Parents of War: A Grounded Theory Study of the Experience of Parenting Through the War Experience

Margaret Wilkie

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Parents of War: A Grounded Theory Study of Parenting Through the War Experience

by

Margaret Wilkie

A Dissertation Presented to the
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences of Nova Southeastern University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Nova Southeastern University
2018
Nova Southeastern University
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

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Acknowledgments

There are many people who contributed in a variety of ways to this project, and I would like to recognize some of them. The participants in this study were invaluable, and I deeply appreciate the time and effort that they spent in sharing their stories with me. It was truly an honor to speak with each and every one of them. I also thank my translators, who helped to facilitate both lingual and cultural communication between my participants and I. Thank you to all of those individuals who helped set up interviews and assisted me in finding participants. None of this would have been possible without your interest in this work and your willingness to help me in the midst of your busy lives helping others.

My committee members gave me the inspiration to pursue the path of working directly with parents who had experienced war, and without them I might have taken the less personal, more detached path of working with statistics instead of humans. Thank you Dr. Campbell, Dr. Muvingi, and Dr. Katz for your guidance, suggestions, and patience.

I want to thank my family for their unwavering support during this project. My husband, Jason, has been a huge support throughout this process. It could not have been done without you. My mother and father have pushed me to focus on this project and treat it as the important work that it is. I would also like to thank my son, Carter, who made me a parent and helped me understand the incredible love that a parent has for their child. I, like the other parents in this study, have found that to be a parent is to love immensely. This study was done for the beautiful children around the world like you, my love. Finally, I dedicate this study to all of the parents who strive to raise these amazing children, even under the most difficult circumstances. You are heroes.
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Abstract

This study focuses on experiences of refugee parents who have experienced war and displacement. There is a lack of academic research in the area of parenting and war, and this study hopes to begin to fill that gap. Research that is based on personal experiences is the ultimate guide to forming policy and programs that meet real needs. This study employed Grounded Theory methodology and in-depth interviewing to explore the question of how parents manage to parent effectively while coping with the experiences of war and displacement. Through intense analysis of interviews (employing Grounded Theory methods of coding, categorizing, and theory development), a theory was generated that identified key processes that participants underwent throughout their war-related experiences. This study’s employment of Constant Comparative Analysis of the data resulted in a substantive theory: the Theory that Maintaining a Strong Commitment to Parenting Principles Enables Parents to Parent Effectively Throughout the War Experience. This emergent theory states that having a strong sense of what it is to be a “good parent” guides parents’ actions and decision-making throughout the difficult war experience. It also entails the development of parenting principles during childhood, and using these to maneuver through the challenges of the active war experience and the resulting experiences of displacement and resettlement. To explore these aspects and others, it is recommended that further qualitative research be conducted into the experience of parenting and war for a larger population of resettled refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons.
Chapter 1: Introduction to Study

**Background**

In 2015, Caryl Stern (of UNICEF) estimated that over 230 million children (one in ten) were living in a country or area affected by armed conflict (UNICEF, 2015). According to the current UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Force (2018), “the number of children living in conflict zones has dramatically risen over the last decade by 74%” (UNICEF, 2018). It is widely recognized that children exposed to war need special consideration. They are a highly vulnerable population, and are subjected to the powers and politics of the adults around them. Their care is of the utmost importance because they have the highest potential to affect the future of a society. If well-cared for, they have a much better chance of positively affecting the community and the future of their nation. These children have the potential to break the cycles of conflict that caused the violence in their youth. Unfortunately, children who are not sheltered by the love of their caregivers are much more likely to succumb to the destructive effects of the trauma suffered by war – two of these being increased violence and aggression.

Parents are widely recognized as a major influence, if not the central influence, on the wellbeing and development of children. The research on children in war largely points to the crucial role that parents play in children’s processing of and recuperation from war trauma (Bandura (1997) cited in Pat-Horenczyk et al (2009); Garbarino & Kostelny (1996); Masten & Coatsworth (1998); Thabet et al (2009)). Much of this research has shown that parents’ psychological state is central to their children’s. Parenting style (especially the aspect of nurturance) has commonly been linked to child

Parents in war need assistance and special consideration, just as children do. Their mental health is threatened by the traumas of war and surviving in such an environment – and the way in which they cope with these traumas affects their children exponentially. Assistance targeted at parents helps the entire family. Better understanding parents’ needs and how to meet them is the central purpose of this paper.

**Statement of Problem**

**Limited focus on parent’s experience with parenting effectiveness in war environments.** There is a significant amount of literature on children’s experiences of war, and much of it has pointed to the importance of positive parenting for children exposed to trauma. While the research almost unanimously points to the positive influences of good parental mental health and positive parenting (Bat-Zion & Levy-Shiff (1993); Garbarino (1992); Masten et al (1999); Laor et al (2001); Thabet et al (2009)) in these situations and emphasizes parenting as a key factor in children’s trauma processing and resiliency (Bandura (1997) in Pat-Horenczyk et al; Garbarino et al (1996); Masten & Coatsworth (1998); Thabet et al (2009)), the amount of research that focuses on parents is comparably limited. Most of these studies focus on the effects of parental mental health on their children, the way that children process trauma, or the perceptions that children have of their parents. There are fewer studies that have endeavored to better understand the effects of war on parent mental state, parenting practices, and how parents cope with meeting the needs of themselves and their children. While it has been asserted that parental warmth and nurturance is important for children exposed to trauma, research on
how parents manage to maintain both of these behaviors in such a difficult situation is certainly neglected.

Research into the experiences of parents in war are often lumped into studies on parenting in disasters and poverty, where parents are only briefly mentioned in the studies that focus on children. But *parenting in war* is a unique experience and needs to be studied in its own right. Therefore, this study will extend the research on war trauma and children to their parents. This is a natural progression, considering the evidence that point to parents being the main source of support and resiliency for children and families exposed to war.

**Need for more assistance for parents exposed to war.** The need for programs for war-torn populations that help teach parents how to handle their own posttraumatic stress, as well as how to parent with compassion, control, and skill, is enormous. When parents parent well, it gives their children advantages that last a lifetime. Unfortunately, assistance for parents in healing and parenting skills after the trauma of war is deficient in access and availability. However, we can see how effective these programs are by looking at those that are available, as limited as they are.

Organizations, like UNICEF and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), that focus on the wellbeing of children exposed to war recognize the crucial part that parenting plays in child protection. Specific to teaching parenting skills, the IRC has developed the “Families Make the Difference” parenting education program that has helped Burundi, Liberian, Thai, Burmese, and Syrian families exposed to severe war to learn compassionate and non-violent parenting (IRC Report, 2014). These programs are supported by cognitive, developmental and behavioral research on child development, as
well as research on children and war that point to the crucial part that parents play in their children’s ability to process severe trauma (Cohen (2009); Fischer et al (2010); Garbarino & Kostelny (1996), Lavi & Slone (2012); Mastan & Narayan (2011); Punamaki (1997, 2001, 2006); Smith et al (2001); Qouta et al (2001, 2005, 2008)). These programs teach parents positive reinforcement and caregiving practices, for example: use of consistent and supportive guidance, empathetic communication skills, and use of non-violent disciplining strategies (IRC Report (2014)). In a research partnership with the Harvard School of Public Health and Duke University, the IRC found that “showing parents alternatives to harshly disciplining their children can reduce physical and verbal punishment by up to 56%” (IRC Report (2014)). This is an example of psychological, behavioral, and academic research being put to excellent use. The IRC programs are well informed, incorporative of cultural differences in parenting, and effective in helping parents and children have better lives.

The work that UNICEF and IRC do is imperative for all levels of society – from the individual to the global. If the cycle of violence and abuse can be stopped through evolving, compassionate parenting practices, children will grow up more emotionally balanced, cognitively developed, and, likely, better members of society. Children throughout the world deserve quality parenting, and parents deserve to enjoy the experience of raising their children. The success of IRC’s parenting program is indicative to the possibilities of expanding such programs throughout the world – in order to achieve a new level of parent and child wellbeing. There is need for more programs like this in every country, but it is desperately needed in more violent societies. The IRC programs have shown that the more that we assist parents exposed to war and violence,
the more effective they can parent. These programs are effective and could go far in stopping the cycle of violence that plagues conflict-ridden populations. Research on this topic, especially research that is informed by those with first-hand experience, is important for the spread of peace and wellbeing throughout the world.

**Statement of Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge about how parenting is affected by the extreme conditions of war: specifically, how participants defined their parenting roles, goals and needs, as well as how they managed to navigate their roles as parents in such a high-risk environment. This study was inspired by the extensive research done on the role that parents play in children’s resiliency and/or their complications due to that experience. It was intended to identify basic components of effective parenting in war environments, and to conceptualize a model informed by the data as to how those components work together to create the condition of effective parenting in a war environment.

This study produced a grounded theory that will help families, social scientists, practitioners, and policy-makers in building a valuable and more personal understanding of this important subject. The theoretical model resulting from this study was developed from interviews with refugees that have experienced parenting in a war first-hand. In these interviews, participants were asked to talk about their concepts of effective parenting, and if/how they were able to be effective parents throughout the war experience. They were also asked about their overall experiences of war, and how they (both as parents and individuals) were affected by the war experience. Based on these questions, the primary research questions were developed:
1. How do participants perceive their roles as parents? How do they fulfill these roles?

2. What were the particular challenges of the war experience for them as parents? As individuals? Were parents able to overcome these challenges? Were they able to fulfill their roles as parents during the war?

3. How did the war experience affect parents in the long term?

4. Taking all of the data resulting from questions 1, 2, and 3, what key concepts arise from that data, and how do those key concepts relate to one another in a grounded theory?

**Concepts and Definitions**

**Conceptualizing parenting.** It may seem commonsensical that all parents have universal roles and responsibilities. However, it is a mammoth task to universally define and categorize parental roles, responsibilities, and styles – especially when endeavoring to do this across cultures and personal belief systems. Human rights institutions have tried to define universal human experiences in a number of areas. By creating international charters and declarations of rights for all humans, they’ve attempted to develop universal truths for the human experience and, in turn, how this experience should be respected by others—regardless of cultural norms or traditions. It is in a similar line of thought (that children and parents have certain universal human experiences) that this section conceptualized basic parent’s roles and responsibilities towards their children.

The international community recognized the rights of children as early as 1924, with the League of Nations Declaration of 1924. Building on this Declaration, the United
Nations developed the Declaration of the Rights of Children (DRC) in 1959. The Declaration calls on voluntary organizations and local authorities to observe children’s rights and their need for “special protection” by law (and by other means) “for healthy and normal physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social development ‘in conditions of freedom and dignity’” (Library of Congress (n.d.)). Within the DRC principles, children are entitled to “a name and nationality; to adequate nutrition, housing, recreation, and medical services; to an education; and, for the handicapped, to ‘special treatment, education and care’” (Library of Congress (n.d.)). While these international decrees are specifically concerned about the rights of children (as they should be considered by governing and legal authorities), they shed light on what is expected of parents and caretakers in their treatment of children.

The American Psychological Association (APA) asserts that there are “parenting practices around the world that share three major goals: ensuring children’s health and safety, preparing children for life as productive adults, and transmitting cultural values” (APA, 2018). Writing from a more Western-based concept of parenting, Jane Brooks (2012) defined parenting as “the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood” (p.6). She wrote that parents are individuals “who nourish, protect, and guide new life to maturity” (p.6). According to Brooks, parents serve a long-term role to “provide responsible caregiving that includes: an ongoing attachment and relationship with the child; provide material resources such as food, clothing, and shelter; access to medical and dental care; responsible discipline, avoiding injurious and cruel criticism and harmful physical punishment; intellectual and moral education” (p.7). She supported her concept
of parenting by citing Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007), who asserted that all children have basic psychological needs for:

An ongoing relationship with at least one adult who has profound love for the child and a lifetime commitment to provide care; a secondary adult who joins in the emotional attachment and care and provides emotional support and encouragement for the other caregiving adult; stable and consistent interactions with caregivers and objects in the environment that enable the child to develop more complex behaviors and gain greater knowledge of the world” (p.7).

The above definitions of parenting assume that there are universal needs for children, and therefore parenting is inherently the process of fulfilling these needs. Whether the concept of a universal role of parenting applies to this study remains to be seen in the results from the interviews with participants, who span several backgrounds, cultures and nationalities.

**Conceptualizing “effective” parenting.** It is difficult to define one parenting technique that universally embodies “effective” parenting. This paper defines effective parenting as meeting both parent and child needs in a healthy, balanced way, as they evolve throughout life and changing circumstances. Inherent in the term “effective” is the connotation of success in meeting a desired result (English Oxford Living Dictionary (n.d.). Relating to this study, effective parenting points to the production of desired effects in a child’s (whether young or adult) personality, actions, and lifestyle. Many studies on effective parenting focus on qualities of parenting that result in children developing into successful young adults – whether it be in their education, mental and
physical health, and/or careers (Amato & Fowler (2004); Baumrind (1991); Querido, Jane G et al (2002); Sandler et al (2011)).

In his article “What is Effective Parenting?” (2006), Kerby T. Alvy (Ph.D.), defines effective parenting as “carrying out the responsibilities of raising and relating to children in such a manner that the child is well prepared to realize his or her full potential as a human being. It is a style of raising children that increases the chances of a child becoming the most capable person and adult that he or she can be”. He lists a number of ways that effective parenting can be achieved: “convey a great deal of parental acceptance and warmth in how they talk to, touch and relate to their children, be fair and firm in their disciplinary actions, make age-appropriate demands on their children for mature behavior, be very responsive to the cues emanating from their children’s behavior, and be very much involved in the lives of the children”.

Another source on effective parenting is the Gordon Model, created in the 1970s by Dr. Gordon Thomas. The Gordon Model of parental effectiveness is based on four core skills: Active Listening, I-Messages, Shifting Gears, and No-Lose Conflict Resolution. According to this model, the effective parent: listens with understanding, communicates honestly to disclose feelings and prevent conflicts, solves problems fairly, and shares values respectfully. In “Breaking the Cycle”, Peter Gerlach (2015) writes that effective parents are aware of (and “proactively reduce”) their own psychological wounds, make wise mate choices, make wise child-conception decisions, monitor their child’s unique developments and special needs, and place high priority on guarding children (especially young children) from inheriting ancestral wounds.
These parenting models reflect a movement in Western parenting: Positive Parenting. This movement is based on the belief that children deserve respect, compassion, and freedom from punitive parenting. It is rooted in the Baumrind Consensus that an authoritative parenting style is the most effective – which may not be as applicable in more authoritarian, collectivist, and shame based cultures. However, it is a major source of the effective parenting nomenclature in the West. In keeping with the principle of Grounded Theory that the qualities of concepts arise from the data itself (and not from predetermined concepts), this study will be applying a much broader definition of effective parenting – one that focuses on effective parenting in terms that participants themselves describe being effective as parents.

**Methodology Overview**

As Birks and Mills (2015) write, “Stemming from a congruent philosophy, a methodology is a set of principles and ideas that inform the design of a researcher study” (p.4). This study utilizes the Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM). GTM is a research approach that is based on developing theory from data collected by surveys, interviews, and other documents (like autobiographies) that capture the personal experience of a phenomenon. Specifically for this study, interviews were the method of data collection. In the initial stage of data collection, interviews were conducted with refugee parents that have experienced parenting in a war environment. The interviewees were taken from the population of war-exposed refugees relocated to the Orlando area. As concepts arose from these interviews, further interviews were conducted in order to further develop the concepts into an effective theory. Although the initial phase of interviews does make use of previous theory as a way to start the conversation with participants about their
perceptions of parenting, the interviews were largely unstructured. This study is not intended to test theories already developed - largely because the subject of parenting in war has been relatively neglected as a topic of research. Rather than relying on applying previous theories to the research, people who have experienced parenting in war personally were supplying the data that was analyzed and organized into a relevant, applicable theory of that experience. Therefore, GTM is the appropriate methodology for developing theory for this topic. Below is a brief description of the phases of data collection and analysis based on the grounded theory methods used in this study.

Table 1

Data Collection and Analysis Using Grounded Theory Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection and Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Phase 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct and transcribe initial interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Coding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply open coding and initial coding processes to organize data into concepts and categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Phase 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct and transcribe up to 5 more in-depth interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced Coding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply theoretical coding processes to organizing data into more cohesive categories and concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development of Theory</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop core category and tie other categories to it to develop dynamic theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

This introduction chapter was intended to present the reader with the research topic, perceived problems areas that the study intends to help resolve, the primary research questions that drove the study, and the chosen methodology used in this study. The topic of parenting in war was introduced, as well as briefly discussing some of the research, theories, and assistance programs concerning this area. It also introduced the
concepts of parenting and effective parenting. A brief overview of Grounded Theory as a methodology was presented to familiarize the reader with this study’s approach to data collection and analysis. The following chapter is a literature review of the research done on child development, parenting styles, culture and parenting, and the effects of war on parents and children. It will discuss previous research findings that have influenced our understanding of the effects of parenting on children exposed to war, and better explains the factors involved in this complex topic. The last three chapters of the paper will delve into greater detail on Grounded Theory as a qualitative methodology (Chapter 3), describe how the study was conducted and the results that it produced (Chapter 4), and concludes by presenting the theory that resulted from the data analysis, as well as discussing the study’s validity, relevance, and contribution to the larger subject area of war and its effects on parenting (Chapter 5).
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will look at the literature relevant to this study’s purpose: to better understand the effects of war on parents. As parenting is a complex topic that spans many different areas of life, and is affected by environment, culture, biology and situation, this literature review will cover several topics: biology of child development, the prominent literature on culture and parenting, the effects of war of children and parents, and the effects of parenting on children exposed to war trauma.

A Note on the Limitations of Literature Reviews in Grounded Theory Studies

The role of the literature review in Grounded Theory research is much more limited than in other methodologies. Because Grounded Theory methodology (GTM) is based on the principal that theory should arise from the data itself, conducting a literature review of relevant theory before the data is captured and analyzed could corrupt this process. Therefore, incorporation of previous literature is often delayed until after the theory has been developed through the GTM process of collecting, analyzing, and sorting data and theory development has almost been completed (Galser (1998) cited in Dunne (2011), p.114). However, this “purist” standpoint is very difficult to implement in a Ph.D. dissertation, where the doctoral proposal process requires a literature review to continue forward with the research – a point well acknowledged by Glaser himself (Glaser (1998) cited in Dunne (2011)). Therefore, a substantial literature review was written for this dissertation. However, it is important to note that this literature review did not result in the creation of predetermined categories, which would corrupt the GTM process of data analysis. This will become clear in Chapter 5 – which discusses how coding was guided by the data itself. Rather, this literature review is intended to give readers a background
on the topic of parenting, child development, and the general research on the effects of war on children and families.

This literature review was conducted in order to establish an idea of what research has been done on topics surrounding this study’s topic. Since it became evident in the search for literature on parenthood in war that academic research was quite limited on this particular subject, the researcher decided to conduct a GTM project to explore this topic. Previous studies have focused on children’s experiences of war, but not parents – which the researcher found to be an area that needed attention. Therefore, the literature review is more of a background on a parallel topic than an extensive look into the study’s topic. It also provides important information on child development that puts the importance of parenting into perspective. A brief section addressing the aspects of the literature on parenting is also discussed, but it is included for background information and will be compared to this study’s findings in the Discussion (Chapter 4). This study’s Grounded Theory Method produced an original theory of parents’ experiences in war – which will extend the research on children’s experiences on war. When supplemented with the research on children, it will work to illuminate the experience of war for the family as a system.

**Child Development and the Importance of Parents**

In order to better understand the role of parenting, it is important to understand child development. Parenting styles are culturally and individually based; their benefits and drawbacks are often reflective of the surrounding culture. The biology of child development, however, determines that there are universal needs of children, regardless of culture. This section will briefly discuss two prominent theories on child psychological
and brain development: attachment theory and the evolutionary developmental biology’s approach to child development.

**Attachment theory and affective neuroscience.** Ruth Newton (2008) writes that scientific studies have shown that “the quality of early parent-child relationship appears to directly affect a child’s emotional security, his sense of self, and even his cognitive development” (p.1). Studies have shown that the primary relationship of child and mother, and the quality of the child’s attachment to his mother, is the most important force in the early structural development of the brain (Masten & Coatsworth (1998); Newton (2008); Schafer (1965); Schore (2003); Small (1999)).

Attachment theory is built upon studies that have shown the important role that attachment to the mother plays in infant development. Through affectionate and nurturing activities (like holding, breastfeeding, “baby wearing”, skin-to-skin contact, and co-sleeping), mothers nurture their baby’s physical, brain, psychological and emotional development. Attachment theory has stipulated that reliability and sensitive attunement is essential for a child’s healthy attachment. Healthy attachment, in turn, results in a healthier self-esteem and emotional balance for that child’s life.

Attachment theory was formally developed by British psychoanalyst John Bowlby. He asserted that babies have a “human biological attachment system refined by the forces of evolution” (Newton (2008), p.12); this system drives babies to seek out their primary caretaker when they are tired, stressed, hungry, or in need of comfort. Most children will attach to their first primary caretaker, even if the care was poor. The attachment relationship between the mother and infant results in established cycles of
either emotional security or insecurity; these cycles will likely stay embedded for a
person’s emotional life (Newton (2008)).

Attachment is nature’s way of securing protection for children. The infant’s need
for attachment is biological and automatic, but the mother’s reaction to her child’s need
for attachment can be greatly influenced by her own attachment experiences. If a mother
suffered abuse or neglect as a child, her ability to be attuned and sensitive to her child’s
needs may be impaired. On the other hand, if a mother has an experience of healthy
attachment, it is more engrained for her to act out her own mothering experience. Thus,
the cycle of healthy attachment relationships lasts not only lifetimes, but generations as
well.

As Newton (2008) writes, “affective neuroscience is the study of the underlying
brain processes, neural systems and organization involved in emotions, feelings and
instinctual responses” (pp.3-5). Affective neuroscience studies instincts and emotions –
and prizes them as essential in the quality of brain activity and evolution of the human
species. While adults often prioritize rational thought, children live in the world of
feelings and instincts – making affect regulation especially important in the parent-child
relationship. When a mother/primary caregiver reacts sensitively and is attuned to her
child, it creates a sense of security in the child, and also “regulates his autonomic nervous
system so that important regulatory centers in the brain develop and mature” (Newton
(2008), p.2). On the other hand, if a child experiences the stress and neglect of an
unresponsive or abusive mother, it can literally damage their brain development – leaving
the child with “a disregulated nervous system and incomplete structural development in
Affect regulation is the ability to regulate your emotions in order to keep your nervous system within optimal ranges; basically by keeping your positive and negative emotions “modulated” and regulated (Newton, p. 4). Emotional regulation problems often stem from childhood experiences of feeling destabilized, having unmet needs, and general problems of a mother not providing adequate attachment for the child (Newton, p. 4). Secure attachment is perhaps the most important aspect of infancy and early childhood because it greatly affects the way the brain and body develops and sets the emotional foundation for the person’s entire life. By helping her child regulate his/her emotions through sensitive and attuned reactions, the mother is teaching her child healthy affect regulation that will stay with him/her for their rest of their life. This is especially relevant for children who experience the trauma of war (Ford et al (2008)).

**Evolutionary development biology and child development.** Childhood is an incredibly important stage for a human being. This stage of development is very formative for the human brain, and what the child is exposed to developmentally will serve as a foundation for the rest of his/her life (Masten & Coatsworth (1998)). Masten and Coatsworth (1998) assert that “plasticity” in development evolves in a way that a species has “the best chances of survival and reproductive success” (p.2). A child’s brain is naturally very susceptible to plasticity, and adapts to changes in its environment – whether they be good or bad. Developmental plasticity “extends from preconception to early childhood”, and is influenced by both genetic and environmental factors. The genetic and environmental factors that arise during this period, will continue to “exert their effects during life-history phase transitions” for the duration of life (Masten & Coatsworth (1998)). If extreme stress and trauma occur during the years of brain
plasticity, stress systems (like the adrenals) and brain development can be altered – leading to memory, learning and stress adaptation problems (Ford (2005), McEwen (2001, 2007) cited in Pat-Horenczyk et al, p.60).

**Child growth and their environment: A need for stability.** While genetics were previously believed to be responsible for common inheritable diseases (both mental and physical), it is now believed that genetics and environment influence disease (Hochberg (2012)). As Hochberg (2012) describes it, the environment entails different aspects of life outside of the self: “For sociologists and psychologists, the environment encompasses social and group interactions [ex. surrounding culture], family dynamics and maternal nurturing…” Masten and Coatsworth (1998) write that, “Environmental conditions that are experienced in early life can profoundly influence human biology and long-term health” (p.2). When environmentally-induced genetic mutations occur at a crucial stage of life, they can alter behavior, disease susceptibility and survival (Jirtle & Skinner (2007), cited in Hochberg (2012)). Hormonal changes are the major factors in marking the different psychological and physical experiences in these stages. In order for a child to develop in a healthy way, they must “avoid potential costs and penalties” of hormones secreted at inappropriate times – especially at the critical life-stage transition periods. Inappropriate amounts of stress and inadequate nutrition can cause problems with endocrine/hormone function. Parents are crucial in protecting their child from extreme stress and poor nutrition – which, due to the effects of these stressors on endocrine/hormone health, can negatively affect a person’s overall life experience. Unfortunately, a war environment makes this especially difficult for parents. The
research on child development and war later in this chapter will discuss this topic in more
detail.

**Is There a Universal Way to Parent Effectively?**

Major factors relating to parenting are heavily influenced by culture. Bennet and
Grimley (2001) write that,

Reproductive patterns, family formation, and child-rearing practices differ
widely in the global community. They are not just expressions of
individual will but are often determined by deep-rooted religious and
cultural world views from the past, as well as by social and economic
conditions in the present. (p. 99)

Anthropologists like Sara Harkness and Charles Super have asserted that social behaviors
have more to do with cultural conditioning than biological imperatives (cited in Small
(2011), p.61, 77). They argued that the biological motivations for behaviors that appear
universal are not because of genetic coding, but because of similarities in cultures.
Meredith Small (2011) writes that “the roots of human culture run deep and …it is
frequently impossible to separate biological human behavior from those that are cultural
because they are often one and the same” (p.73). So, while it may be difficult to identify
the social or biological roots of human behavior, it is undeniable that social conditioning
produces quite a variety in how people engage in universal behaviors, like reproduction,
community, and subsistence patterns (Small (2011), pp.74-5). Depending on the
traditional, environmental and resulting subsistence methods, meeting the universal needs
of reproduction, food, nurturing and shelter may vary rather dramatically.
While parenting styles can vary greatly by culture, parental love and care is possibly one universal parenting practice that has biological roots. Batson (1990) writes that, “Parental affection may be a candidate for a psychological universal, possibly based on biological/evolutionary processes involving protection and care for the offspring for the continuation of the species” (quoted in Kâğıtçıbaşı (1996), p. 22).

Cross-cultural studies on parenting have also concluded that certain parenting styles are universally beneficial as well. Some researchers, including Diana Braumind, have concluded that the authoritative parenting style is superior because parents establish their authority, but it also allows children to think for themselves (Akinsola (2011)). The compassion and resistance to coercive parenting that authoritative parents practice is reflective of the “psychological universal” need for parental affection. The psychological development of children is highly dependent on parents creating a stable, nurturing environment for proper attachment. This principle is behind the theories on child development that tout the universal need for authoritative (as opposed to authoritarian or permissive) parenting styles, regardless of the cultural factor.

**The Baumrind Consensus: authoritative parenting style is more “successful”**.

The Baumrind Consensus is that the authoritative parenting style is the superior parenting method, simply because the alternatives are so detrimental in comparison. The controlling nature of authoritarian parenting, the inconsistency of permissive parenting, and the rejection of rejecting-neglecting parenting have all been repeatedly associated with psychological maladjustment (Dwairy (2009)). Many studies have asserted that authoritative parenting is “associated with better psychological adjustment of children” (Baumrind (1966, 1991, 2005) and Steinberg et al (1991, 1992a,b) cited in Dwairy
(2010)) - with children of authoritative parents “having a higher level of self-esteem and tend to be self-reliant, self-controlled, secure, popular and inquisitive” (Buri et al (1988), Wenar (1994) cited in Dwairy (2010), p. 2). This is in opposition to children of authoritarian parents (who are “controlling, strict, dominating, coercive, intrusive and demanding”) or permissive parents (who tend to be “indulgent…and laissez-faire”) (Dwairy (2010), p.2). Baumrind’s 1966 study of the effects of disciplinary techniques on nursery and school-aged children concluded that “punitive, hostile, self-righteous, and non-empathetic disciplinary practices” result in “cognitive and emotional disturbance in the child” (p.896). This is opposed to mild punishment, which can be beneficial in guiding children’s behavior.

Baumrind (1966) also cites several studies that concluded that authoritarian parenting’s “close supervision and high demands” often end up encouraging the rebelliousness that it attempts to suppress, especially later in adolescence (Hoffman et al (1960), Sears (1961), Dubin & Dubin (1963) cited on p. 897). However, when parents explain the rationale behind their authority, and that rationale is based on concern for the child’s welfare, children accept their parent’s authority much more willingly (Pikas (1961) cited on p. 898). Authoritative parenting encourages independence and self-sufficiency, whereas authoritarian parenting (especially when hostile) fosters passivity, dependency and self-doubt in children (Baldwin (1948), Hoffman (1960), Sears (1961), Becker et al (1962), Kagan & Moss (1962), Bandura & Walters (1959), Glueck & Gluek (1950), cited on p. 898-9). Baumrind and others found that authoritarian parents often have “authoritarian personality syndrome”, and this inherently prevents them from encouraging independence in their child (L. Hoffman et al (1960) and M. Hoffman
(1962) cited on p. 901). Passivity and non-interest/neglect do not encourage “self-reliance, buoyancy, and self-assertiveness” either (Shaeher & Bayley (1963) cited on p. 899-900). Despite what permissive parents may think, allowing a child to behave in a way that he thinks is unacceptable without interfering sends a message that the parent approves of his “socially disapproved behavior” (Sears et al (1957) and Siegel & Kohn cited on p.900). Indeed, Baumrind found that the oppressive control of an authoritarian parent or the freedom from responsible behavior that the child of a permissive parent has both inhibit a child’s ability to make responsible behavior decisions (Baumrind (1966)).

The rational, well-explained, and compassionate direction that authoritative parents provide allows children to understand responsible behavior, and better practice it for themselves.

Parental affection is an important element of authoritative parenting. Recent research has pointed to parental affection as an indicator for better brain development. Luby et al (2012) found that “early maternal support has been shown to promote specific gene expression, adaptive stress responses, and larger hippocampal volumes in developing animals…. and maternal support observed in early childhood was strongly predictive of hippocampal volume measured at school age” (p.2854). The biological necessity of parental affection, attunement and attachment for children’s mental health has further boosted the assertion that authoritative parenting is superior. Dwairy (2009) wrote that, “Authoritarian and permissive parenting are associated with children’s mental health problems whereas authoritative parenting is associated with better mental health and well-being … ‘regardless of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and other defining conditions’” (Baumrind (1991); Binger (1994,2004); Buri et al
Several studies have showed that the authoritative style is associated with better psychological development with children in North America (Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown (1992); Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling (1992); Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch (1991) cited in Dwairy et al (2006)). These children are better adjusted, and are more curious, self-reliant and self-controlled (Buri, Louiselle, Misukanis, & Mueller, 1988; Wenar, 1994 cited in Dwairy (2006)). Buri et al (1988) showed that authoritarian parenting was correlated with lower self-esteem, but that authoritative parenting was associated with higher self-esteem (Cheng and Furnham (2004) cited Buri et al (1988)). Cheng and Furnham (2000, 2004) found that recalled parenting rearing styles were strongly correlated with self-esteem and happiness in adolescents— with maternal authoritativeness, criticism and control predicting lower self-esteem and greater unhappiness. They concluded that “a reasonable discipline exercised by mothers towards their children was particularly beneficial in enhancing their off-spring’s self esteem” (p.468). Further, paternal authoritarianism also weakened their children’s self-esteem and happiness (Furnham & Cheng (2000)).

It certainly appears that authoritative style parenting is far better for children’s development than authoritarian or permissive styles. However, studies that account for culture have more variation in associating authoritarian and permissive parenting styles with good child development. The following section discusses the findings that challenge the universal application of Baumrind’s parenting styles and the assertion that authoritative parenting is superior.
The Dissent: Authoritarian parenting is “effective” in many cultures. If control, rejection and inconsistency are related to poor parenting, and all parenting styles but authoritative parenting have at least one of these aspects, then it is assumed that any style but authoritative parenting leads to “psychological maladjustment” – regardless of cultural background (Dwairy (2009)). However, several studies comparing authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles across cultures argue this assumption is too simplistic. They encourage a more thorough investigation into the cultural mechanisms that direct communication, emotional expression, and value-orientation (Chao (2000); Rudy & Grusec (2006)). Instead of assuming that parental love and affection (which is a necessary component for healthy psychological development in children (Luby et al (2012); Newton (2008)) is similarly expressed in all cultures, it is important to look at the “bigger picture” of how a culture teaches the expression of love.

Culture determines so much of parenting practices. Just as cultures differ in their values and expectations of parents and children, relationships between parents and children reflect cultural messages (Dwairy (2009)). For the most part, studies comparing parenting styles across cultures have been based on the dimensions of individualism and collectivism (Berry et al (1992)). Many have found that more collectivist cultures emphasize hierarchy, control, obedience, and restraint (Chao (1994); Dornbusch et al (1987); Harwood et al (1995); Hofstede (1983); Kagicibasi (1970); Sinha (1981) cited in Rudy & Grusec (2006)). Children in these cultures are socialized to inhibit their individual wants and expressions, and instead meet the needs of others in their group. Authoritarian parenting is more useful in achieving this outcome than authoritative parenting (Rudy & Grusec (2006)). Individualistic cultures emphasize self-interest and
self-reliance as well as co-existence. Co-dependence and putting others far above the self is looked down on in this cultural setting. The goals of authoritative parenting are more geared towards facilitating a child’s independence and self-reliance (Rudy & Grusec (2006)).

Kagitcibasi (2007) has written extensively on the variation in pathways to development that different cultures approach the basic needs of independence and interdependence. These needs are universal, but each culture approaches them differently (Greenfield (1999, 2000); Keller et al (2003); Rothbaum et al (2000) cited in Kagitcibasi (2007)). He wrote that parents approach teaching their children about independence and interdependence in accordance with their overall culture’s values, beliefs and life-styles. Essentially, the approach to independence and dependence are at the heart of individualistic vs. collectivist cultural divide. The surrounding culture in which socialization occurs gives context to the meaning exchanged between members.

Kagitcibasi asserted that the need for autonomy and relatedness are basic needs, and are key to understanding the development of the self. Individuals will employ agency/autonomy and interpersonal distance/separateness in order to retain self-rule, or dependency and relatedness to subject themselves to being governed from the outside.¹²

Family life is the foundational experience of maneuvering the balance of autonomy and dependency. Kagitcibasi (2007) defined human development as “socialization, together with maturation” (p.27). He perceived the role of parents as “training” their children to be competent cognitively and successful social members of society from the time they are very young.¹³ Kagitcibasi (1970, 2007) used the example of perceived parental affection and control to exhibit the importance of cultural context in
meaning. In his comparative study of Turkish and American adolescents in their perceptions of parental control and affection, he found that although the Turkish adolescents perceived more control, they did not perceive any less affection (p.28).

Perhaps the type of control has more of an influence on children’s psychological development than parenting style itself. Rohner’s theory of parental control spans the parenting styles, with authoritarian on the end of high control and permissive on the end of low control (Rohner et al (2005) cited in Dwairy (2009)). Parental control that inhibits psychological development is detrimental, but control that regulates behavior encourages self-control and better academic achievement (Barber et al (1994); Lamborn et al (1991) cited in Dwairy (2009)). Dwairy (2006) found that parents and children in authoritarian, collectivist societies tend to be closer than in individualistic societies because they are more mutually dependent on each other. Baldwin et al (1990) found that authoritarianism helped children in high-risk environments have higher levels of competency, and are more “stress resistant” (Baldwin et al (1990), p.257; Gamezy (1982) cited in Dwairy (2009)). Baumrind (1972) herself found that an authoritarian parenting style had a positive effect for girls in the African American population – for them, it led to more assertiveness and independence (cited in Dwairy (2009). However, parental rejection sets the stage for depression and poor mental health (Garber & Flynn (2001)). On the other hand, unhealthy control (coercive, dominating, intrusive, and restrictive) reduces personal control, ambition and encourages a sense of helplessness (Chorpita & Barlow (1998); Garber & Flynn (2001); Weisz et al (2003), in Dwairy (2009)).

Rudy and Grusec (2006) found that maternal negative thought and emotion had more of negative effect on their children’s self-esteem than parenting style or cultural
orientation. They studied mothers and children from individualist (Western European) and collectivist (Egyptian, Iranian, Indian, and Pakistani) cultures. They assessed children’s self-esteem, maternal authoritarianism, and mother’s thoughts and feeling about their children. They found that collectivist mothers did engage in authoritarian parenting more than individualist mothers, but their thoughts and feelings were not less loving. However, when individualist mothers engaged in authoritarian parenting, it was associated with them thinking and feeling negatively. In both individualist and collectivist groups, they found that maternal negativity was associated with lower self-esteem in the children.

Ruth Chao (1994, 2000) found that authoritarian parenting styles in immigrant Chinese mothers did not necessarily result in poor academic achievement and self-esteem. She compared immigrant Chinese mothers with European American mothers with younger children in their parenting styles, practices and socialization goals. She asserted that Baumrind’s parenting styles did not encompass all of the alternative styles of different cultures. For Chinese immigrant mothers, “training” was the parenting style of choice – which emphasized close monitoring, control, obedience and a set standard of conduct (authoritarian), but also parental support and guidance (authoritative). Immigrant Chinese mothers were heavily focused on education as the major form of child socialization and success, whereas European American mothers were focused on making their children feel loved, building their self-esteem, and comfortable with self-expression. She found that the Chinese children were not negatively affected by the differences in parenting styles, practices and priorities because more authoritarian nature of Chinese parenting – especially in reference to their success in school.
A 2006 study by Dwairy and colleagues of children in eight Arab societies reframed the Baumrind model to fit into a more pan-Arab model. They combined the Baumrind styles into three different styles: inconsistent, controlling, and flexible. Like Cheng’s earlier study, Dwairy et al (2006) found that authoritarian parenting did not have the same negative effect on Arab children that it did on Western children. They wrote that “when authoritarian parenting is consistent or in harmony with the socio-cultural environment, such as the authoritarian/collective Arab or Asian cultures, authoritarian parenting per se has no negative impact” (abstract). It was not the controlling or flexible parenting styles that had the most negative impact on Arab adolescents – rather the inconsistent (combining both authoritarian and permissive) style that was associated with psychological disorders. This is consistent with previous findings that inconsistency in a child’s life confuses the child and impairs their socialization, learning, and behavior (Dadds (1995); Hersov (1960); Patterson (1982); Wenar (1994) cited in Dwairy (2006)).

Dwairy et al’s 2006 findings on inconsistency and poor child mental health are especially important to this study because war has shown to cause inconsistency in parenting due to disruptions and trauma (Berz et al (2008); Kerestes (2006); Punamaki et al (1997); Qouta et al (2008); Samper et al (2005)).

Like the Arab children studied by Dwairy, Japanese and Korean children found their parents’ control to be signs of warmth and acceptance in several studies (Kornadt (1987); Rohner & Pettengill (1985); Trommsdorff (1985); cited in Kagitcibasi (2007)). Gisela Trommsdorff (1985) found that “parental practices such as strict control and discipline are not necessarily always functioning as negative reinforcement patterns and do not necessarily induce conflicting parent-child relationships or later disturbances in child
development” (p. 232). She found that Japanese adolescents, who were from a collectivist culture with more authoritarian parenting styles, did feel more controlled by their parents than German adolescents. But this did not negatively affect their “interpersonal relations” with them. Due to the strong Confucian and Samurai cultural traditions, Japanese children accepted parental control willingly – and even felt rejected if their parents gave them a broader range of autonomy. However, the German children felt higher levels of parental control as rejecting and threatening – because they lived in a culture of high individuality and independence.

Pettengill and Rohner (1985) also found that Korean adolescents perceived parental control as loving, whereas even Korean-Americans found it to be restricting and negative (cited in Trommsdorff, p.238). Thus, the surrounding culture can have effects on perceptions of affection and control even in immigrant families with traditions of authoritarian parenting.

The literature on cultural diversity and parenting point to the complex relationships between control and affection, interdependence and individuality, and the role of culture in making certain parenting practices “normal”. Rather than one particular parenting style being “good”, and others being “bad”, the qualities of perceived acceptance, affection and control are all necessary elements to good parenting. These are incorporated into parenting depending on the culture that parents and their children subscribe to. One culture may have more authoritarian practices, but if the parent conveys affection and love to the child (and the child does not perceive the parenting style as “not normal”), it is not detrimental to their self-esteem and happiness. However, if the child feels that the authoritarian or permissive practices convey their parents’ negativity
towards them, it will likely lead to the psychological and behavioral problems that Baumrind and others found in their pro-authoritative studies.

**War and Parenting**

Parents in war have to juggle the extreme roles of survival and raising well-adjusted children. Shelling, air raids, land mines, violence on the street, oppression, poverty, fleeing home and community, and loosing family members to death or imprisonment are just some of the traumatic experiences that families face while living in a war zone. Daily-life stressors compound the trauma of violence. Miller and Rasmussen (2010) found that direct exposure to war typically accounts for 25% of PTSD symptom levels; experiences like poverty, unemployment, violence in the home, and poor health have been found to be *more* damaging to mental health than direct exposure to war (pp.10-11). Closings of grocery stores and markets, interruption or cancellation of school, work, disruption of socializing and community are added problems that destroy routine and threaten structure in a family’s life. These traumas and disruptions negatively affect a parent’s ability to parent effectively, and that only adds to a parent’s traumatized mental state.

Dealing with their traumatized children is incredibly challenging for parents as well. Quota (2008) found that the violence occurring in the environment are traumatizing for children. Air raids, sirens, and gunshots and bombings at night have been shown to terrify children and babies – “severely deteriorating children’s sleep and cause uncontrollable fears among babies and children, causing anxiety, panic attacks, poor concentration, constant alertness, as well as withdrawal, stuttering, ticks, regressive behavior and new somatic problems” (p.315).\(^{15}\) This can create confusion, depression,
anxiety and anger in the lives of fathers, mothers and their children in a war environment. Even when the trauma has passed, the mental, physical and environmental disruption impedes families’ ability to stabilize and heal. The following two sections discuss the literature on children, parents and recovery for families dealing with the trauma of war.

**Effects of war on children: PTSD, aggression, and resiliency.** The war environment is rife with traumatic experiences for children and families. It is common for children to witness assaults against themselves and family members, night raids and shelling, and killings (Qouta, Punamaki and El Sarraj (2005) cited in Qouta (2008)). Parents and children who have experienced war are at high risk for PTSD, which can be severely debilitating and disorienting (Pfefferbaum (1997); Thabet et al (2004) cited in Thabet et al (2009)). When a traumatic experience is so overwhelming that it “interferes with effective cognitive-emotional processing of the painful experience”, it can lead to the “intrusive symptoms of PTSD” (Qouta (2008)).

Thabet et al (2009) and Macksoud & Aber (1996) concluded that while children’s reactions can vary over age and exposure to trauma, the general features of the reactions are similar and fall under the clinical syndrome of PTSD. These symptoms consist of disturbed sleep/nightmares, difficulty concentrating or remembering things… repetitive/unsatisfying play involving traumatic themes, diminished interest in enjoyable activities, emotional detachment from parents or friends, and an increased state of alertness” (Macksoud & Aber, p.71; Qouta (2008), p.314). However, children differ from adults in their symptoms of PTSD in several ways, and this may make it difficult with parents with PTSD to fully relate to their children’s experience (Ford et al (2008)).
Exposure to traumatic experiences in childhood not only impacts children’s emotional life, but their cognitive capacity as well (Qouta (2008)). Qouta and colleagues (2008) found that “war and military violence profoundly impact children’s cognitive development, including parent-child interaction and peer and social development, including parent-child interaction and peer and sibling relations” (p. 314). Thus, their education, creativity, and intelligence are negatively impacted as well – leading to a lifetime of challenges and setbacks. Biologically, the effects of experiencing trauma and extreme stress as a child can range from disorders in “hormonal and psychophysiological regulation” (Carlson et al (1995); Victoreff & Qouta (2005) cited in Qouta (2008), p. 314) to “brain anatomy and functioning” (Bremner & Narayan (1998); Bremner and Narayan (2000), p.875 cited in Qouta (2008), p. 314,). Bremner and Narayan (2000) found that children who experienced PTSD were at high risk for problems with memory due to “hippocampal atrophy” (abstract). Bremner and Vermetten (2001) found that children who experienced extreme stress early in life were affected by long-term consequences in the development of “stress-responsive neurobiological systems, including the HPA-axis…and brain areas involved in learning and memory (the hippocampus)” (abstract). The impact of extreme stress on the brain has affected people throughout their lives – making them more prone to learning difficulties, memory problems, and accelerated aging (Bremner & Narayan, p.881-2).

According to the “dose-effect” relationship between war exposure and poor mental health, after an accumulation of severe traumas, the risk of psychological disorders greatly increases (Breslau (1998)). Children exposed to trauma are at much higher risk for psychiatric disorders - like anxiety, depression, excessive impulsivity, and
aggression (Ford et al (2008)). Rita Giacaman (2007) wrote that living in prolonged conflict, like the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, can “impede normal, healthy identity development and can radically influence their psychosocial health, as well as their outlook on the future” (Machel (1996) cited on p.361). Her study found that both collective and individual exposures to trauma over a long period of time lead to “depressive-like states”, with boys acting out in aggressive ways and girls experiencing isolation, loneliness, and depression (p. 366).

Increased aggression, especially in adolescent males, is another possible consequence of experiencing repeated violent trauma (Bandura (1986); Barber (2001); Garbarino (2001,1995); Garbarino et al (1992); Macksoud and Lawrence (1996), Miller et al (1999); Punamaki (2009); Qouta and Odeh (2005); Thabet & Vostanis (2002)). Raija Punamaki (2009) wrote that certain preconditions are required for violent experiences to lead to aggressive behavior (p.62). These preconditions include a promotion of violence in: cognitive, emotional and psychological processes, family relationships, political ideologies, and social atmosphere. Children who have difficulty in emotion regulation (Schwartz & Proctor (2000) in Punamaki (2009)) and lack parental emotional and community support (Kliewer et al (1998) cited in Punamaki (2009)) are more likely to react aggressively to the violence around them. Like its opposite behavior self-efficacy and regulation, aggression is an aspect of personality that is facilitated by family and social relationships (Punamaki (2009)). She found that when a child does not have proper attachment relationships, is not taught emotional/affect regulation skills, and is not taught proper cognitive/problem-solving skills by his/her parents, the war-exposed child is at high risk for aggressive behavior. In order to counteract such a risk, she asserted that
it is important for parents to encourage more “comprehensive and reflective emotional processing” by teaching them “to recognize their own and others’ feelings, and to express a diversity of emotions” (p.65). This can help them to stay in touch with their feelings in an environment where violence becomes habituated and desensitization happens naturally.

Children’s ability to recover successfully from a trauma is due to their resiliency. Resilience is when people “successfully adapt despite adversity, overcome hardships and trauma, achieve developmental competences, become strong in harsh conditions and create themselves a life in adversity through developmental processes” (Luthar et al (2000); Rutter (2000) cited in Qouta (2008)). There is evidence that children are quite resilient and capable of adapting in low-risk situations, however, there is quite a bit of variation. Some children are remarkably resilient and even grow stronger from the traumatic experience, others never seem to fully recover, and others still alternate between periods of resilient recovery and recurrent dysfunction (Luthar et al (2000); Rutter (2000) cited in Qouta).

The mystery of variation between children’s posttraumatic recovery has been studied in some detail. Certain factors have been identified as “protective factors”, which help contribute to resilience and recovery (Masten & Coatsworth (1998)). Family and self-efficacy are shown to be two major protective factors in resilience (Bandura (1997) in Pat-Horenczyk et al). Pat-Horenczyk et al (2009) found that when a child has confidence in his/her ability to handle difficult situations, they are more “competent in dealing with stress-related emotions” (p.59). Children learn competency, self-efficacy and coping skills through their parents, and children’s resiliency has been shown to be boosted by a
“fully functioning family system” (Garbarino et al 1996 cited in Thabet et al 2009, p.227). This research shows that a functional, resilient family unit is a key protective factor in children’s resiliency to the traumas of war. The following section will cover the research on parenting children in a war and post-war environment.

**Literature suggesting expected effects of war on parenting.** Belsky (1984) described parenting as “a function of adult characteristics, child temperament, and contextual stressors” (quoted in Gerwitz et al 2008, p.180). A war presents a host of “contextual stressors” that harm mental health and stability. Parents in war struggle to process their own experiences, and can be at risk of poor parenting that does not meet their child’s needs. The quality of parenting during and after a traumatic experience is crucially important. As parents are the primary givers of guidance, safety and comfort in their children’s lives, their parenting in a traumatic situation is central to a child’s processing and recovery (Gerwitz et al 2008).

Parenting in peaceful and violent societies differs in that one is focused on enrichment and one is focused survival (Punamaki 2009)). While parenting is a challenging experience in any environment, complicating factors like war, poverty, and forced migration can make the task of parenting especially difficult. Most of today’s violent conflicts occur in the developing world – where parents struggle with meeting their family’s needs more than in the developed world. Family well-being is less focused on learning, development and progress than on satisfaction of the basic human needs of food, shelter, health, and basic education (Bennet & Grimley 2001)). Malnutrition, higher infant mortality, and early death of mothers are some of the risks that accompany living in poverty (Bennet & Grimley 2001)). Bennet and Grimley (2001) wrote “that
children in survivalist communities are valued by how they can contribute: they are valued by their work capability, and then as their ability to care for their parents as they age” (p. 102). This survivalist mentality is only exacerbated in a war environment.

As parents in a peaceful society raise their children from infancy to adolescence, they try to practice sensitivity and responsiveness, teaching limits, supporting and guiding their child, education, having open communication, and moving towards indirect involvement as they grow older (Punamaki (2009)). As parents in a violent society raise their children from infancy to adolescence, they focus on protection from danger, regulation of fear and anger, teaching responsibility, enduring loss, and sharing of grief (Punamaki (2009)). Parents and children in war are compromised because they struggle to meet the basic developmental stages of attachment, emotional regulation, social competence, and self-efficacy.

**Extreme stress negatively affects parenting.** Parenting in a war environment is more directed at protecting children and keeping them alive – and the stress of that often leads parents to be more punitive and harsh with their children (Barber (1999, 2001); Barber et al (2005); Punamaki (1997, 2009); Qouta et al (1997)). Similar to Baumrind’s assertion that authoritarian parenting is harmful to children’s development of self-esteem, there is a consensus in the literature on war trauma and parenting that controlling and dominating styles of parenting are harmful to children who have experienced the trauma of war (Pat-Horenczyk et al (2008); Punamaki (2009); Qouta et al (2008), Thabet (2009)). More extreme authoritarian parenting practices like using “corporal and psychological punishment, taking exaggerated control of children, asserting power, or reducing warmth and nurturance” have been proven to have a negative effect on all
children, especially on vulnerable children (Pat-Horenczyk et al (2008); Punamaki (2009); Qouta et al (2008); Thabet (2009)).

Unfortunately, the “disorganization and chaos” of war have been shown to strongly correlate with “ineffective parenting practices” (Patterson & Capaldi (1991); Patterson & Dishion (1988) cited in Gerwitz et al (2008), p.180). Research has pointed to an increase in authoritarian tendencies when social threats are increased (Fischer et al (2010)).

According to Patterson’s (1982) model for the impact of stressful life circumstances on family social interaction, coercion is more likely to arise when families experience very stressful events. Gerwitz (2008) writes that, “coercive interchanges with parents, siblings, and peers predict youths’ conduct problems, delinquency, depression and school failure” (Capaldi (1991); Dishion & Patterson (2006); Patterson et al (1982) cited on p.182). Some examples of the consequences of using coercive and controlling parenting techniques on traumatized children are: internalizing or externalizing behaviors, PTSD, and aggression.

In the stress of war, parenting can become punitive, oppressive and even violent. Cummings et al (2010) found that children living in violent societies (the study took place in Belfast, Northern Ireland) were exposed to more family conflict as community conflict elevated. Several studies have pointed to the negative influence that parents’ use of punitive child rearing have in children’s level of traumatization and recovery. Fischer et al (2010) found that parents exposed to images and news reports of terrorist attacks engaged in more authoritarian parenting styles. In their study of Palestinian families that had experienced severe war trauma, Punamaki et al (1997) found that an increase in exposure to traumatic events correlated with an increase in negative parental behavior.
(like anger and punishment); this resulted in an in higher neuroticism and low self-esteem in children (p.723). Qouta et al (2008) found that children’s perceptions of their parents were that they became more “strictly disciplining, rejecting and hostile and especially their mothers as using highly punitive rearing practices” (p.317). In a 2007 study, Qouta and colleagues used a scale that indicated punitive, controlling, and negotiating parenting to measure the effects of maternal parenting on adolescents’ levels of PTSD. While personality and exposure to traumatic events were more indicative of PTSD, a punitive mothering style was found to be negatively correlated to the adolescent’s resiliency (p.713). Thus, they concluded that overly controlling and coercive parenting could be especially detrimental for adolescents and young adults.

On the other hand, studies have found that parents can help adolescents tremendously by using less coercive parenting techniques. Pat-Horenczyk et al (2006) found that maintaining their routine, with the help of their parents, helped teens from Jerusalem to avoid PTSD despite the threat of terrorism. Lavi and Slone (2012) studied the effects of parental warmth and authority-control on Jewish and Arab Israeli children. Conversely, they found that authority-control parenting patterns, especially in mothers, were perceived by children as threatening and were “related to higher levels of behavioral and psychological difficulties among children reporting high impact of political violence exposure” (p.559).

This research is especially poignant because children experiencing the effects of violent trauma are extremely vulnerable and in need of warmth and nurturance from their parents. Parenting, however, is highly dependent on the parent’s own mental health and
personal recovery from trauma. The following section discusses the importance of parental mental health in recovering from trauma.

**Links between parents’ and children’s trauma responses.** It is important to remember that parents are simply human, and their exposure to the trauma of war puts them at a higher risk for psychological ailments. Daily stressors (like poverty, isolation and breakdown of services) can be even more stressful for parents than the surrounding violence of the war experience. They are chronic and “gradually erode people’s coping resources and tax their mental health” (Miller & Rasmussen (2010), p.12). Just as in children, adults mired in chronic stress experience the physical and emotional consequences in their stress-response systems and HPA axis – eventually leading to decreases in memory loss, self-control and thought process deficiencies (Christopher (2004), Gunnar & Quevedo (2007), Sapolsky (2004) cited in Miller & Rasmussen (2010)). Thus, parents experience the trauma and the stresses of surviving in a war and post-war environment just as their children do; only their experiences are compounded by the responsibility of caring for their children.

When parents suffer from trauma, their children suffer. Extensive research shows that a mother’s emotional reactions to traumatic events has a direct effect on her child’s reactions; it may even be a stronger indicator of her child’s posttraumatic healing than the traumatic experience itself (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (1998) cited in Cohen (2009), p.72). Maternal PTSD symptoms have been shown to negatively affect infants’ ability to develop secure attachment (Schuengel et al (1999) cited in Pat-Horenczyk et al (2008)), and parental PTSD symptoms are established predictors of PTSD in older children – so much so that this study estimated that, if both
parents have PTSD, children are over 30% more likely to have PTSD. Bryce et al (1989) found that Lebanese children’s distress was directly related to their mother’s depression, and even child morbidity was directly linked to the mother’s level of depression. Punamaki (1987) found that Palestinian children were more distressed if their mother’s mental health was troubled. Laor et al (1997, 2001) found that very young children (3 years old) who experienced rocket attacks in the Gulf War suffered more severe PTSD if their mothers were avoidant or distressed— which is much more likely if they are suffering from PTSD themselves. In their study of Palestinian mothers and children, Qouta, Punamaki and El Sarraj (2005) found that poor maternal mental health negatively affected children, with mothers’ depressive states associated with children’s internalizing, and mothers’ hostile treatment resulting in children’s externalizing.²⁹

Resiliency and positive parenting. Just as parental (especially maternal) negative responses to trauma result in negative responses in their children, positive parental mental health and recovery indicate the same in their children. Several studies have pointed to the primary role that parents play in facilitating their children’s resiliency (Masten et al (1999) cited in Gerwitz et al (2008), p.181). Masten et al (1999) found when parents develop “adaptation systems” that protect child development, children were able to have good mental health, even in the most adverse situations. Laor et al (1997, 2001) found that good maternal mental health and family cohesion are directly related to a child’s recovery from trauma. Also very important was the mother’s ability to “control mental images” because it allowed her to moderate both her and her child’s stress symptoms ((2001), p.1021).³⁰ This is consistent with other research on child development that points
to the importance of attachment and parent behavior modeling in predicting self-efficacy and self-esteem in their children.\textsuperscript{31}

Nurturing, loving and supportive parenting is so important for children’s healing from trauma (Bat-Zion & Levy-Shiff (1993); Garbarino (1992); Laor et al (1997); Qouta (2005)). Several studies have pointed to the positive effect that parental warmth has on a child’s mental health in the face of war trauma. Thabet et al (2009) write that “parents are the most important support for children, providing a sense of physical safety, comfort, and nurturing” (p.233). Bat-Zion and Levy-Shiff (1993) found that affectionate parental behavior helped children to heal, but parental negative behavior was related to increased stress in children. Punamaki et al (1997) found that good perceived parenting made children less vulnerable to psychological problems in Palestinian children exposed to traumatic events. Garbarino (1992) found that children who have a history of healthy attachment with their parents are better at coping with the stress of war (cited in Lavi and Slone (2012), p.552).

Garbarino et al (1991) found that adult response to danger was a mediating factor in children’s responses; and if it was a loving, calm, and “positively determined” response, the child could cope with the stress of war (Garbarino & Kostleny (1996), p.41). Qouta et al (2008) also found that ”if mothers and fathers showed love, caring and wise guidance and restrained from punitive rearing practices, children showed better psychological adjustment in spite of exposure to military trauma and did not develop PTSD symptoms” (p.317). Children from loving homes were found to be more creative and better at problem solving, and were less prone to PTSD. Lavi and Slone (2012) found
that parental warmth and affection were related to low levels of psychological difficulties – even for children with high exposure to violence (p.558).

Parenting through difficult times and extreme change can be done positively – especially when community support is available. Fogatch et al (2008) recommend that parents focus on Patterson’s “five effective positive parenting practices”: skill encouragement, limit setting, balancing encouragement and discipline, monitoring children’s whereabouts, using problem solving, and showing positive involvement (p.197). One example of positive posttraumatic parenting is helping small children recuperate by allowing them to process the trauma through talking about it - especially through symbolic play. By replaying traumatic experiences through play, drawing, stories and fairytales, children are able to self-heal. In one study, Qouta and colleagues (2008) found that children tend to intensify their play after trauma, and also that extremely traumatized children dream more vividly and remember more of their dreams. Qouta concluded that both of these aspects of post-traumatic healing in children means that there is an “urgent need of humans to work through, rehearse and repeat painful and bewildering experiences until their emotional load is neutralized” (pp. 315-16). For older children, giving them positive feedback, allowing them to have peer interaction, maintaining a fulfilling schedule, monitoring them with respect, addressing problem behaviors, and avoiding excessive restriction, criticism, or avoidance all help children/adolescents to recover from trauma (pp. 315-16).

**Conclusion**

Just as the fear and violence of war creates distress, the comfort, security and love of family can facilitate recovery and psychological balance for both parents and children.
Common findings in research on children’s experiences of war are: children’s reactions to traumatic experiences are directly related to their parents’ reactions (Bryce et al (1989); Coates (2003); Gerwitz (2008), Kilic (2003); Newman (1976); Thabet et al (2008, 2009)) and the quality of parenting in a traumatic situation has more of an effect on children’s mental state than the direct war experience itself (Gerwitz (2008); Thabet et al (2000, 2008, 2009); Qouta et al (2008)) - all pointing to the fact that parents are instrumental in their children’s posttraumatic recovery.

Good mental health is crucial for parenting in traumatic situations, and the generational effect has been well documented above. The psychological consequences of war for parents and children are dire: PTSD, depression, aggression, and more severe dissociative disorders are just a few. These psychological problems are easily transferred from parents to children – thus affecting generations to come.

The literature on parenting and war is consistent with the research on child development and parenting. In order to raise psychologically healthy children, parents need to model the behaviors that they want to instill. Secure attachment, emotional regulation, and mental regulation are key in good mental health (Ford, Pat-Horenczyk, and Brom (2008)). Bronfenbrenner (1986) listed three elements essential for raising healthy children: parent-child attachment, parental self-esteem/identity, and stability of routine caregiving. Garbarino (2001) wrote, “if parents can sustain a strong attachment to their children, maintain a positive sense of self, and have access to rudimentary shelter, food, and medical care, then children will manage” (p.380). This is a tall order in an active and post-war environment, but the research emphasizes the importance of good parental mental health in recovery for both parents and children.
Further research on the successful elements of parenting in extreme stressful situations will go far to serve the world population of parents and children. Better understanding what parents need in order to not only survive but successfully parent their children through exposure to the trauma of war will help aid organizations support them. As we can see from the IRC program, parents exposed to war are highly responsive to parenting support and education. It is the intention of this study to identify the behaviors, beliefs, techniques, and resources that parents themselves have used to effectively parent even in the worst conditions. This will expand extremely useful and important efforts to help a population that holds the key to post-conflict recovery: the family.

In closing, it is important to note that the theories discussed in this literature review are initial forecasts as to what may arise in the interviews conducted in the study. This is especially true in the coverage of parenting definitions, effective parenting, parenting styles, and theories on how war affects parenting. Since grounded theory methodology requires a researcher to be open-minded to the path that participant-led data uncovers, it would be detrimental to impose these theories on the data analysis. Therefore, the theories covered in this literature review have served as an introduction to prominent concepts, and will have limited influence on analyzing the data that comes from the parents that will be interviewed. Further literature review and comparison will be covered in the discussion chapter – which will address how the data derived from parents’ experiences compares with existing theory.
Chapter 3. Research Methodology, Sources, Procedures and Expectations

**Methodology – Grounded Theory Method**

This chapter introduces the Grounded Theory methodology (GTM) as a research methodology and describes this study’s implementation of GTM. In the first section, the purpose of using GTM is explained. In the second section, the background of GTM is briefly covered and the fundamentals of the methodology are defined. The next two sections will describe the GTM philosophy for this paper, as well as the data collection and analysis phases for this study. The chapter concludes with a timeline for data collection, analysis, theory formation, and writing in the final two chapters of this paper.

**The Purpose of GTM is to Generate Theory**

**Building theory with GTM.** Building theory “grounded” in the data of participants’ experience of the studied phenomenon is the goal of research using GTM. Bircks and Mills (2015) wrote that, “the final product of a grounded theory study is an integrated and comprehensive grounded theory that explains a process associated with a phenomenon” (p.14). The stages of data collection and analysis build on each other, with the higher two stages building on the foundational work done in the first stage. These stages have concepts and techniques that will take a GTM study to “a level of sophistication that will lift analysis beyond qualitative description” (p.14).

GTM is a process of theory building that relies on the researcher’s “theoretical sensitivity”. As Glaser and Strauss (1967) described theoretical sensitivity in *Discovery of Grounded Theory*, it is a two-part concept:

Firstly, a researcher’s level of insight into both themselves and the area that they are researching. Secondly, a researcher’s level of theoretical
sensitivity reflects their intellectual history, the type of theory that they have read, absorbed and now use in their everyday thought. (Birks & Mills (2015), p.12)

Theoretical sensitivity entails that the researcher brings an individuality to each GTM study, and the further into the process of building theory that a researcher goes, the more their sensitivity to “analytical possibilities” will flourish (Birks & Mills (2015)).

Theoretical sensitivity of the researcher refers not only to the ability of the researcher to understand the people and the setting under study but also to his or her ability to generate meaningful theory in this area. Glaser and Strauss (1967) argued that the researcher should be “sensitizing” – that is, to be able to “yield a meaningful picture” and to illustrate the theory so that readers can connect it to their own experience.

Grounded theory requires the researcher to come into the study with a fairly open and receptive mind. The ability to put aside one’s initial perspective and be open to evidence as one interacts with the data is essential in all versions (Oktay (2012)).

GTM Background

This section will briefly describe the origins of the grounded theory method, and the two major approaches to GTM: objectivism and constructivism.

Galser and Strauss – The Originals. Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss are known to be the founders of grounded theory as a qualitative research methodology. They aimed to develop theories through rigorous analysis of qualitative data that generated theory through coding data, developing categories, then comparing these categories and developing important common aspects and conditions of the studied experience (Charmaz & Belgrave (2012)).
Glaser and Strauss devised GTM as a qualitative research method that could compete with the rising tide of the statistical research, in both credibility and significance (Bryant & Charmaz (2007)). Their book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967) is considered the seminal work of GTM. Bryant and Charmaz (2007) point out that it was written in an era of change for sociological research – at a time when social constructionists were calling for changes in qualitative research methods. Glasser and Strauss believed that to focus on deriving data from people’s actual experience of an event, instead of relying on second hand data from other sources or from existing theory, would yield authentic, insightful theory. Through interviewing people and allowing them to tell their stories, the GTM researcher collects the data directly. Bryant and Charmaz (2007) relay that this is data from which reliable theory can be discovered; that is grounded in reality. The systematic way of gathering and analyzing data from primary sources that Glaser and Strauss defined in their four founding texts assists researchers in “generating novel theories as opposed to existing ones” (p.43), which leads to an expansion of knowledge that goes far beyond testing and retesting existing theory.

While very influential and ground breaking, Glaser and Strauss’ description of grounded theory methods left much to be desired in the way of describing a determined grounded theory methodology- and these “first-generation texts led many students of grounded theory to try to figure out what was…. “going on” ontologically and epistemologically in order to plan and execute a rigorous study that would pass examination” (Birks & Mills (2015), p.6). The second generation of works on grounded theory set out to do just this.
**Strauss and Corbin vs. Glaser – Constructivism vs. Objectivism.** Birks and Mills (2015) wrote that “over the years much has been made of a supposed split between Strauss and Glaser following the publication of Strauss and Corbin’s (1990) text *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*” (p.3). They describe the split between the two originals as being a fundamental disagreement on how Grounded Theory should develop as a methodology. It has been said that Strauss and Corbin were more concerned with developing a standard methodology than Glaser; they did this by thoroughly outlining a definite process that researchers could follow.

By 1994, Strauss and Corbin stated that their version of grounded theory meant doing interpretive work. Rather than maintaining the stance that the data speaks to every researcher the same (that if the researcher follows the GTM process, a theory will emerge that is likely to be developed the same as if another researcher developed it), Strauss and Corbin held that the researcher and participant *construct* theory from their unique perspectives. This approach has been called constructivist grounded theory.

Charmaz and Belgrave (2012) describe the constructivist grounded theorist as “seeing both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants” (p.349). The theory that results from the research process is inherently affected by the constructs of the researcher and the participants, “thus our standpoints, starting points and end points influence our data analyses”, and lead researchers through the data analysis process (p.349).

On the other side, Objectivist grounded theorists believe that the theory will emerge from the data, if the researcher uses GTM and allows the data to speak for itself. Glaser (1978, 1992, 2002) “insisted that researchers let the data emerge…and [he] did not
acknowledge that researchers’ own standpoints, historical locations, and relative privileges shape what the can see” (cited in Bryant & Charmaz (2007), p.44). Objectivist grounded theorists, like Glaser, believe that the researcher constructing meaning impedes truly valid theory. Instead, the data is there to be uncovered in a way that allows it to speak for itself. If researchers insert their backgrounds, perspectives, and previous research into the construction of theory, objectivists see that as polluting the authenticity of the theory. As Charmaz and Belgrave write, “Here, researchers aim to approach the data uncontaminated by preconceived notions and theories. Meaning inheres in the data, and the grounded theorist discovers it” (quoted in Bryant & Charmaz (2007), p.44). Objectivists see the researcher as “neutral analysts of a knowable external world”, where the researcher receives information and then applies the method to analyze it. The data will speak for itself, and the researcher must let it (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

**Charmaz’s Constructivism.** When taking the constructivist approach to grounded theory, researchers work from the paradigm that participants construct their unique “meanings and actions” of their experience (Charmaz & Blegrave (2012)). Therefore, part of the process of data analysis is to look at how the participant construct their memories of the experience. Their constructions are rooted in the “time, place, culture and context” of the experience, but also “reflect the social, epistemological and research locations” for the researcher (p.348). Charmaz and Belgrave (2012) assert that Constructivist grounded theory is rooted in the “symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective”, which assumes that people perceive reality differently, that data is influenced by both the researcher’s and the participants’ construction of meaning, and
that the researcher is inevitably influenced by the participants’ view of reality (p.349).
The researcher must learn the participant’s “implicit meanings” in order to build a conceptual understanding of their experiences (p.349). Thus, the constructivist grounded theory method includes “studying how meaning and action are constructed” while following the GTM process of interviewing, coding, memoing, categorizing, and constructing theory (p.350).

**Essential Elements of a Grounded Theory Study**

Despite the differences between objectivism and constructivism GTM, they share three basic principles essential to the grounded theory approach: constant comparison methods, theoretical sampling, and theoretical development via theoretical saturation.

Charmaz and Belgrave (2012) write that all variants of grounded theory include: simultaneous data collection and analysis; engaging in early data analysis of emergent ideas; using comparative methods throughout the process of interviewing and coding; “analyzing basic social processes within the data”; “constructing tentative categories that explain these social processes”; “sampling to expand, refine and check these categories”; and integrating well-developed categories into a theoretical framework that links the categories together, explains the conditions that they arise from, as well as their properties and their consequences (pp.348-9).

As Birks and Mills (2015) described it, Grounded Theory as a methodology influences the analysis of data “as it focuses the researcher’s attention on different dynamics and alters them to possible analytical configurations in the process of conceptual and theoretical abstraction” (p.4).
Unlike many other research methods, GTM does not progress in a linear fashion. Instead, it is a cyclical process of data collection, data analysis, and theory formation. This entails evolving research questions and repeated sessions of data gathering – which requires repeated re-evaluation of sample requirements. The main elements of GTM are: “theoretical sampling, constant comparison of data to theoretical categories, and focus on the development of theory via theoretical saturation of categories rather than substantive verifiable findings” (Hood (2007) quoted in Bryant & Charmaz (2007), p. 163).

**Constant comparative analysis method.** Oktay (2012) described constant comparative analysis as consisting of the researcher “gathering some data, making comparisons to generate concepts, and then gathering more data to further develop the concepts and, at the same time, to verify them” (p.37). The entire time, the researcher is comparing data against emerging theoretical codes through “the process of concurrent data collection and analysis” (Bircks & Mills (2015), p.11). In the beginning, the researcher collects some data with an initial sample, and immediately starts coding the data before more data is collected. Unanswered questions and further leads will guide the researcher through the subsequent steps of choosing participant samples and data collection – which will then open up the data analysis and theory development that are unknown when the researcher begins.

The role of the researcher in this process is to collect the data in a way that participants feel open and able to describe their experiences, so that the researcher can gather authentic, valid data. The researcher then analyzes the data by combing through it – after which he/she will begin to notice that 1) common themes arise in the experiences
of all the participants, and 2) important pieces of information arise that are crucial to capturing the experience. This will guide subsequent data collection and analysis.

Charmaz (2014) wrote that Grounded Theory is a methodology that “keeps the researcher interactive and involved in their data and emerging analysis” (p.1). It does this by mapping out a process of collecting data (often through interviews), analyzing the data (by coding it into conceptual categories), and continuously repeating those two activities until the researcher develops a theory that reflects the study’s topic. GTM is a methodology that seeks to develop theory of an experience that is “grounded” in the empirical evidence as it portrayed by people who have actually lived it.

**Developing theory through coding and categories**

*What is a code?* Saldana (2013) defines a code as “most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p.3). When coding, a researcher labels these phrases or words with labels that “describe, dissect, and distill the data while preserving their essential meanings” (p. 112). Coding itself is an analytical process. As he describes it, coding is more than just labeling - it is “linking” because it “leads you from the data to the idea…” (Richard & Morse (2013) quoted in Saldana (2013), p.13). Coding is also a cyclical activity. It is an essential process of GTM that takes the researcher back and forth between data collection and analysis. In the first cycle of coding, the researcher discovers important ideas that guide the second round of interviewing. As the researcher codes in the second cycle, the researcher “further manages, filters, highlights, and focuses the important features for generating categories, themes, concepts, grasping meaning, and/or building theory” (Saldana (2013), p. 13). As

**What gets coded?** Participant interviews are recorded and transcribed, and the researcher goes through these transcriptions – coding participants’ words into terms and phrases that represent the main idea behind them. “When something in the data stands out, apply it as a code” (p.92), writes Saldana (2013), “what gets coded” are “slices of social life recorded in the data – participant activities, perceptions, and tangible documents and artifacts produced by them” (p.17).

In an attempt to illustrate how researchers decide what to code, Lofland et al (2006) list 10 “units of social organization” as important for understanding participants’ experiences. Out of the 10, I recognize some as being especially relevant for this study: daily routines (or cultural practices), unanticipated activities (or “episodes”), roles (ex. Mother), social types, social and personal relationships, settlements and habitats (ex. neighborhoods), and lifestyles. These are aspects of people’s lives that, when researchers combine them with observations of the inner workings participants’ personal making of meanings, emotions and feelings are fruitful “topics for studying and coding” (cited Saldana (2013), p.15).

**Types of codes**

*Substantive and theoretical codes.* Glaser and Strauss (1967) distinguish between two major categories of codes that develop in analysis: substantive and theoretical.

Substantive codes are codes that use the words and ideas of participants. One example of a substantive code is an *in vivo* code. In vivo codes are a participant’s actual words. For example, if a participant said, “I was terrified”, an in vivo code could be “terrified”. In
vivo codes are important when the participant uses strong or important words that are highly significant to the studied experience because “they are closely reflective of the raw data” (Oktay (2012), p.54).

Theoretical codes are codes that the researcher assigns as important to the theory. As Oktay (2012) writes, “according to the researcher’s background, he or she will see some statements of behaviors as illustrations of theoretical concepts” (p. 55). For example, if a participant said, “there were times that I just had to lock myself in the bathroom to get away from my family”, the researcher may code this as “avoidance”. Theoretical codes certainly relay a researcher’s own input, so Oktay warns against placing importance on them too early in the coding process – when the codes should “stay very close to the data and the worldview of the respondent” (p.55). However, they should never be ignored or put off until later – rather the researcher should write them down, and his/her personal reflections, in a memo immediately – as they will likely prove relevant in later stages of analysis and theory making.

**Common coding techniques in Grounded Theory.** There are 6 particular methods that are commonly used with the grounded theory methodology: Initial (or Open), In Vivo, Process, Focused, Axial, and Theoretical Coding. This section will briefly explain these coding techniques and how they are used in the stages of GTM coding and analysis.

**Initial/Open coding.** When first beginning to code the interview transcripts, initial (aka open) coding is the preferred method. Also known as line-by-line coding, the researcher goes through the transcripts word for word, line by line, looking for poignant or relevant words or phrases. As these words or phrases strike the researcher, he/she will
write codes on the right margin of the paper and keep track of thoughts and reflections in memos.

Charmaz (2006) emphasized that it is important to keep in mind that the goal of this initial coding is “to remain open to all possible theoretical directions…” (quoted in Saldana (2013), p.100) and that it is meant to be a “starting point to provide the researcher with analytical leads for further exploration and ‘to see the direction in which to take the study’” (Glaser (1978) quoted in Saldana (2013), p.100). Oktay (2012) advises researchers that perhaps the most important thing to do when doing initial coding is “to stay close to what the respondents actually say, how they think, and how they describe their feelings” (p.57). She gives four tips for open coding (p.57):

1. Code words and phrases that describe or evoke strong emotions
2. Code words and segments that describe actions (-ing words)
3. Code material that reflects symbolic interaction concepts, such as sense of self, expectations of social roles, assessment of the judgments of others, and justifications for actions
4. Look for “red flags”, such as phrases that reflect assumptions (everyone knows, always, never)

Another aspect of open coding is word-by-word analysis – which is a “technique that Strauss used in his seminars…to stimulate more abstract thinking by focusing intensely on specific words in the data” (Oktay (2012), p.72). In order to better understand how the participant conceptualizes meaning, the researcher can study words that are especially significant to the participant. Asking questions like “what other words could she have used?”, “How does being ----- differ from these other words?”, what
conditions might lead to ------?” helps the researcher to “think more deeply about his/her data and think in different ways that may not have occurred to him/her before”. This can also help further reflection as data analysis progresses (Oktay (2012), p. 74).

Table 2

*Exampe of Initial Coding*

| Participant: “I hang out with everyone. Really, I choose to. Because I’ve been living here form so long, you get to know everyone. I can look back to kindergarten and at some point I was best friends with everybody how’s been here, pretty much.” | “HANGING OUT WITH EVERYONE”
| | “CHOOSING” WHO YOU HANG OUT WITH
| | RECALLING FRIENDSHIPS
| | “BEST FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE”
| | QUALIFYING: “PRACTICALLY”

**In Vivo coding.** As discussed in the section on substantive codes, in vivo codes are words or phrases that are in the literal words of the participant. Other terms for in vivo coding are “literal coding” and “verbatim coding” (Saldana (2013), p.92). Often used in the first cycle/stage of coding, researchers may often use in vivo coding for participant’s “words or phrases that seem to call for bolding, underlining, italicizing, or highlighting” (p.92). These may be words or phrases that strike the researcher as moving, impactful, and precise descriptions of the experience or the participant’s thoughts and feelings. These are best kept in their words. As Charmaz (2006) writes, “in vivo coding can provide a crucial check on whether you have grasped what is significant to the participant, and may help to crystallize and condense meanings” (Charmaz quoted in Saldana (2013), p.92).

**Process coding.** Process codes are action words (i.e. “-ing” words, aka gerunds). They can be activities (“waking up”), emotional (“suffering”) or relay conceptual action (“surviving”) (Saldana (2013), p.96). Saldana writes that, “process coding is particularly useful for those that search for ‘ongoing action/interaction/emotion taken in response to
situations, or problems, often with the purpose of reaching a goal or handling a problem”” (Corbin & Strauss (2008) quoted in Saldana, p.96). It can be used in combination with other coding techniques (like initial, focused, or axial coding) to capture participants’ processes while undergoing the experience. There are also subprocesses (i.e. “individual tactics, strategies and routine actions”) that make up a larger act (Corbin & Strauss (2008) quoted in Saldana (2013), p.96). Process coding is especially useful in indicating how people cope and take action during the experience.

**Values coding.** Values coding codes the participant’s “values, attitudes, and beliefs representing his/her perspectives and worldview (Saldana (2013), p.110). Saldana (2013) writes, “A value is the importance we attribute to oneself, another person, thing or idea. An attitude is the way we think and feel about ourselves, another person, thing or idea. A belief is part of a system that includes our values and attitudes, plus our personal knowledge, experiences, opinions, prejudices, morals, and other interpretive perceptions of the social world” (p.110).

While values coding is not one of the top coding practices for GTM, it may be especially useful for this study. Because the study’s purpose is to better understand parenting in war-time, and parenting is so influenced by values (and attitudes and beliefs), it is a coding technique that may prove valuable for this study.

Table 3

*Example of Values Coding*

| Well I’m struggling with that right now. College is a very scary thing to think about. | A: “college is scary to think about” |
| You know, it’s hard to get into theater except through the universities. | B: “theatre is exclusive” |
| I may go to college and major in theatre and minor in choral music. | V: “fine arts” |
The three types of values codes are distinguished by using V for Values, A for Attitude, and B for beliefs.

**Axial coding.** Axial coding is also a second-stage technique, designed to develop categories and concepts that were developed by the initial coding process. Oktay (2012) defines the components of axial coding as 1) identifying the variety of conditions, actions/interactions, and consequences associated with the category; 2) relating a category to its subcategories; and 3) looking for clues in the data about how major categories might relate to each other. (p.75)

Strauss and Corbin (1998) write that the goal of axial coding is to “reassemble data that were ‘split’ or ‘fractured’ during the initial coding process” (Saldana (2013), p.218). It is, essentially, a paring down of repeated, excessive, unnecessary codes or themes, and consolidating the “best representative codes” (Boeije (2010) quoted in Saldana, p.218) – those that relay the participants’ experiences cohesively and comprehensively.

**Theoretical coding.** Theoretical coding is the final stage in the coding process, and it is intended to result in the central/core category (or categories) of the grounded theory. By this point, the “primary theme of research” should become apparent - and a core category (or more than one category) will present itself as explaining that theme. Strauss and Corbin (1998) explains the core category as that which “consists of all the products of analysis condensed into a few words that seem to explain what “this research is all about” (Quoted in Saldana (2013), p.224). The core category should “identify the major conflict, obstacle, problem, issue or concern to participants”(Stern and Porr (2011) quoted in Saldana (2013), p.224) and “have the summative power for all major and minor
categories” (Saldana (2013), p.227). Theoretical coding is a process that links the categories developed during the focused and axial coding processes to the core category – the one that has “the greatest explanatory relevance” for the experience studied (Corbin and Strauss (2008) cited in Saldana (2013), p.224). The “bones” that were developed by the initial coding come to connect to the “spine” developed by theoretical coding, which makes up “the skeleton of the theory”, as Charmaz (2006) so eloquently put it (cited in Saldana (2013), p.224). After the theoretical coding process, categories will be “integrated and synthesized” to make a comprehensive theory of the studied experience (Charmaz (2006) cited in Saldana (2013), p.224).

**Codifying and categorizing.** Through the cycles of coding, “data is divided, grouped, reorganized, and linked in order to consolidate meaning and develop explanation” (Grbich (2013) cited in Saldana, p.15). Codes become organized into categories, which then become linked to make a comprehensive theory of experience. Therefore, codifying is the first step in theory creation.

**Memo writing.** Memo writing throughout the research process is an essential element of GTM (Bryant & Charmas (2007); Birks & Mills (2015)). As Bricks and Mills (2015) write, “memos are written records of a researcher’s thinking during the process of undertaking a grounded theory study” (p.160). They are different from codes – rather they are the personal reflections of the researcher. Memos help the researcher to keep track of and interpret emerging themes in the data, which is a crucial part of theory development in the GTM process. Bryant and Charmaz (2007) promote memo writing as helping the researcher to focus on important emerging themes, which focuses attention on “developing theoretical categories and their properties” (p. 161). The memos written
throughout the GTM process should, at the point of theoretical saturation, come together to “transform into your grounded theory findings” (Bircks & Mills (2015), p.11). It is widely advised to use memos to record any thoughts, ideas, and questions that may arise during data collection and analysis. Even if they do not seem to be completed ideas at the moment, these jottings may turn out to be very useful later in the process of theoretical development.

**Theoretical sampling.** Another process that is unique to GTM is theoretical sampling. Initial sampling techniques (like convenience, snowball, and purposive) are similar to other qualitative methods, but as the study progresses, and the core concepts are identified, theoretical sampling in increasing used (Oktay (2012), p.38). Glaser and Strauss describe theoretical sampling as, “the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop theory as it emerges” (Glaser & Strauss (1967) quoted in Bryant & Charmaz (2007), p.160).

Charmaz and Belgrave (2012) wrote that theoretical sampling is used to “fill out the properties of a tentative category” (p.358). Essentially, researchers use theoretical sampling for three purposes: (a) gain rich data, (b) further develop theoretical categories, and (c) discover variations and gaps within or across their categories (p. 359). The data that results from this method of sampling should help to “explore important dimensions, properties, and relationships of your concepts” (Oktay (2012), p.38-9) – resulting in a better-developed category and “the conditions under which it is operative, how and when it is connected with other categories, and its range of variation” (Charmaz & Belgrave (2012), p. 359).
Theoretical saturation. GTM differs from other research methods in the way that data collection ends. As Bryant and Charmaz (2007) put it, instead of stopping data collection when all of the data has been retrieved from the predetermined sampled sources, “inductive non-probability sampling ends when the saturation point is reached” (p. 161). The saturation point arrives when data collection (through interviews) does not produce enough new information to enrich the categories further. Bircks and Mills (2015) help researchers recognize the saturation point. When new data analysis results in repeated information, or “analysis codes that only fit into existing categories, and these categories are sufficiently explained in terms of their properties and the dimensions”, then saturation has been reached (p.10).

Many times, the research could continue to produce more depth and diversity indefinitely, but time and resource limits prevent the project’s continuation. For this reason, many GTM experts suggest focusing on saturation of one or two core categories. In fact, Glaser and Strauss themselves required that only the core category or categories be saturated (Oktay (2012), p.39). Therefore, an adequate saturation point is often simply adequate – and, of course, the researcher must explain how they got to this point and how they justify ending the data collection at that point.

Use of Grounded Theory Methodology for this Study

The choice of any research design is determined by the aims of the particular study. Qualitative research is appropriate when the goals for the research are as follows: little is known about the topic, the study is of the lived experiences of participants (and intends to relay the perspective of those who have lived it), and studies of complex social processes (Oktay (2012), p.30). More specifically, GTM is best used in projects that
strive to better understand “a process in relation to a particular phenomena”, because it is the purpose of GTM to result in a grounded theory that provides an explanation and description of that process (Bircks & Mills (2015), Hood (2007) in Bryant & Charmaz (2007)). This paper’s purpose certainly fits that bill. This paper was intended to better understand how parenting is conducted in a war situation. Parenting is often about process, and the research was concerned with discovering how parents go about this process.

Oktay (2012) wrote that, “grounded theory has a distinct history, purpose, and set of methods. Some study topics and methods do better with GT than others” (p.32). She recommends asking yourself the following questions before you endeavor to use GTM: Is your goal to develop theory, can you implement a multistage process using the key components of grounded theory, will you have access to your population over time, do you have access to a population with a wide variety of characteristics, do you have a time table that allows you to reach theoretical saturation? This section will answer all of these questions, and show that the grounded theory methodology is the appropriate methodology for this study.

**Research questions.** In GTM, research questions evolve as the research process unfolds. The main research question guide initial interviews, and focuses data collection and analysis, but will likely evolve as research is conducted. The continual process of evolving research questions throughout the analytical process is a key aspect of GTM. This differs from other research methods, which often demand that the research questions are developed before analysis begins.
**Research design.** GTM is a very unique research process in that the focus of the research design evolves as the study progresses – and though the research design may develop and focus as it progresses, the main intention of GTM is to develop a theory of process or experience (Hood (2007) in Bryant & Charmaz (2007), p. 163).

Theory development with GTM is not a linear, step-by-step process, where a step must be completed before moving onto the next step. Rather, the GTM process calls on the researcher to cycle between data collection, analysis, and theory development repeatedly until saturation is reached (Birks & Mills (2015), p.4). Below is a diagram of the GTM process.

![Figure 1. Grounded Theory Process](image-url)
Data collection and analysis. The process of collecting data begins with open question interviews, then analyzing the data using initial coding to develop codes, and then using focused or Axial coding to develop categories. This is the first stage of theory development. The next stage begins with theoretical sampling to interview participants for information to develop the categories further – which entails a more direct approach to interviewing. The data analysis of these interviews entails coding processes that expand the categories to a point of saturation, and then to tie the categories together to make a valid, well-developed theory of the experience. How many interviews are needed to reach this final goal is unpredictable and determined by the progress made during data collection and analysis.

Sampling: 2 stages. “In grounded theory, the sampling framework cannot be determined in advance”- since the purpose of using GTM is to generate new theory derived from the natural progression of unfolding the data, and early sampling decisions may put restrictions on the researcher as the data takes them in previously unknown directions (Oktay (2012), p.38). Thus, determining sample qualities, size, and technique is unique in grounded theory research, and does not follow the standard rules of sampling.

Morse (2002) writes that, “Excellent qualitative inquiry is inherently biased”; that is, participants are “deliberately sought and selected” (p.7). Instead of using random sampling (which is considered the gold standard for representative, valid sampling in quantitative studies), sampling in grounded theory research is based on how well participants fit the purpose of the study, and on how the participants’ experiences contribute to the development of building theory (Morse (2002), p.6). As the study
proceeds, analysis will show the researcher what areas need to be developed and focused on. So, sampling begins with the purpose of finding participants who can talk about their experiences, and progresses into more focused sampling of participants who can further theory development.

**Initial sampling: purposive.** In GTM studies, initial sampling is often purposive sampling, because the *purpose* of selection is based on the participant’s appropriate experience. For example, in this study the requirements to be included in the initial sampling were that they have experienced parenting in a war zone, and that they were willing to be interviewed, repeatedly if necessary. Purposive Sampling “maximizes variation of meaning” (Morse (2002), p.8) by leaving sample parameters open.

**Second stage: theoretical sampling.** As research progresses, samples of participants should be selected based on developing categories and theory. Theoretical sampling is based on choosing participants that have qualities that further the development of categories and concepts that make up a budding theory (especially by exploring variation within those categories, or filling in gaps that exist within the categories). At this point, each participant should be chosen based on contributing to the building of theory.

**Sample size and representation.** Grounded theory is used to discover a theory about an experience, process or phenomenon. It is not to “prove” a universal truth, or to test a hypothesis. Representativeness in quantitative studies depends on large, random samples that can be generalized to a larger population (Beitin (2012)). Representativeness in qualitative research is based on people’s personal stories of their experiences, and their ability to shed light on the studied experience. When the research purpose is to explore an
experience, and not attempt to apply it universally, a large sample that represents the studied population is not necessary. Instead of relying on “sample randomness and significance factor” qualitative research that uses the in-depth interview method of data collection has power in getting a “compelling evocation of an individual’s experience” (Seidman (2013), p.51). By delving deep into an experience as it is told by a variety of people, successful findings can result from “the researcher’s ability to find connections between the different individuals (i.e. the common structural and social forces that arise as patterns in that experience); the reader’s ability to see the possibility of connecting their own stories to those presented in the study” (Seidman (2013), p.52).

Rubin and Rubin (1995), like many grounded theorists, argue against establishing a sample size before starting the research, and instead support an “emerging research design” where “new participants are added as new dimensions of the issue become apparent through earlier interviews” (Seidman (2013), p.55). However there are two criteria for establishing that enough participants have been interviewed: sufficiency and saturation of information. Sufficiency refers to ensuring that the study has enough numbers to “reflect the range of participants that make up the population…”, and saturation of information refers to “the point at which the interviewer begins to hear the same information reported” (Seidman (2013), p.55).

Beitin (2012) points out that diversity of perspective can be found in grounded theory studies as well. He advises researchers to look at the roles that people play in the experience. He writes that, “Asking who can provide a different perspective on a topic by nature of their role can be just as important as asking how many people are needed to answer the question” (p. 249).
For the purposes of this study, variety of experience has been captured in the cultural diversity of the sample. It may progress that a variety of social roles in participants presents itself as well. For example, participants of different social class, religion, or gender would be chosen in order to diversify the narratives of the experience, and enrich our understanding of the experience. This will certainly be considered as the study progresses.

For grounded theory, the key is to reach saturation. It is difficult to predetermine the number of participants in grounded theory because the process of choosing samples is “fluid and emerging throughout a research design, from research questions to data analysis” (Beitin (2012), p. 243). Ben Beitin (2012) cited several researchers who have suggested sample sizes for phenomenological studies. While they range from 2 to 25, all of the researchers focus on the need for “thematic redundancy” (Thomas & Pollio (2002)) - which ties into the need for theoretical saturation in grounded theory.

**Data collection: In-depth interviews.** The method of data collection for this study was in-depth interviews with a semi-structured questioning style. In-depth interviewing is a common data collection method in grounded theory research because it allows participants to go into detail about their experiences, and for researchers to listen and learn a greater depth of the experience. It also supports the “learn as you go” nature of grounded theory because researchers walk into initial interviews with very little presuppositions about the experience. As Seidman (2013) writes, “In-depth interviewing is designed to ask participants to reconstruct their experience and to explore their meaning – not to test a hypothesis” (p.92). The participant’s narrative is the source of data and the researcher is best served by facilitating the participant’s revealing of that
data. Interview preparation, developing an interview guide, and interview questioning and style are discussed in below.

**Interview guides.** Rubin and Rubin (1995) suggests that grounded theorists plan interviews like planning a vacation – to make plans “to meet practical expectations” but to “provide for the possibility of ‘hanging loose’ or altering the course of the interview to go where the participant wants of lead” (Johnson & Rowlands, p.103). Charmaz (2014) advises that researchers who develop preparatory interview guides are more successful than those that just “wing it” (p.62). Rather than set the researcher on a rigid path, grounded researchers can use interview guides to help them to remember important topics, and also “cue” themselves on when to be more sensitive – say, when a line of questioning could elicit deep emotions (Charmaz (2014), p.64). A list of planned questions helps both the researcher and the participant. It helps the researcher “become aware of their interests, assumptions and use of language” and it helps the participant by making the researcher “improvise is a smoother, less confrontational way, which is the typical goal of intensive interviews” (Charmaz (2014), p.64).

While it is wise to have a predetermined Interview Guide, it is important for GTM researchers to use the guide as a loose outline, and to leave room for participants to tell their stories as come naturally to them. To elaborate on this process, Charmaz and Belgrave (2012) write that:

The first question may suffice for the whole interview, if stories tumble out. Grounded theory interview questions need to be sufficiently general to cover a wide range of experiences and narrow enough to elicit and
explore the participant’s specific experience. Probes and follow-up questions concerning participants’ responses open up interviews. (p.351)

**Interview Questions.** Charmaz (2014) advises researchers that the goal of the constructivist grounded theorist is to “frame questions to study processes in individual experiences, thoughts, feelings and actions” (p.64). She writes that, “an interviewer’s questions and interviewing style outline the context, frame and content of the study” (Charmaz (2014), p.63). She warns against asking the “wrong questions” – those that “force” the data (by emphasizing or posing certain topics or asking a question in a leading way) or “fail to explore pivotal issues” or do not allow participants to use their own language to tell their stories (Charmaz (2014), p.63). To combat such failings, she advises to “let research participants set the tone and pace” and then present questions and pacing according to what they are comfortable with (Charmaz (2014), p.63).

**Open Ended Questions.** The style of interviewing that is conducive to grounded theory is one that promotes the participant’s sharing of his/her story. Open-ended questions are the foundation to this interviewing style. Unlike closed-ended or leading questions (that make assumptions, lead the interviewee to a certain answer, or command yes or no answers), open-ended questions encourage the interviewee to tell their story in their own terms. As Seidman (2006) writes, “an open-ended question….establishes the territory to be explored while allowing the participant to take any direction that he or she wants” (p.84). Questions like “what was that experience like for you?” and “can you elaborate on that?” are examples of open-ended questions. A leading question would be more specific and assuming – like “what was the worst part of this experience?”.
kind of question instantly sets a negative, painful tone, and leads the interviewee into territory that they are likely to be uncomfortable with.

**Interview Questions Through the Stages.** In the initial interviews, the goal is to “obtain an overview of the overall process” or experience. Morse (2011) writes that, “there is a need to determine the dimensions and boundaries, as well as the trajectory of the project” (p.8). The questions are broad and aimed towards getting a picture of the studied experience. After the first stage of coding and the development of concepts and tentative categories, interviews are aimed at developing those concepts and categories further.

**Analysis: Coding and categorization.** Choosing the appropriate coding method for one’s study is highly personal and dependent on the “nature and goals of your study” (Saldana (2013), p. 60). This study’s research questions were ontological and address the nature of participants’ realities. Saldana (2013) writes that “ontological questions address the nature of participants’ realities, examples of these are: “what is the nature of…, what are the lived experiences of….., and what is it like being…..” (p. 60). Therefore, this study will use the coding methods that “catalog and better reveal these ontologies”, like: In Vivo, Process, Emotion, Values, Dramaturgical, and/or Focused Coding, plus Theming the Data (Saldana (2013), p.61). When using the grounded theory method to develop new theory, In Vivo, Process, Initial/Open, Focused Axial, and Theoretical Coding are the traditional coding methods (Saldana (2013), p.62). This study will use all of these coding methods, because they are the superior methods for building theory using GTM.

**Stages of coding.** Every stage of the grounded theory data analysis process is cyclical – with each cycle containing appropriate processes. Depending on the goal of the
stage of coding, certain coding techniques are more applicable than others. As Oktay (2012) writes, “Grounded theory’s process usually involves meticulous systematic approaches by applying specific types of codes to data through a series of cumulative coding cycles that ultimately lead to the development of a theory…” (p.55). GTM coding consists of three stages: initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding. Essentially these three stages are to first translate participants’ experiences into codes, then condense those codes into categories (or “sort, synthesize, and conceptualize” the codes) (Charmaz & Belgrave (2012), p.356), and then to further organize those categories into a cohesive theory.

Initial, In vivo, and process coding are first-stage processes because they open the data up for the researcher to individual and important concepts and codes. But this leads to disperse, repetitive and unorganized data. Focused, axial and theoretical coding are second-stage processes because they focus the data into categories that surround an “axis” of comprehensive theory that explains the experience (Oktay (2012), p.52). Essentially, coding evolves into categorizing, which evolves into constructing a cohesive theory – all of which are “grounded” in the data gathered from primary sources that have undergone the experience themselves.

**First cycle coding processes**

*Precoding.* As the researcher goes through the interview transcripts, it is helpful to “circle, highlight, bold, underline, or color significant quotes or passages” that strike them (Saldana (2013), p.19). Below is an example of how a researcher may use MS Word text features to organize codes.
Table 4

*Using Text Features to Organize Codes*

| Quotations, things spoken by participants, are logged in bold font |
| Observer’s comments (such as the researcher’s subjective impressions or analytical jottings) are set in italics |

**When to start coding?** Saldana (2013) suggests that the researcher “start coding as you collect and format your data – not after all the fieldwork has been completed” (p.20). Even after the very first interview, the researcher can begin the coding process. As he/she is “writing up field notes and transcribing recorded interviews, jot down any preliminary words or phrases for codes on the notes, transcripts, or documents themselves or in memos and entries in a research journal for future reference” (Saldana (2013), p.20). He advises to never put off writing down ideas or reflections when going through the transcripts: “get your thoughts, however fleeting, documented in some way” (Saldana (2013), p.20). Memo writing serves this purpose, and it is important to start keeping memos from the beginning.

Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) suggest formatting pages of data into three columns. An example of this is below.

Table 5

*Formatting Pages of Data*36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column 1</th>
<th>Column 2</th>
<th>Column 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raw Data</td>
<td>Preliminary Codes</td>
<td>Final Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The closer I get to retirement age, the faster I want it to happen. I’m not even 55 yet and I would give anything to retire now. But there’s a mortgage to pay off and still a lot more to stock away in savings before I can even think of it.</td>
<td>“retirement age”</td>
<td>RETIREMENT ANXIETY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial obligations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Initial coding.** Initial coding fits into the theoretical development by “identifying concepts that the researcher will ultimately aim to saturate, as well as the characteristics of these concepts” (Oktay (2012), p.53). Of course, at the beginning of coding (i.e. data analysis), the direction and “focus of the study” is not clear – but this stage of coding serves to “narrow the scope of the study” by making common and important concepts and themes clear to the researcher (pp. 53-4).

As Oktay suggests, it is important to begin the coding process as soon as the initial interviews are conducted. These interviews provided the initial data, which are analyzed using open coding, in vivo coding, and process coding to create codes, concepts and categories that will frame subsequent data collection. Since GTM requires that the research begin with as little predetermination as possible (as it would skew analysis of the data and impose artificial parameters to the study’s progression), the initial interviews begin the process of defining concepts. Going into these interviews with very little idea of what concepts the participants would bring up means that their experiences determined the development of the study. The initial coding phase was focused on breaking down the data into codes and taking initial steps to develop concepts.

**From codes to categories.** The second step in open coding is to group codes into broader concepts and categories. This entails grouping codes into broader concepts that arise in the interviews. Saldana (2013) writes that, “Moving from codes to categories is a process of synthesizing codes toward ‘consolidated meaning’” (p.180). As coding progresses, some codes will obviously “go together”. These are then combined into concepts.
Categories are even broader concepts created when several concepts can be grouped together. Oktay (2012) maps out this process with an example of an interview on the subject of nursing a loved one through death by AIDS, “neuropathy” was used as a code, which could then be grouped with other symptom codes, all of which could be grouped together to form a larger concept, “experiencing loss of functioning”, which could then be grouped with other concepts into a larger category “illness characteristics” (p.59). Oktay (2012) advises researchers that,  

What is important here is that you need to go from a large number of codes to a relatively small number of categories that will make up the heart of your theory. In my work, I label everything a “concept” in the early part of a study and only develop some into categories later, when I can see that they come up consistently in the data and relate to other concepts. (p.60)  

This process of moving from codes to concepts to categories lies at the heart of the grounded theory methodology. It is the method of analysis, and it guides further data collection (through theoretical sampling), analysis and theory creation. In the first stage of coding, large amounts of codes are solidified into concepts. The coding method is initial coding, which can be combined with in vivo coding, process coding, and/or other coding techniques that are relevant to the study’s purpose. The other aspect of analysis is concept category development. The following section describes the second stage of GTM – which focuses on enriching categories and developing theory.
Second Stage Data Analysis

*Transitional coding.* Saldana (2013) writes that, “the goal [of transitional coding] is not to take you to the next level, but to cycle back to your first coding efforts so that you can strategically cycle forward to additional coding and analytical methods” (p.187). The transitional steps after initial coding are: “selecting new coding methods for a reanalysis of data, constructing categories from the classification of codes, drawing preliminary models of the primary actions at work in the data, and reorganizing and reassembling the data to better focus the direction of the study” (Saldana (2013), p.187). Below is an example of a coding technique that can bridge first stage and second stage data analysis.

*Code mapping.* Saldana (2013) describes Code Mapping as a way of “organizing and assembling the codes developed from the First Cycle of coding” (p.194). Using this process, the codes generated from the first stage would be listed. Then, during the “second iteration of code mapping” (Saldana (2013), p.194), these initial codes are categorized based on the themes that emerge. The “third iteration of code mapping” then “categorizes the categories” even further – with new category names and the inclusion of subcategories. This should result in a few major categories created from the initial codes. Finally, the “fourth iteration of code mapping” involves transforming the categories into concepts. Thus, Code Mapping entails “how a list of codes gets categorized, re-categorized, and conceptualized”. It is “a straightforward technique that gives you a condensed textual view of the study, and potentially transforms the initial codes into organized categories and then into higher-level concepts” (Saldana (2013), p.198).
Second cycle coding methods. The second stage of GTM coding and category development is focused on “theoretical integration” (Birks & Mills (2015), p.12). A “grounded theory” is one that “explains a process or scheme apparent in relation to particular phenomena” (Birks & Mills (2015), p.12). In order to develop such a theory, concepts and categories must be dynamic enough to give a comprehensive picture of what the studied experience is like. Focused, axial, and theoretical coding processes will bring the data that was “scattered” in initial coding into more organized and dynamic categories.

The goals of second stage methods. The first stage of the GTM process is about laying out all the data, and taking an inventory of what you have, and giving it a code – which then are grouped into concepts and categories. The second stage of the process is about assembling the categories into a structured, comprehensive theory.37

The goal of second stage analysis is to reorganize and reanalyze data coded in the first stage “to develop a smaller and more select list of broader categories, themes, concepts, and assertions” (Saldana (2013), p. 207). These coding methods are advanced, and require “linking seemingly unrelated facts logically, and fitting categories one with another” in order to develop a clear, logical theory of the studied experience (Morse (1994) quoted in Saldana (2013), p.207).

For grounded theorists, beginning this second stage with focused coding, then progressing to axial, and then to theoretical coding is a natural path. Focused coding focuses the large amount of codes from the initial coding process into more condensed, comprehensive concepts, and then into categories. Axial coding is used to develop the categories (i.e. the conditions, properties, and dimensions of the concepts in each
category) individually, and to develop an overall picture of how the categories relate to each other.

Finally, during the theoretical coding process, the researcher takes all of the major codes and categories from the previous coding processes and “determines the central process, theme, or problem” (Saldana (2013), p.225). This should result in the identification of a core category – that, combined with the other supporting categories, essentially explains the studied experience. Saldana (2013) advises that researchers must explicitly state that “the core category of this study is….”, and “the theory proposed is….”; if this cannot be done, then a grounded theory has not been developed (p.226).

**Theoretical saturation and final development of theory.** Usually, GTM will eventually result in certain categories/concepts becoming the bedrock of the developing theory; these categories are called “core categories”. Glaser and Strauss (1967) define a core category as “A category that appears frequently in the data, is abstract and is related to your other categories, is applicable to other areas, and grows in complexity and explanatory power as you relate it to other categories” (Glaser & Strauss (1967) in Oktay (2012), p.81). These core categories help to explain the developing theory in its depth.

Beyond developing a core category to saturation, the final stage of GTM is to “review the theory for completeness, internal consistency and logic” (Glaser & Strauss (1967) in Oktay (2012), p.81). At this point, data gathering is very focused on theory testing (“to see if the theory holds up and to explore its limits”) (Oktay (2012), p.81). When these categories are well developed, and further interviews do not produce more depth to them, the saturation point has been sufficiently reached. Then the final stage of theoretical development can be pursued – and this largely consists of tying the categories
to the core category and writing the theory in terms of main and supporting ideas. The timeline below covers the steps this research study followed.

Figure 2. Timeline

Chapter Summary and Conclusion

At its core, this study aimed to help parents who have to take care of themselves and their families under the most dire circumstances. Methodologically, using the Grounded Theory method of data collection, analysis, and theory development allows war-exposed parents to tell their stories – in their own words, ways, and under their own control. This paper, with its rigorous, systematic research, focused on developing theory rooted in the actual experiences of refugees as well as its well-researched and developed ethical standards, aimed to produce research that is accurate and applicable. This research will benefit the participants, other parents undergoing the same experience, and, hopefully, all parents struggling with raising themselves and their children under difficult experiences.
Chapter 4 – Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study. The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge about how parents managed parenting effectively under the extreme conditions of war: specifically, how those parents defined their parenting roles, ideals, priorities, how they conceptualized effective parenting, how/if they were able to parent effectively in a war environment, and how the overall war experience affected them as parents. Since war has effects on people long after they are directly in the experience, this study’s purpose is also to better understand the long-term effects of the war experience on parents.

Research questions. This research study began with three questions designed to open an exploration that would generate theory grounded in the first-person experiences of parents that have experienced war:

1. How do participants perceive their roles as parents? How do they fulfill these roles?
2. What were the particular challenges of the war experience for them as parents? And as individuals? Were parents able to overcome these challenges? Were they able to fulfill their roles as parents during the war?
3. How did the war experience affect parents in the long term?
4. Taking all of the data resulting from questions 1, 2, and 3, what key concepts arise from that data, and how do those key concepts relate to one another in a grounded theory?

The above questions were based on the assumption that parents understand their roles as parents, and that they strive to fulfill these roles. As the research process
progressed, guiding research questions became based more on how individual participants coped with the challenges that war imposed on them as individuals, parents and their children; how their parenting changed depending on the environmental factors of war and displacement; and of the overall war experience’s impact on their parenting. Throughout the data collection and analysis, the question “how did the war experience affect the experience of parenting?” remained the most prevalent research question. It applied to those participants that experienced war before parenting, and those that experienced war while parenting.

**Methods of verification and validity.** In order for a study’s findings to make a contribution to solutions to the problem the study is concerned with, there must be a way to validate that the research actually applies to real world experiences of these problems. As Morse et al (2002) write, “Without rigor, research is worthless…and loses its utility” (p.14). In essence, a study’s reliability and validity rely on a study’s “trustworthiness”(Guba & Lincoln cited in Morse, p.14). Reliability and validity ensure that a study has “applicability, consistency, and neutrality” (Guba & Lincoln cited in Morse, p.18). Reliability and validity are established in a study by rigorously following the methodology, and ensuring that the research is credible, transferrable, dependable and confirmable (Guba & Lincoln (1985) cited in Morse et al (2002), p.19). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest using strategies like “prolonged engagement, persistent observation, audit trails, and member checks” to ensure that the qualitative research is reliable and valid (cited in Morse et al (2002), p.19). Researcher “characteristics” are also important: in that a researcher must be “responsive and adaptable to changing circumstances, holistic…sensitivity, and ability for clarification and summarization” (Guba & Lincoln
(1981) cited in Morse et al (2002), p.19). Acknowledging research bias, being rigorous about referring to the participants’ exact words and meanings, properly following the research methodology, being open to changing earlier researcher conclusions based on developing analysis, and leaving an audit trail are all methods that have been used in this study to ensure validity and reliability.

Methods of establishing validity, reliability and verification for studies using the Grounded Theory Method are: methodological coherence, appropriateness of sample, interview reliability, concurrent collection and analysis of data, maintaining internal consistency, and leaving an audit trail (Morse et al (2002)). Throughout this chapter, these methods of ensuring validity, reliability and verification, are explained in detail.

- **Methodological coherence** (i.e. the researcher’s commitment to following the study’s methodological components) is exhibited in each section’s explanation of the data collection and analysis processes. The methods of collection and analysis used in this study are explained through the lens of established GTM methods, and the unfolding process of research is clearly consistent with the GTM processes of data collection, analysis, and development of theory “grounded” in the first-person experiences of participants.

- ** Appropriateness of sample** (i.e. selection of participants who have undergone the studied experience, especially in relation to the properties that become more relevant as theory development proceeds) is discussed in some detail in the section “Progression of Sampling Process and Participants”.

- Part of establishing reliability is making sure that the data is accurate. Since this study relies primarily on participants’ stories of their experiences, and not on facts
or figures, reliability of data entails that the data was accurately collected, transcribed, recorded, and used in the research. It also requires that the researcher accurately understands the participants’ descriptions of their experiences during the interviews— including their words, meanings, emotions, body language and sub-texts (i.e. implied meanings).

- **Concurrent collection and analysis of data** (i.e. Constant Comparative Analysis) is an important component of GTM because theory development relies on research that is grounded in the data produced by participants and their experiences. This entails continuously referring to and analyzing participants’ transcripts and the codes that are derived from them, throughout the progression of theory development.

- **Maintaining internal consistency** is also built into GTM. By using the Constant Comparative Analysis method, the researcher has to go back to the data again and again to progressively build theory – even to the point that the theory is directly derived from participants’ experiences. The GTM method of progressively building theory from interview transcripts through coding techniques ensures that each stage of analysis reviews and builds on participants’ experiences, both individually and collectively. This ensures consistency throughout the research process.

- **Leaving an audit trail** is essential for verification, especially when using GTM. Consistency is important in building theory from raw data, and leaving an audit trail ensures that the researcher has remained connected to the participants’ experiences throughout the research process. Transcript excerpts, code tables,
memos, and diagrams have all been included in this paper to visually and narratively incorporate the raw data from participant interviews. These visuals enable readers to clearly follow the researcher’s analysis of (and references to) the data as she builds concepts and theory from original interviews.

This study has used various methods to ensure that the research is verifiable, reliable and valid. The findings are verified in that the experiences come directly from people who have lived through the experiences of war and parenting. They are reliable in their accuracy to the participants’ experiences, and valid in their applicability to a larger population beyond the particular participants. By rigorously following the Grounded Theory Method (and its requirements for sampling, data collection, data analysis, and theory development), a theory has been developed that contributes to the larger study of the effects of war on families.

**Research role and bias.** My role as a researcher required me to be aware of personal bias a throughout the interview and analysis process. My personal parenting values had to be put aside so that I could be open to whatever beliefs, actions, and experiences the participants relayed to me. I also had to embody and present acceptance and compassion to the participants as I interviewed – so that they felt comfortable sharing their stories with me without feeling judged or guided into giving certain answers.

All of the participants involved in this study were refugees who had been exposed to war environments. I have never been exposed to war environment, and I have never been a refugee because of one. Because I have never shared this experience with the participants, I was inherently limited in fully understanding what they have been through. Although I have been studying war for 15 years and have a research background in a
plethora of topics related to war, I was an outsider to this experience in many ways. Each of these participants generously opened themselves up about the most horrific experience of their lives and I learned much more about the human side of war that academia often overlooks. Surveys and statistics do not capture the depth that a person’s story does – but as an academic observer, I was limited in my ability to capture the true depth of what these people experienced.

That said, my personal life experiences and being a parent gave me great compassion for the traumatic experiences that the participants went through. In a way, being removed from the experience allowed me to ask the “tough questions” that needed to be asked. Deeply rooted in compassion and a duty to avoid re-traumatizing my participants, my line of questioning allowed for each participant to tell their own story in a way that they felt acceptable. This way of interviewing (asking open-ended questions and allowing for participant-led conversations) facilitated data gathering that attempted to overcome the bias of this researcher’s limited experience.

**Ethical Considerations**

**Confidentiality.** Confidentiality is an issue when working with human subjects because the information that they share with the researcher is considered private, and “is not intended to be public knowledge” (“Loss of Confidentiality”, IRB submission form). Assessing the risk of loss of confidentiality entails accounting for the following three elements: 1) the likelihood that the risk will occur, 2) the magnitude of risk if there is a breach of confidentiality, and 3) what procedures will be undertaken to prevent this risk (“Loss of Confidentiality”, IRB submission form).
**Procedures to mitigate or prevent risk of breach of confidentiality.** This study uses audio recordings during the interviews, and this could possibly be linked to particular participants. To protect the participants’ confidentiality, all personal information that can be used to identify them will be kept in a secure, locked location only known to the researcher (it will be locked with a combination lock that only the research knows the combination to). Their names and personal information (address, phone number, email address) will be kept in a database saved on a USB portable drive that will be stored in the secured location. The audiotapes and interview notes will also be kept there. Their names will be replaced by a pseudonym in the transcripts and research paper. They can also request that other information not be included in the research paper, if they feel that it is too revealing. They may also have a copy of the audio recordings and a copy of the completed research paper, if they wish. All data will be kept in the secure location for a minimum of 36 months from the conclusion of the study.

**How severe is the harm to potential participants if confidentiality is breached?**

The risk of a breach of confidentiality for the participants is minimal in this case. Identifiers (i.e. personal information) will not be included in the study, and interviews will not focus on risky behaviors (like criminal activity). However, there is a minimal risk that past actions may arise in the interviews that could harm the participant’s reputation if the information was made public. Therefore, I will take several measures to avoid the risk of identifying participants. This includes securing documents, using pseudonyms in the transcripts and report, and giving participants the right to ask that information not be included in the report.
Protecting subjects: Assessing physical and psychological risk and benefit.

Researchers are ethically responsible for minimizing risk for physical, psychological, financial, and social risks, pain and discomfort for participants. One guiding ethical principal is that the benefits of participating in the study outweigh the risks. The IRB process demands that researchers address the risks and the benefits before a study with human subjects can be pursued. Below is a description of how this study intends to minimize risk; then the possible benefits of participating in this study are described.

Risks to participants in this study. The main risk of discomfort for participants in this study is psychological. Previous studies on trauma-related research has shown that interviewing trauma-exposed participants often entails them becoming distressed by talking about painful memories and experiences. It is common for participants to cry or have to stop talking about the memory. Sometimes, participants took the pain home with them after the interview as well.

I will do my best to mitigate the psychological risks of distress. By changing the subject, giving participants the choice to take a break or stop the interview, the researcher can limit the severity and duration of psychological distress. I will also give participants contact information for a therapist who has experience in trauma recovery for those who need more assistance.

Benefits to participants in this study. Several studies on trauma-related research with refugees point to the positive therapeutic benefits of participating in in-depth interviews. Being able to talk freely to an impartial party can be limited for refugees, and being able to do that in in-depth interviews has shown to be beneficial for the mental health of most participants in studies that use in-depth interviewing (Birman (2005);
Cook & Bosely (1995); Dyregrov, Kari et al (2000); Kabranian-Melkonian, Seta (2015)).

Furthermore, the benefit of participating in this study is that the research may benefit others - especially for persons who undergo the same experience of parenting in war, and for refugee parents who have experienced war. There is the potential that participating in this project will give participants the feeling of contributing to the greater good - which may also balance the risk of going through psychological discomfort in order to have their stories shared with others who are suffering through similar experiences. Kari Dyregrov (2000) summarizes the refugees’ positive feelings towards participating in a study that she conducted with Bosnian refugees in these terms:

An important part of the positive effect was no doubt from being able to organizing their story into a coherent one and by giving meaning to their experiences from being able to help future generations of refugees. To what extent this effect might be a “therapeutic” effect is impossible to state, because the term refers to stable changes in attitudes, emotions, and behavior. (p.422)

Other studies that worked with people who were grieving found that “being able to tell the story of pain and distress to a researcher might have a healing effect for a grieving person” – and Dyregrov found that this was very similar for refugees talking about their war experiences (p.422). Thus, despite the sensitive nature of working with people who have experienced trauma, there are definite benefits for participants in being able to relieve themselves of their stories.

This study’s positive benefit-to-risk ratio. This study has a positive-to-risk ratio. The risk is minimal because "the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort
anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests" (The Common Rule (1991)). The study is not focused on reliving specific traumas - rather it is focused on how participants lived their daily lives in stressful situations. Without participating in this study, refugees likely still relive memories as a part of their daily lives. I will respect the wishes of participants to avoid topics or memories that they would prefer to avoid in order to minimize risk. The section below describes some of the special considerations of working with refugees exposed to war trauma, as well as the research that supports predicting a positive benefit-to-risk ratio.

Special considerations when working with refugees exposed to war trauma.
Research on vulnerable populations requires special ethical consideration. In order to avoid causing participants who have been exposed to trauma further psychological damage, researchers should incorporate an especially compassionate and empowering mindset at every stage of the study. When developing the research purpose and methodology, formulating the questions and interview style, analyzing data, writing the results, and later dissemination of the research, the participant must be represented in a truthful, respected light. The standard processes of gaining consent and protecting confidentiality are especially important when working with vulnerable populations. When working with refugees exposed to war trauma, these processes need to make the participants feel safe, protected and empowered. While this study is not focused on the experience of trauma of war (rather it is focused on performing the role of parent in such an environment), by going through the experience of war, they are at higher risk for being
exposed to traumatic events. Therefore, it is necessary that the researcher is informed of and prepared for interviewing trauma-exposed participants.

Sieber (2009) asserted that at the forefront of preparing for interviewing refugees is getting acquainted with “important background information” – which can be done by researching and talking to people from similar cultural backgrounds as the participants (some use the term “cultural gatekeepers” for these people) (Kabranian-Melkonian (2015); Sieber (2009); Sommers-Flanagan (2007)). Becoming aware of the culture of the participants works to “reduce the chances of unacceptable behavior or ethical misconduct” that could arise in in-depth interviews (Sommers-Flanagan (2007) quoted in Kabranian-Melkonian (2015)). Beyond researching and gathering background information on the culture and conflict that participants have come from, building a relationship of trust through the consent process also helps to “mitigate the effects” of mistrusting the motives of the researcher, how the research will be used, or having unrealistic expectations of the risks/benefits of the research (i.e. that the research can influence the resettlement process) (Mackenzie, McDowell, and Pittaway (2007) in Kabranian-Melkonian (2015)). It is also important to include potential participants in the consent process – before, during and after interviewing.

During the interviews, it is advised that interviewers help refugees feel safe by reducing their stress levels, behaving sensitively but not over empathetically (ex. by looking horrified or getting very upset), never cutting them off or interrupting them, and asking questions that do not assert judgment and criticism (Dr. Iris Graef-Calliess and Gavin Rees cited in Ryall (2015)). For the researcher interviewing people exposed to trauma, it is especially important to be attuned to the body language and emotional state
of their interviewee. Stopping for a break, or even ending the interview for the time being, are necessary options that the researcher needs to offer an upset participant (Dyregrov et al (2000)).

In closing, using refugees as participants can be similar to using other victims of trauma. Researchers need to be sensitive to cultural nuances, aware of the environment the refugee has come from, conduct interviews with sensitivity, watch out for judgment or over-empathy, and overall be very inclusive of participants in the ongoing consent process. If the interviewer practices these skills, then in-depth interviews can help refugees feel like they are heard and contributing to empowering themselves and others like them.

**Participants.** Individuals were used as the unit of analysis due because the basis of the research plan was to focus on the personal experiences of people who have experienced war and parenting. The data collection method of in-depth interviewing calls for a more intimate connection between the subject and the researcher, and this would not have been possible with larger units of analysis. The primary goal of the Grounded Theory Method is to generate theory “grounded” in first-person accounts of the studied experience. This was the guiding principle of every step of the research process, including the sampling process. The GTM sampling process begins with broad parameters – by choosing participants based on the most basic inclusion/exclusion requirements. The inclusion criteria for proposed participants in this study were that participants: 1) be parents of at least 1 child, 2) must have experienced war, 3) be willing to be interviewed about their experiences of war and parenting, and 4) speak English fluently or a language for which a translator can be provided. The exclusion criteria were
that participants: 1) are not willing to revisit their experiences of war or talk openly about their experiences of parenting, and 2) speak a language for which a translator is not available.

Table 6

*Summary of Characteristics of Human Participants*[^38]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th># of Children</th>
<th>Country of War</th>
<th>Age of War Exposure</th>
<th>Years of Displacement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ines</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahman</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abilene</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaliyah</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>30-31</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halina</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>16-36</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relevant Characteristics of Participants to this Study:

- **War Countries**
  - 4 parents from Middle East
  - 3 parents from Congo and DRC

- **Ages** – from 29-44

- **Parental Roles** – 1 father and 6 mothers

- **Civilian Victims of War** – All participants experienced war as civilians because they are not active participants in the fighting.

- **Occupations** – Pre-war occupations varied. One parent worked at home as a cook to make money for the family during the war. One parent had a full-time job during the war to support her family, and was highly educated and skilled in the Financial Sector. One parent was on a career path in the Education Sector. Both of these career-oriented participants were forced to derail career plans because of the
war and fleeing as refugees. Three participants were stay-at-home mothers before the war, and have remained so. One participant was a professional driver, but had to quit when war broke out. Now relocated in the US, most participants have had to take jobs that the Relocation Services have arranged for them, or stay home to take care of the children. For those with career plans, this serves as an added psychological burden of the war experience.

- **Size of Family** – all participants lived with all of their children. All participants, except 1, lived with their spouses. One participant lived with her extended family of her mother, aunt, and cousin. The participants ranged from having 3 children to 6 children.

- **Parent/War Exposure Age Groups** – 3 participants were exposed to war when they were teenagers (ranging from 12 to 16) – before they had children. 2 of these participants became parents as refugees, and the other participant lived in a war environment before and while becoming a parent. 4 participants were exposed to war while they already had children.

**Progression of sampling process and participants.** The progression of sampling occurred starting with participants who experienced war earlier in life (before the became parents) to participants who experienced war while they had children. The first two participants (Alice and Ines) were similar in their exposure to war earlier in their lives, before they had children. They were both in their teen/pre-teen years when the war hit, they both were exposed to high levels of traumatic violence, they both lived as refugees in neighboring countries for 20 years, they both started having children in their teens (within 5 years of their war experiences), they both had many children (6-7 children) with
the same man they started families with, they both suffered from frequent painful memories and flashbacks up to the present day, they both had similar approaches to handling these painful episodes, they both lived in difficult and limiting environments as refugees, and they came to the US in order to give their children better opportunities and better quality childhoods.

Since the first two participants experienced war before they had children, my next sampling choice was to interview a participant who had experienced war as a parent. Bhaman and Abilene were a married couple who I interviewed together. They had two very young children when the war broke out in their country. They had experienced high levels of war violence because their city was one of the centers of conflict in the Syrian civil war. They both suffered from the trauma of the war, but had the support of Bhaman’s parents – who parented both them and their children during the war. They lived as refugees in Jordanian refugee camps for 4 years before coming to the US.

I then interviewed another Syrian refugee - Aaliyah. She had her first child within months of the breakout of civil war. While not exposed to high levels of violence from the war, she and her husband suffered from poverty, harassment by government armed forces, and generalized fear of the country’s escalating conflict. She spent a year in Syria before fleeing to Jordan – where she lived for 4 years in a private home. Both in her experiences of war and as a refugee, poverty was the major contributor to her trauma.

After Bhaman, Abilene, and Aaliyah, I looked for a participant who had experienced high levels of war violence, had older children (who could understand what was happening around them), and had a difficult refugee experience in order to better understand how parents coped with an overall stressful and intense experience of war-
related impediments. Halina and her family certainly met these requirements. Halina had 3 children during the war in Iraq, and faced the daily challenges of having school-aged children in a highly volatile war environment. When she and her husband finally decided to flee Iraq, they were detained on their way to Australia in a refugee camp for 3 years. She used the term “prison” to describe the camp because her family was kept in one room for almost 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, without being able to go outside except for a few hours each week. Her children were traumatized by this experience.

As the data analysis process produced concepts, and even categories, of the experience of war and parenting, I sought out one more participant to enrich the budding theory. I was looking for someone who had long-term exposure to war and parenting. Louise combined many of the aspects that the previous participants had: experience of war before she had children, exposure to high levels of war violence, raising children in a war environment, and living as a refugee in a neighboring country. Louise’s experience of war began when she was 17 years old, and did not end until she left 20 years later. She completed school, went on to get a Master’s degree in Finance, and had a successful career before she had her first child at 26. She did not leave the DRC until after all of her children were born, and her oldest was 9. She fled with her children to Kenya to give her children a better life. While it was safer there and her children could get an education and play outside (something they had never been able to do in the DRC), she was unable to find adequate work to support her children—despite her high level of education and work experience. Louise had the most exposure to parenting in a war environment, and her participation greatly added to the range of experiences included in this study.
Data Collection Method

Generation of data. Data was generated by in-depth interviews, facilitated by translators who were fluent in English and the participant’s native tongue. In-depth interviewing is a common method of data collection in Grounded Theory research studies. This study utilized in-depth interviewing because it facilitated one-on-one communication with participants, and allowed them to relay their experiences in great detail. The interviews were structured in a way that guided participants to share their life experiences, with a focus on their childhoods (and the development of their parenting philosophies, priorities, and approaches, as well as what they wanted their own children’s childhoods to be), their plans, hopes, and dreams for their futures as individuals, their experiences of war, parenting, and being refugees of war, and how they perceived the war experience as impacting their parenting experiences.

Recruitment. According to Robert Amdur (2006), recruitment of subjects begins the consent process, and is subjected to ethical consideration by the IRB. The recruitment process was the first step in selecting participants for this study. In order to recruit participants, I initially contacted the two refugee relocation organizations in Orlando, FL: Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Services and Lutheran Refugee Services. Despite several attempts at contact with Catholic Charities, they did not participate in recruitment of refugees for this study. The Lutheran Services, however, were helpful in the recruitment process. They put me in contact with a Congolese reverend that helps African war refugees resettle in the Orlando area. Through him, I was able to arrange 3 participants who experienced the civil wars in Congo and DRC. I had to hire a translator who spoke the languages of these participants. A caseworker at Lutheran Services then
helped me find more participants. She helped me meet with 3 of her families, and with the aid of a translator from the American Arab Association, I had initial consultations with them. I then hired a private translator to conduct the interviews with these participants.

Before I conducted interviews, an initial meeting was set up where the potential participants were informed of the study, their role in the study, and the possible risks/benefits of their participation. Initially, the sampling process was simply based on availability and the inclusion criteria. As the data analysis progressed, sampling became more based on Theoretical Sampling – where participants were selected based on having properties that developed the theory further. Selection of these participants based on these requirements was established during the initial meetings in later stages of data collection and analysis.

**Addressing the role of gatekeepers.** Gaining access to potential participants for this study required going through third parties to locate people meeting the participation criteria – mainly refugees who fled warzones. Since war refugees can be hard to locate (as they are considered to be a “special or rare population”), agencies that worked with refugees were relied upon to gain access to potential participants (Bloch (1999), p.371). Using organizations to facilitate initial contact that were familiar to the refugees was especially important as well because it increased the likelihood that they could look to me as legitimate and someone they could trust. As described above, my first point of contact was with official organizations that resettle refugees in the Orlando area. Through them, I was able to meet directly with some of the participants, as well as meet with a local Congolese reverend that put me in contact with the other participants.
The Lutheran Resettlement Services and Congolese reverend would be considered “gatekeepers”, because I had to go through them to get access to potential participants. Seidman (2013) broadly define gatekeepers as “someone who controls access to potential participants” (p.47). Gatekeepers can be very influential in granting or withholding access to potential participants, as well as influencing the type of participants that a researcher has access to (Wanat (2008)). For this research project, this type of blocking behavior was exemplified in the refusal of Catholic Charities to grant access to their population of refugees.

Broadhead and Rist (1976) warn that gatekeepers can influence a research project in several ways: “by limiting conditions of entry, by defining the problem area of study, by limiting access to data and respondents, [and] by restricting the scope of analysis…” (p.325). Their article was more concerned with research sponsored by government agencies and commissions, where research can be swayed by the sponsor’s desire to produce results favorable to their policies, but their warning does stand in any situation where gatekeepers are involved. It is important for researchers using gatekeepers to recognize and mediate the influence that they have on the research project.

In order to mitigate the influence of gatekeepers on a research project, Seidman (2013) advises researchers to establish personal contact with participants from the earliest possible point. This begins with contacting potential participants directly early in the process - instead of relying on third parties to make contact, explain the study, and recruit people. Seidman (2013) writes that, “building the interviewing relationship begins the moment the potential participant hears of the study…. [and] third parties may be necessary for gaining access to potential participants but should be used as little as
possible…” (p.50). In keeping with Seidman’s advice, I made contact early in the process with potential participants in person, during which explained the study myself with them in an initial contact visit, and set up all future contact to be directly between myself and them. From the initial contact visit on, I became the principle person in communication with participants. The gatekeepers’ involvement in the research process ended as soon as participants became involved in the study.

It is important to note, however, that the gatekeepers had two limiting influences on this research study: access to a limited number of participants, and limitation in variety of sample to two particular groups of participants. Access was limited because only one Lutheran Services caseworker had the time or inclination to connect me to her population of refugees. The sample size and variety was also limited because the Congolese reverend was only able to give me access to refugees from the group he was affiliated with (which was predominantly Christian). These two limitations resulted in two relatively homogenous sample groups: both in terms of culture (Middle Eastern and Congolese) and religion (Muslim and Christian). Thus, while gatekeepers were very helpful in granting access to potential participants, they had a substantial influence on this study’s limitations in reference to sample size and variety.

**The ongoing process of gaining consent.** Selecting participants is based on whether the participant is willing, and whether the “subject of the study is central to participants’ experiences” (Seidman (2013), p.48). After I established a pool of refugee parents willing to participate, I selected the five that “fit” best into the study. Their first-hand exposure to the experience, diversity of experiences, ability and willingness to talk about their experiences of parenting in war were the primary factors in this decision. I
then created a database for these participants, including notes that I took during our contact visit.

At the initial interview, before the interview began, I went over the consent form with the translator and participant again and we signed it. I provided a consent form for them (in their fluent language), for them to take home with them. As the interview progresses, I checked in with them to make sure that they were comfortable with how was going. For example, if I saw that they were becoming distressed, I asked them if they wanted to take a break. Throughout the process, I asked them if they had any questions for me and gave them access to the study's progress and updated them about their own part in it.

**Special considerations of recruiting refugees.** Since refugees are considered a vulnerable population, special consideration needs to be taken when recruiting them. Most of the literature on this topic concerns recruiting refugees in camps and not after they’ve been resettled in countries with institutionalized protections for them. That said, refugees from war-torn areas have more often than not been exposed to traumatic experiences. Researchers working with refugees must be attuned to the emotional state and boundaries of possible participants. Building trust is essential for researchers to facilitate refugees’ sharing of their stories. During the contact visit, it is important to be respectful, humble, and compassionate. The process of building trust begins with the consent process, when they are made aware of their rights to privacy, termination of participation, and gaining access to the finished research paper (Kabranian-Melkonian (2015)).
The interviews. There were two major stages of interviews – the initial interviews and the later interviews that explored important concepts developed from the progressive stages of analysis. All of the interviews were conducted face-to-face. The length of the interviews was on average 90-120 minutes. The first 2 interviews were conducted and analyzed using the First-Stage coding processes. Based on data analysis during the First Stage, subsequent sampling and interviews were conducted in order to progress the development of important concepts. The initial interviews were guided by the main research questions developed early in the study. When using GTM, researchers are supposed to be as open to the participants’ experiences as possible. Therefore, initial interview questions were very open-ended (i.e. not leading or instructive) and focused on eliciting information about the topic from participants. The initial interview guide was based on gathering information about the participants’ overall lives (from childhood to the present) with a focus on parenting and war experiences.

As data analysis progressed, theoretical sampling was enacted to further explore concepts that were developing. Each of the following 5 interviews was recorded, transcribed and coded using First Stage and Second Stage coding processes. These later interviews focused on the 4 major concepts derived from Initial Coding: development of parenting principles, parenting experiences, war experiences, displacement experiences, and how the war experiences impacted their parenting experiences. The final interview was conducted with a focus on developing the Core Category: how the war experience impairs parenting, and how parents cope with those impairments.

In the interviews, I first established a sense of how parents developed the framework of their approach to parenting, based on the influences of their own
upbringings (i.e. the way that they were themselves parented). Another reason for questioning their background was to understand where they were in their lives when they became parents. For example, were they professionals, students, and did they have personal dreams and goals that coincided or conflicted with becoming a parent? Did they build their family with a loving partnership, did they have family support, did they feel happy to become a parent, etc.? I also asked them about their experiences of being parents, and what they thought being an effective parent consisted of.

Then I turned to their experiences of war. If they had children during the time of war, I asked them what it was like being a parent during the war. Were they able to be effective? Did their perceptions, values, and priorities as parents change during the war? If they did not have children during the war, I questioned them about their experiences during the war, and their experiences as refugees. Finally, I asked them about how the experiences of war and being a refugee affected their parenting.

Although my initial intention was to only interview parents who had children during a war, I found that interviewing parents who experienced war earlier in their lives (pre children) were still experiencing the effects of it long after they left the war environment: whether they were living in chaotic, violent environments left destabilized by the effects of war (i.e. if there was ongoing violence, ethnic targeting, discrimination, sexual violence, poverty, etc.), were living long-term in refugee camps (where living conditions were considered difficult by most participants), or still struggling to provide for their families as war refugees resettled in the US.

Since all of my participants were refugees, the elements of emigrating and displacement were also addressed. I asked people about their parenting while they were
emigrating, and how they coped with the remnants of experiencing a war to this day. I found that all participants were still dealing with effects from the war and refugee experience – both in themselves and in their children.

A note on the use of translators. The researcher primarily conducted the interviews, but a translator was often necessary because most of the participants were more comfortable communicating in their native languages. Two translators were used for the translation of the Consent Form and to conduct the interviews. The spoken language of participants included Arabic, French, and Swahili. One translator was used for the three interviews with Arabic speakers, and one translator was used for the two interviews in French and one interview in Swahili. The Arabic translator was from Iraq and the French/Swahili translator was from Democratic Republic of Congo. These translators were crucial to the consent and interviewing process – not only did they serve as facilitators of communication, but also as “cultural insiders”. Sommers-Flanagan (2007) suggest that, when working with participants from different cultures, “cultural insiders” can “add necessary skill and knowledge to work with an unfamiliar culture” (p.195). The translators came from the same countries or areas as the participants (and often shared similar experiences to them) and had a strong sense of American cultural and linguistic references – making them culturally fluent. This made them adept at translating local terms and vocabulary into American English. This cultural fluency would not have been as likely if a translator from a different country, area or culture as the participants was used.

Of course, ensuring the integrity of the translations was of the utmost importance – since the data was sourced from these interviews and the accuracy of the participants’
words and meanings were paramount to the study’s validity. Establishing the translators’ skill level was a first step in ensuring their integrity. Interpreters/Translators should be “guided by a code of ethics and respects the confidentiality of the person, is impartial, accountable and strives for accuracy” (Queensland Health (2007), p.6). Both translators signed a “Translator Confidentiality Agreement” to ensure that they met these requirements and were aware of their responsibilities. Their credibility was established by their recommendations, qualifications, and experience. Both translators came highly recommended by the Lutheran Refugee Services, and were used by this organization in their work with refugees. They were native speakers of the participants’ language, and completely fluent in English. The Arabic translator was Iraqi, and had translated for the U.S. military in Iraq before coming to the U.S. The French and Swahili translator was from the Democratic Republic of Congo, and spoke four of that country’s languages fluently. She was one of the participants in the study as well, and was able to fully participate in the in-depth interview in English (thus demonstrating her proficiency in English communication). It is also important to note that most of the participants had some grasp of the English language, and were able to agree or disagree with the translator’s English explanation to me. Though it rarely occurred, some participants would tell the translator to more accurately relay his/her explanation if they felt their meanings were not interpreted fully in English. Thus, even the participants served to establish the accuracy of the translators. The resulting data (i.e. transcriptions of the interviews) proved that the translators “demonstrated the necessary skills and knowledge to operate” competently in their task of fully translating participants’ stories into English (Queensland Health (2007), p.6).
Gathering and recording data. Data was gathered during interviews with an audio recorder and later recorded by transcribing using Dragon software. Transcription entailed downloading the audio file into the Dragon program, then typing out the interview word for word – of both the interviewer’s questions and the translator’s dialogue of the participants’ responses. Transcribing gave me the opportunity to deeply explore the participants’ stories, and was an important data analysis tool.

Systems used for keeping track of data and emerging understandings

Code tables. After initial transcription, I created tables in MS Word for each coding process. Code tables organized the data based on the transcriptions and the relevant coding processes. The First-Stage coding process followed the order of: 1) line-by-line, 2) Initial Coding, 3) In Vivo Coding, 4) Process Coding, and 5) Emotion Coding. The Second-Stage coding process followed the order of: 1) Axial Coding and 2) Theoretical Coding. All of these coding processes will be discussed in more detail in the Data Analysis section. The code tables were essential as a data organization tool in this study because they displayed the data in all the different coded forms – allowing for complexity of meaning to be more apparent across the different types of codes. In later stages of analysis, the code tables helped me to develop themes, categories, and theory.

Memos. Throughout the research process, I kept memos documenting how I conducted the sampling process, interviews, coding processes, and analysis of the data. Memos also included after-thoughts about the interviews and participants, future planning of data collection and analysis processes, and theoretical concepts that were forming through concept and category development. Memoing was the method that I used to write out and develop concepts and theory every step of the way. It was the way
that I incorporated the circular/simultaneous process of data collection and analysis (i.e. the Constant Comparative Analysis) – a key component of GTM.

By first breaking down each participant’s interview, then comparing/contrasting all of the participants’ experiences, I was able to develop theory that incorporated crucial elements of both the variation and the consistencies in all participants’ experiences of war and parenting. Memoing helped me to transfer the analysis developed during coding into a cohesive understanding of the experiences in a way that I could write about and coherently communicate. A sample of analytical memos is included in Appendix D.

Data Analysis

First-Stage coding and analysis: Developing concepts from codes

*Line-by-Line/Open Coding.* This stage of coding consisted of reading through the interview transcripts line-by-line and coding based on phrases and concepts that appeared important to the study’s purpose and to the participants. I did Line-by-Line coding (aka Open Coding) with the intention of reading the transcripts, getting a better sense of people’s stories, and summarizing important details in those stories. In Appendix E, the Open Code Table includes the codes produced during this stage. This table is a compilation of the participants’ codes, but the actual process that I followed was to develop code tables for each participant and then created the table in the Appendix for this paper that included the most important codes from all of the participants.

This stage of analysis served to acquaint me better with participants’ stories. As I coded, I found similarities and differences arising – some that would later be developed into concepts and categories as analysis progressed. Overall, after this first process of coding, participant’s stories were broken down into preliminary codes – disassembled
into ideas instead of complete, whole stories. The Initial Coding process that followed the Open Coding process further developed these ideas into concepts that were found in all of the participants’ experiences.

**Initial coding processes.** The intention of Initial Coding was to analyze participants’ stories for meaning and concepts. I did this by looking for participants’ processes (Process Coding), key words and concepts (In Vivo Coding), emotional expressions and undertones (Emotional Coding), and developing concepts from their stories – which I developed in my own analytical language and reflections.

Initial coding “is breaking down qualitative data into discrete parts, closely examining them, and comparing them for similarities an differences” (Saldana (2013), p.81). During this process, the Grounded Theory researcher is looking for different “theoretical directions indicated by the reading of the data” (Charmaz (2006) in quoted in Saldana, p.81). In Line-by-Line Coding, “reflecting deeply on the contents and nuances of the data” (Saldana, p.81) was limited because I was simply going through the data to revisit what was said during the interview, and to get a better grasp on what was said. During Initial Coding, I thoroughly analyzed the data, and reflected back on what participants said, how they acted during the interview, compared and contrasted people’s experiences and stories, and developed analytical ideas and concepts that were arising from my own interaction with the data. To deepen my understanding of the data, I used In Vivo, Process, and Emotion coding – and these helped me to “tease out” different aspects of participants’ experiences.

**Process coding.** Process coding uses action words – or, as some have defined them, “-ing” words (i.e. gerunds) (Charmaz (2002) cited in Saldana, p.77). They can be
“a simple activity or general conceptual activity” (Saldana, p.77). Process coding is good for studies that are observing “ongoing action/interaction/emotion taken in response to situation, or problems, often with the purpose of reaching a goal or handling a problem” (Corbin & Strauss (2008) quoted in Saldana, p.77). Process coding also includes sub-processes, or “the individual tactics, strategies, and routine actions that make up the larger act” (Corbin & Strauss (1998) quoted in Saldana, p.77).

Saldana notes that process coding often happens simultaneously with both Initial Coding and Axial Coding (Strauss & Corbin (1998) cited in Saldana, p.81). I found this to be true – as some of my codes inherently were process related. However, when I focused on just coding for process, I found that it made participants’ processes for making decisions and taking action clearer to me. This clarity resulted in a better understanding of what people did and why they did it, in relation to experiences of war and parenting.

Process coding was important for this study because it helped me to identify and understand processes that participants went through as they maneuvered through the war, refugee, and parenting experiences.
### Table 7

**Examples of Process Codes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Vivo coding</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLAYING AS A CHILD</td>
<td>TRYING TO COPY HER MOTHER’S TENDERNESS AS A PARENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING SECURE AND SAFE AS A CHILD</td>
<td>BEING CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY THE RAPID RISE OF VIOLENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING POOR, BUT BEING HAPPY AS A CHILD</td>
<td>BEING CONFINED TO THE HOUSE OUT OF FEAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REMEMBERING MOTHER AS VERY KIND, HAPPY, AND FUN</td>
<td>LIVING WITH DISRUPTIONS TO DAILY LIFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOLDING ONTO MOTHER’S ETHICAL LESSONS</td>
<td>BEING CAUGHT UP IN THE WAR WITHOUT PARTICIPATING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMIRING FATHER BECAUSE HE WAS KIND AND ALSO DIRECTING HIM IN LIFE</td>
<td>LIVING THROUGH EXECUTIONS AND RISING RADICALISM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOING THROUGH THE DAILY ROUTINE OF MEETING CHILDREN’S NEEDS FOR FOOD,</td>
<td>CHILDREN BEING TERRIFIED AND NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION, SELF-CARE, SLEEP, AND COMFORTING</td>
<td>BEING UNABLE TO PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH FOOD AND NECESSITIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REACHING A POINT WHERE THEY COULD NOT TAKE IT ANYMORE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEING LOVING AND CARING ARE VERY IMPORTANT AS A PARENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STILL LIVING WITH MEMORIES OF WHAT HAPPENED TO HER AND HER FAMILY DURING THE WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROTECTING HER CHILDREN FROM HER PAST: NOT ALLOWING WAR EXPERIENCE TO AFFECT HER AS A PARENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEING A GOOD MOTHER IS BEING TENDER, LOVING, AND PROVIDING FOR THEM NO MATTER WHAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMP WAS LIKE LIVING IN A PRISON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DECIDING TO STAY IN CAMP TO PURSUE REFUGEE STATUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIVING IN THAT CAMP WAS A SACRIFICE FOR A BETTER FUTURE LIVING IN LIMBO SINCE THE WAR DESTROYED SECURITY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In Vivo coding.** In Vivo codes are those that refer to “a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data record” (Saldana 2013, p.74). In Vivo Codes are useful because they capture important information in participants’ own words and their direct meanings. They are very useful in capturing the essences of their stories.
Table 8

Examples of In Vivo Codes

| Emotion coding. Emotion coding is an Affective coding method, which is a group of coding techniques that “investigate qualities of human experience” by coding them based on emotions, values, conflicts or judgments (all subjective aspects of individuals’ emotional experiences). | My mother sacrificed so much to see us happy. |
|———|———|
| “MY FATHER TRIED TO MAKE ME THE BEST AND SUCCESSFUL KIND OF PERSON” | “My mother was there for everything, in any condition – good or bad situations, she was there.” |
| “MY PARENTS WERE AFRAID ABOUT US FOR EVERYTHING – THEY WERE TRYING TO PROTECT US MOST OF THE TIME” | This is the nature of the mom - sacrificing herself for her kids. This is the nature of - it’s kind of built in.” |
| FATHER TAUGHT THEM TO “LOVE PEOPLE AND TO BE PEACEFUL” | “My understanding of being a parent is tenderness and sacrifice.” |
| She sacrificed a lot of her own comfort or her own things to make us happy and make us a family” | We had enough of this life, that's it, we can't stay there any more. We need a better life for our kids. If we can't provide that, let's die together. |
| “IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO STAY IN A PLACE THAT IS GOING TO END UP KILLING YOU” | “When you live in a war place, you don’t have government, you just survive.” |
| “AND MAYBE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE IS THAT I WAS LOOKING FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR MY KIDS” | You cannot avoid these groups – “they can come from anywhere. You can’t predict” |
| “MY COUNTRY AT THAT TIME WAS NOT A GOOD PLACE TO RAISE KIDS” | “You go to work and you’re not sure that you’ll come back” |
| DECIDING TO FLEE IRAQ WAS LIKE “TAKING A JUMP INTO THE SEA...AND TRYING TO GET TO SAFETY” | BECAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE CAMPS, SHE WOULD START TO THINK “THIS IS NOT RIGHT” AND “THEN IT COMES BACK” |
| You don’t know what to do, you just run. If you feel like it’s coming this way, you go the other way. And you don’t know where to go” | “Life here in the US is good because it is a country of opportunity. There are many opportunities to do something that you can’t do in Africa” |
| “Being there for them in times of pain and giving them the most valuable things that I can give them – my whole life, I sacrifice for them” | “Emotion coding. Emotion coding is an Affective coding method, which is a group of coding techniques that “investigate qualities of human experience” by coding them based on emotions, values, conflicts or judgments (all subjective aspects of individuals’ emotions).” |
Emotion codes label emotions that the participant expressed about their experiences, during the interview, or that the researcher noticed during the interview (Saldana, p.82). Oxford Dictionaries (n.d.) defines emotion as “a natural instinctive state of mind deriving from one’s circumstances, mood, or relationships with others”. Feelings like sadness, grief, shame and anger are examples of Emotion Codes that came from the participants’ stories. Emotion coding was important for this study because experiences like war and parenting are incredibly emotional, and emotions are major aspects of grasping the depth of these experiences.

Table 9

*Examples of Emotion Codes*44

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEING HAPPY AS A CHILD</th>
<th>FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS WHEN HAD FIRST BABY</th>
<th>DISAPPOINTED THAT WAR STOPPED HER PLANS</th>
<th>SCARED AND SAD FOR HER COMMUNITY</th>
<th>DAUGHTER SCARED, CONFUSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEING SECURE AND SAFE AS A CHILD</td>
<td>FEELING OBLIGATED TO SERVE HER FAMILY</td>
<td>HORRIFIED BY EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE</td>
<td>HOW TO KEEP THEM CALM? = DESPERATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REMINICING WISTFUL FOR PAST</td>
<td>IDOLIZING MOTHER AS A CHILD AND AS AN ADULT</td>
<td>CONFUSION OF WHERE VIOLENCE IS COMING FROM</td>
<td>SUFFERING</td>
<td>ANGRY AND SAD ABOUT WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEALIZING MOTHER’S TENDERNESS AND SACRIFICE</td>
<td>BEFORE WAR, VERY HAPPY AND PEACEFUL</td>
<td>SCARED</td>
<td>STRUGGLING</td>
<td>DESTROYING FAMILY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SATISFIED BEING WITH FAMILY</td>
<td>MEMORIES OF KILLINGS AND FLEEING IS OVERWHELMINGLY PAINFUL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDOLIZING MOTHER’S TENDERNESS AND SACRIFICE</td>
<td>FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS WHEN HAD FIRST BABY</td>
<td>RAPID ESCALATION IN VIOLENCE = STUNNED</td>
<td>NEVER FELT ADEQUATE BECAUSE OF THE ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>FEELING TERRIFIED FOR HER CHILDREN’S SAFETY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEELING THAT HER CHILDREN WERE DEPRIVED OF A GOOD CHILDHOOD IN CONGO</td>
<td>FEELING THAT HER CHILDREN WERE DEPRIVED OF A GOOD CHILDHOOD IN CONGO</td>
<td>FEAR OF LACK OF RESOURCES</td>
<td>TRAUMATIZED</td>
<td>HIDING THE PAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAKING AN EFFORT TO</td>
<td>MAKING AN EFFORT TO</td>
<td>FEAR OF GETTING KILLED</td>
<td>DEPRESSED</td>
<td>TRYING TO BE STRONG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URGENCY TO GET OUT</td>
<td>URGENCY TO GET OUT</td>
<td>UNABLE TO BREASTFEED = SCARED AND FAILURE</td>
<td>SACRIFICING CURRENT HAPPINESS FOR DREAM OF FUTURE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEELS REMORSE THAT HER SADNESS PREVENTS</td>
<td>FEELS REMORSE THAT HER SADNESS PREVENTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMORIES OF KILLINGS AND FLEEING IS OVERWHELMINGLY PAINFUL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"..."
Second-Stage coding and analysis: Developing categories from concepts

Second-Stage Coding techniques move the data analysis from the massive amounts of codes derived from first-stage coding and analysis of the data to the creation of a comprehensive theory that embodies the experiences of the participants. This process begins with recognizing concepts that present themselves in the participants’ experiences. Then these concepts are organized into categories (Focused Coding), and the categories are related to each other in a way that structures the experience as a process (Axial Coding). Finally, a core category is identified that best explains the central phenomenon as it applies to the participants, and sub-categories are integrated to support the core category in a way that fully captures the participants’ experiences (Theoretical Coding).

*Focused coding.* Focused Coding “searches for the most frequent or significant codes to develop “the most salient categories” in the data corpus and “requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytical sense” (Charmaz (2006) quoted in Saldana (2013), p.213). Focused Coding is a good precursor to Axial Coding because it develops categories “without paying attention to their properties and dimensions” (Saldana, p.213). The Focused Coding process categorizes coded data based on thematic or conceptual similarity – identifying recurrent patterns and looking for multiple layers of meaning (which is done by looking for variations and interconnections among sub-
themes) (Saldana, p.213). Thus, it furthers the analysis process by developing more complex categories based on the themes developed in the previous step.

The Focused Coding process was the method that I used to further condense the concepts that were developed during Initial Coding into categories that included the major aspects of each concept. Together, the Initial and Focused Coding processes of analysis helped to “winnow down” the wide scope of disjointed codes developed during the Open Coding process of analysis into a more organized, conceptually driven group of codes that began the structured development of theory.

**Axial Coding.** The intention of Axial Coding is to develop key categories and link them with supportive subcategories (Strauss & Corbin (1998), p.143). The Axial Coding process in this study developed an idea of the process of “war affecting parenting” (as it applies to the participants). Through this process, the preliminary categories developed during the Focused Coding process were applied to exploring the process of the participants’ experiences (their particular situations, how they made decisions to act, and the consequences of their decisions), then these categories were further developed into the three major categories that more fully described this process as it applies to all of the participants. The Axial Codes reflect the three major components of participants’ experiences of parenting through war: having a clear sense of parenting ideals based on childhood experiences, facing severe impairments to fulfilling those parenting ideals during and after experiencing a war, and the ongoing challenge of coping with the war experience and it’s effects on themselves and their children. These categories have clear descriptions, properties and dimensions that apply to all of the participants’ experiences.
**Theoretical Coding.** The point of Selective/Theoretical Coding is to discover a Central Category – one that “represents the main theme of the research”, and also to integrate other important categories into a comprehensive theory (Strauss & Corbin (1998), p.146). The central/core category identifies the major obstacle, problem, and issue of concern to participants (Stern & Porr (2011) cited in Saldana (2013), p.224).

Johnny Saldana (2013) writes that the purpose of Theoretical Coding is to “identify a single category as the Central Phenomenon” (p. 223). One does this by identifying the most “salient issues or problems” for the participants. The Central Category must have “analytical power”; this power “comes from its ability to pull the other categories together to form an explanatory whole… and also account for considerable variation within categories” (p. 147). In order to do this, integration of all the important categories is essential. Saldana writes that “integration begins with finding the primary theme of the research – which ‘consists of all the products of analysis condensed into a few words that seem to explain ‘what this research is all about’” (Strauss & Corbin (1998) quoted on pp.223-4). By the time Theoretical Coding is completed, “all categories and subcategories are systematically linked with the core category – ‘the one that appears to have the greatest explanatory relevance’ for the phenomenon” (Strauss & Corbin (1998) quoted on pp.224). A comprehensive theory that explains the central process/concern for participants in their experiences of war and parenting was developed using the Theoretical Coding method in the final stage of data analysis.
Results

Concepts. During the first-stage coding process, concepts began to arise that applied to all of the participants’ experiences. They are listed below.

Participants developed parenting principles from their own parents and childhood experiences. All of the participants said that at least one of their parents inspired their parenting approaches. They reported having happy childhoods, and pointed to their parents as providing that for them. When they became parents, they wanted to do the same. Common terms used to describe childhood experiences were: happy, loved, tenderness, protected, provided for, guided, and fun.

The participants held onto the happy experiences that they had as children, and wanted to provide their children with the same experiences. They point to their parents as guides to their own parenting, and their parenting principles were developed primarily from their parents’ priorities, values and behaviors.

Alice lost her father when she was 3 years old, so her mother was the primary parent in her life. She describes her mother as being “everything for me”, and Alice openly declared that she “wished to be just like her”. Her mother worked very hard to support her and her sister, and was successful in her business of buying, making, and selling clothes and other goods. Alice felt loved and that she had everything that she needed because her mother provided for her and “she was always there” for her - thus, both psychologically and materially, her mother met her needs. Ines laughingly reminisced about her childhood in the forests of northern DRC. She grew up “wild and free” – playing in the jungle with her many brothers and sisters. Because of her childhood, she believes that childhood should be a time of “fun and being free”, and put a
lot of emphasis on play in childhood and playing with your children as a valuable parenting behavior. Since her father was gone often for work (he was a traveling physician), her mother was her primary parent. She remembers her mother being very loving, fun, “always happy” and “a nice Christian”. Both of her parents taught her to be respectful, considerate, and compassionate.

Bhaman, the only male participant, focused on his father’s parenting as the inspiration for his own parenting ideals. He described his father as being “like a friend” – guiding him and advising him on life in a friendly, compassionate way. He encouraged Bhaman to get an education, be a part of the community, and be a good husband and father by being playful, loving, and a good provider. Abilene, Bhaman’s wife, grew up in a Nomadic family, and only had interactions with her parents and siblings until she married Bhaman and moved into his parents’ home. Her parents were very protective and Abilene did not attend school or socialize outside of the family. However, she did not feel that this negatively impacted her – she felt loved and safe within her family unit and when she later lived with her in-laws, she looked to them as her role-models and protectors. Abilene’s mother-in-law was the matriarch of the family, and Abilene depended on her guidance in learning how to parent. She recalls her mother-in-law as being very loving, calm and capable in caring for her and her children.

Aaliyah and Halina idolized their mothers, and based their parenting on them. Both of their mothers were loving, affectionate, “so tender”, and focused on providing their children with what they needed (and even wanted) even though they were impoverished. Aaliyah was raised in Syria and Halina was raised in Iraq – both ruled by dictatorships with large populations living in poverty. Both of their fathers worked for the
government, and these jobs did not provide adequately to raise large families. Aaliyah and Halina’s mothers would stow away money to give to her children when they needed something – sacrificing their own comforts for their children. Halina learned that self-sacrifice was a sign of love from her mother. She focused on this as a major component of good parenting. Aaliyah’s mother was very focused on her children getting an education and having careers that could support themselves and their children. Therefore, Aaliyah has been focused on educating her young daughters, and believes that educating them is an important part of her role as a parent.

Louise said that her mother is her role model for parenting. The way that her mother “did everything” and “gave all of her time” for her and her sister taught her “how to love children”. Louise remembered her childhood as being happy and fun – especially when her large, extended family would visit for holidays. She remembers these times wistfully, because the war almost destroyed her larger family unit completely – with many of her family members killed or separated.

Participants developed principles of “good parenting” that they tried to implement in their own parenting. Providing resources for children was a parenting practice that all participants pointed to as being essential to good parenting. Resources included food, shelter, clothing, diapers, formula, healthcare, and education. Working to provide changed throughout the war experience, and participants’ abilities to make sure that their children had what they needed for a healthy, happy, and productive childhood were driving factors in what actions they took. Alice idolized her mother’s ability to provide for her and her sister, and greatly valued the role of a parent to meet her children’s needs by “being everything” to them.
Being dependable, supportive, and giving guidance were important elements of parenting to all of the participants. One way of being dependable was having a routine that gave the children a sense of structure and care as important parenting behaviors. Daily routines included cooking meals, taking children to/from school, working on educational activities, and bathing and nighttime care were examples that participants described. Halina worked hard day and night to both care for the children and provide income for the family. She describes her life during the war as “DURING THE DAY I WAS A TENDER MOM, WITH THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF RAISING THE KIDS, AND DURING THE NIGHT I WAS A WORKING WIFE”. She also repeatedly used the word “sacrifice” to describe an important principle in her parenting. She saw how much her mother sacrificed her own comfort for her children, and this drove her to work hard while also being loving. She summed up the role of parent as “my understanding of being a parent is tenderness and sacrifice.”

Having a loving, close relationship with their children was also an important element of parenting to the participants. They felt very loved as children, and wanted to repeat that experience for their children. Aaliyah “tried to copy her mother’s tenderness” by being loving and affectionate with her children. Louise worked at a full-time job in Finance to support her family, and then came home and devoted herself to caring for her children and building a close bond with them by “cooking and eating dinner with them, bathing them, and putting them to sleep”. Bahman and Ines valued playing and having fun with their children as a bonding experience. Bahman wanted to repeat his father’s technique of “being a friend to my children”, and Ines emphasized the importance of “playing and joy” in parenting.
Parents also emphasized the importance of guiding their children to have fulfilling futures. Working at home on education was a method that several parents reported doing in order to prepare their children, especially when there was no educational system in place outside of the home. Aaliyah’s mother was (and still is) very focused on education, and Aaliyah is repeating that by working with her young daughters at home before they start school. Bahman’s father encouraged him to work hard at his education, and he regrets not following his father’s guidance by finishing school, so he pointed to making sure that his own children succeed in school. Ines and her husband have high expectations for their 6 children, and listed off a number of careers that they want their children to pursue – from medicine to police work.

Parents practiced parenting behaviors that they valued from their own childhoods. All participants used their own parents as models in practicing good parenting. They had very clear principles of what “good parenting” consists of, and tried their best to stick to those ideals even as their lives changed and were uprooted. Providing for physical needs of food, shelter, and security were seen to be priorities of parenting. Being tender, loving, comforting, and close to children were the most common approaches to providing for children’s emotional needs. Balancing these two parenting roles (provider and care-taker) was the goal of all of the participants. Essentially, they wanted to provide their children with good childhood experiences that would prepare them to be successful adults. This is something that most parents, throughout the world, want for their children – but these parents were especially challenged as they parented through war and refugee experiences. These experiences are discussed more below.
Participants viewed war conditions as threatening, destabilizing and traumatizing. All participants reported being surprised and unprepared for the extent of the violence that war brought to their home environments. Some knew that war violence was approaching their city or village – while others were completely surprised. Even the participant that did not experience open war in their village experienced unexpected violence personally. Fleeing was a common theme as an element of the war experience. Fleeing had a definite sense of leaving suddenly - with little preparation, and desperately leaving the war situation.

The harsh government reaction to peaceful protests in Daraa shocked Bahman and his family. Within 2 months of the protests, Bahman’s home was engulfed by extreme violence. From this point on, Bahman was obsessed with getting his family out of Syria. They left after about a month into the heavy siege on their city, and they secretly fled during a 2-hour release of the curfew. They took back country roads to the Jordan border and walked across to avoid government or rebel forces. Halina saw her community ripped apart by violence. After a couple of years of living in this terrifying environment, the family decided to leave Iraq because they believed that they were going to die there if they did not leave. While Aaliyah did not experience an open war zone, she did witness violence. Her husband suffered violence from government military forces – and the shock and disorientation from those experiences sent him into a mental breakdown, where he could not work and support his family out of fear of the military killing or detaining him indefinitely.

The war in Congo spread quickly, and Louise’s family was caught off-guard. They had not prepared for the force or level of violence that would erupt in their city –
exemplified by the fact that their father went to work the day that they were forced to flee. They had to flee on foot, and she remembers it being chaotic and terrifying. She fled with her mother, siblings, and neighbors. They had no idea where to go – only running away from where they heard gunshots and bombings. They were forced to keep running and hiding for a year before they found a city that the fighting forces had passed through. Like Louise, Alice experienced a sudden, overwhelming oncoming of war violence. She fled on foot with her sister, brother-in-law, and nephew to a nearby village – where her brother-in-law’s family lived. Ines’ family home in the forest was very isolated, so when militia groups with hatchets and guns burst in, her family was caught completely by surprise. She and her family ran – “hiding and walking endlessly”. They slept in the forest for months before being airlifted to a refugee camp in Rwanda.

All participants were exposed to violence in some form. Forms of violence included: bombings, shootings, detainments/beatings, home invasions/beatings, public executions, rape, and murder. There was a definite spectrum of violence – with Aaliyah being on the low exposure end and Louise, Bahman, Abilene, Alice and Ines being on the high exposure end.

Bahman’s family endured round-the-clock shootings and bombings, with a government-imposed 2-hour cease-fire window to allow people to go to shops for necessities. The shootings were so close and so terrifying that Bahman and Abilene’s family spent “24 hours a day” on the floor of their home. Bahman said that “Most of the time, we were laying on the floor to avoid getting shot”. Halina saw her community ripped apart by violence. She remembers wartime being a time of a lot of “militia, radical, and execution” activity – as well as kidnappings, which made her terrified for her
children’s safety. Aaliyah’s husband suffered from several detainments and was wounded from a beating during a surprise round-up by the Syrian military. Louise was exposed to high levels of ongoing violence. For 20 years, she witnessed violence by various sources, mostly by militia groups that acted independently of the government. She never felt safe, saying that, “when you left in the morning, you did not know if you would make it back home”. Alice spoke of personally experiencing horrific violence. Actually, she was the most outspoken of her experiences – although I suspect that Louise and Ines also witnessed similar levels of violence. Alice was raped as a teenager by militia groups in Congo; she witnessed her sister and mother being raped, and her grandfather’s murder – all in their family living room. Ines was also exposed to extreme violence at an early age. When militia groups invaded the forest that she lived in, she witnessed terrible violence: raping, hatching limbs, cutting open pregnant women’s bellies and killing their babies with machetes. She is still haunted by the horrific violence that she saw.

**Parenting in a war environment was difficult because of the physical and emotional challenges imposed upon them.** Providing resources problems took the form of not being able to find work, being unable to acquire resources because of environmental violence and shortages, and being on the run on the road or in hiding. There are also the obvious challenges to meeting the family’s need for security in a warzone. Together, the lack or resources and the threat to security, make meeting needs extremely difficult for parents in war.

Providing security was a major challenge for all of the participants due to violence and structural upheaval. The most common method of keeping children safe was
keeping them inside the home. Most participants said that they did not feel safe even inside their homes, but that was the safest option. No one reported self-defense options.

Bahman’s family was confined to their home because the government sieged and bombarded the city, and if anyone were out of their homes, they would be shot at (besides a daily 2 hour cease-fire, after which a curfew was put in place). But even before the curfew was put in place, Bahman’s father forbid anyone to go out of the house – including Bahman for work. He did this to protect his family from the rising violence. When the violence engulfed the family’s neighborhood, they stayed on the floor most of the time to avoid gunfire. For Bahman and Abilene, the bombings and shootings were so frequent that they had to crawl around on the floor most of the day and night, without even candlelight to see by at night because snipers would shoot at any light they saw.

Alice was a child herself (15 years old) when the war happened. Her mother tried to protect her daughters by having them leave the city and go to a nearby village, but they returned to the city after a month to be with their mother. They spent a year in the city, and it was a year of hell. For Alice, even the home was not a safe space, as groups of men would break in and rape, steal, and kill people inside their homes. Living in a war environment was incredible difficult for Alice because of the violence she experienced, but also because of the lack of resources. She told the story of leaving her home to go find food, and coming back to find her mother raped and beaten nearly to death. This denotes that resources were sparse because she had to go searching for food at her uncle’s house. It also denotes the complete lack of security, even within the home.

Some participants spent their entire war experience on the run, without the shelter of a home. Ines, also a child (12 years old) when she experienced war, spent months in
the jungle on the run from violent groups of men. She remembers being terrified – both of the roving groups of killers, and of the natural dangers of the jungle. She remembers not even being able to sleep, “you could be bitten by snakes while you were sleeping in the jungle. It was so scary”. Her parents also had to scavenge and live off of the land during the war, keeping their children alive by feeding them from the forest.

Even when participants managed to have a semblance of safety within their homes, providing food and resources for their families was incredibly difficult. In Iraq during the war, it was incredibly difficult to find work. Halina made food for her husband to go and sell at the market, but “they were hardly able to provide the kids with food, milk and diapers”. Halina provided security for her children by walking them to and from school, and keeping them at home the rest of the time to prevent them from being kidnapped, as kidnapping was rampant at the time.

Even in war environments where there was not active conflict, families still suffered from fear. Aaliyah’s family did not live in a violent area of Syria during the war. However, the men in her family were exposed to violent government detentions and interrogations – and it terrified her husband. He protected himself from detentions by not working and staying home. The year that Aaliyah spent in Syria during the war was incredibly difficult because of the lack of resources due to her husband’s inability to work. Her family was not exposed to high levels of violence, so security was not a major issue. But shortages of food and basic supplies to live was a result of her husband’s inability to work due to a mental breakdown. Overall, this family was not able to meet their needs on their own, and survived on charity from loved ones.
Louise worked full-time in the DRC. She was highly educated and successful in her career in the financial world. However, due to the instability of a continuous war and violent environment, work was often interrupted and it was very dangerous to travel back and forth to work and home. Jeannine’s children had to stay in-doors much of their early lives because going outside was very dangerous. Working full-time to support her family, she had to leave the house to go to and from work. She remembers the fear that she had every time she left the house for work – “You go to work and you’re not sure that you’ll come back. You leave everyday not knowing if you will see your children again”.

The violence experienced in a war environment is a major barrier to providing children with a happy childhood. Also, living on the run, living in places where kids have to stay inside most or all of the time, and lack of education and socialization are all barriers to providing your children with a happy childhood. This was very difficult for parents because they could see their children suffering and they knew what their children were missing because they themselves had happy childhoods. The variations in challenges for parents in giving their children happy childhoods while living through the war experience depended on the surrounding environment and extension of time spent in that environment. Bahman and Abilene’s time spent parenting in a war environment was short, but intense. Their children were very young, and everyone was very scared. They left Syria shortly after the war started, and they have since lived as refugees. They left because they were terrified, and they also saw that their beloved country was inevitably being ruined by war. They left to protect their family, and also to give their young children an opportunity to have a safe childhood elsewhere. Halina and her husband made the decision to leave Iraq because it was impossible to give their children a good
childhood there. She saw the country declining, and knew that her children would not get educational opportunities, and they could not play outside because of the violence. Aaliyah was 9-months pregnant and had a 1 year-old child when she left Syria. They left because the civil war was spreading, but also because her husband was unable to work because of fear. They were impoverished and unable to live there. They had “had enough” and could not see a future for their children in that environment. Louise raised her three children in DRC for 9 years (her oldest child was 9 years old when she left). She left DRC for her children – to give them an opportunity to have a “real” childhood. There were no parks, and there was inconsistent, inferior education in DRC because of the violent environment and infrastructure instability. Alice’s mother was unable to protect her daughters from rape and violence, and they left for Gabon after living in war for a year. Alice’s childhood was essentially ruined by the war. Ines’ mother tried to protect her and her siblings from the war violence by hiding in the jungle, but Ines reported feeling that opportunities for her future were ruined by the war, and she continues to mourn her childhood and the loved ones she lost in the violence. Both of these women had children as refugees, and their parenting experiences will be discussed in more detail below.

Participants continued to struggle during their early refugee experiences. The refugee experience was described as mostly difficult, unsettling, and scary. Some participants became refugees when they were still children themselves, and started families and raised their children as refugees or IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons). Others grew up in relatively peaceful environments and became parents before or around the time that war broke out. For those refugees that experienced war as youths, all 3
participants reported fleeing suddenly, with war descending on them without warning. These participants were victims of the war in DRC and Congo, and the violence of this war was different from that in Iraq and Syria in that it was more intimate – with fighting groups using their bodies and weapons like machetes as well as guns and bombs to commit violence and murder. The Congolese war victims fled the war on foot – trying to run away and hide from the sounds of guns and bombs or the marauding groups going from house to house raping and killing. This experience of fleeing on foot in an attempt to run away from the violence was terrifying, disorienting, and often did not end with a particular destination in mind. Many people simply fled and hid for months or years until they were rescued by UN forces and their allies, settled in an area or city that the rebel groups appeared to have passed through on their way to the capital Kinshasa, or fled to a neighboring country. Each of the three participants who experienced the Congolese civil war reported fleeing on foot and hiding either on the road or in the jungle. Louise fled the war with her mother, sister and brother by walking and hiding for 2 years until she settled in a different city in DRC. She was separated from her father for years before they met by chance on the road. She said that this happened often, “you would be separated from loved ones, not knowing where they were or if they were alive, and then you might find them on the road one day. It happened this way for many people”. Ines fled groups of men pillaging, raping, and murdering people with her family by running deeper into the jungle in Northern DRC. She and members of her family that survived (her mother and some siblings) hid in the jungle for months until being evacuated by UN helicopters. Alice fled the war by walking for close to a year to the neighboring Gabon. The fleeing and hiding experience for these three participants was extremely difficult – with little
food and no protection from groups chasing and murdering people fleeing the war. Alice’s 9 year-old nephew died from the living conditions on the road, specifically from gastrointestinal complications from eating leaves and grass that they were forced to survive on while fleeing.

Some participants lived in refugee camps, and some lived in private homes. Living in camp was not a choice for some – it the only place for them to go (Ines is an example of that). For others, living in the camp is the only option to move forward towards refugee status and the hope of resettlement.

For all those who experienced living in a refugee camp, it was a difficult (even traumatic) experience. Halina and her family tried to flee to Australia – where they had Iraqi friends settled there. They were detained in Indonesia before they could get to Australia and put in a refugee camp. They were given the choice to go back to Iraq or stay in the camp and pursue refugee status to be relocated to a safer country. She and her husband made the decision to stay in the camp because life in Iraq had become intolerable and had reached a point where they decided that if they stayed in Iraq, “their whole family was going to end up dying there”. Even with the promise of obtaining refugee status, the decision to stay in the camps was not an easy one. Halina described the refugee camp as a prison, and her 3-year stay there was psychologically damaging to her children. While they were given 3 meals a day, they were not allowed to go outside or communicate with other refugees. Her three children struggled with this experience more than the actual war environment, and were depressed, withdrawn, and wanted to go back to Iraq.
For participants that did not live in camps, life was still difficult. Some participants experienced discrimination from the local populations, some were unable to find work because of expensive, difficult procedures to get work permits. Others were forced to stop working because of an overwhelming influx of refugees. For each and every participant, life as a refugee was difficult in its own way, and they suffered discrimination, inferior prospects, loss of job, lack of necessary resources or prison-like living conditions. Aaliyah’s life actually improved during the first two years as a refugee. However, after 2 years their situation drastically declined because the Jordanian government withdrew all support for refugees and made it illegal for them to work. For two years after that, they suffered living conditions as bad as they were in Syria. Louise lived as an IDP for 20 years because of the war. She became a refugee when she moved to Kenya when her oldest child was 9 years old. She chose Kenya because it was known to be friendlier to refugees. However, she could not work in her professional field because of permits, and struggled to support her 3 children. Life was very difficult because of the financial hardships of not being able to work, even in the relatively safe environment of Kenya. Alice suffered discrimination while being a refugee in Gabon. Because of the hostile attitude in Gabon towards refugees, her children were unable to have a formal education and faced violence from other children at parks and out in public places. Ines lived for 20 years in a refugee camp in Rwanda. Her living conditions were poor, and she suffered from depression from those living conditions and from her war experiences.

All participants made the decision to flee the war and displacement environments because they wanted a better life for their children, and knew that life in these
environments could never bring that for them. For those living in open war environments, it really was a life-or-death matter. As Halina said, “It doesn’t make sense to stay in a place that is going to kill you”. For others living in less violent environments, the decision to leave was primarily based on the lack of resources and hope for a better future. As Aaliyah said, “we reached a point where we just could not take it anymore. We took any opportunity to get out and start a new life”. Louise also said about her decision to flee to Kenya, and then to the United States, “I felt so sad for my children growing up in that environment. I had to do something about it”. Ines said that she did not feel settled, safe, or hopeful for her family’s future until they came to the US. When asked about how long she fled during the war, she said, “I have been fleeing until now, until we came here to the United States”. Her words capture how all of the participants felt about their journeys fleeing the war as refugees.

*Parenting as a refugee has its own challenges.* As refugees, their children sometimes suffered from discrimination, poverty, violence, and imprisonment. As parents, the quality of participants’ children’s childhoods greatly troubled them. They tried to support their children – both in providing for them and by psychologically comforting them. They were resourceful – taking on their children’s education when there was none offered, working any job that was available, and eventually transplanting their lives and leaving their families/communities to give their children better lives. Below are some examples of the participants’ experiences of parenting as war refugees.

For Halina’s family, living in a refugee camp was like living in prison. The 3 years that they spent in a refugee camp in Indonesia were traumatizing to her children and left her children with psychological issues like depression. However, Halina and her
husband decided to stay in the camp in order to move forward instead of back to war (where there was no healthy future). She tried to relay a sense of hope to her children, focusing on “the light at the end of this tunnel”, and to comfort them by holding onto that hope of a better future.

Her children were still very young when Aaliyah lived in Jordan. Her parenting experience was largely positive for the first 2 years, while she received support from the Jordanian government and her husband was gainfully employed. She was able to provide her children with food, and her husband’s state of mind greatly improved. However, after 2 years, Aaliyah’s family was again plunged into poverty when the Jordanian government banned Syrians from working. She said that the government gave Syrian refugees the option of living in the UN-sponsored refugee camps or going back to Syria. At this point, Aaliyah and her husband made the decision to leave the Middle East in search of a better life.

Louise struggled to support her family in Kenya. Her children were happier, though, because they were safe to play at parks and they could go to school. Louise’s inability to work in her field, however, meant that she was unable to support her family and she made the decision to leave Africa to try to make a better living and to give her children more opportunities.

Alice raised 5 of her children in Gabon, and experienced a lot of prejudice. Her husband was able to support her family (he was native to Gabon), but the children suffered greatly from the discrimination around them. Alice did her best to give them a good childhood “inside the home” because outside the home, they were attacked at parks
and they were not able to go to school. This was the major reason that Alice and her husband decided to leave Gabon and seek a better life in the US.

Life in the camps was a bad experience for Ines and her family. They suffered from an inferior quality of life: living in tents, sleeping on the ground, shortages of food, water, and cooking materials (wood). Her children were vastly undereducated, and suffered from hunger and a poor quality of life. They were sometimes angry at their living conditions and would ask their parents “why do we have to suffer like this?” and she would tell them that “the war made us lose our lives, and because of that we cannot provide for you”. Seeing her children grow up in the camps, without being able to provide for them then or in the future, tormented Ines. Because of the conditions of the camps, she would often experience debilitating depression – further impairing her ability to parent. She reported experiencing a steep decrease in episodes of depression since coming to the US. She feels more able to play and have fun with her children – as well as give them the opportunity to go outside and play. This allows her a greater sense of satisfaction in her abilities as a parent.

All of the participants found initial refugee life to be too difficult to fulfill their parenting ideals, and pursued refugee status in a different country – a country with more opportunities and security for their children. Most came to the United States because they were resettled here by the UNHRC, and have found life here to be of better quality than their previous countries. They reported feeling safer here, and those families that have found work, work hard to provide their families with resources. They have been relocated and settled with the help of organizations who found them jobs, health insurance, and food assistance. However, to get this kind of assistance, they have to go through the
process of refugee status and be placed with a caseworker. Most of the participants came into the country with refugee status, but those that did not are going through the application process now, and that can take months. That means that they cannot find work, and the struggle to support their families and establish a stable life continues.

Even for those refugees that do have assistance, language, cultural, and establishment barriers still exist. The participants that I spoke with all struggled to speak English, and only one was fluent. For refugees that had been here for a few months, their needs for assistance in transportation, medical needs, educational needs, and basic navigation of the educational, medical, and occupational systems outweighed the availability of assistance. However, they reported feeling hopeful because at least they had security, and the knowledge that their children were safe. They continue to focus their parenting on providing their children with security, education, and opportunities for the future.

*The war and refugee experiences had long-term effects on participants and their children – and these effects were sometimes reflected in their parenting behaviors.* All participants reported being psychologically affected by the war and refugee experience. Depending on the time and intensity of the exposure to violence, psychological damage affected parenting in various ways. On the lower levels of exposure to violence, some said that they noticed that they were feeling more anxious or quick to anger where it concerned their parenting. On the higher levels of exposure, parents relayed a sense of deep-seated psychological damage, in the form of frequent bouts of depression and sadness when memories of their experiences “hit them”. Alice admits that she continues to struggle with her experiences of war and living as a refugee.
in Gabon. There are times that she becomes overwhelmed by memories and pain, and she has to shut herself in her bedroom to cry and pray. Ines, like Alice, sometimes becomes overwhelmed by sadness and grief over her war experiences. Also like Alice, she goes into her bedroom to lie down, cry, and pray when these emotions overtake her. Louise showed the most extreme case of long-term psychological damage, saying that her whole life had been affected negatively by the war: “It has affected my emotional life, my psychological life, my physical life, my intellectual life, and everything financially”. She felt broken as a person because of her experiences and living in constant fear for over 20 years. She felt that the instability of the war and refugee experience has hindered her ability to provide for her family, despite having worked so hard to build a career.

Parents varied in the way that they perceived their parenting being affected by the war experience. In the case of Halina, she was very aware of how her children were affected by the refugee camp experience, and has adjusted her parenting to be more sensitive, calm and nonreactive to her children’s difficult behaviors because they are more vulnerable to discipline and criticism. Aaliyah first said that she did not think that the war/poverty experiences did affect her parenting style and principles because those things came from her mother. However, she later said that she is now more anxious and short-tempered with her children. Her anxiety makes her react with more anger – which is something that she said, “I wouldn’t do in a normal time”.

Louise’s personal psychological struggles (due to the war and refugee experiences) were a real barrier to her being able to be the full parent that she wanted to be – and felt great pain over the fact that war and being a refugee had almost destroyed her ability to give her children a good childhood and plan for adulthood. Because of the
traumatic war experience that she suffered, she feels that she cannot be as emotionally available as she wants to be. This brought her to tears in the interview. She relayed her frustration at the war-related impediments to parenting when she said, “To be a good parent, you need to plan for the future for your children, and to work for it while they are still young. Already my son is 15, and I haven’t been able to do it”. She felt like she’s failing her children because she has not been able to provide for them to the level that she believes is enough. When she lived in a war zone, she could not provide them with security and opportunities. As a refugee in the US, she has not been able to get work yet in order to provide them with resources and to plan for a secure future. Yet she still strives to build a close relationship with her children by walking them to and from school, talking openly with them about their lives, and making them feel like she is there for them “no matter what”.

Alice felt that she was a good mother, and went great lengths to protect her children from her trauma of experiencing war. Alice’s mother taught her how to be a mother, and she felt confident that she is a good mother. Although she continues to struggle with painful memories, she tries to keep those memories and difficult feelings from affecting her parenting. She does this by going to her bedroom to hide her pain from her children. She wants to protect them from the pain of war and her trauma, but she knows that she will tell them when they are “old enough” (18 is the age that she has set). Similarly, Ines also tried to avoid letting her psychological issues from war affect her parenting. Like Alice, she has struggled with bouts of overwhelming traumatic memories and grief, and has had to isolate herself at times to process these strong emotions. She feels remorse that her sadness has at times prevented her from being able to play and
connect with her children – especially because play was a parenting priority for her. She also felt sad that she’s had to take her children away from their extended family, whom they were very close with during their time in the refugee camp in Rwanda. However, she did this because she and her husband want their children to have a better future. They have high hopes for their children to be successful. She continues to prioritize the ethical values that her mother and father instilled in her as well.

All parents tried to make up for their and their children’s war/refugee-related psychological damage by being the best parents they could be. They did this by being affectionate, working hard to provide a good home for their children, trying to keep their pain private from their children, and doing the daily things for their children to show them that they loved them. For example, always walking their children to and from school, helping them with their homework, playing with them, communicating with them, sharing a rich spiritual life with them, and helping them build a good future are behaviors that participants shared.

The children that I saw were very close to their parents, and their parents were very attentive to their children. The older children were responsible and giving to their families – cooking meals, doing dishes, and caring for the younger children. The younger children appeared to be very polite, very loving with their parents, and overall happy, social, and well-adjusted kids. This shows that the parents have worked hard to provide a good childhood for their children, despite the traumatic experiences in their pasts.

Summary of initial coding. The codes and concepts developed during the Initial Stage of Coding helped to develop an idea of how the participants experienced war and subsequent refugee life as individuals and parents. Each of the participants had unique
experiences, but there were some major concepts developed during the analysis that applied to all of them. They all reported having parenting ideals that they used throughout their experiences of poverty, violence, upheaval, and adjustment. The intention of this study is to better understand how parents are affected by war-related experiences (including the refugee experience). What began as a massive collection of diverse, dispersed codes, became a more coherent, collective group of concepts that describe the processes, rich with emotion and self-reflection, each participant went through as they maneuvered through the experiences of war and parenting. To further develop these concepts into categories that encompass important aspects of all the participants’ experiences, I employed Axial Coding.

Categories

Axial Categories. The intention of Axial Coding is to develop key categories and link them with supportive subcategories (Strauss & Corbin (1998)). Three Axial Codes were developed into categories that explored the properties and dimensions of three major aspects of the experience.

There are three Axial Codes explored below: HAVING PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PARENTING, THE EXPERIENCE OF PARENTING IS IMPAIRED BY EXPERIENCING WAR, and PARENTS TRY TO COPE WITH THE IMPAIRMENTS OF BEING A WAR VICTIM BY USING THEIR PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PARENTING. These codes emerged from consolidating the 6 categories developed during Focused Coding, which were developed from the 7 concepts that arose during Initial Coding. The three Axial Codes are explained below.
Having principles of good parenting guides parenting. HAVING PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PARENTING GUIDES PARENTING. was developed as a category because it was an important element of how participants developed parenting skills. All participants grew up with at least one parent that they modeled their parenting on. They also grew up having happy childhoods before the war. Some participants were exposed to war as older children (the youngest was 12), but still had a strong sense of what it was to be a good parent because of the way that they were parented before, during, and after the war experience. The other participants were exposed to war after they were adults and had children of their own, or as they were becoming new parents, and had parenting ideals in place from their well-developed early childhoods. All of the participants reported having clear principles of what good parenting is, and they focused on these ideals to guide their parenting.

- Properties
  - Defining good parenting philosophies based on their parents and the values that they instilled in them as children
  - Good parenting is working hard to meeting the needs of your family
  - It is also giving your child a good childhood and planning for your child’s future
  - Having principles of good parenting motivates parents to take action to better their circumstances

- Dimensions
Parenting principles range from meeting the basic needs of food, shelter and security to meeting the needs for emotional fulfillment and providing opportunities for success in the future.

Having set principles of good parenting helps guide parents through a variety of different stages in life, even in the most stressful circumstances.

**The experience of parenting is impaired by the experience of war.**

The experience of parenting is impaired by the experience of war was developed as a category because it was a central element of all the participants’ experiences, and pertained directly to this study’s purpose of understanding how the experience of war affected the participants’ parenting.

- **Properties**
  - The war experience is:
    - Being caught unprepared
    - Fleeing
    - Fear
    - Separation from Loved Ones and Community
    - Being Exposed to Violence
  - Providing food/resources for family financially is a major challenge
    - Failed Infrastructure
    - Inability to find work
    - Inability to leave the house to work
  - Protecting you family is a major challenge
    - Providing security needs
Parenting in a warzone or as a refugee means that giving your child a happy childhood is a major challenge

- Providing well-being (emotional, psychological) needs
- Education
- Socialization
- Play

**Dimensions**

- Level of exposure to violence can affect impairment of parenting differently
- Duration of time spent in war environment can affect impairment of parenting
- The severity of other circumstances, like poverty and unavailability of resources and services, can impair parenting – even when someone is not exposed to a high level of violence
- Parents use different tools to meet their children’s needs and provide happy childhoods (as much as possible) throughout the war and refugee experience
- The experience of war can affect parenting long after the experience

*Parents try to cope with impairments of war experience by using their principles of good parenting. PARENTS TRY TO COPE WITH THE IMPAIRMENTS OF BEING A WAR VICTIM BY USING THEIR PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PARENTING* became a category because it was an important element of both the immediate and long-term experiences of being exposed to war. It also shows how parents and their children were changed by the experience of war. In war, parents coped with the impairments of their environment in diverse ways. Even when not in an active warzone,
parents still struggled to cope with the challenges of psychological trauma and life as a refugee.

**Properties**

In a War Environment

- **Meet Bodily Needs**
  - Risked their lives daily to make money to provide food for family.
  - Sacrificed personal health and comfort to work at night make food to sell.
  - Sacrificed pride to ask for help from friends and husband’s family.

- **Provide Security and Safety**
  - Stay at home, escort children to/from school, flee home and hide from violent groups, stay on floor 24 hours a day to prevent getting shot

- **Meet Emotional Needs**
  - Be tender, comforting, and loving even though you’re very scared
    - Show physical affection and love – holding while crying
    - Use reassuring words to comfort children

- **Provide for Future**
  - Leave home country and community to seek a safer environment with the possibility of more opportunities for children
  - Flee war environment to keep children from being killed or left orphaned

As a War Refugee

- **Meet Bodily Needs**
  - Seek government/aid agency assistance
  - Do any job to provide food
• Eat whatever food is available

• Provide Security and Safety
  o Stay in refugee camps, even though living conditions are poor, to stay safe
  o Keep children home in countries that treat refugees with hostility

• Meet Emotional Needs
  o Try to entertain children in home
  o Try to educate children at home when there is no available education
  o Maintain closeness
  o Comfort children in distress
  o Give children hope for future
  o Rely on spirituality for comfort and guidance

• Provide for Future
  o Seek out avenues to leave situations where children are not getting opportunities – like refugee status in a country with more security and opportunities

In the Long-Term

• Provide Resources for Family
  o Seek out assistance to find work
  o Do any job available to provide
  o Work overtime to provide
  o Seek programs that assist refugees with food and staples

• Provide Security and Safety
  o Live in a more secure environment
• Walk children to/from school or bus stops
• Build communities that provide safety and close relationships

• Meet Emotional Needs
  o Focus on children and parenting, even when in physical or psychological pain
  o Be attentive, loving, and tender with children
  o Maintain routine that makes children feel well cared for
  o Communicate openly with children
  o Encourage play and having fun with children
  o Change parenting behaviors to be more sensitive to traumatized children
  o Use prayer, church, community, gratitude, and hope to comfort self and children
  o Seek out therapy for self and children

• Provide for Future
  o Commitment to education
  o Seek assistance to help children overcome lack of previous education
  o Teach children to be committed to faith and being good people.
  o Inspire children to pursue education and careers
  o Teach children to be committed to faith and being good people.
  o Inspire children to pursue education and careers

Dimensions

• Parents may adjust their parenting according to how their children have been affected by the war experience
• Some parents choose to openly share their personal struggles, while others keep it to themselves.
• The negative effects of war on quality of life (including the childhood that parents can provide for their children) can greatly trouble parents.
• Gratitude, prayer and hope are three mechanisms that parents use to cope with the effects of experiencing war.

Conclusions on Axial categories. The Axial categories reflect the three major components of participants’ experiences of parenting through war: having a clear sense of parenting principles based on childhood experiences, facing severe impairments to fulfilling those parenting ideals during and after experiencing a war, and the ongoing challenge of coping with the war experience and its effects on themselves and their children. These categories have clear descriptions, properties and dimensions that apply to all of the participants’ experiences.

Theoretical coding: Developing theory from categories

I began developing a core category by going back through the categories developed during the Axial Coding process, as well as reviewing all of the data that were included in these categories. I was looking for a central process – specifically, what participants were doing to resolve the major problems of parenting in the context of a war/post-war experience. Asking the question, “Which category appears to have the greatest explanatory relevance for the phenomenon?” helped guide the development of the central category.

Explanation of core category and sub-categories. The Core Category is PARENTS COPE WITH THE IMPAIRMENTS OF BEING A WAR VICTIM BY
USING THEIR PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PARENTING. This was developed as the core category because it is the best summarizes and explains what happened to the participants when they were subjected to the studied experience: war and its effects on parenting. The Core Category is supported by three subcategories: Using Parenting Principles to 1) Meet Needs in a War Environment 2) As a War Refugee, and 3) in the Long-Term.

Core category: Parents try to cope with the impediments of being a war victim by using their principles of good parenting. Parents TRIED TO COPE WITH THE IMPAIRMENTS OF BEING A WAR VICTIM BY USING THEIR PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PARENTING throughout the war process. GIVING YOUR CHILDREN A GOOD CHILDHOOD, by PROVIDING FOOD, SHELTER, SAFETY, NURTURANCE, and OPPORTUNITIES for children are elements of good parenting, and were priorities for all of the participants in this study. All participants were aware of the importance of a good childhood because they HAD A GOOD CHILDHOOD – and they also DEVELOPED POSITIVE PARENTING STYLES based on their parents’ parenting. Participants listed aspects of good parenting as WORKING HARD TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR FAMILY, BEING NURTURING (and emotionally available) TO YOUR CHILDREN, GIVING YOUR CHILDREN A GOOD CHILDHOOD (by allowing for time outdoors, socializing and play), and PLANNING FOR YOUR CHILDREN’S FUTURE.

With the impairments of violence, lack of job opportunities, instability, and lack of resources that war introduces, the elements of a happy childhood (like food, security, socialization, education, and outdoor play) were extremely difficult for parents to provide
their children. And yet, parents were driven at all stages of the process to meet their children’s physical and emotional needs. They coped with the impairments of living in war environments by STAYING HOME FOR PROTECTION, DOING ANYTHING TO GET FOOD AND RESOURCES, and FLEEING AND HIDING from war violence in order to meet the most basic needs of food and security. They also tried to COMFORT THEIR CHILDREN with PRAYER, AFFECTION, and INSTILLING HOPE AND FAITH to meet their psychological and emotional needs. Finally, they made action plans of FLEEING to safer locations, usually neighboring countries or refugee camps.

**Sub-category: Parenting principles developed during childhood guide parents.**

All of the participants reported basing their parenting beliefs, values, goals and practices on those of the parent(s) they felt LOVED and PROTECTED by as children. These feelings of being loved and comforted were the prominent emotions that participants relayed when telling stories of their childhoods. They spoke of their memories of being parented by loving, NURTURING, TENDER parents who PROTECTED, GUIDED, and SACRIFICED to PROVIDE FOR THEM even in the most difficult times. All participants experienced challenges in their youth. Some grew up in POVERTY and witnessed their parents struggle to provide food, clothes and shelter for them. Several of the participants who grew up in poverty spoke lovingly of their mothers, and how they SACRIFICED THEIR OWN COMFORTS TO PROVIDE FOR THEM by putting money aside for when they needed something. Some spoke of watching their fathers STRUGGLE TO PROVIDE when their government jobs did not pay enough to support their families. Other participants EXPERIENCED WAR AS A CHILD OR YOUTH and remember their parents as STRUGGLING TO PROVIDE food, shelter, security and
stability in such a tumultuous environment. They remember the parents that did remain with them during the war as being HEROIC in their abilities to protect and support them. The way that their parents supported them during hardship served as guides to them when they were parents themselves in the difficult situations of war and displacement. It gave them the INNER STRENGTH to survive and SELF SACRIFICE to work hard to provide for their children and TAKE ACTION to LEAVE WAR AND REFUGEE ENVIRONMENTS that did not allow their children to HAVE GOOD CHILDHOODS as they envisioned it – as they had before the war experience consumed them.

Sub-Category: Parenting is impeded in a war environment. The experience of war, including being a refugee from war, impedes parenting in a number of ways. Participants reported that WAR IMPEDES PARENTING by DESTROYING A PREVIOUSLY HAPPY LIFE, MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR FAMILY, BEING EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE, BEING FORCED TO FLEE, and BEING PSYCHOLOGICALLY DAMAGING TO PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

An IMPEDIMENT is something that impairs the quality or process of something. It has been defined as “a hindrance or obstruction in doing something” (Google definition) and as “something that makes progress or movement difficult or impossible” (Cambridge Dictionary). The living conditions that arise in war, or because of war (like being relocated to a refugee camp) IMPEDE the process of parenting – they make it more difficult to provide children with the elements of a good childhood, and they make it difficult to meet children’s needs. The experience of war continues to IMPEDE the parenting process even after one leaves the war environment – because of psychological
damage, dissolution of community and family, having to live in foreign (sometimes hostile) environments, and decreased ability to provide for family.

**Sub-Category: Parenting continues to be impaired in difficult displacement environments.** Once they had removed their children the immediate dangers of a war environment, participants continued to face impairments that life as a war refugee can impose. LIVING AS REFUGEES, many participants experienced VIOLENCE, POVERTY, DISCRIMINATION, LACK OF SOCIAL, HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES, and SUBSTANDARD LIVING CONDITIONS. Parents tried to cope with these impediments by EDUCATING CHILDREN AT HOME, TAKING ANY JOB TO SUPPORT FAMILY, PROVIDING LOVE AND AFFECTION, ISOLATING AT HOME FOR PROTECTION FROM HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS, and finally MAKING ACTION PLANS TO IMMIGRATE TO SAFER, WEALTHIER COUNTRIES to GIVE THEIR CHILDREN HAPPY CHILDHOODS and OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE.

**Sub-Category: Parents continue to use their parenting principles to deal with long-term impairments of the experience of war.** Throughout the war and refugee experiences, parents coped with the impediments of war and refugee experiences by heavily relying on the parenting principles that their own parents instilled them with. TENDERNESS, COMPASSION, SACRIFICE, BEING THERE FOR YOUR CHILDREN, PROVIDING FOOD, ROUTINE, AND STABILITY, PLAYING WITH CHILDREN, EDUCATING CHILDREN, PROVIDING MORAL GUIDANCE, and PLANNING FOR CHILDREN’S FUTURE were all principles that participants reported as being important aspects of their parenting.
Parents also had to cope with the long-term psychological effects of traumatic experiences on both themselves and their children. ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, FEELING HOPELESS, and GRIEVING were common psychological problems that participants reported for themselves. They coped with these problems by PRAYING, PRACTICING GRATITUDE, SEEKING SUPPORT FROM SPOUSES AND FAMILY MEMBERS, ISOLATING DURING BOUTS OF SADNESS TO HIDE EMOTIONS FROM CHILDREN, and FOCUSING ON PARENTING. Some participants also reported psychological problems in their children like INCREASED SENSITIVITY, WITHDRAWAL INTO SELF, HOPELESSNESS, and SADNESS in their -children. Parents that had children with these issues reported CHANGING PARENTING STYLES to be MORE EASYGOING, PATIENT, AFFECTIONATE and ENCOURAGING of their children.

Participants recognized that the psychological traumas of the war experience continued to impact their parenting, by inhibiting their abilities to BE PRESENT, BE CALM, BE PLAYFUL, and BE PATIENT in times of psychological distress. Overall, perceptions of the impact of the war experience on individuals did vary, with most parents feeling that even though the psychological damages and environmental challenges continued to impact their lives, they were able to mediate the negative effects of these on their parenting by sticking to the ideals that their parents had taught them. One participant, however, felt that the WAR HAD NEGATIVELY IMPACTED EVERY ASPECT OF HER FAMILY´S LIFE – and the impact of war on the quality of life for her children was incredibly painful for her. She happened to be the participant that had the longest exposure to the war environment. This participant’s experience shows that the
longer that a family is exposed to the war environment, the more difficult it is for parents to cope with the impairments that war introduces into their parenting.

**Conclusions on theoretical coding.** The core category was supported by the three subcategories in Theoretical Coding. The core category “Parents Try to Cope with the Impediments of Being a War Victim by Using Their Principles of Good Parenting” was selected as the main explanatory category because it was the central component of the experience of parenting throughout the war experience. The three subcategories expound on the entire war-related experiences of participants and how they affected their parenting throughout the stages of the war experience. From living in a war environment to the refugee experience to the long-term (even life-long) effects of going through war, parents were faced with a range of impediments to their abilities to parent their children in the way that met their ideals of “good parenting”. Theoretical Coding integrated this core phenomenon and the ongoing experiences of parenting and exposure to war.

**Processes within experience of parenting as a victim of war.** An experience consists of both structure and process. Structure (i.e. living conditions) set the stage: they create the circumstances in which problems, issues, or events pertaining to a phenomenon arise. Process shows the progression of participants’ actions over time in response to certain problems or issues within the conditions – which may change over time. Combining structure with process helps researchers to get at some of the complexity of the experience – it gets at the why and the how people deal with the studied struggle. We are looking for repeated patterns of events or actions that people do in response to the problems/situations in which they find themselves. The Process Paradigm explored the actions and strategies that the participants took in reaction to the challenging
environments of war and as refugees. It emphasized how participants in different war and refugee situations had similar parenting ideals, and how these ideals drove them to take similar actions, despite being in different situations with different experiences. A general flow of process for participants was focusing on keeping their families safe, trying to meet their families’ needs in difficult environments, and seeking a better environment for their children. Below is a visual and narrative application of Strauss and Corbin’s paradigm for Axial Coding to identify process in the experience of war affecting parenting.

![Process Paradigm Model of Parenting in War](image)

**Figure 3.** Process Paradigm Model of Parenting in War

**Explanation of Model**

*Conditions.* Causal conditions are a “set of events that create situations, issues, and problems pertaining to a phenomenon” (Strauss & Corbin (1998), p.129). The
questions asked to identify conditions are: why, where, how come, and when; what events, incidences bring the phenomenon about?

The parenting experience is affected by experiencing war because of the conditions that war creates. War creates circumstances that challenge parenting. Violence, displacement, poverty and trauma influence parents’ ability to meet their own needs and their children’s needs. Parents want to be “good” parents (and they define this according to the parenting ideals they developed from their own parents), but are challenged by the environment and internal psychological effects of experiencing a war.

**Phenomenon.** Answering the question “What is going on here?” helps to identify the central phenomenon. From the analysis process up to this point, it became clear that parents were striving to be “good” parents in the face of their experiences of war. The experience of war introduced problems that left them and their children with the internal challenges of psychological damage and the external challenges of living in war and refugee situations. The Process Paradigm focuses on process and the actions that participants take in dealing with a phenomenon, and the analysis thus far has identified the central process that participants dealt with as the phenomenon of trying to be good parents while and after being exposed to war.

**Context.** The context is the environment in which a phenomenon occurs. Some parents were in war situations when they were parenting; some parents were in post-war conditions and had experienced war before they became parents. Some were in active war environment, others were in refugee camps, and others were living as refugees in other countries but not in camps. Therefore, I have listed two contexts and aspects of these contexts in this model.
Whether living in an active war zone, as a refugee, or IDP, participants struggled with similar elements: poverty, violence, poor living conditions, separation from family/community, and fear. These elements inhibited participants’ abilities to meet their children’s needs, and to give their children the childhood experiences that they wanted for them. Even in these contexts, however, parents still strived to be as good parents as they could be given the circumstances.

*Intervening conditions.* Participants had different experiences with war and how it affected their parenting. Some participants were exposed to war earlier in life, before they had children. These participants also tended to be exposed to higher levels of personal violence and witnessed horrifying brutality. Examples of this violence are rape, witnessing people being hacked up with machetes, and the murders of family members. Other participants experienced war later in life, when they were already parents or had just become parents. Their lives were more established, and tended to experience lower levels of direct, personal violence. Within this group, there was variation in exposure to violence as well. One participant was in the center of a civil war, and lived through bombardments and sniper fire all around them. Another participant lived in a city where car bombs and radical executions occurred daily. Another participant experienced relatively low violence, but whose husband experienced military detainments and beatings.

The severity of exposure to violence affected long-term psychological states, with participants who experienced higher levels of violence facing deeper, more complex effects of trauma – like long-term hopelessness, despair and depression. These participants suffered from frequent bouts of depression and traumatic memories, even 20
years after experiencing war. Whereas, those exposed to lower levels of violence experienced less severe, but long-term psychological issues as well, like low-grade anxiety and a generalized increase in fearfulness.

Living conditions and availability of outside assistance were two additional elements that affected people’s experiences. Each participant had a different living situation when they were in war and living as refugees. The levels of poverty, threat of violence, access to medical, social, and educational resources, and treatment by the surrounding community all created conditions that parents affected their actions and strategies to meet their children’s needs – and to be good parents.

Outside assistance came in the form of host-country aid and UNHRC refugee camps. The participant that received government assistance from the host country could live in a private residence because of the aid and availability of work and certainly fared better than those that lived in refugee camps. The other two participants that lived in the host-country communities reported discrimination and lack of availability of work to provide for their families.

Four participants lived in UN-sponsored refugee camps, and all reported poor living situations. One participant and her family had a horrible experience in the camp – which she described as a prison because she and her family were confined to a room almost 24 hours a day. Another participant described her living situation in the camps as extremely poor – living in tents with insufficient food and water, and daily threats of violence from outside groups for almost 20 years. The other two participants reported living in the camps as poor living conditions, but did not feel threatened by violence and could roam freely and build a community with other refugees.
Participants that lived as refugees with no government or aid agency assistance struggled to support their families because the government restricted their abilities to work and did not receive enough help from outside resources to help them provide for their families. This resulted in poverty and suffering similar to the living conditions they experienced in war. None of the participants felt that their early refugee living conditions were hospitable, and they could not build a stable, happy life with opportunities for their children. These were major factors in them seeking refugee status elsewhere in the world.

**Action/Strategies.** Participants devised strategies and took actions to manage, handle, carry out, and respond to the experience of war as parents. Questions that I asked to define the actions and strategies that participants took and devised in this study were:

*How did parents cope with the war experience, how do they parent effectively, how did they leave the war situation, how did they parent as a refugee, and how did they deal with the psychological damage done in war and as refugees?*

All participants took the above actions and devised the above strategies as parents in response to their war-affected environments. In threatening environments, they stayed home to protect their children, found ways to provide food and resources for their children, and tried to create home environments that met their children’s needs for love and enrichment. They also devised strategies and action plans to leave these threatening environments.

Coping mechanisms and parenting changes were also actions and strategies that participants used in response to their war experiences. All participants had coping mechanisms to help them deal with the psychological damages that they had suffered from their war and refugee experiences – but they varied by individuals. Prayer, hope,
personal isolation to hide painful emotions from their children, seeking emotional support from partners and parents, focusing on parental duties and focusing on the future were examples of different coping mechanisms that participants listed. Parenting changes varied, but all parents felt that their parenting was affected by having experienced war – even those that became parents after their war experience. Some parents became more patient and sensitive in their parenting and disciplining in response to their children’s behavioral and psychological changes due to the war experience. Others became more anxious, and thus more short-tempered, with their children’s behavior due to the war experience. Most parents tried to change their parenting to be more focused on their own parenting ideals of love, affection, and support to compensate for the long-term effects of war on their families.

Living as refugees in neighboring countries or refugee camps did not allow participants to meet their ideals of being the best parents they could be. These participants were driven by their desire to give their children good childhoods – complete with education, resources, and opportunities for the future. They devised action plans to come to a country that would provide these when they found that initial refuge countries could not do this. This was their ultimate action strategy to meditate the negative experiences of war and displacement on their children.

**Consequences.** Asking the question, “What happens when they’ve achieved something, or changed something” can identify consequences. For this study, I asked the question, *When they accomplished the goal of living in a more secure and resource-rich environment, what have they done as parents to mitigate the war experience?*
Throughout the process of parenting as a victim of war, participants’ actions and strategic responses to the difficult environments and situations were driven by their desire to be good parents to their children. An important element of good parenting for participants was to provide their children with a good childhood and future. To keep their children safe, fed, educated, and happy was the main motivation for seeking refugee status in the United States. Most participants felt that they had made great steps in accomplishing this goal by the time I interviewed them. They perceived their environments as safe, they were able to feed their children, their school-aged children were enrolled in school, and many participants had assistance from the community or the government to help them find jobs. However, all participants reported daily struggles, ranging from: poverty, inability to find work, a lack of assistance in navigating their new environments, their children’s educational setbacks, and psychological damage in both their children and themselves.

While each participant coped with the psychological damages of the war experience and daily struggles differently, all of them felt that the war had changed their lives forever. Separation from loved ones, living in a foreign country, losing the job experience and success they had built in their native countries, and the setbacks of living as refugees with little or no education for their children continued to cause daily life challenges. One participant even felt that her and her children’s lives had been almost hopelessly ruined by the war experience, and could not see how she could provide the future that she wished for them given the damage it had done.

That said, all of the participants relayed feelings of gratitude and relief to be out of the war and refugee camp environments. Most of them felt hope about the future, and
were especially grateful that at least here there was a chance for their children to have a
good life. As parents, they continued to strive to meet their goals of being good parents –
and that work is never done.

**Summary of the model.** This model helped to identify the processes that parents
go through when they are trying to be “good” parents throughout the war experience,
including displacement. The contexts of living in war and refugee environment presented
definite challenges to meeting participants’ children’s needs, and they sought to devise
strategies and take actions to mitigate the obstacles that these situations presented. The
model also identified intervening conditions that served to help or hinder individuals in
their process of providing for their children. These conditions either mitigated or
exacerbated the effects of war on parenting. Finally, the model showed the consequences
of the participants’ actions and strategies – and the variation of success depending on
these strategies and the contexts of the participants’ experiences.

**Variation in experience.** Strauss and Corbin (1998) wrote that, “There are
variations in every process. This means that even within patterns/categories, there is
variability with different people falling at different dimensional points along some
properties” (p.160-1). In writing about our theory, “we want to bring out the variations
both within and between categories” (p.160-1).

The chart below shows variability in actions and outcomes between participants
by exhibiting how participants’ parenting was affected by the war experience by a range
of factors. It does this by showing the variation of the interactions between the two major
concepts in this study: Experience of War and Impediments on Parenting. The factors of
war (violence, poverty, loss of family/community support, and psychological distress)
and the factors of parenting (strong sense of parenting ideals, ability to meet physical and emotional needs, and maintaining strong connection as a family unit (with the support of a spouse or other family member)) are dispersed amongst the chart to show how these different factors were affected and effective in the interaction between the war experience and impediments on parenting. The chart ranges from 1) participants reporting being deeply affected by the war experience to not being deeply affected by the war experience, and from 2) participants reporting high impairment of parenting to low impairment of parenting.

Figure 4. Variations in Impairment of Parenting Caused by the War Experience
High Exposure to War Violence/Higher Impairment of Parenting

- Not being able to provide resources to family
  - Not being able to provide food, shelter and security for children impaired parents the most, and war creates situations that challenge abilities to meet these needs

- Deep psychological distress (in parents and children)
  - Deep psychological distress, including having a feeling of hopelessness about the present and future for you and your children, overrode parent’s ability to feel like they are succeeding as parents. Parents’ ability to parent well is dependent on mental state

- Long-term Exposure to Violence
  - Long-term exposure to violence is the root of a lot of other problems associated with living in a warzone for an extended period of time, especially when raising children in a warzone.

- Long-term Stay in Refugee Camps
  - While living in refugee camps, participants reported some severe impairments to parenting. Poverty, lack of food and water, inferior living conditions, threats of violence from militia groups, having children experience life in what was essentially a prison, lack of educational opportunities for children, and living in limbo were all elements of life in refugee camps that caused trauma to participants and their children
  - For the participant that experienced severe war trauma (i.e. witnessing people being murdered with machetes), living in the difficult conditions to the
refugee camps made it difficult to process and heal from her war trauma – and the ongoing depression made it difficult for them to function in daily life. Seeing her children grow up in these conditions also exacerbated her psychological distress. The psychological and environmental elements made her feel like her parenting was greatly impaired by living in the refugee camp.

- For the participant who’s children suffered from living in the refugee “prison” for 3 years, her parenting capabilities were impaired by her children’s psychological distress. She was in pain for her children, but coped with her difficult feelings by holding onto hope that her family’s sacrifice of living in that prison-like environment would lead to a better life through the refugee resettlement process. Her children, however, experienced severe depression during their stay in the refugee camp – to the point that their behaviors have changed over the long-term. They have become more withdrawn, sensitive, and struggle with strong emotions of sadness. When psychological distress occurs, in either parents or children, parenting abilities are challenged. This participant has focused on her parenting ideals of comfort, love, and “tenderness” to help her children heal from the refugee camp experience – which was more detrimental for them the experience of war.

- Children growing up in a war environment

  - Only two participants had children that spent a substantial period of time of their childhoods in a war environment. Older children are more aware of their surroundings, and are impacted by their experiences because of that. For the participant that lived in war for the longest period of time (20 years total, 9
years as a parent), her children had the most exposure to growing up in a war environment. Her oldest, who spent the first 9 years of his life in war, struggles with the long-term impediments of living in a threatening, unhealthy environment. Growing up with a lack of environmental structure and sense of security, being isolated from community and peer groups, and lacking educational opportunities have resulted in set-backs that he struggles with as attempts to adjust to life in the US – feeling far behind educationally and even socially as he enters high school in the United States. His mother focused on the impediments that his childhood in war has imposed on her parenting – saying that she has been unable to properly prepare for his future success. She also said that she struggles to help him with the psychological effects that his childhood has left him with because he is almost an adult now and she feels overwhelmed by the depth of his needs to overcome his difficult childhood.

- Three participants were older children themselves when they experienced war. Even though this study focused on their experiences as parents, the impact of war on their overall psychological states is telling in how the war experience affects children throughout their lives, even as they become adults.

- Lack of Educational Opportunities for Children
  - All participants listed education as a priority for their success in providing their children with a good childhood and future. The participants in this section of the matrix felt that their children’s quality of life was damaged by the lack of education created by the war and post-war environment. They viewed the war and long-term stay in refugee camps as greatly impairing to
their ability as parents to provide their children with a quality childhood and future, specifically because of the lack of education provided in these environments.

- Inability to Feel Settled
  - The participants that lived in war and refugee camps for an extended period of time felt like their lives were unsettled and unstable. They could not offer their children opportunities for growth and development, and the living conditions, daily exposure to violence, and necessary isolation for protection resulted in an overall feeling of instability and hopelessness about the future. This exacerbated the feeling that they could not fulfill their obligations to their children or lead fulfilled lives themselves.

High Exposure to War Violence/Lower Impairment of Parenting

- Leaving War Environment Before Having Children
  - The participants that left the war environment before having children were exposed to high levels of violence (and this certainly left them with loss and trauma that they had to deal with for the rest of their lives) were able to mediate the effects of the war on their parenting, largely because their children never experienced the war first-hand. The participant that lived as a refugee, but in a private residence, worked very hard to provide her children with a happy home. The participant who raised her children in a refugee camp, however, suffered from that living situation – and therefore her parenting was more impaired than the other participant who left the war before she had children.
• Having Support from Partner, Family and Community
  
o  Having loved ones and a community as refugees helped participants to build new lives, even though they had experienced high levels of war violence. Continued love and support brought great comfort to these individuals and their children. Children were able to have close relationships with their extended families and friends – which is an important aspect of a healthy childhood. Participants who continued to suffer from the trauma of their war experience were able to turn to their spouses, siblings, and mothers for love and support in their pain, and this was often stated as a major source of comfort and healing for them.

• Having Positive Beliefs about Future
  
o  Participants that talked about hope and faith about future possibilities said that this was a major component of maintaining strength and being able to function as parents, even when they were sad or in difficult situations of war and as refugees. They relayed that they were able to get through those difficult times because they clung to the hope of leaving and dreamt about what possibilities the future would hold for them and their children. Hope and faith propelled them forward, and allowed them to leave the past painful experiences behind them – as much as possible.

• Strong Sense of Parenting Principles
  
o  The parents that were exposed to high levels of war violence, but did not feel deeply impaired as parents and individuals by the experience seemed particularly connected to their parenting principles. These principles were
those that had made them feel safe, supported and loved as children, and the disorienting and terrifying experiences of war seemed to make them hold onto those ideals with passion and commitment. Being parents “grounded” them and made them build a sense of normalcy for their children, and themselves. Even for parents that had children in warzones, being good parents to their children (i.e. sticking to their parenting ideals as much as possible) gave them a sense of purpose and inspired them to live and function on a daily basis. Meeting their children’s needs for love and comfort made them feel that at least they could give their children something good, despite the difficulties around them.

- Changing Parenting Approaches to Accommodate Children’s War/Refugee Trauma
  - Being able to comfort children is an important element of good parenting. This can be a difficult thing to do when children are suffering from emotional problems like depression or hyper-sensitivity that directly result from their exposure to war and refugee trauma. When resources are limited, and changing environments immediately is impossible, changing parenting approaches may be the only resource for parents. Parents that are able to harness their own emotions and react to children’s problem behaviors with compassion and love are parenting to their best abilities. Participants that reported doing this have found good about their parenting abilities, and felt that changing their parenting in this way mediated the impairments that traumatic experiences imposed upon them and their children.

- Being Able to Provide Resources for Family
Parenting behaviors, like enacting tenderness, discipline, and structure are important elements of good parenting. However, providing food, clothing, and shelter are the most basic, fundamental obligations of parenting. In war and refugee environments, providing the most basic resources for children is especially difficult. Without providing these resources for children, parenting is greatly impaired. Parents that were able to provide these resources, especially through working at a job/s, felt that they were able to parent sufficiently. When their children were fed and clothed, and they or their partners were able to provide for their family’s needs, the impairments of war were mitigated enough for them to parent successfully.

**Low Exposure to War Violence/Higher Impairment of Parenting**

- *This section of the matrix shows that even when people are not exposed to high levels of violence directly, other elements can work to impair their parenting abilities.*
- Not Being Able to Provide Resources for Family
  - Even in areas where there are relatively low levels of war violence, the war in other areas can affect the entire country. Non war-related job opportunities are few and far between, infrastructure can crumble, and a general climate of fear prevents people from continuing in their previous occupations because of the hazards of travel and exposure to potential violence. The lack of availability of resources due to the crumbling infrastructure adds to the difficulty of finding adequate food and other staples.
  - Because of the lack of jobs, high poverty is an impediment that results in not being able to provide resources for family. Hunger and lack of resources like diapers and formula were things that caused these participants great distress.
• Threat of Violence/Detainments
  o Even in areas that were not in active war, the high alert of the government forces and spread of violence throughout the country caused an increase in government detainments and interrogations. For the participant that experienced this particular situation, the threat of violence from government forces resulted in her husband’s mental breakdown – which prevented him from working or even leaving the house. This, in turn, resulted in a dire situation of poverty for this participant – who had just had a baby and became pregnant with her second child at the same time as her husband’s breakdown and the war escalation.

• Psychological Distress
  o The overall experience of fear, poverty, and insecurity created great psychological distress for participants that were not living in highly violent war situations.

• Lack of Opportunities for Children
  o For families living in war and refugee situation with lower war violence, infrastructure failures often result in a lack of educational opportunities because of school closures and restrictions of travel. This interrupts or prevents the continuation of education for children – which over time can severely hamper their future opportunities.

• Long-term Stay in Refugee Camps
  o Refuge camps have been notoriously dangerous – with threats of violence from outside groups targeting refugees because of their ethnicities or to
continue the slaughters of war-fueled militias. One of the participants experienced continuous threats of violence from groups outside the camps, and this added to her distress greatly. But for all of the participants that spent time in the refugee camps, life was difficult – and that was not due to the threat of violence. Rather, the living conditions in the refugee camps caused the highest levels of distress and impairments to parenting. One participant suffered from lack of food and water and poor living conditions, while another was provided with three meals a day, but her family could not leave their one-room “cell” almost 24 hours a day – which caused her children more trauma than actually living in a war. Both of these participants reported their lives in the refugee camps as being very detrimental to their ability to provide happy, healthy childhoods for their children.

- Discrimination in Host Country
  
  o For those participants who lived as refugees amongst the general population in host countries, each experienced varying levels of discrimination. The participant who experienced the worst discrimination said that her children suffered from violence, lack of education (because the government made it unaffordable for foreigners who weren’t wealthy), and general felt unwelcome by people in the host country. For another participant, she and her children did not feel direct discrimination, but the host country made it difficult for refugees to work in higher-paying jobs. Being highly educated and successful in her field, she still could not find work that supported her family because work permits were too expensive. The other participant who lived as a refugee
was initially welcomed, and was very supported by the host country. Her husband could work, the government and refugee agencies gave her food and housing assistance, and her living conditions were good. However, after 2 years, the government cut off assistance, bared Syrian refugees from working, and gave them the option of returning to Syria (which had declined into a widespread, deadly civil war) or go to the UN-sponsored refugee camps (in which living conditions were poor). This participant was once again plunged into poverty levels similar to when she lived in a country at war.

- **Loss of Family Support**

  Participants that did not have the support of loved ones or a community suffered both psychologically and financially. This further impaired their abilities to parent.

**Low Exposure to War Violence/Lower Impairment of Parenting**

- **Low Exposure to Violence**

  - Participants reported experiencing low levels of threat/violence as being conducive to good parenting. Their children’s security was paramount to participants, because it enabled their children to play outside safely, to develop relationships with peers, and for them and their children to experience life in an environment where they did not feel threatened when they walked outside the door. Living in a more secure environment allowed participants to feel calmer, and many felt that this led them and their children to be happier and overall more positive about their lives – which increased parents’ feelings of parenting well.

- **Building Community**
o All participants had built communities since being relocated to the United States. Organizations that help settle war refugees facilitate this by finding homes that are close to other families from their home countries or regions, so that they can build a community with their neighbors. These organizations also facilitate building community by having volunteers help refugees with food, clothing, and navigating systems and services (like medical assistance, school enrollment, continuing education for adults, etc.). Religion was also a very important part of the participants’ lives, and places of worship and culture were another source of community for participants in feeling welcomed, accepted, cared-for, and settled.

• Having Positive Outlook of Future
  o Participants reported having a more positive outlook of the future when their children were enrolled in school, could play outside, had prospects for the future, they had resources to provide for their children’s needs, they or their partners had jobs, and they had opportunities to better their own lives.

• Settling in a Safe, Supportive Environment After War
  o Participants reported feeling that their parenting was improved when settling in safe environments where there was support from organizations and communities.

• Strong Sense of Parenting Ideals
  o Parents were able to feel good about their parenting when they had a clear sense of what good parenting consists of and they were able to practice it to the best of their abilities. Living in an environment that is safe, your children’s
basic needs for food and shelter are met, your children’s needs for education, socialization are met, and they have opportunities for future success is conducive to good parenting. Even with the struggles of settling in a foreign country (which should not be minimized), parents that have clear ideals of positive parenting have a platform on which to parent effectively, and impairments to parenting due to war are largely due to past traumas.

- Being Able to Provide Resources for Family
  - Getting Assistance
    - Once refugees receive refugee status (which can be a long and arduous process), they get assistance from government-sponsored organizations like Catholic Charities and Lutheran Services. For 90 days, they get food assistance, Medicaid, kid care services (that pay for childcare); they also receive an Employment Authorization Document and assistance in finding a job (usually in the hospitality industry).
    - There are also organizations like Arab American Association, Africans F.C. Outreach, and churches that help refugees find housing, donate food and clothing, and help refugees find work once they have an official Employment Authorization Document.

Almost all of the participants had work or their spouses had work. Combined with the assistance from organizations, their jobs were able to provide their families with food, shelter, and clothing, and they felt that their basic needs were met. Their children could attend school and begin to build futures for themselves. With the resources that they needed to live provided, parents could build the rest of their lives on that platform.
Without resources, participants continued to struggle even though they were relocated to stable, safe environments with resources and opportunities – just not accessible to them. Being able to provide for the basic needs of your family is perhaps the most crucial element to resettlement, establishing normalcy, and recovery from the traumatic experiences of war. Once the ability to provide is established, participants felt that they were finally able to rebuild their lives and move past the destabilization of the past.

**Conclusions on the variation in how parenting is affected by experience of war.**

All participants fit into more than one section of the matrix over their on-going war and refugee experiences. Some moved from: 1) highly violent war environments, where they were deeply affected by the war experience and their parenting was very impaired, to 2) less violent countries where they were exposed to less violence, but were still dealing with what they experienced in war and situations where their parenting was impaired, to 3) countries where they experienced no violence, had assistance that helped them to provide for their families, were healing from their previous traumatic experience, and were able to parent with less impairments. This matrix is formed in such a way to show the relationship of the direct experiences of war violence and the range of impairments on parenting. As situations change, elements of both of these factors change as well.

Another interesting result of this study that this matrix exhibits is that exposure to low violence which living in a war/refugee situation does not necessarily result in lower parenting impairment. Poverty, availability of resources and opportunities for children (education, play, socialization, etc.), and availability of assistance were shown to have more of an impact than direct violence on parenting impairment. High exposure to violence did result in more trauma-based psychological problems – which have longer-
term effects on a person’s overall psychological health. Living situations where it was difficult to meet needs, to feel settled and build a stable life, exacerbated these psychological problems. People living in war environments for a long period had the highest psychological damage, and raising children in a war environment for longer periods meant that the children suffered from higher levels of psychological damages, which posed further impediments to parenting for participants that lived in active war environments for long periods of time.

**Conclusion**

This chapter relayed how GTM was used to develop a theory of how parenting is affected by the war experience. This study describes the phenomenon of parents who have experienced war and investigated their processes of striving to do their best for their children throughout the violence, poverty, isolation, and insecurity that war and refugee experiences create in people’s lives. These parents were civilians - innocent bystanders in terrifying situations of violence, instability, and helplessness. All of these individuals managed to survive, and their actions were driven by their roles as parents to protect their children’s lives and futures. Inspired by their own parents, they held onto parenting ideals of providing for their children’s needs (both physical and mental) to guide their actions and strategies of survival in the challenging environments of war and refugee camps. Their actions as parents resulted in the positive consequences of relocating to more stable environments, where they had much better chances of reaching their goals of providing good childhoods and opportunities for their children’s success in the future. However, the experience of war (whether it be before or while they were parents) continued to affect their roles as parents. Coping mechanisms to deal with the long-term impairments of war
(separation from family and community, disruptions to career plans and the ability to provide for their families, psychological damages done by the war experience, and learning how to navigate a new country and culture’s systems) were still important aspects of mitigating the damage done by the war and refugee experiences. These coping mechanisms (both emotional and functional) remain central to their parenting experiences as survivors of war.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to generate a substantive theory of how experiencing a war affects parenting that is grounded in first-person accounts of the experience. The primary research consisted of 7 in-depth interviews with refugee parents who have experienced war. The qualitative study’s design relied on the Grounded Theory Method, as interpreted by a collection of Grounded Theory scholars – from Glaser and Strauss to Charmaz and Saldana. This chapter discusses the theory that developed from this study. Then it reviews the categories that emerged from the data analysis, discusses the relationships among those categories, and presents the substantive theory that emerged. Finally, it discusses how the study answered the initial research questions, the study’s relevance to the larger study of parenting and war and suggests avenues for future research.

Final Theory: Parents are Guided by their Principles in Order to be Effective Throughout the War Experience

The theory that parents use their parenting principles to cope with the impairments that the war experience imposes on them evolved from the GTM process. All participants shared their parenting ideals/principles, behaviors, priorities, and goals in a way that reflected their deep desire to parent effectively. As defined in this paper’s introduction, parenting effectively is “carrying out the responsibilities of raising and relating to children in such a manner that the child is well prepared to realize his or her full potential as a human being. It is a quality of raising children that increases the chances of a child becoming the most capable person and adult that he or she can be” (Alvy, 2006). For the participants in this study, their visions of effective parenting were
modeled from their own parent/s. Providing for basic needs (like food, shelter and security) and psychological needs (to feel loved, accepted, and cared for) were major priorities for parents – as was meeting their children’s needs to build a stable, successful future as adults. All participants wanted their children to thrive: to feel physically, psychologically, and spiritually healthy and fulfilled. In the sense of wanting their children to not just survive but also thrive, the participants of this study are like any other parents that strive to parent effectively.

Despite having clear parenting principles of effective parenting, war universally impeded the participants’ ability to fully parent effectively. The war and difficult early refugee environments impaired parents’ abilities to provide food, adequate shelter and safety for their children, give their children a happy childhood, provide a successful future for their children, protect the psychological health of their children, and protect their own psychological health.

Exposure to violence, lack of security, lack of resources, inability to adequately support their families, dissolution of infrastructure, as well as a sense of hopelessness about a resolution of these difficult living situations were all elements of war-imposed impediments on parents’ abilities to meet their children’s needs. The refugee experience was an ongoing influential part of the war experience for these participants, and many have pointed to the dissolution of their future plans and careers, communities and families, as well as their forced relocation from their beloved homes to be additional impediments to quality of family life.

For this particular group of participants, there is a clear process of the war experience – starting with the war environment in their home countries, then fleeing,
living as refugees and/or IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons), and finally settling in a stable, but foreign, country. Within process of war, parenting was affected differently between participants. The variety of effects was due to exposure to different levels of violence, duration of time spent in a war environment, and quality of life in refugee environment. For example, the participant that spent the longest amount of time in an active war environment (20 years) reported the highest level of ongoing psychological disturbance (exemplified by hopelessness about the future and depression). However, all participants experienced some level of emotional trauma from their war and refugee experiences. Thus, this study points to the direct negative effect that living in difficult war and refugee environments has on quality of life for both parents and children.

For many participants, parenting principles of effective parenting were maintained, but parenting priorities changed as they encountered different environments. For example, parents were highly focused on security and keeping their children fed in a war environment, and more focused on providing their children with a happy childhood and education as the threat of violence lessened in refugee environments. Meeting all of their children’s needs, from physical to psychological, were always present in parent’s awareness and intentions – but, parents were more focused on meeting survival needs when threats to survival (whether the threat be from violence or poverty) were highest. As they moved from environments of higher levels to lower levels of threat to survival, they were able to focus more on meeting their children’s needs for psychological fulfillment (through facilitating their children’s play, spirituality, education, and psychological health).
Through the analysis, it became clear that all of the participants shared a commitment to parenting principles of effective parenting that they developed from their own parents, and they used these as guides mitigating factor in the impairments of experiencing war. This was the major factor driving parenting for the participants - exemplified by parent’s attempts to change the home-life to an environment that met children’s needs when the outside environments did not. A focus on being loving, tender, and close with their children relays how parents tried to use their own parents’ nurturance as guides even in situations of poverty, isolation, and fear.

Throughout the war/refugee experience, participants worked very hard to mitigate the damage to their children that the war experience had caused. It certainly appeared that they were committed to protecting their children from the indirect stress of their own trauma, and healing the trauma that their children had suffered directly. They voiced a strong commitment to “good parenting” principles, like showing compassion and tenderness, loving guidance, providing for basic and emotional needs, giving their children good childhoods, and planning for the future.

Even in the most difficult circumstances, they were very concerned with fulfilling their roles as parents to the best of their abilities. Indeed, their roles as parents were the primary drivers of their actions and decision-making throughout the war experience. They were thinking of their children when they made the risky decision to leave their families and communities behind. They were thinking of their children when they endured difficult refugee experiences to seek refugee status and relocation in safer, stable countries far from their homes and loved ones. They were continuously driven by their
roles as parents to provide safety, resources, and opportunities for their children every step of the way.

In studying how participants coped with the overall experience of war and displacement, the main theme/process that arose was that they relied on the parenting principles instilled upon them in childhood to guide their parenting throughout the experience. Many of these principles were innate behaviors in effective parenting, such as: providing food, shelter, and security for children, exhibiting nurturing behaviors to comfort children and make them feel loved, and focusing on building a successful and fulfilling future for children. This study found that parents do not lose their abilities to parent effectively during the incredibly difficult experiences of war and displacement – instead, they hone in on their roles as parents to guide their own behaviors, decision-making and action plans even under tremendous amounts of stress. It would appear that, in spite of severe environmental impediments to parenting, if parents have clear principles of what good parenting consists of, even the trauma of war and displacement do not destroy parents’ abilities to parent effectively.

**Concepts and Categories: Supporting Theory with the Research**

**Emerging categories and relationships between them.** The goal of Grounded Theory as a methodology is to develop a theory from categories that capture the key aspects of the studied experience as participants have described it. The core category in this study is “Parents Cope with Impairments by using their Principles of Good Parenting Throughout the War Experience”. Since this study was intended to look at how parents navigated the war experience, this core category captures the central process that parents used to meet needs throughout the war experience.
All participants relied on their principles of parenting throughout the war experience. The word “principles” in this circumstance refer to one’s “a rule or belief governing one’s behavior” (English Oxford Living Dictionary (n.d.)). Participants’ parenting principles helped them to define what their responsibilities were as parents, and how to fulfill those responsibilities. When war and refugee environments presented impediments to their abilities to fulfill their parenting duties, they took actions to either mediate the negative impact of these impediments while in those difficult environments or to get their children out of those environments and into environments where they could effectively meet the needs of their children.

GTM’s ultimate goal is to develop a core category that captures a central process, and uses subcategories to support and further explain the core category. While the core category defines the central process for the participants throughout their experience of parenting and war, the subcategories define the different phases of the war experience and how they parented through the impediments that each phase presented. The three subcategories in this study show how parents coped with the impediments of war and refugee environments, and link to the core category by showing how parents use their parenting principles/values/belief systems throughout the war experience.

**First Subcategory: Parenting principles developed during childhood guide parents.** The participants in this study all attributed their parenting principles, goals, and priorities to their own experiences as children. They modeled their parenting off of how their parents treated and raised them. They adapted the parenting behaviors that they felt nurtured by to develop the foundation of their own parenting styles and techniques. Adoration of the parent that they felt nurtured by was described in great detail by most
participants, and was clearly defined as the major factor in the development of their parenting ideals. Feelings of being loved, nurtured, guided, and provided for as children resonated with participants as model parenting behaviors. This was made especially clear when participants described parents that had harsher or absent parenting techniques, as participants did not attribute their own parenting principles and approaches to these parents.

This study was comprised of participants that had at least one parent that they felt loved and nurtured by, regardless of cultural norms of parenting styles that may have dictated harsher parenting techniques. It is important to recognize that participants clung to the parent that they most felt loved by, and almost enshrined this parent’s parenting techniques into their parenting ideals when they became parents themselves. They clung to their loving parent’s behaviors as they parented throughout the war and refugee experience. They drew from their own childhood experiences to guide them in how they treated their own children, and maintained these ideals in the most stressful situations. They relied on the innate feelings and memories of how they felt as children. Thus, this study found that childhood was the fundamental guiding experience in participants’ development as parents, and they heavily relied on it throughout the war and refugee experience. This subcategory supports the core category because it identifies how/when participants developed the principles, beliefs, and behaviors that guided their parenting throughout the war experience.

Second Subcategory: Parenting is impeded by the war environment. The second subcategory “Parenting is Impeded by the War Environment” supports the core category by focusing on how war conditions limit parents’ abilities to meet their children’s needs.
of food, shelter, security, emotional stability, socialization and education. The experience of war is detrimental to the general public’s quality of life, and it is a special kind of hell for parents – who have to provide for themselves and their children on a basic level, but also have to face the crumbling of their abilities to provide a quality childhood for their children. Despite parents’ commitments to practicing compassion, tenderness, and love with their children, the surrounding environment of violence, poverty, deprivation, and disruption posed definite impediments to participants’ abilities to provide the quality of childhood that they wanted for their children. While in an active war environment, participants took actions based on their parenting principles of providing for their children’s needs – ranging from basic to higher levels of need. Intertwined with the parenting principles to provide for security, shelter, and food/water were the ideals to provide for their children’s mental wellbeing, socialization, education, and future. This subcategory ties into the core category by explaining what participants were impaired by in the war environment, and how they mitigated those impairments as parents. This category is also linked to the other categories by demonstrating how parents’ actions were driven by their principles and ideals of parenting (specifically to provide a quality childhood for their children), which culminating in their leaving the war environment when they saw no viable way of reaching these ideals.

**Third Subcategory: Parenting continues to be impaired in difficult refugee environments.** The third subcategory “Parenting Continues to be Impaired in Difficult Refugee Environments” looks at how refugee conditions made parenting and properly caring for their children difficult for the participants. The refugee and displacement experience is a common element of the war experience. It was certainly an important
element for all of the participants of this study. The refugee experience is an important aspect to address because a refugee environment that is hostile or lacking in support/resources for war refugee families can continue the impediments of the war experience, and even exacerbate the trauma of war. This subcategory further explains the core category by showing the different phases of the war experience, and how parenting is affected by life as a refugee. This subcategory is termed “Parenting Continues to be Impaired in a Difficult Refugee Environment” because the quality of life in the host country determines the level of impairment. Most participants described insurmountable impairments in the refugee environments they were in before coming to the United States - thus driving their eventual departure and resettlement in the United States.

Participants described a range of impairments in refugee environments. Discrimination, poverty, lack of food and clean water, lack of work opportunities, lack of education for children, prison-like living conditions, and ongoing violence were some of the challenges that participants faced. Difficult refugee environments varied for each participant, and so they experienced different challenges. Some participants lived in camps, others lived in private homes; some were initially welcomed by their host countries, only to be rejected as more refugees flooded into the host country, others met discrimination as soon as they arrived because they were war refugees or because of their ethnicity; and some lived in difficult refugee environments for a couple of years, while others spent decades trapped in poverty and deprivation. For all participants, environmental factors continued to impair their abilities to provide for their children’s needs adequately. How did parents use their parenting ideals in the difficult refugee environments? Despite facing an array of parenting challenges unique to their
environment, all participants were driven by the parenting ideals developed during their childhoods: to nurture children with love and compassion, to provide for basic needs (food, water, shelter, security), and provide children with an education and successful future. These ideals drove their decisions and action plans (which culminated in them applying for refugee status in a participating UN resettlement country).

**Fourth Subcategory: Parents use their parenting principles to cope with the long-term impairments of the war experience.** All of the participants in this study achieved the dream of many war refugees: to be settled in a safe, stable, opportunity-rich country. This study tells the stories of war victims that find a “happy ending”. It captures the full arc of the “best case” scenario of the war experience: living through the trauma of war, living through displacement, and finding settlement in a peaceful, prosperous environment. In this sense, this study is based on the experiences of people who reach a point in their lives that is truly “post war”. As such, it is able to look at how people continue on with their lives after such a devastating experience.

The fourth subcategory “Parents Continue to Use their Parenting Principles to deal with Long-term Impairments of the War Experience” describes the long-term effects of experiencing a war: specifically with their own and their children’s psychological issues and the long-term deprivation of education and socialization opportunities as refugees or living in war environments. These environments introduced impediments to the long-term recovery from the war experience, especially for participants with older children who grew up in war or compromising refugee environments.

All of the participants’ parenting principles included showing tenderness to make children feel loved (i.e. meeting their needs for love and acceptance), providing for their
children’s basic needs of food and shelter, and preparing their children for success in their adult lives (through education and being in an environment with opportunities). They all had visions of a healthy childhood (reflective of their own childhoods) – full of love, stability, feeling cared for, and guided by a parent that had their best interests at heart. However, the war and poor refugee environments robbed them of the ability to provide that healthy childhood for their children. For participants with school-aged children and teens, the damage of the war experience was perceived as more severe than those with infants and young children. This is due to the duration and severity of exposure to dire living conditions, but also the lack of resources (like education, healthcare, and peer socialization) that their children were exposed to. Even with these severe impediments, participants continuously used their parenting ideals to mitigate the negative effects of the war and refugee experiences. Leaving the destructive and resource-limited environment was an action that all participants pursued primarily for their children.

Once resettled in a stable, more opportunity-rich country, impairments to fulfilling their roles as parents up to the standards that they had envisioned were lessened. All of the participants who had achieved refugee status (with all of the assistance that comes with that status) relayed a deep sense of relief at being in a safer environment rich with opportunities for their children. Now that the immediate dangers and scarcity of life in a war and poorer refugee environment had been alleviated, many of the psychological stresses were lessened.

Educating their children was a universal parenting priority for participants. For those with older children in high school, there was significant concern about the lack of
educational background. This was a stressor for both the teens and their parents. The parents coped with their children’s lack of education by pushing their children to really focus on school, and to have dreams for a career. For participants with younger children, there was much less concern with the effects of war and refugee life on their education. The participants that had school-aged children during the war and difficult refugee experiences often taught children at home because their education was so important to them. Participants that did this did not feel that their children were far behind when they entered school in the United States. Some participants did not have access to education inside or outside them home (being un/undereducated themselves because of their childhood war experiences). Their children, and children exposed to years of war, were further behind in school and struggled to catch up. That said, all participants were extremely grateful that their children had access to an American education, and held onto their parenting principles of emphasizing education to encourage their children to focus heavily on their education.

Participants also universally relied on their religion to guide their children, and to keep them focused on building a successful future (by not “sinning”, and being guided by their religious morals)\textsuperscript{52}. All participants reported that they relied heavily on their spirituality to guide and comfort them and their children. In the United States, their religious community was a great source of comfort and support. They used their religious values helped to guide their children. Most participants reported having grief, anxiety and depression due to their experiences in war and displacement. Their faith in God was their main source of comfort in dealing with the trauma of the war and refugee experiences.
For the parents who witnessed changes in their children due to traumatic experiences, the parenting ideals of love, comfort, and tenderness helped guide them to adjust their parenting style to be more compassionate towards their children who are struggling. If their own emotional trauma prevented them from practicing those principles, they relayed feeling guilt and frustration over this – as if they were falling short of fully being the parent that they wanted to be. Participants who felt this way recognized that they were parenting in a way that they did not want to, and strove to deal with their own emotional trauma (almost always privately) in order to be more patient, loving, and emotionally available with their children.

In closing, even when participants were resettled in stable, safe environments with access to resources and assistance, they continued to feel the long-term impairments of their war and displacement experiences. Their psychological scars and those of their children demanded attention and healing. The educational, occupational, social, and health derailments and damages added hurdles to stability and success – sometimes these seemed insurmountable and irreversible. Despite facing a life that was never going to be what they’d dreamed of before the war, participants were very committed to giving their children as many opportunities to have a good life that they could. To combat the negative effects of the war and displacement experiences on their children, they worked hard to parent as their model parent had parented them. They relied on the nurturing, fulfilling, inspiring behaviors that they felt fondly of when they were children. Just as they had done throughout the incredibly difficult earlier experiences of war and displacement, participants continued to practice them after they were settled in the US – a country that refugees viewed as “winning the placement lottery”.

Settled in such a
country (with security, assistance, community, and resources), the wounds of experiencing such trauma and loss still needed attending to and healing. Relying on the parenting ideals from their childhood (working hard to provide, nurturing children, focusing children on education to build their futures, and instilling a deep spirituality and faith in their children) only grew stronger as they parented in the post-war experience.

**Conclusion: How subcategories support and explain Core Category.** The subcategories go into more detail in describing the various impediments that parents face in meeting their children’s needs throughout the stages of war/refugee experiences that all the participants experienced. The core category is concerned with exhibiting the central process that participants underwent as they try to parent effectively throughout the war-related experience. Together, they work to thoroughly describe how participants developed their parenting principles, and how these guided their parenting throughout the war and displacement experiences.

**Study’s Answers to Research Questions**

The research questions that originated and guided this study were focused on how participants navigated parenting through the war experience. In answering the research questions of how parents identified and enacted effective parenting in these dire circumstances, this study revealed that parents implemented the principles that they learned from their own parents as the driving factor behind their decision-making throughout the war experience – and this priority guided their actions and strategies as they navigated through the war and refugee environments. Answers to the questions about how they parented during the war and while they lived as refugees showed that while parents were highly concerned with meeting the basic needs of security and
survival, they were simultaneously very concerned about the quality of life their children were getting, and what their futures would look like. They wanted their children to have happy childhoods – and perceived this as including education, play, emotional fulfillment as well as safety and food in their bellies. Answers to questions about what guided parents during their war and refugee experiences revealed an enormous amount of self-sacrifice and a deep focus on being loving, tender, available parents. They were not only guided by a desperate need to protect and survive, they were committed to being the best, most loving parents that they could be. Even under incredible stress and fear, they did not focus just on survival (by shutting down their hearts to focus on their heads). Their emotional obligations to their children were as paramount as their survival obligations in their parenting. Overall, participants’ answers to the research questions revealed that parents can be intensely loving and emotionally supportive even in the most life-threatening conditions.

**Evaluation of Validity**

*Respecting people with a story to tell.* In a Grounded Theory study that is built on in-depth interviews, participants’ stories are the bedrock of the study. The quality of their stories is based on their willingness to open up about their experiences. In cases where studies are dealing with difficult, sensitive and even traumatic experiences, the researcher must respect the possible boundaries that individuals have in exposing their memories and feelings. At the same time, the researcher needs to get information that generates data for the study. They must walk a tightrope between respecting the privacy and psychological safety of participants and generating information on which to build a rich understanding of participants’ experiences. Essentially, GTM studies using in-depth
interviews about difficult life experiences rely heavily on respecting people with a story to tell, and working with them to “make meaning” of those stories.

William Feeler describes testing validity in this type of study as, “a test of validity is that participants are respected as people with a story to tell, and that they are enlivened to become competent narrators of their stories and collaborators with the researcher” (citing Holstein and Gubrium (1995), p.175). This study succeeded in this test of validity by conducting collaborative in-depth interviews in which participants felt open to describing their experiences in great detail. The researcher set a tone of collaboration and respect by allowing participants to share their stories in their own words – with little interruption and guidance. Participant expressed that they felt respected, and knew that their stories would contribute to the understanding of their experiences and others like them. As such, they felt that they were an important part of the study’s process – and they understood that the study’s relevance relied on their sharing. They knew that they were a crucial part of this study, and willingly revisited their experiences (even when it was emotionally demanding to go back to such a difficult time). It is because of their bravery that this study was able to yield results and revealing insights into how parents are affected by war experiences.

Rigorous adherence to research method. A GTM study’s validity relies on its rigorous adherence to the method of data collection and analysis particular to this qualitative methodology. Validity tests of the data are built into the method of Constant Comparison Analysis (the process of comparing data collected with developing analysis of all the data), theoretical sampling, and by the GTM process of building theory. Theory develops from the constant comparison of data as codes and categories are created and
evolved to identify a central process (i.e. Core Category) and supporting processes (Sub-Categories) that the participants have described as central to their experiences.

This study was guided by rigorous adherence to the GTM research method, and a consistent focus on answering primary research questions. Constant Comparative Analysis, theoretical sampling, and theoretical saturation of categories were guiding tactics used throughout the data collection and analysis of this study. Data was collected using an appropriate sample – 7 parents who had experienced war, and the sampling was guided by theoretical sampling as analysis developed. Data analysis was a painstaking process of mining through the data (interview transcripts) repeatedly throughout the stages of analysis – from 1) transcription to 2) multiple stages of coding to 3) repeatedly developing and refining categories to 3) the development of a theory of how parenting is affected by war based on the experiences of the participants. All of the codes and categories were developed directly from the transcripts of each participant’s interviews, and the final theory is a result of the development of key categories and processes that were relayed through the data/interviews. The resulting theory was developed using GTM practices and is directly linked to the data provided from the participants. Thus, rigorous adherence to GTM research methods is a primary test of validity in this study – and the results stand up to this test.

**Internal consistency.** The fact that this study resulted in a theory that was solely derived from the data using GTM’s methods of Constant Comparative Analysis and development of categories and concepts displays that the study’s findings are valid and internally consistent with the data collected. The data collected from in-depth interviews was consistently used throughout the analysis process – which can be seen in Chapter 4’s
description of the multiple steps of analysis and theory development. The concepts that were introduced in the first stage of analysis (transcription and open coding) are consistent with the final developed theory. This shows that the data was not “forced” into a preconceived theory, or onto an analytical path that resulted in a theory that the researcher sought out from previous research or assumption. Rather, the theory was developed from repeatedly referring back to the raw data of the participants’ first-hand experiences, and applying GTM to find the major process used by participants as they underwent the studied phenomenon. This exhibits the internal consistency of data usage throughout the study’s analytical process, and the theory that was developed from that process. As Kirk and Miller (1986) write, a test of validity in a qualitative study is that “measurement procedures are seen to exhibit theoretical validity if there is substantial evidence that the theoretical paradigm rightly corresponds to observations” – namely that the data collected aligns with the theory developed in the study (p.3). As shown above and throughout Chapter 4, this test of the validity was met in this study’s findings.

Reliability. In interview-based studies, assessing reliability is different from assessing reliability in quantitative or qualitative studies. Reliability of data derived from human participants can be assessed by the researcher’s accuracy in understanding and relaying the participants’ stories. This entails fully capturing the interviews – both by quality audio recording (in this case), and keeping notes on emotional undertones, body language, contexts of words and meanings, and other behaviors that denote meaning (like avoidance of answering questions, hesitance, or over-explaining).

Of course, assessing reliability of participants’ stories also entails assessing the truthfulness of responses (Kirk and Miller (1986)). When a study relies principally on
participant’s accounts of their experiences, their sharing of valid information is crucial to the validity and reliability of the study’s data. Sharing personal information (like about how one started their family and the difficulties of parenting) and talking about very traumatic experiences in their lives (like witnessing murder or being the victim of rape) is ripe with potential for glossing over embarrassing experiences or avoiding sharing details of painful experiences. Participants could have hidden the reality of how they parent in times of stress – especially about becoming violent or losing their tempers. However, they did share about the limitations that their emotions had on their parenting. They spoke about being anxious, depressed, and helpless at times. This is evidence that they did not just try to paint a perfect picture of their parenting experiences.

There were times when participants chose not to answer questions about their war experiences because they were too painful to revisit. As the interviewer, I made it very clear to participants that they did not have to talk about anything that felt they could not handle talking about – and sometimes people chose not to answer questions that made them feel uncomfortable. However, for the most part, participants were very open about both their parenting and their war experiences. They described the difficulty of parenting in war and refugee environments – even when they were very upset about how these environments affected their children and their parenting abilities. No parent feels at ease talking about what they perceive as their parenting limitations or failures, so it is entirely possible that participants held back in sharing their personal limitations. That said, this study was focused on how parents cope with the war experience, and participants shared enough information about that aspect of their parenting to be credible informants on that subject. They opened up about how the war limited their abilities to provide for their
children – even to the point that their own psychological difficulties impacted their parenting (not an easy thing to reckon with as a parent). They also opened up about the most difficult experience of their lives – living through the violence, poverty, and desperation of war and displacement. It was evident that these were difficult experiences to revisit, but their bravery was evident as they told their stories. Of course, there were likely things that they chose to keep private, but they shared enough information in the interviews that data rich and relevant to this study was collected.

This study was more concerned with how parents perceived their experiences of war and parenting, so factual information (like when, where, etc.) was less relevant than the stories of participants, as told through their own lens of reality. When a qualitative study is based on personal relaying of experience, reliability is measured more by the researcher’s ability to tell participants’ stories as accurately as possible, and relating their experiences to the major research questions. That was certainly accomplished in this study – by way of the recording, transcription, coding, and analytical methods that were focused on applying the raw data (i.e. participants’ interviews) to every level of theory development.

**Audit trail.** An audit trail can also help to show the validity and reliability of a study – namely, the “trustworthiness” of the study’s findings.\(^{55}\) Glenn Bowen (2007) wrote that, “an audit trail can enhance the rigor and transparency of qualitative research” (p.307). Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed an audit trail technique especially for grounded theory studies that records the research process, “theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices made by the researcher” (cited in Bowen, p. 308). The audit trail shows “the recording and presentation of information about the material gathered and
processes involved in a GTM study” (Bowen (2009), p. 308). An audit trail diagram is a “visual integrative diagram that shows how the relationships among all the concepts and categories evolve into the final theory”, and is a very easy-to-access method to show the validity of the study’s generation of theory based on the data collected (Strauss and Corbin (1998) cited in Bowen (2009), p.309). This study’s audit trail is shown in Appendix P and is based on an audit trail table in Bowen’s article (p. 310).

Assessment of the Significance of the Findings

Studies on how war affects civilian families have primarily focused on children. There are relatively few academic studies on how war affects parents and parenting, even though the direct link of parents’ psychological effects of war on their children’s psychological effects on war has been established in previous research (Bat-Zion and Levy-Shiff (1993); Bryce et al (1989); Garbarino (1992); Laor et al (1997, 2001); Masten et al (1999); Pat-Horenczyk et al (2008); Punamaki (1987); Quota (2005); Quota et al (2008); Smith et al (2001); Thabet et al (2009)). Some studies that have been conducted on war’s effects on parenting specifically have pointed to a heightened state of anger and anxiety, which in turn led to harsher parenting behaviors (Barber (1999, 2001); Barber et al (2005); Punamaki (1997, 2009); Qouta et al (1997)). Others have pointed to the benefits of positive parenting on children who have experienced war trauma (Bat-Zion and Levy-Shiff (1993); Fogatch et al (2008); Garbarino (1992); Laor et al (1997, 2001); Lavi and Stone (2012); Masten et al (1999); Punamaki et al (1997); Thabet et al (2009); Quota et al (2008)). Both of these groups of studies have focused on the effects of parenting on children, not on the parents themselves (and how they make parenting decisions). This study fills a gap in previous literature because it focuses on parents
specifically by going into more detail on how parents manage to meet needs, what guides their decision making, how their parenting is altered, and their own personal processing of their experiences – all in reaction to experiencing war and the consequential refugee environments. It opens an important conversation about how war affects parents, both as individuals and as responsible members of their families. Better understanding of how parents experience war enhances our understanding of how war affects families as a whole. Expanding our understanding of this subject will enable academics, policy makers, organizations and practitioners who assist families exposed to war trauma to formulate programs that help families heal and rebuild their lives.

This study was limited in it’s application to the relevant larger population principally because of the small sample size and the fact that all of the participants were refugees who had relocated to the relative wealth, stability, security, and opportunity of the United States. The majority of parents living in war and refugee environments do not get the opportunity to relocate to such living conditions, and the impediments of violence, discrimination, poverty, and lack of opportunities for betterment (education, jobs, etc.) are ongoing challenges. These people remain in environments where raising children is extremely difficult, and it is essential to better understand how assistance can be targeted to them specifically. This study does contribute to building a better understanding of this population’s experiences by exploring the personal experiences of 7 people, but it is primarily a first step towards expanding the field of study of the war experience on families and the sub-genera of parents. This study’s limitations are invitations to conduct larger studies on war-exposed parents.
The Bigger Picture: How This Study Relates to the Literature on Parenting and War

This section discusses how this study’s findings relate to the literature review on the subject of parenting and war.

**Culture and defining effective parenting.** It is interesting to note that effective parenting was defined by participants in this study very similarly, despite cultural differences. Previous studies have varied on the idea that there is a universal style of effective parenting (where children and parents meet needs and thrive in their lives). Some studies have found that an authoritative parenting style is the most effective parenting approach, regardless of culture (Chao (1994, 2000); Kagitcibasi (1970); Pettengill and Rohner (1985, 2007); Trommsdorff (1985)). Other studies have reported that parenting styles can be more authoritarian if the cultural norm sets this as “normal” (Baumrind (1966); Buri et al (1988); Cheng and Furnham (2000, 2004); Dwairy (2006); Wenar (1994)). The parenting principles of the participants in this study are consistent with many of the studies on positive parenting in the Literature Review. Most parents reported connecting to their own parent(s) that had a more authoritative parenting style – and it was common for some of them to report feeling isolated or “turned off” from their parent that had a more authoritarian approach, even when that was the cultural norm. This was evident in how they implemented the parenting method that they felt loved and supported by as children when they became parents. Only one participant, Abilene, said that she felt close to her authoritarian parents. She said that she felt very loved by her parents, even though her father was extremely protective and feared her interaction with people outside the immediate family. Abilene did not get an education, only had
relationships with her immediate family growing up, and was married at a young age by arranged marriage. She did not resent her parents at all for any of this, and felt that they did this to protect her out of their love for her. However, she did not voice a desire to repeat her parent’s authoritarian approach to parenting. Instead, her parenting style was largely modeled after her mother-in-law’s, which was consequentially also her husband’s approach. During the interview, she largely took a backseat to her husband, as my translator informed me was the cultural norm. Her husband spoke about being a compassionate, loving parent - just like his father, who guided Bahman and his siblings with compassion instead of coercion. Abilene supported her husband’s parenting values and agreed with them. As a whole, the participants of this study focused on a more positive parenting style as the most effective.

Participants reported that they modeled their parenting styles based on the parent/s that they identified as being a good, loving parent – and they often identified nurturing, caring, and supporting behaviors as being primary in effective parenting. Self-sacrifice as a parent to provide for children, making children feel loved, providing educational and life opportunities for children, and protecting children from violence were key responsibilities that all participants talked about when describing their parenting principles.

All of the participants had clear visions of effective parenting, and these were based on the parent that they felt most loved and supported by. I mostly spoke to mothers, who modeled their parenting on their mothers, and they focused on the importance of nurturance and making sure that their children felt loved and supported by them. However, gender did not appear to be a major factor in following a more authoritarian
parenting style. The father that I interviewed, and other fathers that I spoke to without a formal interview, focused on being a loving parent who guided his children with compassion. There was also no mention by the mothers that I interviewed of their husbands having more authoritarian (i.e. strict, punitive) parenting approaches.

Despite my initial belief that culture would play a key part in determining parenting style, that did not turn out to be the case in this study. There was a cultural range of participants, and it was assumed that their cultural variations would result in very different approaches to parenting – with some parents following a more authoritarian approach (as that was the cultural norm for many of the participants). However, all participants shared more commonalities in their focus on loving, tender, compassionate, while guiding and protecting as a parenting approach.

As discussed above, participants’ approaches to parenting were highly affected by their own parents’ methods. When asked about how they formed their parenting approaches, participants talked about their own parents as models. Regardless of culture, participants modeled their own parenting after the parent(s) that they felt loved and supported by. Therefore, this study supports the concept that effective parenting can be approached similarly across cultures, and that being effective entails a focus on positive parenting based on parents’ beliefs that their children need to have their basic needs met, feel loved and nurtured, as well as guided towards a successful future based on learning life skills, access to education and systemic support (i.e. job opportunities, medical care, and security).

Effects of war on parenting. Previous literature on the effects of war on parenting include Bennet and Grimley (2001), Cummings et al (2010), Fischer et al
(2010), Miller and Rasmussen (2010), Pat-Horenczyk et al (2006), Patterson and Capaldi (1991), Patterson and Dishion (1988), Punamaki et al (1997), and Quta et al (2007, 2008). They are largely child-focused, and look at how parenting during war effects children. The studies range from looking at how war affects parent aggression to effective parenting styles in mediating PTSD and child psychological damage, to studying links between parent and child PTSD and psychological damages done by war. The literature review for this study in Chapter 2 described how studies conducted in this area have shown that 1) the extreme stress of war negatively affects parenting, 2) there are strong links between parents’ trauma responses and their children’s trauma responses, and 3) positive parental mental health results in more effective parenting and higher resiliency in children exposed to war. Studies have found that the stress of war often leads parents to become more punitive and harsh with their children – leading to negative psychological effects on children (Punamaki (2009)). Only one participant in this study reported being more punitive (specifically more short-tempered) due to stress and anxiety from the war and refugee experiences. She also recognized that this was in direct contradiction to both her pre-war (she used the word “normal”) temperament and her nurturing parenting ideals. No participants reported becoming more violent or oppressive in their parenting – instead they focused on fulfilling their parenting roles of being nurturing, loving, affectionate, and caring for their children, and they held onto these principles as throughout the war process – even when poverty, violence and lack of resources made it very difficult to fulfill their parenting roles of meeting their children’s needs for food, security, and socialization.
Participants were not left unscathed from the traumas of their war experiences – and neither was their parenting. There was a range of psychological impairments from war experiences – from anxiety to depression. While these did not necessarily correlate with exposure to war violence and trauma, other factors (poverty and poor living conditions being the most influential) increased the stress and other negative psychological impacts of war-related impairments to participants. Studies have shown that when a parent suffers from war trauma, it affects their children similarly (Bryce et al (1989); Laor et al (1997, 2001); Pat-Horenczyk et al (2008); Punamaki (1987); Quota et al (2005); Smith et al (2001)). The variation in war exposure, and resulting refugee experiences, amongst the participants in this study did have some correlation in how psychological states affected parenting. The participant that had the highest level of war exposure (living in war-affected environments for 20 years) also reported the highest level of psychological unease – both in herself and her children. However, the participant who experienced the lowest level of violence was the same participant who reported anxiety resulting in being more short-tempered with her children. Participants who experienced severe trauma during the war, but left the warzone before children, continued to suffer from frequent bouts of depression and traumatic memories long after their experiences of war. These were exacerbated by difficult living environments, like refugee camps and hostile environments.

Previous studies have found that parents are primary in helping children recover from traumatic war experiences (Cohen (2009); Laor et al (1997, 2001); Masten et al (1999); Quota et al (2005)). Nurturing, loving and supportive parenting helps children recover from the trauma of war (Bat-Zion and Levy-Shiff (1993); Thabet et al (2009)).
All participants in this study took their roles as parents very seriously. Most parents in this study tried to mediate the effects of war on their parenting by suffering their psychological pain in isolation from their children. They tried to hide their emotional struggles from their children so that they could make their children feel safe and that everything was ok. This study shows how parents try to control their own reactions and psychological trauma from war to protect their children from further harm, based purely on their instincts to love and care for their children. Participants showed compassion for their children, and a deep desire to help them develop beyond the effects of war and lead happy, fulfilling lives. Even in times of distress, participants prioritized their children’s mental health. This is consistent with the aspects of positive parenting that previous studies have shown to be conducive to child resiliency.

**How parents can be effective even through the stressful experiences of war, poverty and displacement**

Previous studies on effective parenting in war and high stress environments (like poverty and displacement) have pointed to the importance of parental mental stability (Laor et al (1997, 2001); Masten et al (1999)), offering nurturance and comfort to children, and an overall “positive parenting” approach (Garbarino et al (1991); Garbarino (1992); Lavi and Stone (2012); Punamaki et al (1997), Quota et al (2008), Thabet et al (2009)).

This study contributes to previous research by focusing primarily on parents and how they manage to parent effectively through war and war-related experiences. It is consistent with previous studies on positive parenting, but differs from studies that show that parenting quality is compromised by the stress and impediments of war experiences.
This study shows that parenting quality is directly related to having strong parenting principles of nurturance and providing for children’s needs. These guide parents even in the most stressful environments. Overall, participants focused on their parenting principles to guide them throughout their war experience, and relied heavily on repeating positive parenting behaviors that they remembered feeling loved and supported by when they were children. They recognized that the war and refugee experiences were traumatic for their children, and damaging to their futures. They used their roles as parents to shield their children from further damage by being loving, nurturing, trying to educate their children at home, seeking any available way to provide for their children, shielding their children from their own psychological troubles, and pursuing avenues that would bring their children better living conditions and future opportunities.

**How this Study Advances Knowledge of War and Its Effects on Families;**

**Suggestions for Future Research**

This study advances knowledge on how war affects families by expanding the focus of the effects of war on parents – whereas previous literature has focused mainly on children. Studies on war and parenting have largely focused on how parenting behaviors have affected children, and this has resulted in a lack of understanding how parents themselves are affected. The primary contribution of this study is that it shows how parents formulate parenting philosophies and strategies that guide them throughout the war experience. It expands our understanding of the mechanics of parenting in the highly stressful environments of war, poverty, and displacement by revealing how participants made decisions to take action in their lives based on how they envisioned meeting their children’s needs, and the toll that those actions took on them personally (like having to
leave the comforts of loving relationships, hide their personal pain from their children, give up careers, and live in foreign environments).

This study’s focus on parents as the unit of analysis sheds light on how war refugee and survivors can be helped – both as individuals and as members of their family units. The participants in this study often neglected their own needs as individuals because they were so focused on their children’s needs (as parents often do). Participants’ roles as parents were viewed as their primary concern, but inevitably their own personal experiences of war affected them as individuals. These individuals strove to make their children’s lives better and to keep them safe. As they managed to do this by settling in a safer environment, it became clearer that they had needs as individuals as well. Needs for physical and mental healing, needs to pursue careers that had been interrupted by war and displacement, and needs for help in navigating a new country, culture, and language. As it stands, there is a clear lack of psychological services for refugees in the United States. By acknowledging the needs that parents themselves have (like food, housing, employment, education, psychological, medical, and resettlement assistance), organizations that serve them can better help them heal from the trauma of war and displacement, and rebuild productive lives.

The subject area concerning families’ experiences of war and displacement is incredibly relevant to current events – as more families are being caught in war violence and being displaced than ever in recorded history. It is also a subject area ripe with unexplored topics related to children, parents, families, and communities victimized by the proliferation of weapons, conflict, violence, and destruction. From the global to the individual levels of analysis, this subject could be explored in much greater detail, and in
many different specialized topics. This study scratched the surface of the topic of parenting and war/displacement. Glaser (2012) wrote that grounded theory studies often serve as an introduction to much broader and more detailed studies. Due to the limited resources available to the researcher for this study, only the tip of the proverbial iceberg was revealed.

There is a definite need to further expand this study’s findings with larger sample sizes. A study that has a larger, more diverse sample (at least 20 participants), with in-depth interviews would be an obvious next step in this research’s progression. A similar study that accesses an even larger population of participants could be survey based (translated into the native tongue of participants) – thus lending itself to quantitative analysis. A more diverse sample of participants may include more participants with varied exposure to war violence, lived in different refugee environments, and had generally different experiences of war and displacement. Studies that show more variation in participants’ parenting approaches would also be useful – especially those including participants with different upbringings to see if parents who had troubled childhoods, or more authoritarian parenting models, had different approaches to parenting throughout the war experience. Another avenue to pursue further would be to interview parents and children to see how the parenting and war experiences affected their children – and the relationship between parents and children.

Even with the limited sample size, this study revealed new information about how parents function in war and post war experiences. It questioned the earlier assertions that war experiences, and high stress situations, led parents to be more punitive with their children. It questioned many studies’ assertions that cultural norms of authoritarian
parenting styles would be passed down from generation to generation. Contradicting that earlier research was this study’s findings that parents clung to childhood experiences of love, tenderness and positive guidance to formulate their own parenting principles and techniques. These principles did not change in the high-stress situations of war and displacement; rather, they were guides that participants clung to throughout the war experience. Instead of taking out their loss, pain, anxiety, and sadness out on their children, most of the participants tried to shield their children from their internal struggles. They enacted their mothers’ tenderness, comforting and affection instead of taking their difficult emotions out on their children.

Future studies into the variant effects of different levels of exposure to violence on parents and children is an avenue that could be explored further in order to better understand the more direct effects of high levels of war violence on parenting. Future studies that entail traveling to refugee camps and/or war-exposed countries would open up the research to include the larger population of parents that have experienced war, and are closer to the experiences than populations that have migrated out of that environment. There are a plethora of possible ideas for future research that relate to this subject’s topic, and it is an area that is highly relevant and ripe with opportunity to help the millions of people victimized by war and refugee violence.

**Final Thoughts**

The UNHCR estimates that there were around 65.6 million people forcibly displaced in 2016, with only 189,300 of these people being resettled. The resources provided by potential host countries are inadequate to deal with what is now the “highest levels of displacement on record”. According to the UNHCR (2017), “only a small
number of states take part in the UNHCR’s resettlement programme. In recent years, the US has been the world’s top resettlement country, with Canada, Australia and the Nordic countries also providing a sizeable number of places annually. Resettlement states provide the refugee with legal and physical protection, including access to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals”. This level of assistance in helping refugees resettle is higher than that given to the majority of displaced people not settled in “resettlement states”. With the growing number of people in dire situations, resettlement countries are increasingly in need of. Instead of rising to the crisis, the largest resettlement countries are decreasing their assistance to war refugees. According to a BBC News article (2016), the rise of rhetoric spouting xenophobic rejections of refugees and immigrants is on the rise throughout wealthier nations – resulting in policies reducing the number of refugees resettled within their borders.

In the past two years, wealthy countries have largely reduced the number of refugees they are accepting for resettlement. According to a news article by Phillip Conner and Jens Manuel Krogstad (2018), The United States has drastically reduced the number of refugees resettled in the US (by 64,000) since 2016\textsuperscript{57}, Canada reduced its resettlement of refugees by 20,000\textsuperscript{58}, and Australia reduced its resettlement of refugees by 13,000\textsuperscript{59}. While there were some slight increases in other resettlement countries, the number of refugees resettled with adequate assistance and opportunities dropped by 86,000 people.\textsuperscript{60} This at a time when the number of people displaced by war is at its highest in recorded history.
For the majority of the world’s refugees, resettlement in wealthier countries is not an option. In reality, the top 10 countries hosting refugees are relatively poor - making up only 2.5% of the global economy (Aljazeera.com, 2016). These poorer countries are unable to sustain the high level of refugees that flood into their countries. Many of these people are parents seeking safety and the opportunities to provide a stable future for their children. They need opportunities to provide for their families, access to health and human services, education for their children (and sometimes themselves), and psychological support to help them recover from trauma. However, these poorer countries have found themselves unable to provide such support to the waves of refugees fleeing war and conflict. Thus, the displacement of tens of millions of people has created a humanitarian crisis that has not been met by equitable assistance – prolonging, and even exacerbating, the trauma that war victims undergo.

Instead of being met with adequate assistance in relocation and settlement, most war refugees are met with substandard living conditions, discrimination, and even violence. As this study shows, parents and their children are unable to heal from war trauma until they relocate to a stable environment that provides them with opportunities to provide for their needs. Research that is grounded in real life, first-hand experiences is needed to identify what refugee families need and to support them in their coping and healing processes. In order to adequately assist families victimized by the war experience, it is essential that research studies incorporate participants directly. As this study has found, empowerment and opportunity is what these victims need. Resettlement programs that adequately meet their unique needs can better serve war refugees. An increase in knowledge about war refugees is badly needed in this time of crisis – when the number of
people in need is historically high and only growing, but the aid and assistance to help these people is not willingly given in today’s political climate. Telling these people’s stories is an important way of showing how incredibly relatable their experiences are, and how these people have been caught up in horrors not of their own making. It is incredibly important to show the world who these people are – and to honestly share their human experience instead of allowing discriminatory rhetoric and fear dominate the public’s perception of refugees and immigrants.

It is the bedrock of humanitarianism to provide for the betterment of all mankind, not just those fortunate enough to be born into privilege. In a time of heightened political and economic division and conflict, humanitarianism is the light that must guide global action. Violent struggles for control between groups desperate for power and resources have created uninhabitable environments in many former colonies and occupied territories. Faced with horrific violence and daily living situations, as well as a future with no foreseeable improvements or opportunities, many people from countries embroiled in war and conflict have become immigrants and refugees. They have been forced to flee their homes for their very survival, and seek shelter in safer areas. Violence and selfish greed have created the crisis that now victimizes hundreds of millions of fathers, mothers and children. Enlightened research, funding, and action must now work to heal this crisis. The future of the world’s children depends on it.
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Appendix A: Consent Form

Consent Form for Participation in the Research Study “Parents of War: A Grounded Theory Study of Parenting Through the War Experience”
Funding Source: None.

IRB protocol #: 2016-542
Principal investigator: Margaret Wilkie, PhD
1820 Pine Circle
Winter Park, FL 32792
407-620-2115

For questions/concerns about your research rights, contact:
Human Research Oversight Board (Institutional Review Board or IRB)
Nova Southeastern University
(954) 262-5369/Toll Free: 866-499-0790
IRB@nsu.nova.edu

What is the study about?
The purpose of this study is to interview parents who have raised their children in a war environment to learn about their experiences. This study is intended to inform others about the unique challenges that parents face in the very difficult situation of war.

Why are you asking me?
You are being asked to participate because you have parented in a war environment. There will be between 5 to 10 parents participating in the study.

What will I be doing if I agree to be in the study?
You will be interviewed about your experiences as a parent – before, during, and after the war. The interviews will take about 90 minutes each. You may be asked to do more than one interview, depending on how the study progresses over the next two months. The researcher will ask you some questions about your experiences, but the interview is really about you telling your story. There may be some memories that you find stressful or painful, and you have the right to stop the interview, or stop talking about what upsets you, if you want to. If you realize that the interviews are becoming too stressful, you have the right to end your participation. Again, this study is based on your stories, and you are in charge of what you want to share.

Is there any audio or video recording?
This research project will include audio recording of the interviews. The audio recordings will be made on a standard audio recorder. This audio recording will be available to be heard by the researcher, the researcher’s dissertation chair, and the IRB; no one else will be allowed to listen to the recordings. The researcher will likely be the only person listening to the recordings. The recordings will be transcribed (written in a MS Word document) by the researcher only. The recorder, notes, consent forms, confidentiality agreements, and other written information will be kept securely in a locker with a combination lock that only the researcher knows the combination. The transcriptions will
also be stored on the researcher’s personal computer, which is password protected. The recordings will be kept for 3 years and destroyed after that time. Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the recording, your confidentiality for things you say on the recording cannot be guaranteed although the researcher will protect your identity by limiting access to the recordings to the researcher, and only the other parties listed above in rare occurrences.

**What are the dangers to me?**
The researcher has prepared the study so that risks of discomfort are minimal. Psychological discomfort may occur when recalling disturbing memories, and if that does occur, you have the right to pause the interview or end the interview, and a counselor who specializes in post-traumatic stress will be referred for you if you need support during or after the study. You can call HD Counseling at 407-979-4842 to make an appointment. Zac Dodson, the founder and a therapist at that practice, specializes in Trauma recovery and is an excellent therapist. The researcher understands that talking about parenting experiences during the war will likely cause you to become distressed, and is completely willing to work with you – it is up to you to share what you want. You will never be forced to share anything that you do not want to.

If you have any questions about the research, your research rights, or have a research-related injury, please contact the researcher (Margaret Wilkie at 407-620-2115) or her dissertation advisor (Jason Campbell at 954-262-3035). You may also contact the IRB at the numbers indicated above with questions as to your research rights.

**Are there any benefits for taking part in this research study?**
Several studies have shown that refugees who participated in studies on their experiences of war actually felt positive feelings after the interviews. Freely talking about painful experiences to a neutral person (outside of the family or community) often had a therapeutic effect – leaving participants feeling relieved. You can look at the interviews as your opportunity to share your feelings and experiences in a safe, private and compassionate place.

**Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?**
There will be no monetary payments in exchange for your participation. The researcher will provide refreshments (tea, coffee, water, and snacks) during the interviews. She will also work with you to choose a location, time, and date that works best with your work and family schedule – so costs to you will be as minimal as possible.

**How will you keep my information private?**
All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential, unless disclosure is required by law. Disclosure of child abuse, elder abuse, and current (or planning of) criminal activity is required of the researcher.

All personal information that can be used to identify you will be kept in a secure, locked location only known to the researcher (it will be locked with a combination lock that only the research knows the combination to). Your name and personal information (address, phone number, email address) will be kept in a database saved on a USB portable drive that will be stored in the secured location. The audio recordings and interview notes will
also be kept there. Your name will be replaced by a pseudonym in the transcripts and research paper. You can also request that other identifying information not be included in the research paper, if you feel that it is too revealing. You may also have a copy of the completed research paper, if you wish. All data will be kept in a secure location for a minimum of 36 months from the conclusion of the study. At that point, it will be destroyed.

The IRB, regulatory agencies, and the dissertation chair/thesis adviser may review research records if they request it as well.

**What if I do not want to participate or I want to leave the study?**
You have the right to leave this study at any time or refuse to participate. If you do decide to leave or you decide not to participate, you will not experience any penalty or loss of services you have a right to receive. If you choose to withdraw, any information collected about you **before** the date you leave the study will be kept in the research records for 36 months from the conclusion of the study and may be used as a part of the research.

**Other Considerations:**
If significant new information relating to the study becomes available, which may affect your willingness to continue to participate, this information will be provided to you by the researcher.

**Voluntary Consent by Participant:**
By signing below, you indicate that
- this study has been explained to you
- you have read this document or it has been read to you
- your questions about this research study have been answered
- you have been told that you may ask the researchers any study related questions in the future or contact them in the event of a research-related injury
- you have been told that you may ask Institutional Review Board (IRB) personnel questions about your study rights
- you are entitled to a copy of this form after you have read and signed it
- you voluntarily agree to participate in the study “Parents of War: A Grounded Theory Study of Parenting Through the War Experience”

Participant’s Signature: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Participant’s Name: _____________________________ Date: ________________

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____________________________

Date: ________________
Appendix B: Translator Confidentiality Agreement

**CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT - TRANSLATOR**

I, ____________________________ have been engaged as a translator on the project “Parents of War: A Grounded Theory Study of Parenting Through the War Experience”, and will be required to interpret and translate interviews in this role. In carrying out these activities, I undertake to communicate information fully and faithfully, to the best of my abilities.

I understand that all information provided by interview participants is confidential, and I agree not to use or disclose this information except as required in the course of my duties as a translator. I also undertake to store any records of interviews securely as directed by the researcher, and to destroy any copies of these records remaining in my possession once my involvement in the project ends.

______________________________  ____________
Translator signature            Date
Appendix C: Interview Guides

Initial Interview Guide

1. Segment 1: For the Record
   a. Record the date and place of interview
   b. The name of the person being interviewed
   c. How many children the person has

2. Segment 2: Family Background
   a. Can you tell me about growing up? What are some memories that you have about your childhood?
      i. What are some memories that you have of your mother? Father?
      ii. Did you have any siblings?
      iii. What were some things that you felt that your parents did “right” (things that you want to repeat as parents)? What were some things that you wanted to do differently than them when you became a parent?
   iv.

3. Segment 3: Life Before Children
   a. Interests?
   b. Plans?
   c. Did they have an image of the kind of parent that they wanted to be when they were younger – before they had children?
   d.
   e. Did the war start before you had children?
      i. If so, what was that experience like?
         1. When did it start? How old were you?
         2. What did you do when it started?
         3. What was your life like?
            a. Did you continue to work?
            b. What was a day in your life like during the war?
            c. In what way did the war change your activities or habits?
4. If you were exposed to war before you became a parent:
   a. How did your early experiences of war affect how you parent?
   b. How did those experiences affect her relationship with her husband?
   c. Did those experiences affect your connection to your child?
   d. Intimacy, physical touch and connection, her ability to concentrate on her daily life, etc
   e. Were you or others in your community treated differently because of your gender/ethnicity/race or other factor?
      i. If so, how did that affect you? How did it affect your family?

5. Segment 4: Starting A Family
   a. Meeting husband/partner
      i. How did you meet?
   b. Having Children
      i. How many children do you have?
      ii. When did you have your first child?
      iii. How did your life change when you had your first child?
      iv. Before you had a child, did you think about the kind of parent you would like to be?
         1. Did that change when you had a child?
      v. What were the most rewarding things about being a parent?
      vi. What did you find most stressful?
      vii. Were you able to find time for yourself and your interests?
         1. Did you have a job or did you stay home?

6. Segment 5: Parenting in War
   a. Please, Tell me about what it was like parenting in a war?
   b. What were some challenges that war posed to you as a parent?
   c. What were some ways that you coped during the war?
      i. How did you comfort yourself?
   d. What were some ways that you helped you children cope during the war?
      i. For example, how did you comfort them? How did you protect them?
e. Were there any people that helped you? Any organizations?
f. How did the war change your behavior and/or emotional state?
g. How did the war change your children’s behavior?
h. How did the war affect your ability to parent?

7. Segment 7: After War
   a. How did you escape?
   b. What was your experience of leaving like?
   c. How did fleeing affect you? And your children?
   d. As you look back on this experience, are there any other events that stand out in your mind?

8. Segment 8: Life Now
   a. How is your life different now?
   b. What are some ways that the war has changed you? And your children?
   c. Has war affected you in being the kind of parent you want to be?
   d. ASK MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT SELF CARE AND HOW THEY MANAGE THOSE MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS

9. Segment 9: Ending Questions
   a. Could I ask you about the most important lessons that you learned through experiencing parenting through a war?
   b. How was your experience of parenting in war affected how you parent?
   c. How have you grown as a person since going through a war?
   d. After reflecting on your experiences, is there anything else you would like to add?
   e. Is there anything that you would like to ask me?

Later Interview Guide

1. New Questions to ask:
   a. Has war prevented parents from being the kind of parent they want to be?
   b. Did they have an image of the kind of parent that they wanted to be when they were younger – before they had children?
c. ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW THEY COPED, HOW THEY 
MANAGED TO PARENT DESPITE THE DAMAGE THAT THE WAR 
HAD DONE 
   i. Before you had kids, what kind of parent did you want to be 
   ii. LOOK MORE INTO HOW THE WAR EXPERIENCES AFFECTED 
THEIR SUBSEQUENT RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS 
   iii. ASK MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT SELF CARE AND HOW THEY 
MANAGE THOSE MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS 

d. Notes: At this point, I am starting to see some common threads of thought: 
staying home, not being able to work, not being able to get resources, 
uprooting lives, being victimized as a refugee are a few of them. Some 
categories could be: HOW PARENTS AFFECTED THEIR PARENTING, 
war experience (exposure to violence being one dimension/sub-category; 
difficult to find work, being stuck at home, etc), refugee experience, 
psychological affects of war (how war has affected children, how parents 
adjust because of this), and parenting philosophy. Everyone’s story is different 
– being that individual life experiences are different and also the level of 
violence exposure kind of alters the experience. 

e. CONCEPTS 
   i. HAPPY CHILDHOODS 
      1. LOOKING BACK AT PRE-WAR AS A GOOD TIME 
   ii. WAR STARTS SUDDENLY - SURPRISE 
   iii. HIDING AT HOME 
   iv. NOT BEING ABLE TO WORK 
   v. NOT BEING ABLE TO GET RESOURCES 
   vi. UPROOT LIFE/BREAK PLANS 
   vii. FLEEING IN FEAR 
   viii. SURROUNDED BY VIOLENCE 
   ix. COMFORTING SELF BY PRAYING, HOPE FOR FUTURE, 
CARING FOR CHILDREN 
   x. CHILD-BASED DECISIONS TO LEAVE
1. NO EDUCATION
2. KIDS NOT BEING ABLE TO PLAY OUTSIDE OR WITH OTHER KIDS
3. THREAT OF DANGER
4. CURRENT LIFE IS STILL AFFECTED BY WAR
   a. LOSS
   b. TRAUMA
   c. ANXIETY
   d. FEAR FOR CHILDREN’S SAFETY

f. Notes

At this point, I am starting to see some common threads of thought: staying home, not being able to work, not being able to get resources, uprooting lives, being victimized as a refugee are a few of them. Some categories could be: HOW PARENTS AFFECTED THEIR PARENTING, war experience (exposure to violence being one dimension/sub-category; difficult to find work, being stuck at home, etc), refugee experience, psychological affects of war (how war has affected children, how parents adjust because of this), and parenting philosophy. Everyone’s story is different – being that individual life experiences are different and also the level of violence exposure kind of alters the experience.
Appendix D: Sample of Analytical Memos

3/19/17 – Analysis Method Memo
I have completed Open Coding, and am now doing initial, process and in vivo coding. I have done the first and second interviews and am working on the third interview. Everyone’s story is different – being that individual life experiences are different and also the level of violence exposure kind of alters the experience. However, even at this point, I am starting to see some common threads of thought: staying home, not being able to work, not being able to get resources, uprooting lives, being victimized as a refugee are a few of them. Some categories could be: HOW PARENTS AFFECTED THEIR PARENTING, WAR EXPERIENCE (exposure to violence being one dimension/sub-category; difficult to find work, being stuck at home, etc), refugee experience, psychological affects of war (how war has affected children, how parents adjust because of this), and DEVELOPMENT OF PARENTING PHILOSOPHIES.

Memo on Initial Coding Analytical Process
5/20/17
When doing “Preliminary Coding”, I looked for key phrases, words, and concepts that the participants were expressing. When doing “Initial Coding”, I used action codes to describe the participant feelings or actions described during that part of the interview – both their own and those of other people (like his/her parents) that were being talked about. I also included emotional undertones and my own thoughts about what the participant was saying in short memos. During this coding process, I also wrote codes for main concepts – like how parents developed their parenting ideals from their own parents – as they became apparent to me.

What did I hypothesize about during this stage?
I noticed that participants had happy childhoods, and really admired their parents (especially those of their own sex). They developed their own perspectives on parents from their childhoods, and tried to live up to the ideal that their parents represented for them.

The war experience made people struggle – they could not find work and struggled to provide food for their children. Violence ranged from high exposure to low exposure – and this affected the participants depending on their exposure. However, intervening factors, like extreme poverty, created much suffering in those even not exposed to high levels of violence.

Theoretical note: I hypothesized that participants struggled to take care of their families – especially in relation to security and providing resources. The war interrupted previously happy lives. Parents clung to the ideals that their parents set for them both during and after war – and if they met those ideals, they felt that they were successful as parents. Although, they did eventually share that the war experience did affect their parenting, but they did not feel that it was substantial because they were sticking close to their parents’ examples.

I went into the interviews thinking that some participants might have been involved in fighting, but it did not seem that any of the participants (or their spouses) were involved in either rebelling or supporting the government. They were all caught up in the crossfire – and they all relayed a sense of confusion as to how the war swallowed
them up, or affected them.

Memo on Axial Codes
8/12/2017

Parenting is essentially a process of meeting the needs of one’s children. **Developing ideals of good parenting** is an important part of effective parenting. These ideals can help focus the parent on identifying and meeting their children’s needs, even in the most difficult circumstances. **In war, the parenting process is challenged in many ways**, but meeting their children’s needs often becomes the main focus of parents’ lives. Parents are driven to meet the needs of their children, and even after war, they strive to mediate and cope with the impairments that the war experience has left them with.
### Appendix E: Complete Open Code Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARING AND LOVING FATHER</th>
<th>BEING A TENDER AND LOVING PARENT MAKES YOUR CHILDREN FEEL LOVED</th>
<th>YOU NEED A SUPPORT NETWORK IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>LEAVING A WARZONE MEANS GIVING YOUR CHILD A BETTER LIFE</th>
<th>IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW HOW YOUR PARENTING HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY YOUR WAR EXPERIENCE IF YOU HAD YOUR CHILDREN AFTER THAT EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FATHER STRUGGLED TO MEET FINANCIAL NEEDS</td>
<td>SACRIFICE IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING SHE CAN GIVE TO HER CHILDREN</td>
<td>HOPE OF LEAVING IS A COPING STRATEGY IN WAR</td>
<td>FLEEING WAR MEANS EMBARKING ON A LIFE-THREATENING VOYAGE IN HOPES OF FINDING A SAFER PLACE</td>
<td>PROTECTING CHILDREN: NOT SHARING THE STORY OF YOUR WAR EXPERIENCE WITH THEM UNTIL THEY ARE OLDER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEELING SORRY FOR FATHER FOR STRUGGLING, BUT FEELING LOVED BY HIM FOR DOING THE BEST THAT HE COULD FOR HIS CHILDREN</td>
<td>PARENTING AND WORKING WITH CHRONIC PAIN IS HER SACRIFICE</td>
<td>WHEN YOU GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAVE A WAR ZONE, YOU TAKE IT NO MATTER WHAT</td>
<td>THE DECISION TO FLEE A WAR IS MADE BECAUSE STAYING = DEATH</td>
<td>She works very hard to ensure that her children never experience what she did in war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTHER WAS TENDER</td>
<td>ULTIMATE SACRIFICE WAS LEAVING HER FAMILY TO GIVE HER CHILDREN BETTER LIFE</td>
<td>LIFE ON THE ROAD IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS</td>
<td>FLEEING A WAR ZONE IS WALKING AND WALKING – SOMETIMES FOR YEARS</td>
<td>IN TIMES OF PAIN: PRAYING TO FORGET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTHER WAS VERY SACRIFICING</td>
<td>WORKED DAY AND NIGHT FOR HER FAMILY</td>
<td>HER FAMILY GAVE HER CHILDREN SAFETY</td>
<td>LIFE ON THE ROAD IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS</td>
<td>COPING: “JUST DON’T THINK ABOUT IT” (AVOIDANCE AND SUPRESSION)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE IDEAL MOTHER IS TENDER AND SACRIFICING</td>
<td>BEING LOVING AND CARING ARE VERY IMPORTANT AS A PARENT DURING DIFFICULT TIMES</td>
<td>SETTLING IN A NEW CITY DURING A WAR DOES NOT MAKE YOU FEEL SAFE</td>
<td>FLEEING IS MOVING IN GROUPS</td>
<td>PARENTING AFTER A WAR EXPERIENCE: ENCOURAGING YOUR CHILD TO FORGET AND NOT THINK ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mother was there for everything, in any condition – good or bad situations, she was there”</td>
<td>BEING LOVING AND CARING STRENGTHENED HER</td>
<td>FINDING FAMILY ON THE ROAD IS RANDOM AND BY CHANCE</td>
<td>FLEEING ON FOOT IS WATCHING PEOPLE DIE</td>
<td>ENCOURAGING THEM NOT TO SEARCH FOR ANSWERS, JUST TO SURRENDER TO GOD AND PRAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her mother made her living by buying and reselling things and make a profit</td>
<td>GIVING TO HER FAMILY GAVE HER INNER STRENGTH</td>
<td>PEOPLE TRIED TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES BY STARTING SCHOOLS AND BUSINESSES, EVEN IN HIGHLY DANGEROUS AREAS</td>
<td>FLEEING ON FOOT MEANS SLOWLY AND DESPERATELY FINDING A PLACE OF SAFETY</td>
<td>COPING WITH WAR TRAUMA: FINDING COMFORT IN PRAYER AND SURRENDERING TO GOD’S WILL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His father was very kind</td>
<td>HUSBAND’S SUPPORT AND LOVE GAVE HER INNER STRENGTH</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE IS DOING ANY JOB YOU CAN FIND TO PROVIDE</td>
<td>REFUGEE CAMP IN RWANDA WAS “A BAD LIFE”</td>
<td>RELIGION IS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF MANY SURVIVORS OF WAR’S LIVES.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His father tried to be a friend to them as well as guide them through life</td>
<td>“I’d like to adopt the same kind of strategy or the same way of behaving</td>
<td></td>
<td>THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH FOOD, SLEEPING ON</td>
<td>BELIEF: GOOD PARENTING IS HIDING YOUR PAIN FROM YOUR CHILDREN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His father was very supportive with schooling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“His father was trying to make them the best and successful kind of person.”

His father would try to explain how life works and he would explain it to them as a friend.

He told his children how to try to be successful and try to be protected in the community – how to make yourself useful.

Parents were very tender and kind.

They were also very protective.

“They were afraid about us for everything – they were trying to protect us most of the time.”

They were tender even with their protection.

She did not have a social life outside of the family.

MOTHER TOOK GOOD CARE OF HER AS A CHILD AND AN ADULT.

MOTHER WAS ALWAYS HAPPY.

MOTHER WOULD TAKE CHILDREN AROUND OUTSIDE TEACHING THEM ABOUT that my father did with me.”

He wants to be a friend to his children, and he wants to push them on the right track.

She learned how to love children from her mother.

She does not want to do anything differently from her parents.

She tries to emulate her mother by preparing breakfast and walking her children to the bus.

Building a close relationship with child is based on communicating and “talking about everything”

FORGOTTEN INDIVIDUAL SELF, ONLY MOTHER.

BEING A MOTHER MOTIVATES HER TO KEEP GOING.

She protected her children and herself by praying.

She tried to have a loving, comforting relationship with her children by giving them all of her time after work.

EATING TOGETHER, BREASTFEEDING, BATHING YOUR CHILDREN, PLAYING TOGETHER ARE ALL WAYS TO MEET YOUR CHILDREN’S NEEDS.

His father was very worried when the violence hit, and he forbid them to go out of the house.

“We were barely able to go to the store to pick up the most necessary things for our lives”

There were bombings and shooting.

His children were terrified.

The kids and adults stayed on the ground in their house.

“Most of the time, we were laying on the floor to avoid getting shot. Especially as soon as we heard any sound or explosion, we lay low.”

THE FLOOR

GOT MARRIED AT 17

PRAYING AND DEVOTING HERSELF TO CHRISTIANITY HELPED HER COPE WITH THE PAIN

BECAME CHRISTIAN IN REFUGEE CAMP.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN CAMPS CAME TOGETHER TO PRAY PRAYING TO HEAL.

TRYING TO AVOID GETTING ANGRY AND DEPRESSED BY THINKING ABOUT EXPERIENCE.

KIDS WERE SOMEWHAT HAPPY IN CAMPS BECAUSE THEY HAD EXTENDED FAMILY.

LIVING CONDITIONS IN CAMPS WERE NOT GOOD.

VERY LITTLE SECURITY IN THE CAMPS.

NEVER KNEW IF CAMPS WOULD BE ATTACKED, AND SHE WOULD DIE.

IN THE CAMPS, SHE WAS VERY SCARED.

LIFE THREATENING EVENTS IN CAMPS: TRUCKS DRIVING.

EXPERIENCING A WAR MEANS LIVING WITH MEMORIES AND FLASHBACKS FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

COPING: CRYING WHEN ALONE OR ISOLATING SELF WHEN MEMORIES COME BACK.

GOOD PARENTING IS FOCUSING ON PARENTING WHEN YOU’RE WITH YOUR CHILDREN AND AVOIDING THINKING/SUPRESSING ABOUT PAINFUL MEMORIES UNTIL YOU’RE ALONE.

PART OF PARENTING IS SUPRESSING DIFFICULT MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS.

WHEN YOU’VE EXPERIENCED WAR TRAUMA, YOU CANNOT FORGET, YOU CAN ONLY SUPRESS IT.
| NATURE |  | AROUND THE CAMP THAT THE GROUP WAS GOING TO COME AND KILL THEM. IT WAS VERY HARD TO HELP CHILDREN IN THE CAMPS. |  |
## Appendix F: Complete Table of Process Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Playing As a Child</th>
<th>Trying to Copy Her Mother's Tenderness as a Parent</th>
<th>Being Caught Off Guard by the Rapid Rise of Violence</th>
<th>Not Knowing How to Comfort Self or Children Adequately</th>
<th>Walking Without Knowing Where Going</th>
<th>Providing for Family Even While Being in Pain</th>
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<td>Going Through the Daily Routine of Meeting Children's Needs for Food, Education, Self-Care, Sleep, and Comforting</td>
<td>Living with Disruption to Daily Life</td>
<td>Living Through Execution and Rising Radicalism</td>
<td>Parenting as More Important as a Parent During Difficult Times</td>
<td>Parenting as More Important as a Parent During Difficult Times: Protecting Her Children From Her Past: Not Allowing War Experiences to Affect Her as a Parent</td>
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<td>Being Poor, But Being Happy as a Child</td>
<td>Remembering Mother's Ethical Lessons</td>
<td>Admiring Father Because He Was Kind and Also Directing Him in Life</td>
<td>Parenting as More Important Than Anything: Gradually Moving Up in Her Career</td>
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<td>Parenting as More Important as a Parent During Difficult Times: Protecting Her Children From Her Past: Not Allowing War Experiences to Affect Her as a Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being Poor, But Being Happy as a Child</td>
<td>Remembering Mother's Ethical Lessons</td>
<td>Admiring Father Because He Was Kind and Also Directing Him in Life</td>
<td>Parenting as More Important Than Anything: Gradually Moving Up in Her Career</td>
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<td>Playing as a Child</td>
<td>Trying to Copy Her Mother's Tenderness as a Parent</td>
<td>Being Caught Off Guard by the Rapid Rise of Violence</td>
<td>Not Knowing How to Comfort Self or Children Adequately</td>
<td>Walking Without Knowing Where Going</td>
<td>Providing for Family Even While Being in Pain</td>
<td>Parenting Philosophy Hy: Having a Clear Idea of Mothering Based on Her Own Mother</td>
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<td>Being Secure and Safe as a Child</td>
<td>Working to Provide for Family Is Extremely Important</td>
<td>Going Through the Daily Routine of Meeting Children's Needs for Food, Education, Self-Care, Sleep, and Comforting</td>
<td>Living with Disruption to Daily Life</td>
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**Source:** Unemployment, Like Challenges: Financial Major Causing Night to Get Some Children: Still Parenting Him in Life Was Kind Because He Admiring On to and Fun Kind, Happy, Being Happy As a Child. Appendix F: Complete Table of Process Codes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DETAINMENT S CAUSING HUSBAND TO BE PARALYSED WITH FEAR ENDURING PAIN AND SACRIFICE TO TAKE CARE OF CHILDREN DURING THE DAY AND WORKING TO MAKE MONEY AT NIGHT</th>
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<td>DINNERS AND EATING WITH THEM HELPED TO BUILD CLOSERNESS</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>TAKE IT ANYMORE BEING UNABLE TO PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH FOOD AND NECESSITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAYING ON FLOOR, NOT USING LIGHTS AT NIGHT, STAYING HOME DAY AND NIGHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOT COMPROMISING HER PARENTING BECAUSE OF WAR, POVERTY, AND PAIN</td>
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<td>REFUGEE APPLICATION PROCESS BEING ARDUOUS, CONFUSING, AND UNCERTAIN</td>
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<td>TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY WHEN THEY COULD GET IT</td>
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<td>FOR A BETTER FUTURE LIVING IN LIMBO SINCE THE WAR DESTROYED SECURITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILDREN ARE ADAPTING TO LIFE IN THE US FOCUSING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION AS A MAJOR COMPONENT OF GOOD MOTHERING</td>
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<td>LOVING AND TENDER BEING A GOOD PARENT: BEING PROTECTIVE AND CAUTIOUS BEING A GOOD PARENT: BEING A FRIEND TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND PUSHING THEM ON THE RIGHT TRACK</td>
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<td>BEING A GOOD MOTHER IS BEING DEPENDABLE AND SUPPORTIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEING A GOOD PARENT: HELPING YOUR CHILDREN MAKE GOOD DECISIONS IN LIFE</td>
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Appendix G: Complete Table of In Vivo Codes

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<th>Code</th>
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| "MY FATHER TRIED TO MAKE ME THE BEST AND SUCCESSFUL KIND OF PERSON" | "My mother was there for everything, in any condition – good or bad situations, she was there."
| "MY PARENTS WERE AFRAID ABOUT US FOR EVERYTHING – THEY WERE TRYING TO PROTECT US MOST OF THE TIME" | "I LOVED TO COME HOME TO MY FAMILY AFTER WORK"
| "There is no strange thing that happened to me, it’s just that I transferred from a close family of father, mother, sister, and brother to a family of husband, mother-in-law and father-in-law."
| "If a government vehicle showed up on the street, people would be scared of even getting close to that vehicle" | "My mother-in-law would gather the whole family in one room and tell them "it’s ok, there’s nothing that’s going to happen. This will end, you will be safe. I am here."
| "We were barely able to go to the store to pick up the most necessary things for our lives" | "We were looking for a better life for my kids"
| "My husband was hardly providing the kids with food, with the milk, and the diapers"
| "We had enough of this life, that’s it, we can’t stay there any more. We need a better life for our kids."
| "If we can’t provide that, let’s die together"
| "AND MAYBE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE IS THAT I WAS LOOKING FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR MY KIDS"
| "MY COUNTRY AT THAT TIME WAS NOT A GOOD PLACE TO RAISE"
| "They made us live in terror" | "If you light a candle, the sniper"
| "We didn’t have time to know what was going on"
| "The people could not tell who was attacking" | "we kept our traveling to the minimum. We didn’t do that much traveling. We started to stay at home as much as we could."
| "IT DOESN’T MAKE SENSE TO STAY IN A PLACE THAT IS GOING TO END UP KILLING YOU" | "ok, either we’re going to live a better life, or we’re going to die"
| "We reached the point that there’s no more waiting and we have to move out – there’s no work, there’s not enough food, it’s the time now for moving” | "I’m just going to take my family and run away to get them to safety. This was my main concern, and this was my goal at that time” |
| "THEY HAD NO RADICAL PROSPECTS FOR EITHER SIDE" | "We just took a bag and ran down the street” |
| ""You say, if I die, I die – If I don’t die, I continue life” | "There were always bombings” |
| "When you live in a war place, you don’t have government, you just survive” | "Life here in the US is good because it is a country of opportunity.” |
| My mother sacrificed so much to see us happy.         | “My understanding of being a parent is tenderness and sacrifice.” |
| “During Saddam, the old regime – during that time life was beautiful” | “Being there for them in times of pain and giving them the most valuable things that I can give them – my whole life, I sacrifice for them” |
| “WE WERE VERY POOR” | I do what my mother used to do – just show her children that everything is ok, even when she was sad |
| “Very caring and loving father” | “DURING THE DAY I WAS A TENDER MOM, WITH THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF RAISING THE KIDS, AND DURING THE NIGHT I WAS A WORKING WIFE” |
| She used to give her time for everybody” | “IT WAS A LOT BETTER TO BE IN JORDAN. I FELT MORE COMFORTABLE AND SAFE” |
| “My mother was everything for me” | BECAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE CAMPS, SHE WOULD START TO THINK “THIS IS NOT RIGHT” AND “THEN IT COMES BACK” |
| “I wished to be like her” | “You had no choice. You had to keep moving” |
| “I loved finance and felt like I was in MY field” | “Sometimes you would just meet others on the road” |

| will shoot it” | “I HAD A DIFFERENT KIND OF SUPPORT FROM MY HUSBAND AND THE ENVIRONMENT AROUND ME” |
| It was kind of a very risky situation. It was wartime, it was a militia, radical, execution time” | “IT WAS A ROAD WITHOUT END” |
| KIDS” | “THERE WAS NO FUN IN THE CAMPS. THERE WAS NOTHING TO MAKE YOU HAPPY IN THE CAMPS” |
| life, or we’re going to die” | “You don’t know what to do, you just run. If you feel like it’s coming this way, you go the other way. And you don’t know where to go” |
| “I’m just going to take my family and run away to get them to safety. This was my main concern, and this was my goal at that time” | “One of these times they will not let me go or they will kill me” |
| “You had no choice. You had to keep moving” | IT WAS A ROAD WITHOUT END |
| “Sometimes you would just meet others on the road” | “THERE WAS NO FUN IN THE CAMPS. THERE WAS NOTHING TO MAKE YOU HAPPY IN THE CAMPS” |
| “You had no choice. You had to keep moving” | “You had no choice. You had to keep moving” |
| “Sometimes you would just meet others on the road” | “One of these times they will not let me go or they will kill me” |

There are many opportunities to do something that you can’t do in Africa
### Appendix H: Complete Table of Emotion Codes

<p>| LAUGHING AT HERSELF AS A CHILD | IDOLIZING MOTHER’S TENDERNESS AND SACRIFICE | MEMORIES OF KILLINGS AND FLEEING IS OVERWHELMINGLY PAINFUL | CRAWLING = HUMILIATION AND ANGER | ANGRY AND SAD ABOUT WAR DESTROYING FAMILY | LEAVING LAST MINUTE = PANIC, DESPARATI ON |
| LAUGHING AT HER EARLIER DREAMS TO BE A SOLDIER | CHANNELING MOTHER’S PASSION FOR EDUCATION | DISAPPOINTE D THAT WAR STOPPED HER PLANS | RESENTMENT THAT GOV’T AND REBELS WOULD PUT THEM IN THIS POSITION | GRANDMOTHER SOOTHING FAMILY | LEAVING LAST MINUTE = PANIC, DESPARATIO N |
| REMINICING FINDING IT FUNNY THAT SHE BECAME A MOM INSTEAD | FELT ACCOMPLISH ED BEFORE MARRIAGE AND HAVING KIDS | HORRIFIED BY EXPERIENCE | CHAOS | DAUGHTER SCARED, CONFUSED | NOT KNOWING HOW IT WILL TURN OUT |
| FEELING LOVED: TENDER AND KIND | LIVING IN FEAR OF GOVERNMENT | CONFUSION OF WHERE VIOLENCE IS COMING FROM | INSECURE ABOUT SURROUNDINGS | NEEDING COMFORT | FEELING OUT OF PLACE |
| CHERISHING MOTHER’S LESSONS | FEELING VERY YOUNG | SCARED | FEELING UNSAFE, HELPLESS AND INSECURE FOR 20 YEARS | CHILDREN ARE TERRIFIED | HOMESICK |
| WISTFUL FOR PAST | FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS WHEN HAD FIRST BABY | RAPID ESCALATION IN VIOLENCE = STUNNED | AVOIDANCE OF OTHERS | HOW TO KEEP THEM CALM? = DESPARATI ON, FEAR, CONFUSION | FLEEING IRAQ MEANT FLEEING HOME AND FAMILY = LOSS |
| CRYING AT MEMORY OF GROWING UP WITHOUT FATHER | FEELING OBLIGATED TO SERVE HER FAMILY | SWEEP UP IN VIOLENCE | FEELING GROUNDED BECAUSE OF SCHOOL | FEELING TERRIFIED FOR HER CHILDREN’S SAFETY | FEELING OUT OF PLACE |
| IDOLIZING MOTHER AS A CHILD AND AS AN ADULT | SACRIFICING SELF TO BE THERE FOR HER FAMILY | GOVERNMENT T BOMBARDMENT = VICTIMIZATION | LIVING WITH DISRUPTIONS TO DAILY LIFE BECAUSE OF THREATS OF VIOLENCE FEELING INSECURE AND UNSTABLE | CHILDREN ARE SCARED FOR LIFE | NOT FEELING SETTLED UNTIL IN THE US |
| BEFORE WAR, VERY HAPPY AND PEACEFUL SATISFIED BEING WITH FAMILY | PROUD OF HERSELF AS A MOTHER AND WIFE | TRAPPED INSIDE | LIVING WITH CONFUSION AND INCONSISTENCY | TRYING TO BE STRONG | HOMESICK |
| FEELING LOVED AND SUPPORTED BY PARENTS/IN-LAWS | PROUD OF HERSELF FOR SACRIFICING HER OWN COMFORT FOR HER FAMILY | FEAR OF OUTSIDE | LIVING WITH CONFUSION AND CONFUSION | CHILDREN LONGING TO LEAVE | SACRIFICING CURRENT HAPPINESS FOR DREAM OF FUTURE |
| PASSIONATE ABOUT EDUCATION | PROUD OF HERSELF FOR SACRIFICING HER OWN COMFORT FOR HER FAMILY | FEAR OF RESOURCES | FEELING TERRIFIED FOR HER CHILDREN’S SAFETY | HAVING BABY MADE HER MISS HER FAMILY | FEELING OUT OF PLACE |
| FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS/IN-LAWS | BEING A LOVING MOTHER GAVE HER PURPOSE AND SATISFACTION | FEAR OF GETTING KILLED | HUNGRY | DRUNK | NOT FEELING SETTLED UNTIL IN THE US |
| DEEPLY LOVING EDUCATION | CREATING CLOSURE BY “GIVING THEM ALL MY MEMORIES OF KILLINGS AND FLEEING IS OVERWHELMINGLY PAINFUL | URGENCY TO GET OUT | HUNGRY | STRUGGLING | FEELS MORE ANXIOUS NOW |
| FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS/IN-LAWS | BEING A LOVING MOTHER GAVE HER PURPOSE AND SATISFACTION | CONSTANT FEAR OF DEATH | HUNGRY | STRUGGLING | SHORT-TEMPERED |
| FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS/IN-LAWS | CREATING CLOSURE BY “GIVING THEM ALL MY MEMORIES OF KILLINGS AND FLEEING IS OVERWHELMINGLY PAINFUL | SCARED AND SAD FOR HER COMMUNITY | SCARED | STRESSED OR DEPRESSED | GETTING ANGRY WHEN THINK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HER |
| FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS/IN-LAWS | FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS/IN-LAWS | DEPRESSED | UNABLE TO BREASTFEED | SCARED | MOURNING PARENTS |
| FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS/IN-LAWS | FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS/IN-LAWS | FEAR | FEELING OUT OF PLACE | NOT FEELING SAFE OR “AT HOME” IN NEW CITY | MORE APPRECIATIVEOF LIFE |</p>
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Appendix I: Participants developed parenting ideals from their own parents and childhood experiences

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>In Vivo</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEFORE WAR, VERY HAPPY AND PEACEFUL</td>
<td>“My mother was everything for me”</td>
<td>LAUGHING AT HERSELF AS A CHILD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAYING AS A CHILD</td>
<td>“I wished to be like her”</td>
<td>LAUGHING AT HER EARLIER DREAMS TO BE A SOLDIER:</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEING WILD AND FREE</td>
<td>“MY FATHER WAS A GREAT MAN”</td>
<td>FINDING IT FUNNY THAT SHE BECAME A MOM INSTEAD</td>
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<tr>
<td>REMEMBERING MOTHER AS VERY KIND, HAPPY, AND FUN</td>
<td>“MY FATHER TRIED TO MAKE ME THE BEST AND SUCCESSFUL KIND OF PERSON”</td>
<td>REMINICING</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOLDING ONTO MOTHER’S ETHICAL LESSONS</td>
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<td>FEELING LOVED: TENDER AND KIND</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMING FATHER BECAUSE HE WAS KIND AND ALSO DIRECTING HIM IN LIFE</td>
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<td>FEELING LOVED AND PROTECTED AS A CHILD</td>
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<tr>
<td>FATHER BEING SUPPORTIVE OF EDUCATION</td>
<td></td>
<td>CHERISHING MOTHER’S LESSONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>FATHER EXPLAINING HOW LIFE WORKED IN A FRIENDLY WAY</td>
<td></td>
<td>WISTFUL FOR PAST</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRANDPARENTS CO-PARENTING WITH PARENTS</td>
<td></td>
<td>IDOLIZING MOTHER AS A CHILD AND AS AN ADULT</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEING HAPPY AS A CHILD</td>
<td>My mother sacrificed so much to see us happy.</td>
<td>SATISFIED BEING WITH FAMILY</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEING SECURE AND SAFE AS A CHILD</td>
<td>“During Saddam, the old regime – during that time life was beautiful”</td>
<td>PASSIONATE ABOUT EDUCATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEING POOR, BUT BEING HAPPY AS A CHILD</td>
<td>“WE WERE VERY POOR”</td>
<td>FELT SUCCESSFUL IN CAREER AND EDUCATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRIORITIZING SECURITY OVER HAVING ENOUGH RESOURCES</td>
<td>“She used to give her time for everybody”</td>
<td>DEEPLY RESPECTED FATHER</td>
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<tr>
<td>HAD A HAPPY CHILDHOOD BECAUSE HER MOTHER MET HER NEEDS</td>
<td>“My mother was there for everything, in any condition – good or bad situations, she was there”</td>
<td>FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARENTING PHILOSOPHY: HAVING A CLEAR IDEA OF MOTHERING BASED ON HER OWN MOTHER</td>
<td>FATHER TAUGHT THEM TO “LOVE PEOPLE AND TO BE PEACEFUL”</td>
<td>FEELING SAFE IN VILLAGE BEFORE WAR</td>
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<td>PARENTING PHILOSOPHY: FOLLOWING HIS FATHER’S METHOD OF PARENTING</td>
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<td>BEING SECURE AND SAFE AS A CHILD</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOTHER TAUGHT THEM “HOW TO BE A GOOD PERSON” AND TREAT OTHERS WITH KINDNESS AND RESPECT</td>
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<td>APPRECIATIVE OF FATHER</td>
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<td>FEELING SORRY FOR FATHER</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PROUD OF FATHER FOR TRYING HARD</td>
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<td>IDOLIZING MOTHER’S TENDERNESS AND SACRIFICE</td>
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<td>HAPPY WITH MOTHER AND SIBLINGS</td>
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The Concept of Childhood and Development of Parenting Styles and Philosophies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YOU CAN HAVE A GOOD CHILDHOOD EVEN IN A DICTATORSHIP</th>
<th>HAVING A GOOD CHILDHOOD, WITH A GOOD EXAMPLE OF PARENTING, GIVES PARENTS A BLUEPRINT FOR GOOD PARENTING</th>
<th>HAVING AN INTACT FAMILY MEANS HAPPINESS</th>
<th>HAVING A GOOD CHILDHOOD MAKES YOU WANT TO BE LIKE YOUR PARENTS WHEN YOU BECOME A PARENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>HAPPY CHILDHOOD IS FEELING LOVED AND TAKEN CARE OF</td>
<td>A HAPPY FAMILY HAS GOOD COMMUNICATION AND IS “CLOSE”</td>
<td>YOU CAN PROVIDE A GOOD CHILDHOOD EVEN IN POVERTY</td>
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Appendix J: Participants developed ideals of “good parenting” that they tried to implement in their own parenting

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<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>In Vivo</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
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<tr>
<td>TRYING TO COPY HER MOTHER’S TENDERNESS AS A PARENT</td>
<td>“I LOVED TO COME HOME TO MY FAMILY AFTER WORK”</td>
<td>CHERISHING MOTHER’S LESSONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRYING TO EMULATE MOTHER BY BEING THERE FOR HER CHILDREN</td>
<td>She sacrificed a lot of her own comfort or her own things to make us happy and make us a family”</td>
<td>FEELING SUPPORTED BY PARENTS WHEN HAD FIRST BABY</td>
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<td>WORKING TO PROVIDE FOR FAMILY IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT</td>
<td>“IF MY CHILDREN FEEL BETTER, I FEEL BETTER TOO”</td>
<td>FEELING OBLIGATED TO SERVE HER FAMILY</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOING THROUGH THE DAILY ROUTINE OF MEETING CHILDREN’S NEEDS FOR FOOD, EDUCATION, SELF-CARE, SLEEP, AND COMFORTING</td>
<td>This is the nature of the mom - sacrificing herself for her kids. This is the nature of - it’s kind of built in.”</td>
<td>SACRIFICING SELF TO BE THERE FOR HER FAMILY</td>
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<tr>
<td>GETTING UP AND MAKING BREAKFAST AND TAKING CHILDREN TO/FROM BUS ARE TWO WAYS THAT SHE SHOWS CARING FOR HER CHILDREN</td>
<td>“Being there for them in times of pain and giving them the most valuable things that I can give them – my whole life, I sacrifice for them”</td>
<td>PROUD OF HERSELF FOR SACRIFICING HER OWN COMFORT FOR HER FAMILY</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN IS IMPORTANT IN BUILDING A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILDREN</td>
<td>I do what my mother used to do – just show her children that everything is ok, even when she was sad”</td>
<td>BEING A LOVING MOTHER GAVE HER PURPOSE AND SATISFACTION</td>
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<td>CREATING CLOSENESS BY “GIVING THEM ALL MY TIME AFTER WORK”</td>
<td>“DURING THE DAY I WAS A TENDER MOM, WITH THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF RAISING THE KIDS, AND DURING THE NIGHT I WAS A WORKING WIFE”</td>
<td>TRYING TO GIVE CHILDREN BETTER CHILDHOOD BY BEING CLOSE TO THEM</td>
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<tr>
<td>COOKING DINNERS AND EATING WITH THEM HELPED TO BUILD CLOSENESS</td>
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<td>CREATING CLOSENESS BY “GIVING THEM ALL MY TIME AFTER WORK”</td>
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<td>BEING A GOOD MOTHER IS BEING TENDER, LOVING, AND PROVIDING FOR THEM NO MATTER WHAT</td>
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<td>CREATING PHYSICAL CLOSENESS BY GIVING BATHS WAS SO HAPPY TO HAVE A BABY</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEING A GOOD MOTHER IS BEING DEPENDABLE AND SUPPORTIVE</td>
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<tr>
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The Concept of Good Parenting

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<tr>
<th>Working to Provide for Needs</th>
<th>Protecting From Pain</th>
<th>Building Intimacy and Trust</th>
<th>Providing Good Childhood</th>
<th>Planning for Future</th>
<th>Feeling Successful as a Parent</th>
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<tr>
<td>PART OF GOOD PARENTING</td>
<td>PROTECTING YOUR CHILD BY LEAVING A HOSTILE SITUATION</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTING IS “WORKING HARD TO LIVE IN A SOCIETY WHERE YOUR KIDS ARE PROTECTED”</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTING IS BEING CARING</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTING IS BEING TENDER, DEPENDABLE, AND SUPPORTIVE</td>
<td>BEING A GOOD PARENT IS ENCOURAGING YOUR CHILD TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>WORKING TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR FAMILY</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTING IS “WORKING HARD TO LIVE IN A SOCIETY WHERE YOUR KIDS ARE PROTECTED”</td>
<td>BEING A GOOD PARENT MEANS BEING TENDER AND LOVING</td>
<td>BEING A GOOD PARENT IS “LOVING THEM – IT’S YOUR GIFT”</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTS MAKE CHILDREN WANT TO BE GOOD PARENTS TOO</td>
<td>MOTHERS SHOULD ENCOURAGE THEIR Daughters TO BE SUCCESSFUL</td>
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<tr>
<td>HAVING A CAREER AND PROVIDING FOR YOUR FAMILY IS PART OF GOOD PARENTING</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTING IS FOCUSING ON PARENTING WHEN YOU’RE WITH YOUR CHILDREN AND AVOIDING</td>
<td>A GOOD</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTING IS</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTING</td>
<td>SELF-SACRIFICE IS THE NATURE OF BEING A GOOD PARENT</td>
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DURING THE DAY AND WORKING TO MAKE MONEY AT NIGHT

BEING A GOOD PARENT: BEING KIND, LOVING AND TENDER

BEING A GOOD PARENT: BEING PROTECTIVE AND CAUTIOUS

BEING A GOOD MOTHER IS BEING THERE FOR YOUR CHILDREN “FOR EVERYTHING” AND IN ANY SITUATION

BEING A GOOD PARENT: BEING A FRIEND TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND PUSHING THEM ON THE RIGHT TRACK

BEING A GOOD PARENT: HELPING YOUR CHILDREN MAKE GOOD DECISIONS IN LIFE

FOCUSING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION AS A MAJOR COMPONENT OF GOOD MOTHERING

HOLDING ONTO WHAT HER MOTHER FELT WAS IMPORTANT

IDOLIZING MOTHER AS A CHILD AND AS AN ADULT

The Concept of Good Parenting
GOOD PARENTING IS WORKING VERY HARD SO THAT YOUR CHILDREN “CAN HAVE EVERYTHING” THEY NEED. BEING A GOOD PARENT IS WORKING HARD EVEN WHEN IN PAIN.

GOOD PARENTING IS PROVIDING YOUR BEST EVEN WHEN IT IS DIFFICULT.

GOOD PARENTING IS IMMINENTLY STARTING TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILDREN, EVEN IN EXILE.

GOOD PARENTING IS LOVING PARENT CAN BE MOTIVATING ON TO WORK HARD.

TAKING CARE OF THE HOUSE IS PART OF GOOD PARENTING.

THINKING/SUPRES SING ABOUT PAINFUL MEMORIES UNTIL YOU’RE ALONE.

GOOD PARENTING IS “SHOWING CHILDREN THAT EVERYTHING IS OK” EVEN WHEN YOU’RE SAD.

PART OF PARENTING IS SUPPRESSING DIFFICULT MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS.

GOOD PARENTING IS BEING THERE FOR YOUR CHILDREN “IN ANY CONDITION – GOOD OR BAD.”

GOOD PARENTING IS “GIVING THEM ALL OF MY TIME AFTER WORK.”

GOOD PARENTING MEANS SACRIFICING YOUR OWN COMFORT FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

GOOD PARENTING IS “ENCOURAGING YOUR CHILD TO MOVE ON WITH THE FUTURE AND TRY TO FORGET THE PAST.”

EDUCATING YOUR CHILDREN IF THERE IS NO EDUCATION.

GOOD PARENTING IS TRYING TO CREATE A GOOD CHILDHOOD FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

GOOD PARENTING IS ENCOURAGING YOUR CHILD TO MOVE ON WITH THE FUTURE AND TRY TO FORGET THE PAST.

BUILDING A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP.

GOOD PARENTING MEANS YOU CANNOT ESCAPE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES.

GOOD PARENTING IS COMING TO A COUNTRY WHERE THERE ARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

IS BEING A GOOD ROLEMODEL FOR PARENTING.

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GOOD PARENTING MEANS YOU CANNOT ESCAPE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES.
GOOD PARENTING IS TAKING CARE OF YOUR CHILDREN CAN GIVE EACH OTHER INNER STRENGTH
Appendix K: Participants viewed war conditions as threatening, destabilizing and traumatizing

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<tr>
<th>Process</th>
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<tr>
<td>WITNESSING PEOPLE KILLING EACH OTHER</td>
<td>“We were barely able to go to the store to pick up the most necessary things for our lives”</td>
<td>MEMORIES OF KILLINGS AND FLEEING OVERWHELMINGLY PAINFUL</td>
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<td>GROUPS SEARCHING FOR PEOPLE TO KILL</td>
<td>Most of the time, we were laying on the floor to avoid getting shot. Especially as soon as we heard any sound or explosion, we lay low”</td>
<td>DISAPPOINTED THAT WAR STOPPED HER PLANS</td>
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<td>BEING CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY THE RAPID RISE OF VIOLENCE</td>
<td>“Basically, we lived the whole day on the ground. We crawled most of the time to do all of our business inside the house because there was constant shooting”</td>
<td>HORRIFIED BY EXPERIENCE</td>
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<td>RAPIDLY ESCALATING VIOLENCE BETWEEN REBELS AND GOVERNMENT FORCES</td>
<td>“They made us live in terror”</td>
<td>RAPID ESCALATION IN VIOLENCE = STUNNED</td>
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<td>NON-POLITICAL CIVILIANS BEING SWEEPED UP IN THE VIOLENCE</td>
<td>“If you light a candle, the sniper will shoot it”</td>
<td>SWEPT UP IN VIOLENCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>FATHER PROTECTING FAMILY BY FORBIDDING ANYONE TO LEAVE HOUSE</td>
<td>It was kind of a very risky situation. It was wartime, it was a militia, radical, execution time”</td>
<td>GOVERNMENT BOMBARDMENT = VICTIMIZATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING CONFINED TO THE HOUSE OUT OF FEAR</td>
<td>“we kept our traveling to the minimum. We didn’t do that much traveling. We started to stay at home as much as we could.” “IT DOESN’T MAKE SENSE TO STAY IN A PLACE THAT IS GOING TO END UP KILLING YOU”</td>
<td>TRAPPED INSIDE</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIVING WITH DISRUPTIONS TO DAILY LIFE</td>
<td>“ok, either we’re going to live a better life, or we’re going to die”</td>
<td>FEAR OF OUTSIDE</td>
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<td>INNOCENT BYSTANDERS: BEING CAUGHT UP IN THE WAR WITHOUT PARTICIPATING</td>
<td>“We reached the point that there’s no more waiting and we have to move out – there’s no work, there’s not enough food, it’s the time now for moving”</td>
<td>FEAR OF LACK OF RESOURCES</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOT KNOWING WHO IS DOING THE KILLING</td>
<td>“I’m just going to take my family and run away to get them to safety. This was my main concern, and this was my goal at that time”</td>
<td>FEAR OF GETTING KILLED</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIVING THROUGH EXECUTIONS AND RISING RADICALISM</td>
<td>“THEY HAD NO RADICAL PROSPECTS FOR EITHER SIDE”</td>
<td>URGENCY TO GET OUT</td>
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<tr>
<td>WATCHING PEOPLE GET KILLED AND BOMBED</td>
<td>“We didn’t have time to know what was going on”</td>
<td>CONSTANT FEAR OF DEATH</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIVING LIFE IN A WAR IS LIVING WITH NO SECURITY, NO OPTIONS FOR A BETTER LIFE, NO SCHOOL SYSTEM, NO JOBS</td>
<td>“The people could not tell who was attacking”</td>
<td>SCARED AND SAD FOR HER COMMUNITY</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“You don’t know what to do, you just”</td>
<td>VIOLENCE HAPPENS WITHOUT KNOWING WHERE AND WHEN IT WILL COME</td>
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<td>STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE</td>
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<td>FEELING HELPLESS</td>
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<td>NOT IN CENTER OF WAR BUT STILL FEELING THREATENED BY GOVERNMENT</td>
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<td>HUSBAND QUIT JOB OUT OF FEAR</td>
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<td>AVOIDING BEING A TARGET OF VIOLENCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Believing that life in Iraq would be endless suffering</td>
<td>Environment of fear</td>
<td></td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waiting every day to go to Jordan</td>
<td>Detained and scared</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching a point where they could not take it anymore</td>
<td>Paranoia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run. If you feel like it’s coming this way, you go the other way. And you don’t know where to go”</td>
<td>Husband paralysed by fear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You had no choice. You had to keep moving”</td>
<td>Alone and scared</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“Sometimes you would just meet others on the road”</td>
<td>Fed up with living in war</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“One of these times they will not let me go or they will kill me”</td>
<td>Breaking point</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“You say, if I die, I die – If I don’t die, I continue life”</td>
<td>Country is hopeless</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“When you live in a war place, you don’t have government, you just survive”</td>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You cannot avoid these groups – “they can come from anywhere. You can’t predict”</td>
<td>Unable to breastfeed = scared and failure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“You go to work and you’re not sure that you’ll come back”</td>
<td>Worried about husband’s mental state</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Sometimes you would spend two days in the house because you could not go to work”</td>
<td>Worried about surviving without work</td>
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<tr>
<td>She was so scared by seeing people kill each other</td>
<td>Confusion of where violence is coming from</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Groups “come to people’s homes and kill them if they are home”</td>
<td>Crawling = humiliation</td>
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<tr>
<td>“We just took a bag and ran down the street”</td>
<td>Anger</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“There were always bombings”</td>
<td>Resentment that Gov’t and rebels would put them in this position</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Living in perpetual war</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chaos</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Scared, confused and lost</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Insecure about surroundings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling grounded because of school</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling unsafe, helpless and insecure for 20 years</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have to protect self</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoidance of others</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Living with disruptions to daily life because of threats of violence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling insecure and unstable</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| | Living with confusion and
Defining the Experience of War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destruction of Previously Happy Life</th>
<th>Surprise and Disorientation</th>
<th>Exposure to Violence</th>
<th>Poverty and Scarcity</th>
<th>Survival and Coping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIFE BEFORE THE WAR WAS HAPPY</td>
<td>THE VIOLENCE HITS SUDDENLY IN A WARZONE</td>
<td>IN A WAR, FIGHTING FORCES OFTEN TARGET INNOCENT PEOPLE</td>
<td>THE WAR AND RESULTING POVERTY EXPERIENCE IS A LIFE-ALTERING EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA CAN CAUSE POVERTY AND DEBILITATION IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIFE BEFORE WAR IS SECURE AND PEACEFUL</td>
<td>YOU CANNOT PREPARE FOR A WAR HITTING YOU</td>
<td>WAR IS HEARING GUNS ON THE STREETS AND HELICOPTERS DROPPING BOMBS</td>
<td>FINDING A JOB IS A MAJOR PROBLEM OF LIVING IN A WAR</td>
<td>IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO GET EVEN VERY BASIC STAPLES LIKE SALT IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIFE BEFORE WAR IS SECURE BECAUSE OF SADDAM HUSSEIN</td>
<td>IN THE HEIGHT OF VIOLENCE, THERE IS CHAOS</td>
<td>WAR IS TERRIFYING</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE IS DOING ANY JOB YOU CAN FIND TO PROVIDE</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE IS LIVING WITHOUT GOOD MEDICAL ASSISTANCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIFE BEFORE WAR IS PRIORITIZING NATIONAL SECURITY OVER FINANCIAL STABILITY</td>
<td>WAR IS CONFUSION ABOUT WHICH SIDE IS WHICH (GOVT OR REBEL)</td>
<td>BEING IN A WAR MEANS LOSING LOVED ONES</td>
<td>GOING TO WORK IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT MEANS RISKING YOUR LIFE EVERY DAY</td>
<td>FRIENDS AND FAMILY PROVIDE SUPPORT AND MEDICAL TREATMENT IN A WARZONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOME PEOPLE IN WAR QUIT THEIR JOBS OUT OF FEAR OF BEING ATTACKED AT WORK</td>
<td>BEING IN A WAR IS RUNNING AND HIDING</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT IS WATCHING PEOPLE AROUND YOU</td>
<td>WHEN YOU LEAVE TO GO TO WORK IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT, YOU MAY NEVER SEE YOUR CHILD</td>
<td>CHILDREN WANT TO BE WITH THEIR PARENTS EVEN IF THAT MEANS BEING EXPOSED TO MORE VIOLENCE IN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEN A WAR HITS, MANY PEOPLE LOSE</td>
<td>WAR IS NOT KNOWING WHERE TO GO</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE IS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>THEIR JOBS</td>
<td>LIVING WITH UNPREDICTABLE VIOLENCE</td>
<td>AGAIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATION IS DOWN IN WAR</td>
<td>LIFE DURING WAR MEANS SEEING EXECUTIONS AND RADICAL VIOLENCE</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE MEANS YOU CANNOT TRAVEL FREELY</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PEOPLE START RUNNING AND LOSE THEIR FAMILIES FOR YEARS IN A WARZONE</td>
<td>WAR IS BEING SURROUNDED BY BOMBINGS, MORTARS, AND SHOOTINGS</td>
<td>EXTREME HUNGER IS A PART OF THE POVERTY CAUSED BY THE WAR</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>WAR MEANS SEPARATION OF FAMILY AND LOVED ONES</td>
<td>WAR MEANS BEING EXPOSED TO EXTREME VIOLENCE ON A DAILY BASIS</td>
<td>THERE IS NEVER ENOUGH MONEY OR FOOD IN A WARZONE</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHEN YOU’RE SEPARATED, YOU DON’T KNOW IF YOUR LOVED ONES ARE DEAD</td>
<td>THE CENTER OF WAR VIOLENCE IS BOMBINGS AND SHOOTINGS 24/7</td>
<td>THE WAR EXPERIENCES OF DETAINMENT AND BEATINGS CAN TRAUMATIZE PEOPLE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEN YOU LIVE IN A WARZONE, THERE IS NO SCHEDULE OR PREDICTABILITY</td>
<td>KIDNAPPINGS AND EXECUTIONS WERE COMMON DURING THE WAR</td>
<td>PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA CAN CAUSE POVERTY AND DEBILITATION IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-war</td>
<td>IS FINING OUT THAT NO WHERE IS SAFE</td>
<td>FALSE ACCUSATIONS HAVE THE POWER TO KILL IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE IS POWERLESSNESS AND CONFUSION</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR MEANS BEING SCARED OF DETAINMENT, BEATINGS, AND ROUNDUPS – EVEN IF YOU LIVE IN AREAS THAT THERE IS LITTLE VIOLENCE</td>
<td>PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS CAN DEBILITATE SOMEONE IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>EVEN WHEN YOU DON’T LIVE IN A PLACE OF OPEN WARFARE, THERE IS A LOT OF FEAR</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR MEANS BEING EXPOSED TO EXTREME VIOLENCE ON A DAILY BASIS</td>
<td>POVERTY WAS THE MOST STRESSFUL ASPECT OF LIVING IN SYRIA DURING WAR</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIVING IN A COUNTRY WITH WAR MEANS THERE IS WIDESPREAD FEAR</td>
<td>THE CENTER OF WAR VIOLENCE IS BOMBINGS AND SHOOTINGS 24/7</td>
<td>A WAR</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR MEANS LIVING IN A ENVIRONMENT OF FEAR</td>
<td>KIDNAPPINGS AND EXECUTIONS WERE COMMON DURING THE WAR</td>
<td>SURVIVING IN A WARZONE IS “TRYING TO BE STRONG AND TRYING TO LIVE AND TRYING TO FORGET WHAT IS GOING ON”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IN A COUNTRY AT WAR, THE GOVERNMENT IS SUSPICIOUS OF EVERYONE</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR MEANS BEING EXPOSED TO EXTREME VIOLENCE ON A DAILY BASIS</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR IS “BEING WORRIED, BUT HAVING NO CHOICE” TO GO TO SCHOOL AND LIVE LIFE</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>THE CENTER OF WAR VIOLENCE IS BOMBINGS AND SHOOTINGS 24/7</td>
<td>“WHEN YOU LIVE IN A WAR PLACE, YOU DON’T HAVE GOVERNMENT, YOU JUST SURVIVE”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>KIDNAPPINGS AND EXECUTIONS WERE COMMON DURING THE WAR</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT MAKES LIFE FEEL PURPOSELESS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR MEANS BEING SCARED OF DETAINMENT, BEATINGS, AND ROUNDUPS – EVEN IF YOU LIVE IN AREAS THAT THERE IS LITTLE VIOLENCE</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE MEANS HOLDING ONTO HOPE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR MEANS BEING EXPOSED TO EXTREME VIOLENCE ON A DAILY BASIS</td>
<td>HOPE OF LEAVING IS A COPING STRATEGY IN WAR</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THE CENTER OF WAR VIOLENCE IS BOMBINGS AND SHOOTINGS 24/7</td>
<td>FOCUSING ON HOPE AND THE FUTURE IS A WAY TO PSYCHOLOGICALLY SURVIVE IN A WAR ZONE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>KIDNAPPINGS AND EXECUTIONS WERE COMMON DURING THE WAR</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR AREA MEANS RELYING ON LUCK TO ESCAPE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| | LIVING IN A WAR MEANS BEING EXPOSED TO EXTREME VIOLENCE ON A DAILY BASIS | PRAYING IS AN
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WIDESPREAD GOVERNMENT INTEGATIONS MAKES PEOPLE SCARED IN A WAR COUNTRY</th>
<th>ENEMIES THERE IS NO WAY TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM REBEL GROUPS IN A WAR ZONE – THEY CAN COME FROM ANY WHERE AT ANY TIME</th>
<th>IMPORTANT PART OF HOLDING ON IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WAR IS RUNNING TO HIDE, AND TRYING TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE VIOLENCE</td>
<td>WAR IS MILITIA GROUPS GOING HOUSE TO HOUSE KILLING PEOPLE AND INTERROGATING THEM</td>
<td>GOING TO SCHOOL IS AN IMPORTANT COPING ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAR IS FLEEING FROM THE CITY TO THE VILLAGE BECAUSE YOU THINK THAT IT MIGHT BE SAFER THERE</td>
<td>WAR MEANS SAYING ANYTHING TO ESCAPE BEING KILLED</td>
<td>FATHERS IN A WARZONE ARE IMPORTANT FOR PROTECTION AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE OUTSIDE COMMUNITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE IS LIVING IN A LAWLESS ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE AS A WOMAN IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT IS LIKE LIVING IN A HELL NOT OF YOUR MAKING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE MEANS YOU ARE ALWAYS PREY</td>
<td>WAR IS SEEING YOUR GRANDFATHER BE MURDERED IN FRONT OF YOUR EYES</td>
<td>YOU DON’T KNOW WHY THIS IS HAPPENING TO YOU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAR MEANS NEVER FEELING SAFE IN YOUR HOME</td>
<td>WAR IS BEING RAPED AND WATCHING YOUR SISTER AND MOTHER BEING RAPED</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix L: Parenting in a war environment

Parenting in a war environment was difficult because of the physical and emotional challenges imposed upon them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>In Vivo</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOING THROUGH THE DAILY ROUTINE OF MEETING CHILDREN’S NEEDS FOR FOOD, EDUCATION, SELF-CARE, SLEEP, AND COMFORTING</td>
<td>My mother-in-law would gather the whole family in one room and tell them “it’s ok, there’s nothing that’s going to happen. This will end, you will be safe. I am here”</td>
<td>ANGRY AND SAD ABOUT WAR DESTROYING FAMILY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT KNOWING HOW TO COMFORT SELF OR CHILDREN ADEQUATELY</td>
<td>My husband was hardly providing the kids with food, with the milk, and the diapers”</td>
<td>GRANDMOTHER SOOTHING FAMILY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRYING TO PARENT THROUGH THE TERROR</td>
<td>We had enough of this life, that’s it, we can’t stay there any more. We need a better life for our kids. If we cant provide that, let’s die together</td>
<td>DAUGHTER SCARED, CONFUSED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRYING TO MEET EMOTIONAL NEEDS: GRANDMOTHER COMFORTING THEM BY TELLING THEM THAT THEY ARE SAFE</td>
<td>“AND MAYBE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE IS THAT I WAS LOOKING FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR MY KIDS”</td>
<td>NEEDING COMFORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRYING AND FEELING EXTREMELY SCARED, BUT STILL SAYING SOOTHING THINGS</td>
<td>“MY COUNTRY AT THAT TIME WAS NOT A GOOD PLACE TO RAISE KIDS”</td>
<td>CRYING ALL THE TIME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATHERS PLANNING THEIR ESCAPE</td>
<td></td>
<td>TRYING TO CARE FOR BABIES = TRYING TO BE A GOOD PARENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING LOVING AND CARING ARE VERY IMPORTANT AS A PARENT DURING DIFFICULT TIMES</td>
<td></td>
<td>CHILDREN ARE TERRIFIED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILDREN BEING TERRIFIED AND NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO</td>
<td></td>
<td>HOW TO KEEP THEM CALM? = DESPARATION, FEAR, CONFUSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRAWLING AROUND ON THE FLOOR ALL DAY PREVENTING HARM TO FAMILY: STAYING ON FLOOR, NOT USING LIGHTS AT NIGHT, STAYING HOME DAY AND NIGHT</td>
<td></td>
<td>FEELING TERRIFIED FOR HER CHILDREN’S SAFETY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT COMPROMISING HER PARENTING BECAUSE OF WAR, POVERTY, AND PAIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>TERRIFIED THAT HER CHILDREN WILL BE KIDNAPPED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTECTING HER CHILDREN BY WALKING THEM TO AND FROM SCHOOL, AND KEEPING THEM HOME AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE</td>
<td></td>
<td>HIDING THE PAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STILL TRYING TO PROVIDE FOR CHILDREN: CRAWLING TO GET SOME WATER FOR CHILDREN AT</td>
<td></td>
<td>TRYING TO BE STRONG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CHILDREN CRYING</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CHILDREN LONGING TO LEAVE</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HAVING BABY MADE HER MISS HER FAMILY</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>STRESSED OUT</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DEPRESSED</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UNABLE TO BREASTFEED = SCARED AND FAILURE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FEELING HAPPINESS WHEN SHE BECAME A PARENT</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FAMILY GAVE HER A REASON</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing Resources</td>
<td>Providing Security</td>
<td>Providing Wellbeing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING A GOOD PARENT IS WORKING TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD</td>
<td>GOOD PARENTING IS PROTECTING YOUR CHILD</td>
<td>MEETING NEEDS: FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, TENDERNESS AND LOVE, KEEPING A NORMAL ROUTINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORTING A FAMILY DURING WAR IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES OF LIFE IN A WAR</td>
<td>KIDNAPPINGS WERE A MAJOR SECURITY THREAT DURING THE WAR</td>
<td>LOVING YOUR CHILDREN IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT IS THE BEST THING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE</td>
<td>PROTECTING YOUR CHILDREN IN A WARZONE IS KEEPING THEM</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Experience of Parenting in a Warzone Means Your Means Your Ability to Parent is Impaired

GIVING BIRTH IN A WARZONE IS VERY DANGEROUS BECAUSE THERE IS A LACK OF MEDICAL ASSISTANCE HAVING CHILDREN DURING A WAR IS A VERY HARD EXPERIENCE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WARZONE MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO GIVE YOUR CHILD A GOOD LIFE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TO DO AS A PARENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROVIDING FOR BASIC NEEDS LIKE FOOD WAS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE DURING THE WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEETING NEEDS: FOR SECURITY, STAYING HOME AND WALKING KIDS TO/FROM SCHOOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROVIDING FOR YOUR CHILD DURING WAR IS EXHAUSTING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAR RUINS PEOPLE’S PLANS FOR CAREER AND SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAVING A CHILD IN POVERTY CAUSED BY WAR IS INCREDIBLY STRESSFUL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSIDE ALL OF THE TIME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAYING HOME IS THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY DURING A WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEETING NEEDS: FOR SECURITY, STAYING HOME AND WALKING KIDS TO/FROM SCHOOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOU CANNOT PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH ENOUGH FOOD AND SECURITY IN A WARZONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING A PARENT DURING A WAR IS BEING VERY SCARED FOR YOUR KIDS’ SAFETY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD PARENTING IS LEAVING A TOXIC ENVIRONMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAVING A WARZONE HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET TO A POINT WHERE “YOU CANNOT LIVE LIKE THIS ANYMORE”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING A GOOD PARENT IN WAR MEANS GIVING YOUR CHILDREN A LOT OF LOVE AND CARE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENCING A WAR CAN AFFECT YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL BUT STILL NOT AFFECT YOUR PARENTING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENCING A WAR CAN MAKE PARENTING MORE DIFFICULT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTS WHO EXPERIENCE THE PAIN OF WAR TRY TO PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM THEIR PAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENCING A WAR ENVIRONMENT MAKES YOU VERY DETERMINED TO MAKE SURE YOUR CHILDREN NEVER HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix M: Participants continued to struggle during their early refugee experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>In Vivo</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WALKING WITHOUT KNOWING WHERE GOING</td>
<td>No I don't think that I consider this life as hard as living in Iraq because at the end of the tunnel there is supposed to be a light. There was hope for us - someday this would end. In our country, this was going to last until death”</td>
<td>LEAVING LAST MINUTE = PANIC, DESPARATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIDING AND WALKING ENDLESSLY</td>
<td>I am suffering now with fitting in with the society and trying to keep up and get them the resources, trying to get them all the food and all that all that</td>
<td>NOT KNOWING HOW IT WILL TURN OUT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SETTLING ONLY BECAUSE THE MAJOR FIGHTING HAD PASSED THROUGH THE CITY</td>
<td></td>
<td>RISKING LIFE BY FLEEING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARTING SCHOOL MADE THEM FEEL MORE SETTLED</td>
<td></td>
<td>SNEAKING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING IN GABON WAS LIKE LIVING AS A SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN</td>
<td></td>
<td>HIDING ON THE RUN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRUGGLING TO GET CHILDREN RESOURCES IN NEW COUNTRY</td>
<td>DECIDING TO FLEE IRAQ WAS LIKE “TAKING A JUMP INTO THE SEA...AND TRYING TO GET TO SAFETY”</td>
<td>HAVE TO BE BRAVE TO ESCAPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WANTING CHILDREN TO HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES</td>
<td>“IT DOESN’T MAKE SENSE TO STAY IN A PLACE THAT IS GOING TO END UP KILLING YOU”</td>
<td>RELIEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REACHING A BREAKING POINT AND FLEEING THE WAR</td>
<td>&quot;ok, either we're going to live a better life, or we're going to die&quot;</td>
<td>FLEEING IRAQ MEANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECIDING TO GO TO A FIRST WORLD COUNTRY IN SEARCH FOR A BETTER LIFE</td>
<td>“I’m just going to take my family and run away to get them to safety. This was my main concern, and this was my goal at that time”</td>
<td>FLEEING HOME AND FAMILY = LOSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMP WAS LIKE LIVING IN A PRISON</td>
<td>“I HAD A DIFFERENT KIND OF SUPPORT FROM MY HUSBAND AND THE ENVIRONMENT AROUND ME”</td>
<td>FEELING OUT OF PLACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECIDING TO STAY IN CAMP TO PURSUE REFUGEE STATUS</td>
<td>“IT WAS A LOT BETTER TO BE IN JORDAN. I FELT MORE COMFORTABLE AND SAFE”</td>
<td>NOT FEELING SETTLED UNTIL IN THE US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING IN THAT CAMP WAS A SACRIFICE FOR A BETTER FUTURE</td>
<td>BECAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE CAMPS, SHE WOULD START TO THINK “THIS IS NOT RIGHT” AND “THEN IT COMES BACK”</td>
<td>HOMESICK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFUGEE APPLICATION PROCESS BEING ARDUOUS, CONFUSING, AND UNCERTAIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>SACRIFICING CURRENT HAPPINESS FOR DREAM OF FUTURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAVING QUICKLY, WITHOUT PLANNING</td>
<td></td>
<td>HOPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY WHEN THEY COULD GET IT</td>
<td></td>
<td>BORED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING IN LIMBO SINCE THE WAR DESTROYED SECURITY</td>
<td></td>
<td>IMPRISONED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILDREN ARE ADAPTING TO LIFE IN THE US</td>
<td></td>
<td>STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NOT FEELING SAFE OR “AT HOME” IN NEW CITY</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>FEELING LIKE AN OUTSIDER IN NEW CITY</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WAITING = RESTLESSNESS</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>INSPIRED BY OTHER REFUGEES</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DESPARATION TO LEAVE</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TALKING SELF INTO BEING PATIENT</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PERSISTANCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Experience of Being a Refugee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAVING WAR</th>
<th>LIFE AS A REFUGEE</th>
<th>FINDING SUPPORT</th>
<th>PARENTING AS A REFUGEE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WAR STARTS A PROCESS OF EXILE AND IMMIGRATION THAT IS BASED ON DESPARATION</td>
<td>LIVING AS A REFUGEE MEANS THAT YOU RELY ON OTHERS FOR SUPPORT</td>
<td>FINDING LOVE AND HAVING SEX IS A NATURAL COMFORT FOR SOME IN WAR AND REFUGEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WAR WRECKS YOUR ABILITY TO BE THE KIND OF PARENT THAT YOU WANT TO BE</td>
<td></td>
<td>WAR WRECKS YOUR ABILITY TO BE THE KIND OF PARENT THAT YOU WANT TO BE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TO MAKE YOU HAPPY IN THE CAMPS

DISAPPOINTED
DELAYED
FRUSTRATED
STILL FEELING VERY VULNERABLE AND UNSAFE
FEELING WELcomed AND SUPPORTED
STRUGGLING AGAIN TO FEED FAMILY AND SURVIVE
BURDENED
WORRIED ABOUT HEALTH
HAVE TO PROTECT SELF
AVOIDANCE OF OTHERS
DETERMINATION
SUFFERING
HUNGRY
SCARCITY
STRUGGLING
STRUGGLING A LOT IN KENYA BECAUSE SHE COULD NOT FIND A DECENT JOB
ANGER ABOUT HAVING TO LIVE IN CAMP
RESENTMENT ABOUT LIFE IN CAMPS
LIFE WAS VERY DEPRESSING IN THE CAMPS
SCARED THAT SHE WOULD LEAVE HER CHILDREN ORPHANS
THE DECISION TO FLEE A WAR IS MADE BECAUSE STAYING = DEATH FLEEING WAR MEANS EMBARKING ON A LIFE-THREATENING VOYAGE IN HOPES OF FINDING A SAFER PLACE FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE AND A BETTER LIFE IS ENCOURAGING WHEN FLEEING A WARZONE LEAVING A WARZONE MEANS TRYING TO GIVE YOUR CHILD A BETTER LIFE GETTING THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAVE WAR CAN BE SUDDEN AND UNPREPARED FAMILIES SOMETIMES HAD TO SEPARATE IN ORDER TO LEAVE COUNTRY FLEEING A WARZONE IS WALKING AND WALKING – SOMETIMES FOR YEARS FLEEING IS WALKING ON THE ROAD FOR A VERY LONG TIME WITHOUT KNOWING HOW LONG IT WILL TAKE AND NEED – WHICH IS TOO OFTEN MET WITH RESENTMENT AND REJECTION OF THOSE PEOPLE LEAVING A WARZONE DOES NOT MEAN LIFE GETS EASIER EVEN WHEN YOU LEAVE A WARZONE, YOU ARE STILL IN LIMBO SETTLING DOWN AND TRYING TO REBUILD YOUR LIFE IN A WAR DOES NOT MEAN YOU ARE SAFE AND TRULY SETTLED EVEN IF THERE IS NOT OPEN FIGHTING WHERE YOU ARE AT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THERE IS SECURITY LIFE AS A REFUGEE CAN MEAN BEING TREATED LIKE AN OUTCAST AND BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST LIVING AS A REFUGEE MEANS LIVING AS A SECOND CLASS CITIZEN BUT NOT BEING ABLE TO GO BACK HOME BECAUSE LIVING IN WAR IS WORSE IT IS HARD TO FIND WORK IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY AFTER FROM OTHER PEOPLE IS IMPORTANT FOR REFUGEES WHEN THEY DO NOT HAVE REFUGEE STATUS PARENTING IS EASIER WHEN THERE IS SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS OFTEN DO NOT PROVIDE ENOUGH ASSISTANCE TO LIVE FOR IMMIGRANTS UN SUPPORT IS SUPPLEMENTARY – NOT ENOUGH TO SUPPORT PEOPLE IN REFUGE WHEN REFUGE COUNTRIES WELCOME REFUGEES, LIFE QUALITY IS GREATLY INCREASED GETTING SUPPORT FROM REFUGEE COUNTRY MAKES LIFE SO MUCH BETTER FOR REFUGEES REFUGEES GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK HELPS THEM TREMENDOUSLY WHEN A REFUGE COUNTRY IS NOT WELCOMING, LIFE IS VERY DIFFICULT FOR REFUGEES LIVING IN AN UNWELCOMING HOST COUNTRY CAN BE AS BAD ENvironments FINDING A HUSBAND CAN BE A MEANS OF SURVIVAL IN WAR AND REFUGEE CAMPS ACCIDENTAL YOUNG PREGNANCIES ARE COMMON IN REFUGEE CAMPS ACCIDENTAL PREGNANCIES CAN RESULT IN HAPPY PARENTS AND FAMILIES WOMEN FIND FULFILLMENT IN MARRIAGE AND HAVING CHILDREN BECAUSE IT IS NATURALLY AVAILABLE TO THEM, AND OTHER AVENUES ARE NOT BEING A GOOD PARENT IN A WAR/REFUGEE ENVIRONMENT CAN BE VERY FULFILLING HAVING FAMILY SUPPORT IS IMPORTANT FOR NEW MOTHERS IN WAR/REFUGEE ENVIRONMENTS BEING A GOOD PARENT IN A DIFFERENT COUNTRY MEANS BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST RAISING CHILDREN AS A REFUGEE MEANS FEELING LIKE YOUR CHILDREN ARE NOT GETTING A GOOD CHILDHOOD BEING CONFINED INSIDE THE HOME AS A REFUGEE DAMAGES CHILDREN’S EMOTIONAL HEALTH = INDIRECT EFFECT OF WAR GOOD PARENTING AS A REFUGEE BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST MEANS THROUGH A TRAUMATIC WAR EXPERIENCE MEANS THAT YOU CANNOT BE THE PARENT THAT YOU WANT TO BE CHILDREN SUFFER FROM LIVING IN A REFUGEE CAMP IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE HAPPY WHEN YOU CANNOT PROVIDE FOR YOUR CHILDREN IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUR CHILD WHEN THERE IS NOTHING TO EAT WAR AND REFUGEE EXPERIENCE MAKES CHILDREN MORE ANXIOUS, WITHDRAWN AND SENSITIVE GROWING UP AS A REFUGEE IN A DIFFERENT COUNTRY MEANS BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST Raising children as a refugee means feeling like your children are not getting a good childhood referring to the indirect effect of war on children’s emotional health. Being confined inside the home as a refugee damages children’s emotional health. Good parenting as a refugee is important for new mothers in war/refugee environments, which means feeling like your children are not getting a good childhood. Through a traumatic war experience, means that you cannot be the parent that you want to be.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fleeing in a War Country</th>
<th>Living as a Refugee Can Mean Being Treated Like a Second-Class Citizen and Being Discriminated Against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Countries Can Make It Impossible for People of War to Continue Their Careers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Refugees Treated as Outsiders and Outcasts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being a Refugee Means Not Being Able to Defend Yourself Against Discrimination</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Many Countries Do Not Facilitate Education and Support of Life for Refugees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Cannot Complete Your Education or Follow Your Dreams When a Host Country Does Not Make It Accessible</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>It Is Very Difficult to Get Assistance If You Are a Refugee Without That Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Meet the Needs of Your Child When There Is Nothing to Eat |
| Feeling Frustrated and Guilty as a Parent Because Your Children Are Not Getting a Good Childhood |
| Feeling Upset as a Parent That Your Children Cant Go to School and Cant Play Outside |

| Agonizing Being a Good Parent Is Planning for Their Future and Providing a Good Future for Them |
| Trying to Make Up for What Your Children Are Missing |
| Sometimes Children Raised as Refugees Cannot Overcome Their Past Painful Experiences |
| Coming to a Safe Country Like the US Is the Only Time People From a War Environment Feel More Secure |

YOU FLEE A WAR |
FOREIGN COUNTRIES CAN MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE OF WAR TO CONTINUE THEIR CAREERS |
REFUGEES TREATED AS OUTSIDERS AND OUTCASTS |
BEING A REFUGEE MEANS NOT BEING ABLE TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST DISCRIMINATION |
BEING A REFUGEE MEANS NOT GETTING ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND OTHER RESOURCES |
P EOPLE TRIED TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES BY STARTING SCHOOLS AND BUSINESSES, EVEN IN HIGHLY DANGEROUS AREAS |
LIVING IN A REFUGEE CAMP IS A VERY DIFFICULT PART OF LEAVING A WAR ENVIRONMENT |
AS LIVING IN A WAR COUNTRY |
LIVING AS A REFUGEE CAN MEAN BEING TREATED LIKE A SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN AND BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST |
MANY COUNTRIES DO NOT FACILITATE EDUCATION AND SUPPORT OF LIFE FOR REFUGEES |
YOU CANNOT COMPLETE YOUR EDUCATION OR FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS WHEN A HOST COUNTRY DOES NOT MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE |
IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO GET ASSISTANCE IF YOU ARE A REFUGEE WITHOUT THAT STATUS |

DEATH ON THE ROAD CAN BE CAUSED BY NATURAL CAUSES AND MURDERS |
FLEEING ON THE ROAD MEANS THAT YOU HAVE NO CHOICE – YOU HAVE TO KEEP MOVING |
FLEEING ON FOOT IS WATCHING PEOPLE DIE |
FLEEING ON FOOT MEANS SLOWLY AND DESPERATELY FINDING A PLACE OF SAFETY |
SETTLING IN A NEW CITY DURING A WAR DOES NOT MAKE YOU FEEL SAFE |

YOU FLEE A WAR |
FOREIGN COUNTRIES CAN MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE OF WAR TO CONTINUE THEIR CAREERS |
REFUGEES TREATED AS OUTSIDERS AND OUTCASTS |
BEING A REFUGEE MEANS NOT BEING ABLE TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST DISCRIMINATION |
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LIVING AS A REFUGEE CAN MEAN BEING TREATED LIKE A SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN AND BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST |
MANY COUNTRIES DO NOT FACILITATE EDUCATION AND SUPPORT OF LIFE FOR REFUGEES |
YOU CANNOT COMPLETE YOUR EDUCATION OR FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS WHEN A HOST COUNTRY DOES NOT MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE |
IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO GET ASSISTANCE IF YOU ARE A REFUGEE WITHOUT THAT STATUS |
MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUR CHILD WHEN THERE IS NOTHING TO EAT |
FEELING FRUSTRATED AND GUILTY AS A PARENT BECAUSE YOUR CHILDREN ARE NOT GETTING A GOOD CHILDHOOD |
FEELING UPSET AS A PARENT THAT YOUR CHILDREN CANT GO TO SCHOOL AND CANT PLAY OUTSIDE |
AGONIZING BEING A GOOD PARENT IS PLANNING FOR THEIR FUTURE AND PROVIDING A GOOD FUTURE FOR THEM |
TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR WHAT YOUR CHILDREN ARE MISSING |
SOMETIMES CHILDREN RAISED AS REFUGEES CANNOT OVERCOME THEIR PAST PAINFUL EXPERIENCES |
COMING TO A SAFE COUNTRY LIKE THE US IS THE ONLY TIME PEOPLE FROM A WAR ENVIRONMENT FEEL MORE SECURE |
Appendix N: Parenting as a refugee has its own challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>In Vivo</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEING A GOOD MOTHER IS BEING TENDER, LOVING, AND PROVIDING FOR THEM NO MATTER WHAT</td>
<td>She was their teacher and their playmate. Like her mother, she tried to be everything for her children</td>
<td>SACRIFICING OWN FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO GIVE CHILDREN BETTER LIFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING A GOOD MOTHER IS BEING DEPENDABLE AND SUPPORTIVE</td>
<td>“In the home it was very healthy” – even though outside in Gabon was threatening</td>
<td>TORMENTED BY HER CHILDREN’S UNHAPPINESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACRIFICING HER CONNECTION TO HER FAMILY TO PROVIDE HER CHILDREN WITH A BETTER LIFE</td>
<td>In Gabon, the children did not have a good childhood because “they were just stuck in the house – they were not free and happy”</td>
<td>CHILDREN DESPERATE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKING ACTION TO BETTER HER KIDS LIVES BY LEAVING HER COUNTRY AND FAMILY</td>
<td>IN KENYA, CHILDREN “MORE FREE” AND “LIVING WELL”</td>
<td>CHILDREN TRAPPED INSIDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING LOVING AND CARING ARE VERY IMPORTANT AS A PARENT DURING DIFFICULT TIMES</td>
<td>You just take your child and you leave - she used to say nothing to the people, but to the kids - when someone wants to beat you or something, just keep quite and come back to the house”</td>
<td>CHILDREN DEPRESSED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAVING 2ND BABY AS A REFUGEE IN JORDAN WAS MUCH BETTER THAN HAVING HER 1ST IN SYRIA DURING THE WAR</td>
<td>She did not feel that it was safe to teach her children to defend themselves, because they were refugees “and they had no rights</td>
<td>FRUSTRATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUSBAND WORKING AND FEELING GOOD ABOUT HIMSELF</td>
<td>KIDS WOULD US “WHY ARE WE SUFFERING SO MUCH?” AND “WHY DO WE HAVE THIS KIND OF LIFE?”, WE TOLD THEM “BECAUSE OF THE WAR, WE CANNOT PROVIDE FOR YOU”</td>
<td>FEELING HELPLESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRUGGLING AGAIN TO FEED FAMILY AND SURVIVE NOT KNOWING IF YOU'RE GOING TO SEE FAMILY AGAIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>HIDING THE PAIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF SHE HAD FOOD, SHE WOULD COOK, BUT WHEN SHE DIDN’T HAVE FOOD THEY WOULD GO TO SLEEP HUNGRY</td>
<td></td>
<td>TRYING TO BE STRONG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUFFERING MORE FOR HER CHILDREN’S EXPERIENCE IN THE CAMP THAN FOR HERSELF</td>
<td></td>
<td>CHILDREN CRYING</td>
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<td>CHILDREN LONGING TO LEAVE</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>FEELING HAPPIER IN KENYA BECAUSE CHILDREN WERE HAPPIER</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FEELING LIKE A BAD PARENT BECAUSE SHE CANNOT PROVIDE A SECURE FUTURE STILL LIVING IN LIMBO</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>SCARED THAT SHE WOULD LEAVE HER CHILDREN ORPHANS</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>KIDS’ DISTRESS: WITHDRAWN, QUIET, PAIN INSIDE</td>
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</table>
Appendix O. The war and refugee experiences

The war and refugee experiences had long-term effects on participants and their children – and these effects were sometimes reflected in their parenting behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>In Vivo</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROVIDING FOR FAMILY EVEN WHILE BEING IN PAIN</td>
<td>“THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR ME RIGHT NOW IS SECURITY.”</td>
<td>FEELING SAD REMEMBERING TWO DEAD SIBLINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STILL LIVING WITH MEMORIES OF WHAT HAPPENED TO HER AND HER FAMILY DURING THE WAR</td>
<td>“I FEEL A LOT MORE SAFE NOW”</td>
<td>WISTFUL FOR PAST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIORITIZING SECURITY AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING</td>
<td>“Even though she knows that they are safe, that feeling still comes...she’s still afraid – not as afraid as before, but the fear is still there”</td>
<td>MISSING HER FAMILY CONNECTIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANNOT FULFILL PARENTING ROLE BECAUSE OF THE DAMAGE DONE BY WAR</td>
<td>“I try to ease up on them because I see that they are so sensitive”</td>
<td>GRIEVING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTECTING HER CHILDREN FROM HER PAST: NOT ALLOWING WAR EXPERIENCE TO AFFECT HER AS A PARENT</td>
<td>“I am not as hard as before. Now I think to myself ‘go easy on them’”</td>
<td>FEELING OUT OF PLACE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>This tension has made her react to her children with more anger – which she wouldn’t do in a normal time</td>
<td>HOMESICK</td>
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<td></td>
<td>IF THE WAR HADN’T HAPPENED, SHE WOULD BE “A NICE MOTHER AT HOME”</td>
<td>NEVER GOING TO STOP BEING SCARED FOR CHILDREN</td>
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<td></td>
<td>When she talks to herself about her experiences, she asks “Why did this happen to me and my family?”</td>
<td>SAD THAT KIDS ARE MORE SENSITIVE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How can you be happy when you have children, when you have to eat, and you have nothing to provide”</td>
<td>CONFUSED AS TO HOW TO HELP CHILDREN</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“To be a good parent, you need to plan for the future for your children, and to work for it while they are still young. Already my son is 15, and I haven’t been able to do it”</td>
<td>FEELS MORE ANXIOUS NOW</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Her experience of living in war has changed her as a person: “It has affected my emotional life, my psychological life, my physical life, my intellectual life, and everything financially”</td>
<td>SHORT-TEMPERED</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Getting angry when think about what happened to her”</td>
<td>GETTING ANGRY WHEN THINK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Her experience of living in war has changed her as a person: “It has affected my emotional life, my psychological life, my physical life, my intellectual life, and everything financially”</td>
<td>MOURNING PARENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My children adjusted themselves easily. They are just sad because they can't see their grandmother.</td>
<td>MORE APPRECIATIVE OF LIFE AND WHAT SHE HAS NOW</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sometimes she gets some memories - but sometimes she refuses to tell them because when she talks about it, they feel hurt and they start crying</td>
<td>LIVING IN LIMBO SINCE THE WAR DESTROYED SECURITY</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LESSONS LEARNED FROM WAR</td>
<td>CHILDREN ARE DEPRESSED AND WITHDRAWN</td>
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<td>SCARED FOR CHILDREN</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>STILL STRUGGLING IN US BECAUSE SHE CANNOT WORK</td>
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<td>WISHING THAT SHE COULD WORK IN HER FIELD</td>
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**EXPERIENCE:**

“I wouldn’t like anyone to ever experience what I experienced – not even my worst enemy”

She would tell someone going through that experience to

**BECAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE CAMPS, SHE WOULD START TO THINK “THIS IS NOT RIGHT” AND “THEN IT COMES BACK”**

IF THE WAR HADN’T HAPPENED, SHE WOULD BE “A NICE MOTHER AT HOME”

SHE WANTS TO BE A “HAPPY MOTHER, PLAYING WITH THE KIDS AROUND THE FAMILY AND HER OWN MOTHER” – THE WAR HAS PREVENTED THIS

The most important lesson that she’s learned from this experience is that “I would never want this experience for anyone”

SHE WANTS TO PROTECT PEOPLE SO THAT “NONE COULD HURT THE WAY THAT SHE WAS HURT”

I WENT THROUGH SO MANY HORRIFIC THINGS THAT I CAN’T EVEN TALK ABOUT IT”

“I HAVE BEEN RUNNING AND RUNNING UNTIL I GOT HERE IN AMERICA”

“I DON’T LIKE TALKING ABOUT IT BECAUSE IT AFFECTS MY BRAIN”

**FEELING DAMAGED AS A PERSON**

CANNOT FULFILL PARENTING ROLE BECAUSE OF THE DAMAGE DONE BY WAR

CANNOT PROVIDE STABLE FUTURE FOR CHILDREN

RELIVING PAIN AND FEAR

FAMILY IS SUFFERING FROM WAR EXPERIENCE

CRYING WHEN ALONE

STILL REMEMBERING THE MEMORIES OF THE RAPES, MURDERS, AND WAR

CRAVING SECURITY OF WORK AND STABILITY

CANNOT PROVIDE STABLE FUTURE FOR CHILDREN

FEELING OVERWHELMED BY SADNESS

CHILDREN ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HER

FEELING WISTFUL FOR THE POSSIBILITIES OF WHAT LIFE WOULD BE LIKE IF WAR HADN’T HAPPENED

WANTING TO BE AT HOME WITH FAMILY RAISING HER CHILDREN

SHE LOST HER COMFORT WHEN SHE LOST HER MOTHER

SUFFERING FROM FLASHBACKS AND MEMORIES ALL HER ADULT LIFE

AVOIDANCE OF TALKING ABOUT EXPERIENCE: IT HURTS HER SO MUCH THAT IT CHANGES HER BRAIN

PAIN ALTERS MINDSET AND MOOD

**WAS IN OVERWHELMING PAIN**

KIDS WERE ANGRY AND STRESSED WHEN THEY THOUGHT OF THE WAR

SHE WANTS TO PROTECT PEOPLE SO THAT “NONE COULD HURT THE WAY THAT SHE WAS HURT”

DOES NOT FEEL STRONG AS A PERSON

EMOTION: MISSES THE STRENGTH THAT SHE HAD AS A CHILD
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War Experience</th>
<th>Post-War Refugee</th>
<th>Psychological Effects of War</th>
<th>CHILDREN</th>
<th>PERSONAL</th>
<th>Effects of War and Refugee Experience on Parenting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WAR MEANS SEPARATION OF FAMILY AND LOVED ONES</td>
<td>LIVING IN A REFUGEE CAMP IS A VERY DIFFICULT PART OF LEAVING A WAR ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>EXPERIENCING A WAR CONTINUES TO AFFECT YOUR LIFE FOREVER</td>
<td>WAR AND REFUGEE EXPERIENCE MAKES CHILDREN MORE ANXIOUS, WITHDRAWN AND SENSITIVE</td>
<td>LIVING THROUGH A WAR AND POVERTY CAN MAKE PEOPLE APPRECIATE WHAT THEY HAVE MORE</td>
<td>BEING A PARENT CAN BE VERY FULFILLING TO SURVIVORS OF WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE WAR AND RESULTING POVERTY EXPERIENCE IS A LIFE-ALTERING EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>JUST BECAUSE YOUR ARE SETTLED SOMEWHERE DOESN’T MEAN THAT YOU “BELONG”</td>
<td>LIVING IN A WARZONE MEANS THAT “YOU ARE A LITTLE MORE NERVOUS THAN BEFORE”</td>
<td>SOMETIMES CHILDREN RAISED AS REFUGEES CANNOT OVERCOME THEIR PAST PAINFUL EXPERIENCES</td>
<td>BEING A GOOD PARENT CAN BE VERY FULFILLING TO THE FUTURE</td>
<td>IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE A GOOD PARENT WHEN YOU CANNOT PLAN FOR THE FUTURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVING IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT IS WATCHING PEOPLE AROUND YOU SUFFERING AND IN PAIN</td>
<td>LIVING IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY AFTER FLEEING A WAR IS HARD MANY COUNTRIES DO NOT FACILITATE EDUCATION AND SUPPORT OF LIFE FOR REFUGEES</td>
<td>WAR = NEVER WISHING THE EXPERIENCE ON ANYONE, EVEN AN ENEMY</td>
<td>BEING CONFINED INSIDE THE HOME AS A REFUGEE DAMAGES CHILDREN’S EMOTIONAL HEALTH = INDIRECT EFFECT OF WAR</td>
<td>EXPERIENCING G A WAR CAN AFFECT YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL BUT STILL NOT AFFECT YOUR PARENTING</td>
<td>BEING A GOOD PARENT IS PLANNING FOR THEIR FUTURE AND PROVIDING A GOOD FUTURE FOR THEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAR RUINS PEOPLE’S PLANS FOR CAREER AND SUCCESS</td>
<td>EXPERIENCING G A WAR AS A CHILD = GROWING UP TOO FAST/ LOSING YOUR INNOCENCE AS A CHILD</td>
<td>SUFFERING FROM WAR TRAUMA IS ASKING YOURSELF “WHY DID THIS HAPPEN YOU CANNOT</td>
<td>EXPERIENCING G A WAR ENVIRONMENT MAKES YOU VERY DETERMINED TO MAKE SURE YOUR CHILDREN NEVER HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT</td>
<td>PARENTS WHO EXPERIENCE THE PAIN OF WAR TRY TO PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM THEIR PAIN</td>
<td>WAR WRECKS YOUR ABILITY TO BE THE KIND OF PARENT THAT YOU WANT TO BE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA CAN CAUSE POVERTY AND DEBILITATION IN A WAR ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>REFUGEES GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK HELPS THEM TREMENDOUSLY</td>
<td>SUFFERING FROM WAR TRAUMA IS ASKING YOURSELF “WHY DID THIS HAPPEN YOU CANNOT</td>
<td>EXPERIENCING G A WAR ENVIRONMENT MAKES YOU VERY DETERMINED TO MAKE SURE YOUR CHILDREN NEVER HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT</td>
<td>PARENTS WHO EXPERIENCE THE PAIN OF WAR TRY TO PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM THEIR PAIN</td>
<td>WAR EXPERIENCE CAN MAKE PARENTS VERY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVEN WHEN A WAR IS OVER, LIFE CAN BE FULL OF SUFFERING</td>
<td>LIVING IN A POST WAR ZONE MEANS EASIER WHEN THERE IS SUPPORT</td>
<td>FEELS REMORSE THAT HER SADNESS PREVENTS HER FROM BEING ABLE TO DO THE THINGS WITH HER KIDS THAT SHE WANTS TO DO</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How War Affects Parenting as a War Victim in the Long-Term
BEING AFRAID EVERY TIME YOU LEAVE YOUR HOUSE 
FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE AND A BETTER LIFE IS ENCOURAGING WHEN FLEEING A WARZONE OR LIVING AS A REFUGEE 

LIVING AS A REFUGEE MEANS THAT YOU RELY ON OTHERS FOR SUPPORT 
FAMILIES SOMETIMES HAD TO SEPARATE IN ORDER TO LEAVE COUNTRY 
WAR STARTS A PROCESS OF EXILE AND IMMIGRATION THAT IS BASED ON DESPARIATION AND NEED – WHICH IS TOO OFTEN MET WITH RESENTMENT AND REJECTION OF THOSE PEOPLE FLEEING A TERRORIFYING SITUATION 

WHEN REFUGE COUNTRIES WELCOME REFUGEES, LIFE QUALITY IS GREATLY INCREASED 
WHEN A REFUGEE COUNTRY IS NOT WELCOMING, LIFE IS VERY DIFFICULT FOR REFUGEES 
LIVING IN AN UNWELCOMING HOST COUNTRY CAN BE AS BAD AS LIVING IN A WARZONE 

TO ME?” AND NEVER REALLY GETTING AN ANSWER 
PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED WAR HATE WAR 
EXPERIENCING A WAR MEANS BEING PASSIONATE ABOUT WORLD PEACE 

COMPLETE YOUR EDUCATION OR FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS WHEN A HOST COUNTRY DOES NOT MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE 
PROTECTING CHILDREN: NOT SHARING THE STORY OF YOUR WAR EXPERIENCE WITH THEM UNTIL THEY ARE OLDER 
BELIEF: GOOD PARENTING IS HIDING YOUR PAIN FROM YOUR CHILDREN 
PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM YOUR OWN PAIN: GOING INTO THE BEDROOM UNTIL THE PAIN PASSES 
TELLING CHILDREN THAT YOU DON’T FEEL WELL OR SICK WHEN YOU GET DEPRESSED 
CHILDREN CAN TELL WHEN PARENTS ARE IN PAIN 
CHILDREN ARE CONCERNED ABOUT PARENTS, AND WANT TO KNOW WHY THEY’RE CRYING 
ALONE IS ONE WAY PARENTS THAT HAVE EXPERIENCED A WAR SHELTER THEIR CHILDREN FROM THEIR PAIN 
CHILDREN TRYING TO COMFORT THEIR PARENT AFTER A BOUT OF PAIN 
EVEN IF THEY HAVE NOT DIRECTLY EXPERIENCED WAR, CHILDREN OF VICTIMS OF WAR ARE AFFECTED BY IT BECAUSE THEIR PARENTS STILL SUFFER PAIN FROM IT 

EXPERIENCING A WAR MEANS LIVING WITH MEMORIES AND FLASHBACKS FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE COPING: CRYING WHEN ALONE OR ISOLATING SELF WHEN MEMORIES COME BACK 
SOMETIMES MEMORIES AND FEELINGS FROM THE WAR CAN ANXIOUS EVEN AFTER OUT OF WAR ENVIRONMENT 
The anxiety of living through a war can make some parents more short tempered with their children leaving a warzone means giving your child a better life 

CHALLENGE TO BEING THE PARENT THAT YOU’D LIKE TO BE: DEALING WITH PAINFUL MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS FROM THE WAR/REFUGE 
EXPERIENCE 

PEOPLE TRIED TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES BY STARTING SCHOOLS AND BUSINESSES, EVEN IN HIGHLY DANGEROUS AREAS 
COMING TO A SAFE COUNTRY LIKE THE US IS THE ONLY TIME PEOPLE FROM A WAR ENVIRONMENT FEEL MORE SECURE
WAR COUNTRY
IT IS HARD TO FIND WORK IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY AFTER YOU FLEE A WAR
FOREIGN COUNTRIES MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE OF WAR TO CONTINUE THEIR CAREERS
GETTING HELP FROM OTHER PEOPLE IS IMPORTANT FOR REFUGEES WHEN THEY DO NOT HAVE REFUGEE STATUS
ORGANIZATIONS DO NOT PROVIDE ENOUGH ASSISTANCE TO LIVE FOR IMMIGRANTS
UN SUPPORT IS SUPPLEMENTARY – NOT ENOUGH TO SUPPORT PEOPLE IN REFUGE
LIVING AS A REFUGEE CAN MEAN BEING TREATED LIKE A SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN AND BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST

UPSET EVEN WHEN A PARENT TRIES TO SHELTER THEIR CHILDREN FROM THEIR PAIN, THEY ARE AFFECTED BY IT

OVERWHELM PARENTS, AND THEY HAVE TO ISOLATE THEMSELVES TO PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM SEEING THEIR PAIN WHEN YOU’VE EXPERIENCED WAR TRAUMA, YOU CANNOT FORGET, YOU CAN ONLY SUPRESS IT IN TIMES OF PAIN: PRAYING TO FORGET COPING: “JUST DON’T THINK ABOUT IT” (AVOIDANCE AND SUPPRESSION)

PARENTING THROUGH A TRAUMATIC WAR EXPERIENCE MEANS THAT YOU CANNOT BE THE PARENT THAT YOU WANT TO BE IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW HOW YOUR PARENTING HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY YOUR WAR EXPERIENCE IF YOU HAD YOUR CHILDREN AFTER THAT EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCING A WAR DOES NOT REALLY CHANGE THE KIND OF PARENT THAT YOU WANT TO BE, IF YOU HAD A GOOD EXAMPLE OF PARENTING FROM YOUR OWN PARENTS HAVING A CLEAR DREAM OF YOUR IDEAL PARENTING CAN HELP YOU BE A GOOD PARENT EVEN IF YOU’RE PERSONALLY DAMAGED FROM THE WAR EXPERIENCE

RELIGION IS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF MANY SURVIVORS OF WAR’S LIVES.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YOU CANNOT MEET CHILDREN’S NEEDS FOR PLAYING OUTSIDE IN A WAR ZONE</th>
<th>FEELING FRUSTRATED AND GUILTY AS A PARENT BECAUSE YOUR CHILDREN ARE NOT GETTING A GOOD CHILDHOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEELING UPSET AS A PARENT THAT YOUR CHILDREN CAN’T GO TO SCHOOL AND CAN’T PLAY OUTSIDE = AGONIZING</td>
<td>BEING A REFUGEE MEANS NOT BEING ABLE TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST DISCRIMINATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUR CHILD WHEN THERE IS NOTHING TO EAT</td>
<td>IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE HAPPY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENCING WAR MEANS TRYING TO PREVENT YOUR CHILDREN FROM FEELING YOUR PAIN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTING AFTER A WAR EXPERIENCE: ENCOURAGING YOUR CHILD TO FORGET AND NOT THINK ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>ENCOURAGING THEM NOT TO SEARCH FOR ANSWERS, JUST TO SURRENDER TO GOD AND PRAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTING AFTER A WAR EXPERIENCE MEANS SOMETIMES ISOLATING YOURSELF FROM YOUR CHILDREN WHEN PAIN ARISES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHEN YOU CANNOT PROVIDE FOR YOUR CHILDREN
RAISING CHILDREN AS A REFUGEE MEANS FEELING LIKE YOUR CHILDREN ARE NOT GETTING A GOOD CHILDHOOD
LIFE IN THE FOREIGN COUNTRY IS STILL BETTER THAN LIVING IN A WARZONE – EVEN IF YOU HAD A JOB IN THE WARZONE
Appendix P: Audit Trail for Dissertation Study of Impact of War Experience on Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Responses</th>
<th>Initial Codes</th>
<th>Focused Codes</th>
<th>Axial Codes</th>
<th>Theoretical Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My mother sacrificed so much to see us happy.</td>
<td>Felt loved as children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“She used to give her time for everybody”</td>
<td>Felt protected as children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I wished to be like her”</td>
<td>Cherished mother’s tenderness and sacrifice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“My mother was there for everything, in any condition – good or bad situations, she was there”</td>
<td>Had good childhood because needs were met</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“MY FATHER TRIED TO MAKE ME THE BEST AND SUCCESSFUL KIND OF PERSON”</td>
<td>Felt compassionately guided by father, not coerced or forced</td>
<td></td>
<td>Having Principles of Good Parenting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“MY FATHER TRIED TO MAKE ME THE BEST AND SUCCESSFUL KIND OF PERSON”</td>
<td>Saw parents working very hard to support family</td>
<td></td>
<td>Childhood is Parenting When Parents Develop Parenting Styles and Ideals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATHER TAUGHT THEM TO “LOVE PEOPLE AND TO BE PEACEFUL”</td>
<td>Parents instilled the importance of education and planning for future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“DURING THE DAY I WAS A TENDER MOM, WITH THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF RAISING THE KIDS, AND DURING”</td>
<td>Good parenting is providing a loving home and structured routine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parents Are Guided by their Principles of Good Parenting</td>
<td>Good Parenting for their children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE NIGHT I WAS A WORKING WIFE"

I walked my children to and from school to keep them safe. "Being there for them in times of pain and giving them the most valuable things that I can give them – my whole life, I sacrifice for them.” My understanding of being a parent is tenderness and sacrifice.”

You cannot avoid these groups – “they can come from anywhere. You can’t predict”

GROUPS “COME TO PEOPLE’S HOMES AND KILL THEM IF THEY ARE HOME”

“They made us live in terror”

"When you live in a war place, you don’t have government, you just Living in fear" The Experience of War is Detrimental to Quality of Life

GOOD PARENTS WORK HARD and sacrifice themselves for their children

Good parents protect their children

Good parents prepare children for the future

Good parents are loving and compassionate with their children

You see parents working hard and sacrifice themselves for their children

Good parents protect their children

Good parents prepare children for the future

Good parents are loving and compassionate with their children

The Experience of Parenting is Impaired by the Experience of War

Parents Try to Cope with Impairments of War Experience by Using their Principles of Good Parenting
“We were barely able to go to the store to pick up the most necessary things for our lives.”

I was a driver before the war, but had to quit so that I did not get attacked or arrested.

We kept our traveling to the minimum. We didn’t do that much traveling. We started to stay at home as much as we could.”

“Sometimes you would spend two days in the house because you could not go to work.”

“When I left for work in the morning, I did not FEELING HELPLESS
Having limited or no resources
WAR CAUSING
MAJOR
FINANCIAL
CHALLENGES,
LIKE
UNEMPLOYMENT
BEING CONFINED
TO THE HOUSE
OUT OF FEAR
INSTABILITY

The Experience of Parenting is Impaired by the Experience of War.
know if I would make it home again”

My husband was hardly providing the kids with food, with the milk, and the diapers”

“DURING THE DAY I WAS A TENDER MOM, WITH THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF RAISING THE KIDS, AND DURING THE NIGHT I WAS A WORKING WIFE”

I came home from work and cooked and ate with my children, and bathed them. I wanted as much close contact with them to show them that I loved them and that I was their mother.

My mother-in-law would gather the whole family in one room and tell them “it’s ok, there’s nothing that’s going to happen. This will end, you will be safe. I am here”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Experience of Parenting in a Warzone is Struggle with Impairments</th>
<th>Parents Try to Cope with Impairments Throughout the War Experience by Using their Principles of Good Parenting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facing death to provide for family</td>
<td>The Experience of Parenting is Impaired by the Refugee Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING UNABLE TO PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH FOOD AND NECESSITIES</td>
<td>The Experience of Parenting is Impaired by the Refugee Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOING THROUGH THE DAILY ROUTINE OF MEETING CHILDREN’S NEEDS FOR FOOD, EDUCATION, SELF-CARE, SLEEP, AND COMFORTING</td>
<td>The Experience of Parenting is Impaired by the Refugee Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT COMPROMISING HER PARENTING</td>
<td>The Experience of Parenting is Impaired by the Refugee Experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We had enough of this life, that's it, we can't stay there any more. We need a better life for our kids. If we can't provide that, let's die together. "We reached the point that there's no more waiting and we have to move out – there's no work, there's not enough food, it's the time now for moving."

In Gabon, the children did not have a good childhood because "they were just stuck in the house – they were not free and happy."

She was their teacher and their playmate. Like her mother, she tried to be everything for her children. "In the home it was very healthy" – even though outside in Gabon was threatening. "In Jordan, after they were trying to provide for children when environment is hostile or lacking.

---

**Due to war, poverty, and pain, parents try to parent through the terror.**

Parents try to cope with impairments throughout the war experience by using their principles of good parenting.
took assistance away and made it illegal for Syrians to work, life got as bad as living in Syria during the war”

“I could not find enough work to support my family in Kenya because a license was too expensive and I could not hire a lawyer”

KIDS WOULD US

“WHY ARE WE SUFFERING SO MUCH?” AND “WHY DO WE HAVE THIS KIND OF LIFE?”. WE TOLD THEM “BECAUSE OF THE WAR, WE CANNOT PROVIDE FOR YOU”

BECAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS IN THE CAMPS, SHE WOULD START TO THINK “THIS IS NOT RIGHT” AND “THEN IT COMES BACK”

Parents Try to Cope with Impairments Throughout the War Experience by Using their Principles of Good Parenting

Parents Try

Not able to work and provide for family in host country

Because of the unstable living conditions

Instability of life in new

Parents trying to follow their
“Even though she knows that they are safe, that feeling still comes…she’s still afraid – not as afraid as before, but the fear is still there.”

No I don’t think that I consider this life as hard as living in Iraq because at the end of the tunnel there is supposed to be a light. There was hope for us - someday this would end. In our country, this was going to last until death.”

“I try to ease up on them because I see that they are so sensitive”

“I am not as hard as before. Now I think to myself ‘go easy on them’.”

This tension has made her react to her children with more anger – which she “wouldn’t do...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural Text</th>
<th>Parents try to</th>
<th>Parents trying to follow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in a normal time</td>
<td>I am suffering now with fitting in with the society and trying to keep up and get them the resources, trying to get them all the food and all that</td>
<td>Parents to cope with children’s trauma by changing parenting to be more compassionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“To be a good parent, you need to plan for the future for your children, and to work for it while they are still young. Already my son is 15, and I haven’t been able to do it”</td>
<td>Parents may be more anxious and quick to anger, and see this as a problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do what my mother used to do – just show her children that everything is ok, even when she was sad”</td>
<td>Parents trying to find a way to provide for children, and struggle with hopelessness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometime she gets some memories - but sometimes she refuses to tell them because when she talks about it, they feel hurt and they start crying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I am with my children, I focus on</td>
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</table>
mothering them, not on my memories

SHE WANTS TO BE A
“HAPPY MOTHER,
PLAYING WITH THE
KIDS AROUND THE FAMILY AND HER OWN MOTHER” – THE WAR HAS PREVENTED THIS

Parents avoid showing pain and trauma of war to children

Parents focus on parenting their children instead of painful memories

Parents trying to be more emotionally available to children, even when suffering from war and refugee trauma
Appendix Q: Endnotes

1 The primary caretaker is the person who primarily took care of the baby during the first year of life – usually the baby’s mother.

2 A child’s early emotional experiences create neural pathways and the more that these pathways are used, they more they are solidified. “Developmental experiences are etched into the brain, producing a unique pattern of neural networks based upon the entwining of genetics and experience”. Newton, p. 55.

3 When a person reacts to a situation outside of a normal range of emotions, it qualifies as affect dysregulation – and a person who does not have control over their emotions suffers from the destabilization of their nervous systems to such an extent that it becomes chronic.

Emotions, feelings, and affect are all concerned with the “internal and external states of sensation, feeling and emotion, whether seen or unseen by the parent, and include the corresponding neural changes in the child’s brain”. Newton, pp. 3-5

4 Hochberg, CH.1 section E: In evolutionary developmental biology, environmental influences are those that “cause DNA sequence mutations and explain altered gene expression or increases in disease frequency in a particular region.

5 The following are the periods of adaptive plasticity, and are related to transitions in life-history stages and child growth: the gestation period is the first period of plasticity development (the length of gestation is directly related to things like growth, metabolism, and obesity); energy crises in infancy and childhood utilize a plasticity that modifies the child’s growth transition – this may cause problems in growth stature and endocrine
issues; the transition to juvenility from childhood is dependent on adaptive plasticity (and an increase in the DHEAS hormone) that determines body and brain changes necessary for a transitioning out of total dependence on the family and tribe for food and security; transition to adolescence depends on plasticity for adapting to energy resources, environmental cues, social needs, and maturity – all to transition to fertility and longevity. Hochberg, ch.1, section G

6 “The endocrine system is instrumental in regulating mood, growth and development, tissue function, and metabolism, as well as sexual function and reproductive processes”. Found at: kidshealth.org;

7 Small writes that, “each group can be described relative to the subsistence pattern, the production of goods and their distribution, the interpersonal interactions and social rules, and the history of its society”.

8 Akinsola (2011), p. 81. Authoritative parenting is where parents establish their authority by “having limits and controls, but allow verbal dialogue which promotes parental responsiveness, encourages independence, social and cognitive competence, self reliance and social responsibility”

9 Baumrind exemplifies cognitive and emotional disturbance in children as “hostile withdrawal, hostile acting out, dependency, personality problems, nervousness, and reduced schoolroom efficiency”.

10 Baumrind (1966), p. 896. Benefits of mild punishments are: “a.) more rapid re-establishment of affectioal involvement on both sides following emotional release, b) high resistance to similar deviation by siblings, c) prosocial assertive behavior in children
emulating parents, d) lessening of guilt and humiliation, e) increased ability of the child to understand and endure punishment as a means of learning “good” behavior”.

11 Other findings were that sex differences were significant (with males reporting higher maternal authoritarianism, lower neuroticism, and higher psychoticism than females; females having significantly lower self-esteem scores); permissiveness (both maternal and paternal) were positively correlated with psychoticism p.466

12 Kagitcibasi cited Piaget’s “classic use of autonomous and heteronomous morality” to explain the morality that governs either asserting one’s independence or subjecting one’s self to another person’s rule, p.182

13 Kagitcibasi (2007), p.27. “cultural context provides precious meaning to observed behaviors and their causal links…”

14 “Parental rejection undermines self-esteem and promotes a negative self-concept, a sense of helplessness, which are the building blocks of depression” (Garber&Flynn (2001) quoted in Dwairy, p.2


16 Qouta (2008), p. 314. Thabet et al (2009) reported that the most common PTSD symptoms that Palestinian children reported in their study was: intrusive recollections (81.6%), distressing dreams (80.8%), being upset by reminders of the event (80%), and flashbacks (74%), p.229

17 Thabet et al (2009) write that “it is well established that children living in war zones are at high risk of developing different types of psychopathology, predominantly PTSD” – citing Pfefferbaum (1997) and Thabet et al (2004) on p.226
Ford et al (2008), p.3. For example “adults diagnosed with PTSD must either be aware of troubling memories of past psychological traumas or react to fairly clear reminders of traumatic past experiences with emotional or physical distress, children with PTSD may not have actual memories but may instead enact past traumatic experiences repetitively in play or artwork. They may also regress developmentally in reaction to reminders of past traumatic experiences”.


Breslau (1998) cited in Qouta (2008), p. 311. The dose-effect model of trauma asserts that a higher dose of traumatic exposure leads to a level higher psychological distress; Miller & Rasmussen (2010), p.10

Punamaki (2009), p.64-5. Societal preconditions for aggressive child development are: war propaganda, traumatic experiences, heroic ideals and worldview, and national fear for survival

Fischer et al (2010), p.246. They write that “previous research revealed that different forms of social threat can increase authoritarian tendencies in society”.

Examples of internalizing behaviors are: withdrawal, depression, and eating disorders.

Examples of externalizing behaviors are: aggression, rule-breaking, vandalism and crime.
25 Fischer et al (2010), p.251. “Participants who were exposed to pictures and newspaper articles referencing terror attacks were more positively inclined toward authoritarian parenting practices”

26 Qouta et al (2008), p. 317. In this study, it was found that girls and boys experienced their parents differently: boys perceived their parents as rejecting and indifferent, whereas girls perceived their parents as highly attentive and restrictive. It also showed that boys were supported by their fathers in political activity whereas girls were punished for it.

27 Qouta et al (2007), p.706. The choices of disciplinary methods were: ignore the child’s behavior, threaten with punishment, or calmly discuss the issue

28 “Research among trauma victims has shown that introversion, neuroticism, and insecure attachment styles are associated with higher levels of PTSD”. Thus, parenting (which establishes attachment styles) is still very important in even adult mental health.


29 Internalizing behaviors result from negative feelings and are projected inward, usually expressed in low self-esteem, withdrawal, depression, and victimization. Externalizing behaviors are negative behaviors that are projected onto their environment, usually in aggressive actions like fighting and criminal activity; they are reflective of underlying emotional issues.

30 “Controlling mental images has been found to be correlated with mature development of personality characteristics, intelligence, creativity, cognitive performance, and the affective regulation of psychophysiological responses after a traumatic event”.

31 See the previous section on Attachment Theory and Affect Regulation, p.6
Herbert Blumer (1954,56), Pitirim Sorokin (1956) and C. Wright Mills (1959) all appealed to social researchers at the time to move beyond focus on “variable analysis”, “abstract empiricism”, and quantitative analysis – rather to get into the real world to better understand social problems. Bryant & Charmaz (2007), p.37


All examples of the coding techniques are taken from Saldana’s coding manual (2013).

Beitin (2012), pp.243-4. “Thomas and Pollio (2002) suggest that an appropriate sample size for phenomenological research can range from 6 to 12 participants—provided there is thematic redundancy after hearing the narratives of 6 participants. Creswell (1998) recommended between 5 and 25 participants, with another researcher (Boyd, 2001) prescribing a more flexible range of 2 to 10. These differences extend to other common qualitative approaches, such as grounded theory, and make it difficult for qualitative researchers to predetermine a sample size.”

This table is taken from Saldana’s (2013), p. 21

This is based on the Saldana’s analogy of assembling a piece of Ikea furniture, p.208

All of the names have been changed to protect the participants’ identities

See Appendix C

A note on the specifics of this study: Ideally, GTM initial interviews are conducted with as little structure and guidance from the interviewer as possible. This is to allow research data to arise from the pure source of actual experience, not from preconceptions of the researcher. However, because of the communication barriers inherent in working with non-English speaking participants, the initial interviews for this study had to be
more structured. When I would ask a very broad question (for example, “Can you tell me about your childhood?”), participants often expressed a need for more guidance – like examples, or more specific information. So, I would have to ask them questions like “what was your relationship like with your parents?” or “Can you tell me about your mother/father?” Thus, even the initial interviews in this study were relatively structured and guided by the researcher.

41 A copy of this Agreement is in Appendix B
42 The complete table of Process Codes is in Appendix F
43 The complete table of In Vivo Codes is in Appendix G
44 The complete table of Emotion Codes is in Appendix H
45 Refer to Appendix I for the Code Tables for this concept
46 Refer to Appendix J for the Code Tables for this concept
47 Refer to Appendix K for the Code Tables for this concept
48 Refer to Appendix L for the Code Tables for this concept
49 Refer to Appendix M for the Code Tables for this concept
50 Refer to Appendix N for the Code Tables for this concept
51 Refer to Appendix O for the Code Tables for this concept
52 Ines, Alice and Louise all made comments about how important their religious morals were in teaching their children about not “sinning”. They described sinning as engaging in activities like drinking, smoking, and hurting others.
53 Halina
All of the participants expressed being grateful to share their story, and a hopefulness that their story would shed light on the war refugee’s experience.

“Trustworthiness refers to the conceptual soundness from which the value of qualitative research may be judged” (Marshall & Rossman (1995) cited in Bowen (2009), p.307.).

The small sample size was due to the researcher’s lack of resources (time and money being the primary limitations).

In 2017, the US drastically reduced the number of refugees resettled – falling from 97,000 (2016) to 33,000. Pew Research Center.

Down from 47,000 (2016) to 27,000 (2017). Found in Pew Research Center article.

Down from 28,000 (2016) to 15,000 (2017). Found in Pew Research Center article.

Down from 189,000 (2016) to 103,000 (2017)


Sources: Veteran’s History Project (The Library of Congress’ American Folklife Center)