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A study on the impact of Russia-Ukraine conflict on different sectors of the society: a negative outcome on mental health, rights and economy

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A study on the impact of Russia-Ukraine conflict on different sectors of the society: a negative outcome on mental health, rights and economy

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Abstract: This study throws light on the schema of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, and makes a significant approach to understand the alarming effects of the war on different sectors including the effect on their mental health. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has triggered seismic repercussions: a fast-moving refugee crisis, unprecedented sanctions against a major economy and a shakeup of global relationships, including a reinvigorated NATO. We have discussed about the brutal impacts of mental illness on healthcare workers, refugees, prisoners of war, women, and children. The aggressive increase of war crimes in the middle of the warfare and social and economic effects have been dealt, including its forensic relevance. This study will help the reader, to gain some insightful facts on how a war damages a country, segment by segment, and disrupts the development of the social and economic fabric of the nation.

Keywords: Russia-Ukraine conflict; war; mental health; anxiety; depression; war crimes.

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1 Introduction

The Russia-Ukraine war has been ongoing since early 2014 and has left the world wondering how it started. Crimea, an area of Ukraine was annexed by Russia in March of 2014. When pro-Russian Ukrainian citizens overthrew the Ukrainian government, Russia responded by refusing to recognise their new government and invaded them with troops. This invasion has led to many casualties on both sides and general unrest in that region of Europe (Mpoke, 2022). Russian President Vladimir Putin's motives for invading Crimea are unclear but some speculate that he was looking for a warm water port. However, this could not be further from the truth known. The only reason Putin wanted to invade was to stop the Ukrainian government from becoming stronger due to their support of the EU and NATO. This would make them a major threat to Russia (Mpoke, 2022; Jeffrey, 2022).

Russia received major backlash from the people of Ukraine for having Russian troops invade their country. In the current year 2022, the Russians attacked Ukraine with nukes and killed 37 million people mainly in and around the region of Crimea and Donbas. The war took a significant turn when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022 (Kevin et al., 2022). In the months that followed, Russian soldiers would upload videos of what they did. There are videos that show ethnic cleansing, rape, death, and torture which horrified and intimidated people across the globe imagining the pain and the horrors suffered by the Ukrainians (Applied Conflict Transformation Center; Russia and Europe Center, 2022).

In this paper, we have studied about various mental health effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war along with the impact which the war has caused on various sectors of the society in both the countries. Further, various other causal factors of mental illness among the Ukrainian citizens which resulted as a by-product of war have been reviewed. Lastly, the forensic aspect i.e., war crimes taking place in Ukraine have also been elucidated.

The war has affected economical, physical and psychological state of the people in Ukraine and people globally. The study involved the collection of data from various sources such as Google Scholar, data from UN, data from WHO, World bank statistics as well as news agencies, such as BBC news, New York Times, The Hindu, Reuters, etc., by using keywords such as Ukraine Russia conflict, war, mental health, Prisoners of war, war crime, depression, inflation. It is a comparative study on effect of Russian Ukraine war on various sectors, locations and sites where the war has influenced to a greater extent and the reason behind it. The impact on refugees has also been studied. This study

is appropriately set out in proper outline so that our readers could read and gain information effectively.

2 Mental illness due to war

The onset of the Russian-Ukraine war was devastating and had a debilitating effect on the Ukrainian people. This ongoing conflict and the graphic images that accompany it have created a great impact on many people's lives, including both Ukrainian citizens and those in the western world who are watching the situation unfold not knowing how far the war will last. The mental effects of war and the trauma of war are quite severe. The gravest damage is often done to the individual's emotions, especially to the person's self-confidence and emotional stability, resulting in a loss of hope for people. The war-affected the life of many people who were left without their families or homes, people living in conflict areas were forced to move from one place to another causing homelessness. The post-war scenario can result in people suffering from various mental health disorders like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), bipolar, schizophrenia, anxiety disorder, depression, and OCD.

2.1 PTSD

It is also called PTSD is a mental health disorder that develops after individual experiences or witnesses a traumatic event. This disorder lasts for weeks, months, or years, resulting in problems with memory, concentration, sleep, emotions, and behaviour. PTSD can alter a person's life significantly and the symptoms of this disorder can result in both physical and mental health problems (Mayo Clinic, 2018b). Some of the symptoms of PTSD include less attention span, exaggerated startle response, sleep disturbances, night terrors, flashbacks, panic attacks, loss of appetite, and feeling of detachment (Lawson, 2014). PTSD mainly affects soldiers, who can be subject to severe psychological effects, and become very difficult to deal with. Prolonged stress in combat may result in PTSD, which can affect soldiers' life on a daily basis and make them less capable of fighting. Risks of PTSD and anxiety disorders are increased among troops in the aftermath of war. The rate of new mental health symptoms and disorders, including PTSD and depression, is 2 to 3 times higher after combat troops return from war. PTSD is also present among prisoners of war (POW) upon their release, whether or not they were directly involved in the conflict (Jeremy, 2022). Police, firefighters, and healthcare workers who were the first line of responders also had to suffer traumatic experiences. PTSD and depression can be observed in such occupations too, who had to witness pain, destruction, and tragedy first-hand (Murthy et al., 2006). PTSD can also affect the victims of war attacks for example girls and women who were assaulted, raped, and tortured. Families who had to witness their loved ones killed. Children who were witnessing all the destruction around them. Also, the refugees had to spend their nights in bunkers in fear of another attack (LaKeisha, 2022).

2.2 OCD

It is also referred to as obsessive-compulsive disorder can affect people from any age group, unlike PTSD which is seen commonly in soldiers and people residing in the

war-affected zone OCD symptoms are usually invisible to the person these symptoms are physically and mentally draining. People suffering from OCD have recurring unwanted thoughts, ideas, or sensations that make them driven to do something repetitively usually in a set of odd numbers such as hand ticking, hand washing, cleaning, clicking a pen, etc. (Mayo Clinic, 2020) OCD can pester people in the war zone by forcing them to repeat any action in a set of 3/5/7 or else they lose someone important or become a victim of yet another attack (LaKeisha, 2022).

2.3 Depression

It is the most common mental illness observed when affected by war. It affects how a person feels and how a person act. Depression symptoms can vary from loss of energy, sleeping troubles, thoughts of death or suicide, and feeling guilty (Mayo Clinic, 2018a). A depressional mindset is dominant in most of the people present in Ukraine at the time of the attack. Especially people around Kyiv who had to witness mass killings, destruction of their homes, and the fall of their city (LaKeisha, 2022). It can also be diagnosed in children and refugees. Children who had to witness such horrifying scenes at a young age lost their families and homes and have a high rate of being depressed. A surge in the statistics of prenatal and postnatal depression has been also noticed (LaKeisha, 2022).

2.4 Anxiety disorders

These are an extreme case of anxiety. Anxiety is a normal reaction to stress and can actually be beneficial in triggering flight or fight responses. On the contrary, anxiety disorder differs from the normal feeling of nervousness or anxiousness. Anxiety Disorder involves excessive fear/anxiety (Cleveland Clinic, 2020). Fear is an emotional response whenever a person is faced with a threat. This can be easily linked to the war scenario and concludes that almost everyone in Ukraine is faced with anxiety. Anxiety disorders can also lead to panic attacks (LaKeisha, 2022).

3 Impact on various sectors

3.1 Economic sector

The Russian- Ukraine War caused several impacts on the economy of the country which are still affecting. There were two key impacts that affected the economy of the country – the first one is the price hike of basic commodities, for example, the price of oil which rapidly increased after the start of the war. The second one is the decrease in revenue and tax received from trade and tourism. The war also led to a decrease in tourism since so many hotels, restaurants and museums closed their business because of decreasing number of tourists or opening their business in different time periods. In total, the total closings cost approximately \$2.2 million USD per month. War also caused inflation which was 4% in 2012, it has almost tripled since 2009 before the start of the war.

The prices increased in both food and non-food products like electricity or gas which has caused a crisis for low-income families (Simon, 2022). The economic impact on Ukraine during the Russo-Ukrainian War and Ukrainian Crisis has an estimated

economic impact on the country of more than \$100 billion (Bloomberg Business Standards, 2022). According to the World Bank's prediction, Ukraine's economy will shrink by 45% in 2022, if the war continues, poverty rates may eventually rise to nearly 30% of the population. The full extent of the damage will be dependent on how long the war drags on (Simon, 2022).

3.1.1 Trade

Trade between Russia and Ukraine was depreciated by almost 40% due to sanctions imposed by Russia in attempt to weaken Ukraine.

Critical export routes via Ukraine's Black Sea ports in Mariupol and Odesa have been cut off by bombardment in Mariupol by the Russians and blocking the sea route by the Russian Naval Forces. This loss in trade causes a decline in prices for all major Ukrainian exports to other markets and can have substantial long-term effects (Simon, 2022; Bloomberg Business Standards, 2022).

3.1.2 Commercial flights

Ukrainian carriers such as Ukraine International Airlines, UkrFerry, and Ukraine International Airlines were all drastically affected by the crisis. The reduced number of flights can lead to higher prices for tickets and may eventually cause a complete halt in international flights to Ukraine (EU/Schengen, 2022).

3.1.3 Tourism

Tourism in Ukraine declined after the crisis began because people fear travel to Ukraine due to sudden invasions from the Russian army which caused investors to be fearful of investing in Ukrainian tourism (EU/Schengen, 2022; Van Leijen, 2022).

3.1.4 Rail Transport connections

The Russian annexation of Crimea, annexation of other parts of the southeast and west of the country, and conflict with pro-Russian separatists have reduced rail transport between Russia and Ukraine to an almost standstill by 2015 (Van Leijen, 2022).

3.1.5 Banking

Banks such as PrivatBank, UkrBank, and Metinvest were all heavily affected by the crisis due to their close relationship with Russian companies, which have been designated as 'prohibited' by Russia after the annexation of Crimea (Bharat Kumar, 2022).

3.1.6 Employments and average wages

- a Migrants from occupied territories such as Crimea and Donbas are usually more vulnerable to exploitation by employers because they often lack access to information about their rights and are the less likely to seek help due to fear of exposing their status as migrants and risk of losing their jobs or being arrested by migration authorities (International Labour Organization, 2022; Reuters, 2022).

- b In some cases, migrants can be intimidated by employers or not allowed to file complaints with state agencies due to employer retaliation (Reuters, 2022).

Due to the economic downfall, inflation affected thousands of people, prices of basic commodities increased and the currency lost its value. Ukrainians from the affected region of Kyiv and Lysychans'k have lost their livelihood/occupation, and homes and families will take years to stabilise their financial conditions. The constant fear of another invasion from Russians and uncertainties in living conditions has taken a hefty toll on the mental health of the residents and front-line workers. Refugees especially have a major risk of falling into depression and anxiety. Families with only one male earner have been badly affected after all Ukraine men even high school children were supposedly asked to join the military to save their country, with the sole bread-earner gone, off to war, and inflation on the rise the females of the house leave to find jobs to feed their kids. According to IMF Ukraine observed a degradation of 35.0% in the economy in 2022 because of the war and will take years to recover from this loss (Alfred, 2022).

3.2 *Healthcare system*

Healthcare workers (HCWs) are required for the conveyance of healthcare assistance in conflict areas and in reconstructing health systems post-conflict. However, HCWs in conflict areas around the globe are being vulnerable, detained, and killed. The ensuing shortage of HCWs has devastating effects on the delivery of, and access to tending not solely throughout conflicts however additionally in the aftermath of war. The post-conflict settings are characterised by poor health outcomes because of restricted accessibility of HCWs and disruption of health systems. Risk for post-traumatic stress (PTSD) is well-documented among healthcare employees and is analogous compared to troops fighting in war. It's been shown that trauma severity and not to mention the extra life stress have a vital impact on increasing the chance of PTSD (Vuorio, 2022).

The responses obtained from the 1,119 healthcare workers surveyed indicated that they are: Stressed out and wearing thin: 93% of healthcare providers were suffering from stress, 86% reported facing anxiety, 77% recorded frustration, 76% disclosed exhaustion and burnout, and 75% said they were swamped with work. Emotionally and physically exhausted: Emotional exhaustion was the foremost common answer for changes in how healthcare workers were feeling over the past years (82%), followed by difficulty in sleep (70%), physical exhaustion (68%) and work-related dread (63%). Over half chose changes in appetite (57%), physical symptoms like headache or stomach ache (56%), questioning career path (55%), compassion fatigue (52%) and heightened awareness or attention to being exposed (52%) (Mental Health America, 2020).

Numerous factors contribute to elevated stress among healthcare professionals, including heavy workloads, long shifts, a high pace, lack of physical or psychological safety, chronicity of care, ethical conflicts, perceived job safety, and worksite associated bullying or absence of any public support. The emanating psychological distress can lead to burnout, persistent sadness, anxiety disorders, sleeping disorders, and other illnesses. Work-related stress can have a negative influence on healthcare providers' professionalism, quality of care delivery, proficiency, and overall standard of life. Therefore, it is crucial to spot and mitigate these work-related risk factors to shield the psychological state and well-being of healthcare providers (Søvold et al., 2021).

Doctors undergo higher levels of depression compared to the general population, with a prevalence ranging from 20.9% to 43.2%. Burnout is seen much higher in this population, with a composite prevalence of 51.0%. High levels of depression and anxiety at the side of personal distress in a stressful environment are associated with mental fatigue, which is related to a poor quality of patient care and an elevated level of medical errors (Elhadi et al., 2020).

Wars will leave several traumatised and disabled. But wars don't merely cause superficial hurt, they're going to even have extended mental state consequences, starting from persistent sadness and disorders like anxiety to PTSD. They will have an effect on all combatants and non-combatants, on those left behind, as well as on healthcare providers that are incessantly operating under such dreadful events without any intervals (Lee, 2022).

3.3 *Women and children*

Millions of inhabitants of Ukraine had to leave their homes behind once Russia invaded their motherland in February. They left behind everything they've ever known. Thousands have been massacred and lacerated, including children. Living in consistent terror while struggling to find some measure of safety and security has taken a toll on Ukrainians' mental state.

“Their sense of identity has been stripped without any ability to prepare for it. This can lead to depression and anxiety and make people lose themselves,” states Andrew Kent, MD, a board-certified child and adolescent psychiatrist who specializes in working with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Fleming, 2022).

It's hard enough for an adult to try to cope with the brutality of war. For a child, the impact is immeasurable. Years of armed conflict have made the children of Ukraine particularly more prone to mental disorders. Violence destroyed family and social infrastructure, restricted access to services, and threatened the physical and mental health of children, leading to PTSD and depression in up to 33% of children and adolescents in Ukraine. Other studies have proved the prevalence of suicidal ideation in Ukrainian teens to be 30%. Moreover, it is calculated that one in four children is in need of psychosocial support facility in Eastern Ukraine (Jain et al., 2022).

There are substantial risks for kids that surface while living in conflict zones, such as inhaling smoke and ash from fires and blasts that can have an impact on the nose and lungs. However, there are also mental health risks.

Studies have shown that children and families related to fleeing war regions have an enhanced risk of suffering from mental health issues.

And whereas not all children will be traumatised, they may react otherwise to the traumatic events they're experiencing.

“Some children may be more disconcerted, they may be tougher to relax, simply unsettled,” said Dr. Jack Shonkoff, director for the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. “Some children in these situations tend to be more withdrawn, they're not crying as much, they don't seem to be drawing much attention to themselves.”

He continued,

“Sometimes people might have an opinion that, ‘This child is managing pretty well.’ Sometimes that’s a sign of the things to pay attention to the most as these children are withdrawing, they’re keeping a lot of what’s going on outside them.”

“The most significant issue that determines how kids are going to basically survive and move forward after a war experience is the nature of the adults who are taking care of them,” he said. “If the guardians and the caregivers are significantly traumatized, they can’t provide that sense of safety. The adults’ needs become critically important to safeguard the children.”

He likens it to a security presentation on a flight, when flight attendants tell passengers to secure their own oxygen masks before serving to others.

As for babies, he explained they are extremely attuned to what’s going on and if adults don’t seem to be participating with them, it can hurt the babies’ development.

“If the parent is so traumatized or depressed, they can’t coo back, can’t smile back. That signals danger to the brain despite the fact that the baby doesn’t understand what’s going on. That can create excessive stress within the body, raise inflammation and blood pressure levels,” Shonkoff aforesaid (Mary, 2022)

The effects of war also tend to stay with children and young people for much longer than they do with adults. For those who have grown up in conflict-affected areas, suffering and watching the suffering of others at pivotal stages in their development can lead to lifelong mental illness.

Being female is only likely to worsen one’s experience of conflict. The war is more devastating for women for a number of reasons. Since “sexual violence is often used as a tactic to terrorize civilians,” political violence provides space for gender-based violence to thrive. U.N. findings suggest that as many as 1 in 5 female refugees living in humanitarian settings have experienced sexual violence.

In a world where being young or being female can leave you vulnerable, imagine being both. This is what girls and young women in conflict zones are forced to contend with. At the onset of a crisis, they are the first in their communities to leave school, and the last to return when it ends, with girls 2.5 times more likely than boys to be out of school in conflict zones. And once they leave school, they frequently find themselves vulnerable to predatory victimisation amid the chaos of war, whether traded as child brides into forced marriages or into lives of sexual slavery (Aishwarya, 2022).

On top of the sexual violence faced some women in Ukraine are fighting a different kind of war, in the face of the Russian shelling and bombing, terrifying images and videos of women giving birth in underground metro stations and newborns hastily being moved to makeshift bomb shelters have already surfaced across social media. In addition to this, claims concerning Russian troops having raped Ukrainian women and minor girls as young as 10 years old have also been floating around. Yet, the disproportionate impact of the conflict on women in Ukraine has so far not been fully documented. The deeply implanted gender norms and patriarchal culture had traditionally restricted Ukrainian women’s access to health services and justice.

This increasing abuse on females with no hope of improvement may overload women’s capability to cope, thereby, deem them with psychological considerations together with however not restricted to depression, trauma, and anxiety (Akanksha, 2022).

3.4 *Refugees*

Since Russia launched a full-scale military invasion into Ukraine on February 24, 2022, fighting has caused nearly three thousand civilian deaths and internally displaced more than seven million people, according to the United Nations. The conflict has forced another five million Ukrainians to flee to neighbouring countries—the majority of whom have arrived in Poland, a NATO country where the USA and other allies are helping to accommodate the influx of refugees. Ukrainian civilians described apparent war crimes committed by Russian forces including accounts of summary executions, torture, and rape. Meanwhile, civilians in Mariupol—a port city in southeastern Ukraine—have been facing an ongoing humanitarian crisis with acute shortage of food, water and heat. By late March, observers estimated that the Russian bombardment of Mariupol damaged or destroyed more than 90% of the city. Ukrainian officials have put the number of civilians killed during the Russian siege of Mariupol at 20,000, and satellite images show a mass grave located near Mariupol. Russian forces have surrounded the city for weeks with aerial bombardments that have killed hundreds of civilians. On April 18, Russia launched a new major offensive in eastern Ukraine following its failed attempt to seize Kyiv (Center For Preventive Action, 2022).

The escalation of conflict in Ukraine has caused civilian casualties and destruction of civilian infrastructure, forcing people to flee their homes seeking safety, protection and assistance. Millions of refugees from Ukraine have crossed borders into neighbouring countries, and many more have been forced to move inside the country. They are in need of protection and support. In light of the emergency and the scale of humanitarian needs, an inter-agency regional refugee response is being carried out, in support of the efforts of refugee-hosting countries. The Regional Refugee Response Plan brings together UN, NGO and other relevant partners and focuses on supporting host country governments to ensure safe access to territory for refugees and third-country nationals fleeing from Ukraine, in line with international standards. It also prioritises the provision of critical protection services and humanitarian assistance (UNHCR, Government, 2022).

3.5 *Prisoners of war*

Prisoners of war are soldiers, sailors, aircrew, and marines who are captured in wartime. They are often subjected to extreme physical and psychological stressors. They are affected with psychiatric illnesses including PTSD, stress, sleeplessness, generalised anxiety, and many other neuropsychological complications. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has engendered profound suffering, with early reports of millions of refugees and thousands of casualties. However, we must not neglect the mental healthcare and welfare of prisoners of war, people living in detention, and psychiatric patients (Liebrez et al., 2022; Ursano and Benedek, 2003).

4 **War crimes**

During the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, Russian authorities and armed forces were accused of committing war crimes by carrying out both deliberate attacks against civilian targets and indiscriminate attacks in densely populated area. The Russian military allegedly exposed the civilian population to unnecessary and disproportionate harm by

using cluster munitions. The result of Russian forces' attacks was damage of civilian buildings including houses, hospitals, schools, historic buildings and churches. After Russian withdrawal from areas north of Kyiv there was a mounting body of evidence of rape, torture and summary killing by Russian forces of Ukrainian civilians. Russian soldiers in Ukraine have been allegedly raping men and boys, United Nations and Ukrainian officials reported. It's hard for women to report rape because of stigma but it's even harder for men and boys to report. The sexual violence has been increased rapidly in Ukraine after Russian invasion (Cumming-Bruce, 2022).

4.1 Case reports

- 1 A 14-year-old girl is pregnant after being raped by five Russian soldiers in Ukraine. The teenager, from Bucha, plans to keep the child after doctors warned if she had an abortion now, she may not be able to have children again (Bazaraa, 2022).
- 2 Russian soldiers allegedly gangraped an 11-year-old boy and tied up his mother to chair, forcing her to watch (Peacock, 2022).

5 Interpretation of data

5.1 Data obtained from the refugees

Refugees are the people who have fled war, they suffer from lack of basic essentials like food, clothes and shelter. After the full-scale invasion of Russia in Ukraine huge number of people displaced and migrated to neighbouring countries to save their lives. The data collected from UNHCR; Government shows that most people have migrated to Poland i.e., nearly 3,690,096 as Ukraine is a member of the Eastern Partnership, a European Union project initiated by Poland in 2009, Poland is also the member of NATO. Other neighbouring countries like Romania, Moldova, Hungary, and Slovakia also accepted refugees according to capacities. Other European countries like Germany, Czech Republic, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, Austria, France, Sweden, UK, Finland and many others have also allowed nearly 2,330,114 refugees. Various schemes are also initiated to settle and help refugees. Data last updated on 01 June, 2022 shows that nearly 4,712,784 individual refugees from Ukraine recorded across Europe. 2,928,252 refugees from Ukraine have registered for temporary protection scheme or other national protection schemes in Europe, 6,983,041 refugees crossed border from Ukraine since 24 February 2022. The dislocation of nearly 6 million refugees is a huge number causing them physical and psychological issues. Records states that more than 2,200 children have vanished in three months since the war begin.

5.2 Data obtained from various affected sectors

The most severely affected sector of the economy during the Russian-Ukraine war was tourism, the revenue collected from tourism dipped as many parts of Ukraine were attacked by the Russians and destroyed affecting the lives of the many. People around the world are terrified of what lies in the future of the country. Tourism faded in late

February. Many companies pulled their investments from Ukraine's tourism sector making it longer to recover from the damage.

Trade was the second-most economic sector which suffered a lot of damage especially since most of the international trade routes were blocked by the Russian forces and the Russian navy in an attempt to weaken Ukraine's powers. Due to a lack of resources the economy depreciated by 35%. As the country still had rising demands increasing exponentially due to war the supply was limited, decreased even which cause inflation. This affected the total annual GDP of the country which decreased by 15%. The HCWs of Ukraine were the most affected and mentally exhausted especially after battling the deadly coronavirus, working for hours at end, just when the COVID outbreak was on the verge of getting control, the Russian invasion started, with the massive death scale and injured soldiers, and people. According to the statistics, the healthcare sector had the highest rate of PTSD. About 93% of the workers were stressed, emotionally drained, and frustrated.

The Children and Adolescents were extremely vulnerable, including several physical effects and mental effects of living in the war zone. These young minds have a higher risk of suffering from PTSD, depression in about 33% of the kids, and being traumatised by having to see horrifying scenes. It is necessary to provide efficient therapy and counselling to the affected kids as they are the ones who will be the future of the country.

The data obtained from Mental Health America manifests that more of the healthcare workers were suffering from Stress the numbers are 93%, the second highest disorder reported was Anxiety that is 86% , the list goes down as frustration about 77%, Insomnia (sleeplessness) – 70%, exhaustion – 68%, followed by fatigue that is around 52%. Some other common health issues were are also noted like work related dread, loss of appetite, physical symptoms of headache and stomach ache, etc.

5.3 Effect of war on different sites

Ukraine is the second largest country in Europe. It is bordered by Russia to the east and northeast; Belarus to the north; by Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary to the west; and by Romania and Moldova to the southwest; with a coastline along the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov to the south and southeast, respectively. Kyiv is Ukraine's capital as well as its largest city. The country's language is Ukrainian, and many people are also fluent in Russian. On 24th February 2022, Russia launched out a full-scale invasion from Belarus to target Kyiv, and from the northeast against the city of Kharkiv. Other cities like Luhansk and Donetsk were also attacked from various directions. Russian forces bombarded on major cities to shake the Ukrainian military and Government. Mostly eastern region of Ukraine was attacked by the Russian military forces. They extended control in eastern city of Severodonetsk later, Russian troops continued to attack Ukrainian positions north of Kharkiv city. Ukrainian Defence Ministry claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked advances in southern regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. Russian officials claimed that their forces were fighting for the "complete liberation" of the Donbas, which broadly refers to Ukraine's eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, where Russian-backed separatists held significant territory before the invasion. Russia has made slow but significant advances in the east, and now controls over 90% of the Luhansk region. Lyman and Rubizhne are now fully under Russian control there was a strong resistance from Ukrainian forces near Mykolaiv in the west and in Mariupol significantly which slowed the Russian advances but unfortunately the

Ukrainian soldiers couldn't hold for long and now the port city of Mariupol is fully under control of Russia. Some sources from Ministry of defense also stated that there is a shortage of fresh water and medical facilities in Mariupol and the city is at risk of a major cholera outbreak. Russia has been unable to take control of the city and has resorted to destroying it to demoralise the city's residents (Team, 2022).

Russian bombs have devastated the city's downtown core and damaged Kharkiv National University, which is still standing. Other landmarks, including the city's sprawling Freedom Square, the Kharkiv State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, and the next-door Kharkiv Philharmonic, were reduced to ruins (Cave and Isai, 2022). The shipbuilding city Kherson was an important node for access to the Black Sea. It is the first major city to come under full control of Russian forces. The city was a major hub for shipbuilding and provided access to Ukraine's southern coastline for invading Russian forces. Now, the city is completely unrecognisable. The country's capital Kyiv was the war's most important territorial and political target.

On March 23, a Russian multiple-rocket attack slammed a residential neighbourhood near the city centre, damaging apartment buildings and setting a house on fire. On the west, Russia had aimed to take control of Odesa and cut off Ukraine's access to the Black Sea, but its forces were blocked by a staunch defense in Mykolaiv and forced back towards Kherson by a Ukrainian counteroffensive in March. Russia has continued to reinforce Snake Island in the Black Sea with air defenses in order to protect its naval vessels blockading the Ukrainian coast and hindering the resumption of trade. The world's worst nuclear disaster site Chernobyl was firstly captured by the Russian military forces in the month of February itself but later the Russian forces started evacuating the Chernobyl site after the radiation exposure (Nebi Qena et al., 2022). The destruction of cultural sites in Ukraine has made the country lose its monuments and identity. Since the invasion began Feb. 24, UNESCO has registered at least 120 instances of damage or complete destruction of cultural sites, including museums, historic buildings, libraries and religious institutions (Joseph, 2022). Wars are very much destructive for humanity leaving destroyed cities and people dead. Some people's desire to increase the borders decreases the humanity and peace on the globe. The innocent people of the both countries who are attacking and the country which are attacked pays a huge cost for the war, this pointless bloodshed takes many people's lives and their loved ones away.

6 Conclusions

A country's progress depends on the quality of resources they have and the efficient use they make of the available resources. Ukraine has kept working to recover its economy and GDP since 2014, the year conflict began. However, the severity of attacks in 2022 excels the previous invasions. Citizens of the country, especially from the affected areas suffered a lot, physically and psychologically; the latter would take a heavy toll on their life. Frontline responders to war (soldiers, healthcare workers, firemen and police), women, children, refugees, elderly all had a significant effect due to war and suffer from mental illness. PTSD and Depression rates have increased to nearly 45% of the population, most of which go undiagnosed. Healthy minds lead to a healthy world, Ukraine's financial recovery will take couple of years after war much less than the years it will take to heal psychological trauma. "War is not the long-term solution; it brings more imbalance than peace." Heavy emphasis should be given on counselling being

available to the everyone to help with their experience leading an improvement in their quality of life.

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