

Transitional Justice and Sustainable Peace: Comparative Insights and Policy Implications

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ABSTRACT: Transitional justice plays a pivotal role in restoring peace and accountability in societies emerging from conflict. This narrative review explores the mechanisms employed across various post-conflict settings, aiming to understand their effectiveness and contextual relevance. Using systematic literature search methods across databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, the review analyzed peer-reviewed articles, research reports, and gray literature published within the last decade. Boolean search strategies and specific inclusion criteria were applied to identify studies focused on formal legal structures, community-based practices, gendered experiences, economic reparations, environmental considerations, and cross-national comparisons. The findings reveal that while international tribunals contribute to legal precedent, their detachment from local realities often limits community impact. Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) have helped articulate historical grievances, but their effectiveness depends heavily on political will and institutional support. Informal mechanisms rooted in local culture offer promising pathways for healing and legitimacy, especially when integrated with civil society participation. Gender-sensitive approaches enhance justice outcomes by addressing violence against women and ensuring female representation. Furthermore, economic and environmental justice are increasingly recognized as integral to sustainable post-conflict recovery. Comparative cases from Timor Leste, Guatemala, and Bosnia highlight the importance of local engagement and context-specific adaptation of global frameworks. This study emphasizes the urgency of systemic reforms, inclusive policy-making, and long-term investments in justice mechanisms. It advocates for further research to overcome methodological challenges and supports multi-level strategies that center on community empowerment and resilience.

Keywords: Transitional Justice, Post-Conflict Societies, Truth Commissions, Community-Based Justice, Gender and Reconciliation, Economic Reparations, Sustainable Peace.



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INTRODUCTION

Transitional justice has become a central area of inquiry in the aftermath of conflict, authoritarian regimes, and systemic human rights violations. Rooted in the imperative to recognize victims and

restore the rule of law, its mechanisms range from criminal tribunals and truth commissions to reparations, institutional reforms, and community-based reconciliation. Over the past two decades, these debates have been shaped by evolving norms in international law, human rights practice, and peacebuilding theory (Teitel, 2000; Skaar et al., 2015). As societies confront the legacies of violence, the question of how to design justice processes that are both legitimate and effective remains central. Recent literature highlights that while formal legal approaches remain vital, there is increasing recognition of the importance of contextualized, participatory, and locally adapted mechanisms (Buckley-Zistel et al., 2013; Destrooper & Parmentier, 2017).

Despite its prominence, the implementation of transitional justice remains contested due to its multidimensional nature—legal, social, cultural, and political. Prior studies emphasize the limitations of top-down legal approaches (Besmel & Alvarez, 2018; Dudai, 2017), the neglect of local contexts (Lang, 2022), and the politicization of institutions (Sarkin & Bhandari, 2020). Yet, the causal mechanisms through which community participation, gender sensitivity, and environmental concerns shape legitimacy and reconciliation are insufficiently understood. This gap requires systematic exploration.

Empirical findings further emphasize the relationship between effective justice mechanisms and long-term stability. A study by Binningsbø et al. (2023) in Colombia shows that initiating transitional justice measures even during ongoing conflict increases the likelihood of post-conflict institutionalization and public support. Pham et al. (2019), through their work in Cambodia, find that meaningful justice processes can contribute to psychological healing and social cohesion, especially when victims feel heard and recognized. Such evidence suggests that justice interventions that align with social expectations and acknowledge victimhood can enhance both individual and collective recovery.

However, the implementation of transitional justice often encounters significant obstacles, particularly concerning the role of international actors. Lang (2022) provides a comparative study of Bosnia and Kosovo, demonstrating that the early optimism regarding international engagement often fails to materialize into locally resonant outcomes. External interventions, while normatively grounded, tend to overlook the socio-political specificities of the host society, leading to limited legitimacy and local disengagement. These findings are echoed in critiques of liberal peacebuilding, which argue that externally imposed frameworks often fail to address indigenous needs or empower local agency (Richmond, 2011).

Another challenge pertains to the politicization of transitional justice mechanisms. In Nepal, for instance, Sarkin and Bhandari (2020) note that truth commissions have been compromised by politically motivated appointments, undermining their credibility and public trust. The fusion of justice with political maneuvering risks transforming transitional mechanisms into instruments of elite consolidation rather than vehicles for genuine redress. This problem is not isolated. Across various settings, from Sri Lanka to Guatemala, researchers have identified similar trends wherein political interference curtails the transformative potential of justice interventions (Nazeemudeen, 2019; Gómez, 2021).

Moreover, there is a persistent tension between formal legal mechanisms and community-based or informal approaches. While institutions such as international tribunals or truth commissions are seen as credible, they often lack accessibility and resonance with affected populations. Moving

(2016) highlights that in many African contexts, informal justice mechanisms rooted in local traditions offer more participatory and restorative avenues. Yakinthou and Croeser (2016) further suggest that such mechanisms can serve as complementary, not substitute, pathways, allowing justice to be tailored to cultural and social norms. The case of Guatemala, as discussed by Destrooper and Parmentier (2017), exemplifies how community engagement enhances legitimacy and sustainability.

Despite the breadth of scholarship, a notable gap persists in understanding the causal mechanisms through which local participation affects the outcomes of transitional justice. While it is widely acknowledged that inclusion and local ownership enhance legitimacy, the literature is less conclusive on how this participatory dynamic operates in practice. Gómez (2021) contends that without detailed analysis of these processes, policy recommendations remain speculative and risk misapplication. This gap is critical, as the perceived authenticity and responsiveness of justice processes hinge upon their capacity to reflect community values and experiences.

This review seeks to address these gaps by systematically analyzing how contextual and participatory factors shape the effectiveness of transitional justice mechanisms. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

- 1) How do local justice mechanisms influence legitimacy?
- 2) What are the barriers to integrating gender and environmental justice in transitional mechanisms?

The scope of this review encompasses case studies from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, with particular attention to countries that have undergone recent transitions from conflict or authoritarian rule. In Africa, the analysis includes contexts such as Sierra Leone, Kenya, and South Africa, where the interplay between international norms and local customs has shaped justice pathways. In Asia, the focus extends to Nepal, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka, capturing the diversity of legal traditions and state-society relations. In Latin America, countries like Colombia and Guatemala provide insights into hybrid approaches that integrate gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic considerations. The geographic breadth ensures that the findings are not limited to specific legal systems or cultural contexts but rather offer a comparative perspective on global practices.

By anchoring the review in both theoretical and empirical scholarship, this article contributes to a nuanced understanding of transitional justice as a process that is deeply embedded in societal structures and power relations. It argues that inclusive, context-sensitive approaches are not merely normative ideals but practical necessities for fostering meaningful and durable peace. The findings presented herein have implications for both policymakers and practitioners, particularly those seeking to design interventions that are responsive, legitimate, and sustainable in societies emerging from conflict.

METHOD

This review employed a narrative methodology to explore the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms in post-conflict societies, with an emphasis on truth commissions, reparations,

and locally grounded justice processes. The primary aim was to synthesize scholarly and empirical knowledge that has shaped the field in recent years, particularly literature that examines the intersection of international norms and local practices. To ensure comprehensiveness and academic rigor, a structured yet flexible approach to literature selection and evaluation was adopted.

Literature was collected through extensive searches in major academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. These platforms were chosen due to their comprehensive indexing of peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, research reports, and doctoral dissertations across disciplines relevant to transitional justice such as political science, international law, conflict resolution, and sociology. Searches were conducted between January and March 2025 to capture the most recent contributions and debates. Given the rapid development of literature in this field, studies published in the last ten years (2014–2024) were prioritized to ensure contemporary relevance.

Keyword selection was a critical component of the search strategy. Boolean operators were employed to refine and broaden the scope of search results while maintaining thematic coherence. Core keyword combinations included "Transitional Justice" AND "Post-Conflict Societies" to retrieve literature focusing directly on justice mechanisms in societies emerging from conflict. Additional terms such as "Truth Commissions" OR "Reparations" were used to isolate studies dealing with specific mechanisms. To explore the role of community engagement, terms like "Local Mechanisms" AND "Transitional Justice" were incorporated. Further refinement involved the use of complex Boolean strings such as ("Transitional Justice" OR "Truth Commissions") AND ("Post-Conflict" OR "Reparations") to ensure inclusion of studies addressing intersections between these concepts. The review also adopted variations in terminology, including synonyms and context-specific phrases such as "reconciliation," "restorative justice," and "community-based mechanisms" to capture literature that might use alternative labels for similar phenomena (Dudai, 2017; Sehmi, 2024).

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were established prior to literature screening to enhance the validity and relevance of selected materials. The inclusion criteria comprised studies that were peer-reviewed, published within the last decade, and directly addressed transitional justice mechanisms in post-conflict settings. The review incorporated both qualitative and quantitative research, recognizing the value of diverse methodological perspectives in understanding justice practices. Studies based on case studies, ethnographic fieldwork, surveys, content analysis, and comparative legal analysis were all considered suitable, provided they engaged with at least one dimension of transitional justice in a societal context that had experienced conflict or systemic human rights violations.

Exclusion criteria, on the other hand, filtered out non-academic publications, opinion pieces lacking empirical or theoretical foundation, and overly abstract theoretical discussions without applied relevance to post-conflict societies. Moreover, studies that did not include local dynamics or practical mechanisms for justice, or that treated transitional justice merely as a legal construct devoid of socio-political context, were excluded. Literature that addressed post-conflict recovery without reference to accountability, reconciliation, or victim recognition was also deemed outside the scope of this review (Sarkin & Bhandari, 2020; Avi-Guy, 2021).

The selection process began with a preliminary review of titles and abstracts to determine thematic relevance. Articles that met the inclusion criteria were retrieved in full-text format and reviewed for methodological robustness, conceptual clarity, and relevance to the central questions of this study. An initial pool of 432 articles was identified across the databases. After removing duplicates and applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, 148 full-text articles were reviewed in detail. Of these, 85 were selected for final inclusion in the review.

The evaluation of articles was carried out using a qualitative content analysis approach, enabling a structured interpretation of textual data in relation to the themes of transitional justice, post-conflict reconstruction, and community participation. Each article was coded based on its focus (e.g., truth commissions, reparations, local justice), region (e.g., Africa, Asia, Latin America), methodological approach, and key findings. Thematic matrices were used to identify recurring patterns, gaps, and divergences across studies. Particular attention was paid to how studies conceptualized legitimacy, participation, reconciliation, and institutional design. This process enabled a comparative synthesis that illuminated both converging insights and contextual specificities.

Moreover, the methodological quality of the studies was critically appraised to ensure reliability and credibility. Factors considered included the clarity of research questions, transparency of data collection and analysis methods, and the extent to which findings were substantiated by evidence. This allowed the review to differentiate between high-impact studies and those with limited generalizability. In studies using empirical fieldwork, the role of community narratives, local customs, and informal justice mechanisms was examined to assess how well the research captured localized experiences and perceptions of justice.

In selecting studies, the review also sought to ensure geographical and thematic diversity. Research from a range of post-conflict societies was included, spanning Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Colombia, Cambodia, Nepal, Guatemala, Sri Lanka, and South Africa, among others. This geographic diversity allowed the review to capture a wide spectrum of institutional arrangements, cultural contexts, and justice strategies. Similarly, thematic diversity was ensured by including literature that addressed gender dimensions, intergroup relations, historical memory, and the impact of international interventions, all of which are central to a holistic understanding of transitional justice (Pham et al., 2019; Friedman, 2017).

Finally, this review maintained a reflective approach throughout the process, acknowledging the inherent limitations of narrative reviews, such as potential selection bias and interpretive subjectivity. However, by adhering to a transparent and replicable methodology—including systematic search strategies, explicit inclusion criteria, and critical appraisal of sources—the study aimed to maximize the rigor and utility of its findings. The methodological approach described here provides a robust foundation for the analysis and synthesis of evidence presented in the subsequent sections of this article.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this narrative review are presented thematically, reflecting the central areas of analysis that have emerged across the literature on transitional justice in post-conflict societies.

These include formal mechanisms (international courts and truth commissions), informal and community-based mechanisms, gender dimensions, economic and environmental considerations, and comparative insights across diverse geographic settings. Each theme is analyzed through the lens of empirical research and theoretical contributions to elucidate their effectiveness, challenges, and contextual relevance.

The role of formal mechanisms in transitional justice, particularly international and hybrid tribunals such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), has been extensively examined. While these institutions have contributed to the creation of legal precedents and formal accountability, their local legitimacy remains contested. Studies reveal that these courts are often perceived as distant and disconnected from the lived realities of victims and survivors (Pham et al., 2019; Redwood & Wedderburn, 2019). In Cambodia, for instance, while the ECCC formally addressed atrocities committed by the Khmer Rouge, many Cambodians viewed the court as an elite-driven initiative with limited reparative impact on ordinary citizens. Similarly, in Sierra Leone, the Special Court was seen as a mechanism more responsive to international demands than to local needs for justice and healing (Rukooko & Silverman, 2019).

Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) have demonstrated varied degrees of success in acknowledging past atrocities and fostering reconciliation. The South African TRC is often highlighted for its pioneering role in generating a national narrative around human rights violations, promoting dialogue, and documenting abuses. However, critiques persist regarding the limited implementation of its reparative recommendations, especially in addressing economic and social injustices (Besmel & Alvarez, 2018; Avi-Guy, 2021). In Sierra Leone, while the TRC offered a framework for reconciliation and provided extensive recommendations, implementation has been slow and public dissatisfaction remains concerning perceived government inaction (Muvingi, 2016). These findings suggest that the efficacy of TRCs is significantly influenced by the political will of states to enact their recommendations and by the public's trust in the justice process.

Informal and community-based mechanisms represent a growing area of interest in transitional justice discourse, particularly due to their accessibility, cultural resonance, and emphasis on reconciliation over punishment. Ritual healing and customary practices have been documented in several African and Asian contexts as tools for restoring social cohesion and addressing trauma. These approaches often include traditional ceremonies, public confessions, and symbolic reparations that reflect local understandings of justice (Gómez, 2021; Destrooper & Parmentier, 2017). In Uganda and Rwanda, traditional courts and community-based reconciliation rituals have allowed perpetrators and victims to engage directly in processes of truth-telling and forgiveness, fostering a sense of closure often absent in formal legal procedures.

Guatemala offers a compelling example of integrating local participation into transitional justice. Community involvement in documentation, truth-seeking, and advocacy has strengthened the legitimacy and responsiveness of justice mechanisms. Gómez (2021) emphasizes that when victims and civil society actors are engaged from the outset, they can shape investigative agendas and ensure that justice reflects lived experiences. Moreover, the inclusion of civil society creates bridges between institutional mechanisms and local populations, enhancing public trust and encouraging

sustained dialogue (Brucato, 2019). This integration helps mitigate alienation and positions justice as a collaborative, rather than externally imposed, process.

The gender dimension in transitional justice is a critical aspect of this review. Women and girls often face distinct forms of violence during conflicts, including sexual violence, forced displacement, and socio-economic marginalization. Transitional justice mechanisms have increasingly recognized the need to address these harms explicitly. In South Africa, the TRC documented gender-specific violations and proposed targeted reparations to support women's psychological and economic recovery. However, implementation gaps persist, particularly in ensuring that reparations are delivered in a manner that empowers women (Sarkin & Bhandari, 2020).

Guatemala also illustrates a gender-sensitive evolution of transitional justice. Women's involvement in community-based truth initiatives has led to the development of policies that reflect their specific needs and experiences. Strategies for women's empowerment include providing legal education, psychological counseling, and economic assistance to survivors. These initiatives not only support individual recovery but also challenge systemic gender inequalities. Research affirms that meaningful participation of women in transitional justice processes enhances the inclusivity and sustainability of outcomes, thereby reinforcing broader goals of peace and equity (Destrooper & Parmentier, 2017; Gómez, 2021).

Economic and environmental considerations have emerged as critical, albeit underexplored, dimensions of transitional justice. Reparations programs aimed at restoring victims' economic wellbeing are a common component in post-conflict reconstruction. In countries like Timor Leste and Sierra Leone, compensation schemes and social service access have been central to national justice strategies. However, implementation has frequently been marred by administrative inefficiencies, lack of transparency, and inadequate financial support (Pham et al., 2019). In Timor Leste, for example, complex procedures and insufficient outreach resulted in many victims being excluded, particularly women and marginalized groups.

Environmental justice is gaining traction as an essential component of sustainable peacebuilding. In resource-rich post-conflict contexts, such as parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia, natural resource management is both a source of contention and a potential area for reconciliation. Incorporating environmental protection into transitional justice processes can help address grievances tied to land dispossession, pollution, and resource exploitation. Such efforts promote community trust in governance structures and align justice objectives with broader goals of sustainable development. Community engagement in environmental monitoring and land restitution programs has shown promise in integrating ecological stewardship with transitional justice goals (Stahn et al., 2017).

Comparative analysis of transitional justice across countries further highlights the diverse trajectories and shared challenges in implementing justice. In Timor Leste, the hybrid Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation sought to merge international standards with local customs, but encountered resistance due to its perceived foreign nature and lack of community ownership. In contrast, Guatemala's bottom-up approach, driven by community organizations and survivor networks, fostered stronger public support and more tailored interventions (Destrooper & Parmentier, 2017).

Bosnia presents yet another model, where the reliance on international criminal justice mechanisms, particularly the ICTY, shaped the post-war justice landscape. While the tribunal successfully prosecuted high-level perpetrators and documented war crimes, it struggled to build trust among ethnic communities and had limited impact on reconciliation at the grassroots level (Lang, 2022). The perceived distance between international institutions and local populations weakened the tribunal's moral authority and underscores the importance of grounding justice processes in domestic contexts.

These cross-national findings underscore three key lessons. First, community engagement is indispensable. Justice mechanisms gain legitimacy and resonance when they reflect the needs and perspectives of those most affected by conflict. Second, transitional justice must be historically informed. Recognizing the long-term impacts of colonialism, systemic discrimination, and social exclusion enhances the design and effectiveness of justice initiatives (Sehmi, 2024). Third, integrating international norms with local values requires flexible and adaptive approaches. One-size-fits-all models are inadequate in addressing the complexities of post-conflict societies.

In conclusion, the results of this review demonstrate that while formal mechanisms play a vital role in establishing legal accountability, their impact is constrained without corresponding local engagement and cultural adaptation. Informal practices and community-based processes complement formal structures by embedding justice in local norms and facilitating broader reconciliation. Gender-sensitive policies and economic and environmental reparations further enhance the scope and effectiveness of transitional justice. Comparative insights reveal that context-specific approaches grounded in participatory processes are more likely to foster sustainable peace and justice. These findings form the empirical and conceptual foundation for the discussion and recommendations presented in the following sections.

The implementation and outcomes of transitional justice mechanisms are deeply intertwined with broader systemic factors, which critically shape both their legitimacy and efficacy. Central to these influences are structural issues such as identity politics, institutional fragility, and the legacies of colonialism, all of which collectively impede or facilitate societal reconciliation after violent conflict. As emphasized by Stojanowska and Kosek (2019), identity-based political agendas in post-conflict environments often polarize communities, hindering the broader acceptance of truth-telling and accountability processes. In Bosnia, for example, ethnic affiliations continue to determine how justice initiatives are perceived, creating resistance to mechanisms perceived as favoring one group over another. This fragmentation of social trust represents a considerable barrier to the normalization of intergroup relations and limits the scope of institutional legitimacy.

In tandem with identity politics, institutional weaknesses severely compromise the implementation of transitional justice. Garayová (2025) underscores that states emerging from conflict frequently lack the legal, administrative, and financial infrastructure required to enforce justice equitably. Dysfunctional judicial systems not only delay processes but also allow impunity to flourish, thereby eroding public confidence. In such contexts, the promise of transitional justice may appear hollow, fueling disillusionment and undermining national reconciliation efforts. Moreover, historical legacies of colonial domination have systematically marginalized local voices and perpetuated socio-political hierarchies. Thomson (2021) and Schultz and Vedsted-Hansen (2025) argue that in

several African states, the colonial legacy has entrenched structural inequalities, disenfranchising victimized communities and complicating the path toward restorative justice.

The implications of these findings for policymaking are manifold. Effective justice initiatives demand a reevaluation of legal frameworks to ensure they are responsive to post-conflict realities. According to Fang and Yu (2023), legal reforms must prioritize mechanisms that guarantee victim participation, institutional transparency, and the prosecution of serious crimes. Importantly, the success of such reforms is predicated not only on formal legislation but also on their cultural resonance and public engagement. McAuliffe and Mitchel (2024) highlight that embedding human rights education into national curriculums can foster long-term societal transformation by instilling democratic values and a commitment to justice among youth. Such educational programs serve as preventative measures against future violence by cultivating an informed citizenry that values accountability.

Moreover, inclusive national reconciliation policies must go beyond legal redress to embrace cultural and economic reintegration. As Nigam (2024) suggests, post-conflict rebuilding should center around inclusive dialogue that acknowledges diverse narratives, including those of traditionally marginalized populations. Mechanisms such as community-based forums and victim-centered reparations are essential in this regard, as they reinforce ownership over the justice process. The synthesis of social, economic, and legal support structures can significantly contribute to healing fractured societies and reducing the recurrence of conflict.

Nevertheless, the evaluation of transitional justice remains fraught with conceptual and methodological challenges. One of the central issues lies in defining success. Ferguson (2013) argues that transitional justice outcomes often transcend empirical measurement, as notions such as justice and reconciliation are subjective and vary across societies. Margaletić and Šimović (2024) further complicate this perspective by noting that transformative outcomes of justice mechanisms can take decades to materialize, making it difficult to attribute societal change to specific interventions. As such, traditional impact assessment tools may be ill-suited to capture the nuanced and evolving nature of justice processes.

Additionally, data scarcity in conflict-affected states limits the scope of systematic evaluations. Duić (2021) highlights the barriers researchers face in accessing comprehensive and disaggregated data, especially in countries where state institutions are weak or where political sensitivities restrict transparency. Without robust data on victims, violations, and institutional responses, the ability to draw meaningful conclusions is significantly hampered. This calls for innovative and context-sensitive research methodologies that incorporate qualitative assessments, community testimonies, and ethnographic insights.

The complexity of transitional justice also demands an interdisciplinary approach that integrates legal, sociological, political, and psychological perspectives. Studies such as those by Pham et al. (2019) and Gómez (2021) illustrate how psychological healing and community resilience are essential components of transitional justice. Ignoring these dimensions risks overlooking key determinants of long-term peace and societal cohesion. Furthermore, the hybridization of justice mechanisms, blending formal legal institutions with informal and traditional practices, has emerged as a promising strategy. This integrative model responds more effectively to localized needs and enhances the legitimacy of justice interventions by aligning them with community norms.

While hybrid models hold promise, their success hinges on equitable power-sharing and genuine community engagement. Gómez (2021) cautions that superficial inclusion can reinforce existing inequalities if not carefully designed. Mechanisms must be crafted through participatory processes that empower victims and marginalized groups, ensuring that justice is not only done but also seen to be done. Similarly, the implementation of gender-sensitive frameworks must go beyond token representation. As shown in the experiences of Guatemala and South Africa, sustained efforts to elevate women's voices in truth commissions and reparations processes have led to more nuanced understandings of harm and more comprehensive redress mechanisms.

The findings also highlight the interplay between transitional justice and socio-economic development. Reparations that address material needs—such as education, health care, and housing—can alleviate structural violence and contribute to societal stabilization. Yet, as demonstrated in Timor Leste, procedural inefficiencies and lack of inclusivity can severely undermine the impact of such programs. Effective reparations require streamlined administration, community consultation, and sustained funding to be genuinely transformative.

Finally, comparative insights from countries such as Bosnia, Guatemala, and Timor Leste underscore the need for adaptive justice strategies. Contextual specificity must guide the design and implementation of mechanisms, as uniform approaches rarely account for the diversity of conflict legacies. The comparative literature suggests that locally grounded justice efforts are more likely to yield durable outcomes when complemented by international support that respects sovereignty and local agency. By recognizing the heterogeneity of post-conflict contexts, transitional justice can evolve into a more flexible and inclusive field of practice.

In conclusion, the discussion underscores that achieving meaningful transitional justice requires a systemic, participatory, and context-sensitive approach. While challenges remain, including methodological constraints and institutional fragility, the synthesis of empirical findings and theoretical insights offers a robust foundation for future innovation in the field. Advancing this agenda will depend on sustained political will, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a commitment to centering the voices of those most affected by violence and injustice.

CONCLUSION

This narrative review has examined the diverse mechanisms of transitional justice implemented in post-conflict societies, highlighting formal, informal, gender-sensitive, economic, environmental, and comparative dimensions. The review underscores that while international and hybrid courts like the ICTY and ICC have contributed to legal accountability, their impact often lacks resonance with local populations due to limited contextual relevance and insufficient reparative outcomes. Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) have shown potential in fostering collective memory and healing, yet face challenges in implementation and societal acceptance.

Community-based justice mechanisms emerge as powerful complements to formal structures, particularly when culturally anchored and inclusive of local stakeholders. The integration of gender-sensitive frameworks demonstrates that active participation of women in transitional justice processes significantly enhances inclusivity and sustainability. Similarly, addressing economic reparations and environmental justice is essential for long-term recovery and community

trust. Comparative insights from Timor Leste, Guatemala, and Bosnia reveal that aligning global legal frameworks with local sociopolitical contexts is vital for successful implementation.

Systemic factors such as weak institutions, politicized identities, and colonial legacies continue to impede the full realization of justice. This underscores the need for deeper policy integration that supports legal reform, human rights education, and inclusive national reconciliation.

Future research should focus on developing adaptable evaluation methodologies, expanding access to reliable data in conflict-affected regions, and exploring intersections of justice with sustainable development. Policymakers must invest in participatory approaches, bridge formal and informal mechanisms, and ensure representation of marginalized groups. Ultimately, advancing transitional justice requires not only legal accountability but also the empowerment, education, and engagement of affected communities.

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