



RESEARCH PAPER

A Study of Transgenerational Trauma in Abulhawa's *The Blue between Sky and Water*

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ABSTRACT

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Since the mid-twentieth century, the world has witnessed heartrending tragedies in Palestine, where Palestinians have been subjected to ruthless massacres, enforced abductions, torture and sexual exploitation by Israelis. Consequently, Palestinians' minds are teemed with worries, doubts, and uncertainties about the future as a result of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which is passed on to the succeeding generations. This study deals with the issue of the same transgenerational trauma in the Palestinians as a result of traumatic events of Naqba 1948 in Susan Abulhawa's *The Blue between Sky and Water*. The theoretical framework of the study is Atkinson's transgenerational theory in which Atkinson investigates how literature explicates trauma transmission mechanisms and the cultural circumstances that give birth to them and have long-term consequences. The findings of the textual analysis of this research contain the Palestinians' painful experiences, apprehensions, persistent victimisation and severity etc which are carried down to their descendants via colonization.

Introduction

Trauma, generally considered as an emotional response to a dreadful episode such as bane, rape or natural calamity, leaves long-lasting imprints on its victims in the form of tremor, erratic emotions, hallucinations, unstable relations and seizures; moreover, the culturally identified specific groups of people and generations may also suffer from trauma collectively. Furthermore, the transgenerational trauma is most commonly found in grief-stricken and war-withered nations such as Palestinians subjected to the callous mass murders, forced disappearances, sexual

assaults and annihilation of freedom of speech at the hands of Israel, since last seven decades. The contemporary Palestinian literature is an excellent demonstration of the dynamics of life-threatening situations of savagery produced by communal rifts, cultural termination, and combative geopolitics.

The present study of the selected Palestinian fiction Abulhawa's *The Blue between Sky and Water* is conducted from the perspective of trauma theory to record the intentional infliction of emotional distress on the Palestinians by Israelis and the traumatic experience that is handed down to the succeeding generations for many decades. The goal of this research is to highlight the afflictions of the people of war-torn region of Palestine as depicted in the selected fictional narrative. In this regard, *The Blue between Sky and Water* serves as an eye-opener about the actual situation of Palestinians not only in the annexed region but also as immigrants through the four generations of the Baraka family, who have been witnessing the upheaval since Naqba till this day. Abulhawa has set her plot in the backdrop of Palestinian society to unveil the nature of collective trauma and the role family plays in curbing its most vicious magnitude.

Susan Abulhawa is a Palestinian-American author who in *The Blue between Sky and Water* has employed autobiographical aspects such as her upbringing in diaspora, the loss of her family, and her journey through numerous foster families and homes. The plot revolves around the Baraka family, who, along with many other families, were compelled to evacuate the fictional small village of Beit Daras for the West Bank and Gaza in 1948. The novel begins with a description of a gilded perfect world during British rule when the grandparents' generation was still young and the storyline proceeds to chronicle the family's tale, influenced by recurring punches of misfortunes, all the way to the contemporary time. We see not only an individual's predicament, anxieties, conflicts, daily struggles, apprehensions, disappointments, social unrest, resilience as well as hopes for the future, but also the desires of autonomy of a nation outlined and structured by annexation and ethnic intrusions. The novel also proposes that the Palestinian nation can emerge from its crisis via introspection, freedom and autonomy in their native land.

Moaveni (2015) establishes that the Barakas, like so many Palestinian families, are spread all over the world, and the narrative weaves in the tale of Nur, the granddaughter of Nazmiyeh's brother, who is raised in the United States via foster care, which causes her cognitive and emotional illness. Nur's isolation and hardships illustrate the sorrows of the Palestinian diaspora across the world.

Literature Review

Keeping in view the major strains of the study, Literature Review deals with the review of the works upon trauma theory, pertinent critical writings on Palestinian literature and on Abulhawa's works.

Trauma theory plays a pivotal role in the research and interpretation of historical events as well as their representation in literature. The origins of trauma interpretation may be traced all the way back to Sigmund Freud's conceptions, which evolved throughout the final decade of the nineteenth century in his psychological and psychoanalytical conversations. Trauma, for Caroline Garland (2002) is a "kind of wound" (p. 9), and this impression is taken from the Greeks expression of "piercing of the skin" (p. 9). Sigmund Freud (1920) has used the term metaphorically to highlight "how the mind, too, maybe pierced and wounded by events" (in Garland, 2002, p. 9). Cathy Caruth (1996) has defined trauma in psychiatric literature as "a wound inflicted on the mind" (p. 3). Furthermore, she says that trauma is a startling experience of an unanticipated or calamitous occurrence or sequence of such occurrences in which "the response to the event happens in the often delayed, uncontrolled, repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (p. 11). Such experiences are not entirely incorporated into the mind instantly after they transpire but reemerge after some time as recurring nightmares, hallucinations, flashbacks, and so on. As per Caruth, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a term for a set of signs that arises in the survivor a while after a horrific event or drastic occurrences.

Historical trauma is one form of psychological trauma experienced by nations, tribes, or ethnic groups. In Yael Danieli's *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma*, many critics express their views on historical trauma as a consequence of a certain "collective, historical, and cumulative psychic wounding of a nation or tribe over a long period of time" (1998, p. 342). This sort of trauma affects multiple generations. It generates medical conditions, mental outbursts, and aberrant conduct in the present generation as well as their future counterparts. In general, Black people, African Americans, First Nation Communities, migrants, Holocaust survivors, War veterans and other similar victims are predisposed to historical trauma.

Trauma Theory is frequently critiqued for its predilection for Euro-American perspectives and for ignoring catastrophic occurrences on other civilizations such as Africa and Asia. According to Rebecca Saunders (2007), while Trauma Theory was first proposed in Europe and America, "trauma itself has been experienced elsewhere" (p. 15). On a more tangible level, Euro-centric humanitarian psychiatry has demonstrated its restrictions and partiality in the classification and provision of traumatic episode victims. Moreover, the primary proponents of Trauma Theory maintain that the sense of trauma is global. It is widely used in the context of imperialism and oppression these days as the colonizers' atrocities have left indelible imprints on the minds of the colonised which are difficult to eliminate.

Since the mid-twentieth century, the state of Palestine has been threatened by Israel's horrific mass extermination. Crimes against humanity are a persistent problem in the Palestinian area. The abuses of the power range from mass killings,

forced displacement, torture, rape, and sexual misconduct to drastic oppression and the annihilation of freedom of expression. The 1948 catastrophe resulted in the destruction of Palestinian heritage and the dispersal of the Palestinian population throughout and beyond the Middle East. As of now, about a million Palestinians are living in Israel, with yet another three million residing in the West Bank and Gaza. It is anticipated that a further four million people reside in the Diaspora, primarily as bordering immigrants in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, just over the border from where they once lived. As per Modaghesh (2019), the most probable number is that about 780,000 Arab Palestinians were impoverished and displaced in 1948 to facilitate the “reconstruction and rebuilding” (p. 4331) of Palestine. For more than a half-century, all of these infringements in this territory have instilled trauma in the residents.

According to Hajjar (1988), more than 500,000 prison sentences and prosecutions have transpired in the occupied areas since 1967. Over the last few years, there have been 4500 political prisoners. Victims and convicts were both held at the same time (p. 23). According to Fisher (2014), B'Tselem has reported “8,166 conflict-related deaths, of which 7,065 are Palestinian and 1,101 are Israeli” (para 2). It implies that 87 per cent of the deaths have been of Palestinians, while only 13 per cent have been of Israelis. Hussain (2021) establishes that the latest attacks in the summer of 2021 have cost numerous innocent Palestinian lives as the latest mass murders have occurred on the commemoration of the Nakba, or catastrophic event that flagged their original destruction over past seven decades. He proposes that “it’s a new Nakba in operation, perhaps more ruthless than the previous one” (para 9). The Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip still continues and the extreme violence against Palestinians, struggling to survive within limited resources, has intensified.

In his work “The Palestinian Diaspora and the Voice of Resistance in Abulhawa's *The Blue between Sky and Water*”, Modaghesh (2019) seeks to examine the novel in the light of Palestinian displacement, resistance, and mobility. In the narrative, he considers how Abulhawa calls for nonviolent resistance and opposes the Israeli-fabricated narratives disseminated to legitimise the invasion of Palestine. She highlights the themes of “exile, resistance, displacement, dispossession, suffering magical realism, political conflict, feminism, Naqba (the catastrophe), hatred, love, trauma, courage, sex, rape, identity, belonging, survival, death, loss, celebratory dances, partying on the beach, mourning, fear, mysteries, dirty jokes, national heroism, personal freedom, salvation, violence, fragility, separation, heartache, endurance, renewal, friendship, family, emotional strength, etc” (p. 4336).

In their research, Kumar and Nissa (2019) critically analyse the novel with an emphasis on Palestinian relocation and conflict. They assert that the pleasant ancient days quickly died as a result of the Catastrophe of 1948, when the European Jewish community created the Jewish state of Israel, imposing genocide and driving away Palestinians from their homes. They assert that displacement is also a concrete kind of violence since individuals suffer trauma as a result and are “subjected to social, cultural, and psychological travails” (p. 1022).

Shehzadi, Bacha, Bibi and Rahman (2021) reveal the sociopolitical set of circumstances of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict through the lens of dislocation in their research article. They evaluate "how dislocation disintegrates family and some of the natives impose self-exile and disperse around the globe" (p. 5143). They assert that "This dislocation germinates seeds of homelessness among Palestinians" (p. 5143). According to them, "the dialectic relationship of indigenous natives with their land" is depicted vividly in *The Blue between Sky and Water* (p. 5144).

Orford (2015) argues that Abulhawa's narrative has been playing on our television screens for years. Israeli bombing of the Gaza Strip killed hundreds, injured many, and destroyed a good portion of the city. She maintains how Abulhawa's story is carried forward by the all the strong women in the roles of sisters, mothers, wives and daughters.

Nashef (2021) highlights how Abulhawa's narrative was among the first to address the issue of rape during the Nakba. Women's Nakba discourses were frequently exempted, because some saw them as a deviation from the official version of events. She focuses on Abulhawa's use of female narratives throughout the novel by writing that "rape was used as an instrument of war against Palestinians" (p. 1).

To sum up, the review of the above-cited works from various dimensions e.g. trauma, historical, cultural, ethnic and feminist perspectives provides sufficient ground for the transgenerational trauma study of the selected narrative.

Material and Methods

The proposed research is a qualitative evaluation of Susan Abulhawa's *The Blue between Sky and Water* under the lens of Trauma theory. The type of analysis is textual analysis. Selections from the text are taken based on their relevance to the major research concerns of the study. The theoretical framework of the study is Meera Atkinson's transgenerational trauma theory. Atkinson (2017) affirms that 'transmissive cycles of trauma' are rooted in fundamental social structure and have long-term repercussions. She has employed the term 'transgenerational trauma' including both intergenerational and multigenerational trauma transmissions that take place outside the particular family structures. Transgenerational trauma concentrates on familial trauma, although it is not restricted to it. Atkinson (2017) analyses "the ways literature elucidates the processes of transmission and the cultural conditions that give rise to it" (p. 4). She further goes on to say that trauma transmission is a paradoxical procedure that involves subjective and familial trauma experiences in which guilt, despair, frustration, as well as other influences solidify a feeling of being confined to a body and intuitively and communally constrained inside it; however, they furthermore surpass this boundedness in interrelational outbreaks. Atkinson asserts that "traumatic shame-binds can wound the very fabric of developing subjectivity, and can, in turn, make traumatized children particularly vulnerable to further shame and shame-binds" (p. 13). The basis for the selection of

Atkinson's transgenerational trauma theory as a conceptual framework of this research is that it provides the major strains of transgenerational trauma which are the key research issues of this particular critical endeavour. Atkinson claims that "the poetics of transgenerational trauma is political in that it reveals the shamebound gray area of traumatic transmissions that taint us all, to greater or lesser degrees" (p. 14). Similarly, Abulhawa's text not only echoes her suffering at the hands of familial trauma but it also objectifies the plight of countless Palestinians who are suffering from trauma generation after generation, since the past seven decades.

Data Analysis

The analysis and interpretation of Abulhawa's *The Blue between Sky and Water* (2015) is primarily based on the trauma experienced by Palestinian people over the generations since the Naqba (the catastrophe) in 1948, and how they attempt to voice their frustration in their given positions. The author has used the flashback technique to paint a portrait of Palestine's grief-stricken situation in one composition, from Naqba till the present date, dominated by traumatic memoirs of the past and tenacious distressing occurrences that remind Palestinians of the tribulations waiting for them in the near future. Each portrayed character in *The Blue between Sky and Water* is traumatized by his or her heartbreaking background. The plot highlights not just the key individuals' private sufferings, but also Palestine's collective trauma that flows through generations.

The novel deals with the establishment of the State of Israel by enforcing mass murder on defenseless Palestinian residents who were uprooted from their familial territory and made to live as outcasts for the rest of their life. The story is narrated across four generations, commencing with Um Mamdouh, a widow, and concluding with Nur, her great-granddaughter: the great grandmother Um Mamdouh, the grandmother Nazmiyeh and her brother Mamdouh, mother Alwan, the granddaughter Nur and it also encompasses the plight of the great-grandchildren Khaled and Rhet Shel. They suffer due to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Um Mamdouh, the great grandmother, is described as being possessed by a djinni named Sulayman. Israeli troops rape Nazmiyeh while she is travelling to Gaza, and gun down young innocent Mariam. Mamdouh is forced to relocate to Kuwait and the United States owing to financial difficulties, while Alwan is widowed, ill, and unable to receive adequate medical treatment. Nur is sexually abused as a kid in a foreign land and is subsequently deceived by Dr Jamal, a married doctor. Rhet Shel has had a difficult childhood as a result of the hazardous circumstances in Gaza, and Khaled has Locked-In Syndrome, a disorder in which the body is disabled while the mind is cognizant, which Abulhawa employs as a reflection of the Palestinians' dilemma.

The first traces of trauma in the novel *The Blue between the Sky and Water* appear when the Baraka family's native village of Beit Daras is seized by Israeli forces and they are forced to flee to Gaza to live as refugees for the rest of their lives. In the novel, Beit Daras infers to the transgenerational agony of the Palestinians surviving

wretchedly in the Gaza strip and other terrains, for the reason that their long voyage gets inane since the migrants have to live there with minimum facilities and least possible sources of earnings, as Abulhawa points out:

Sufficient tents were not distributed for weeks and people slept on the earth, with stones and insects and animals... They lined up twice a day for bread and soup. They lined up for communal toilets (2015, p. 43).

During the journey, the Baraka family loses Um Mamdouh; their matriarch to a bullet while carrying her son, who was shot in the leg by the Israeli forces. The loss of a mother, home and leg endorses trauma in Mamdouh, who is suddenly made the head of his family. With minimum earning and a burden of a family on his shoulders, he embarks on the journey to Kuwait and from there to the USA with new hopes, which sweeps him in the "stream of cheap labor that kept carrying him farther and farther away" (p. 51). Although he gets some financial security the cons of living in an alien land demolishes his personality. His first impression on Nzinga was that "his face was the weight of exile's untouchable loneliness" and his elderly skin could be clearly demarcated as "Muslim Palestinian skin, consigned to peripheries and inferiorities" and his prime concern was that his granddaughter will be left in the alienated country, which had "warped his soul" (p. 98) in the form of dislocation.

The annexation of Beit Daras also costs the life of Mariam: the youngest of the Baraka siblings. She is brutally tortured in front of her sister's eyes by an Israeli soldier who drags her "by her hair, like a limp doll" (p. 38). The trauma of Mariam's death remains with the Baraka family forever. Both of her siblings live to narrate her tales to their children and grandchildren subsequently: for instance, Mamdouh wanted to name his granddaughter Mariam in honour of her sister. Later, he used to talk about Mariam with his granddaughter Nur regarding Mariam's philosophies of colours, "very few people can see the colors the way you do. My sister Mariam could" (p. 69). Mariam's death haunts her sister Nazmiyeh day and night throughout her life for the reason that it not only disfigured her body but also her soul and "with an exhausting will, she kept screaming, as if her voice would lacerate reality thoroughly enough that she wouldn't have to face it" (2015, p. 38). Nazmiyeh also longs for her sister and tries to summon her on every difficult situation she faces. She also has visions of Mariam where she guides her on every difficult situation and also suggests the name of her daughter, Alwan.

Mariam's death induces trauma in her sister Nazmiyeh's personality, who seeks to keep Mariam alive through the characters of Alwan, Khaled, and Nur, thus transmitting transgenerational trauma. To preserve Mariam and her dreams, she bears eleven sons at first in the hopes of having a daughter and calling her 'Alwan,' as her sister proposed. Then she wished for a grandson with a white streak in his hair to re-experience the narrative Mariam had told her. Khaled comments, "Mariam called me Khaled," he further goes on to say that "so my teta would name Khaled

when I was born. In that way, it was Mariam who named me before I was born" (p. 23). Nazmiyeh's struggles to keep Mariam alive are perceived when she craves for Nur to come back to Palestine, for she assumed that "Mariam lived in her" for "there could be no other explanation for her mismatched eyes" (p. 79). Furthermore, Khaled notes that "Nur was our missing link, the extra clothespin Teta Nazmiyeh needed when she hung the sky. She saw colors in the ways Mariam had" (p. 67).

The biggest trauma is faced by Nazmiyeh among the children of Um Mamdouh as she is gang-raped by the Israeli soldiers on her way to Gaza. The ruthless marring of her body makes Nazmiyeh wish "to die, waiting for them to kill her, too" (p. 39). It is a stigma that remains with her throughout her life as it scrapes her in the form of haunting memories and nightmares, where she often saunters back to Beit Daras. For instance, she narrates her dream in which she tries to save Nur:

In the dream Nazmiyeh instinctively leapt across the distance from wall to field, to save Nur. But the soldiers hidden in memory entered, reenacting an old trauma. She sat up in bed when the gun rang out and Mariam fell... "I couldn't outsmart them. Mariam is dead again and Nur is alone and frightened," she sobbed, pursued by the dream. (p. 87)

In *The Blue between Sky and Water* catastrophic ruminations of dislocation and sexual assault upset Nazmiyeh repeatedly and she endeavours to escape these excruciating retentions. According to her grandson Khaled, she talked over everything "except the day Mariam was gone" (p. 34). This happens because recalling that day brings back the reminiscences of the double trauma she had to face, first in the form of her sister's assassination and second in the form of her own gang rape. Apart from these distressing events, she also struggles to prevaricate the retentions that took away her brother and eldest son. Khaled expresses that each and every time she spoke of them, "her eyes would change. They became empty rooms" (Abulhawa, 2015, p. 53).

Abulhawa has portrayed Nazmiyeh as someone who represents the plight of Palestinians since the conflict began. At each step, there is a new hell on earth waiting for them, potent than the previous one, adding more chapters of vandalization to their already traumatized book of life as Khaled maintains, "stories were written in my Teta Nazmiyeh's skin" (p. 152). She is shown to witness the mass massacre of 1948, 1967 and 2008. During the course of sixty years, she has lost her land, her freedom and her closed ones like countless other Palestinians who have seen their world drift away, their families scatter and their lives at stake. "Rather than returning and regrouping, family were leaving and dispersing. She thought Palestine was scattering farther away at the same time that Israel was moving closer" (p. 59).

The trauma which Nazmiyeh faces is seen in the course of her children's life. Her firstborn son, Mazen, has to live with doubt regarding his paternal identity, as he has grey eyes and Nazmiyeh had seen "only the eyes of her rapist" (p. 44). He was

traumatized, when he learned the fact from a young boy of his age, and “stormed through the house, tears and fury pumping through his young body” (p. 55). The doubt of his identity developed a profound sense of loneliness in him along with the “fierce impulse of national resistance” (p. 57). This impulse coerces Mazen to join the local underground resistance fighters and eventually land him in prison for almost his whole life.

Abulhawa has depicted transgenerational trauma through the character of Alwan and her struggles to bring happiness to her traumatized mother during her childhood. She grew up in the distressing social state of affairs of her country as well as the disconcerting situation of her family, where her brother was sentenced to jail, her uncle displaced in an alien land and her mother was trying to summon the djinni Sulayman for help. Desperate to help her mother come out of her trauma, Alwan pretends that she can speak to Sulayman. Abulhawa writes that “in this domestic tribunal, the bond between mother and daughter was reinforced with complicity and their shared wish to speak with Sulayman” (p. 108). Her difficult childhood and her mother's continuous efforts to relive Mariam through her makes Alwan a quiet and sombre adult, “and she lived as if she watched the world through slits in the curtains. People thought piety provoked her to don the niqab when she was young, but it was to complete her invisibility” (p. 121). Later, when her husband becomes jobless, she becomes an easy target to appease his anger.

Abulhawa has not only described the effects of trauma mentally but has also presented a vivid picture of its effects on the physical state of victims. Throughout the novel whenever Nazmiyeh comes across a new trauma, her legs are paralyzed as Khaled puts it, “Teta Nazmiyeh's legs would sometimes buckle and she'd have to stop whatever she was doing until movement returned to them. This sudden paralysis usually lasted only a few minutes, sometimes a few days” (p. 57). These conditions of hers appear whenever any misfortune hit her. *The Blue between Sky and Water* exposes the account of trauma transmitted through genes. Alwan also caught a serious disease after her husband's death and did not get proper treatment due to the lack of medical facilities in Gaza. Trauma is also passed on to Khaled, who suffers from Locked-in Syndrome from a very young age where he re-experiences the idyllic days of Beit Daras as recounted by his grandmother Nazmiyeh, to circumvent the stressful events of the present-day Palestine.

Similarly, Nur reflected not just upon her pain whilst living in America, but also her grandfather's misery as an outsider who was “permanently out of place” (p. 71) wherever he went. Khaled narrates, “exile took his son, first by extricating the homeland from his heart and trashing the Arabic on his tongue, then by taking his life in a car accident” (p. 71). Nur is born in the United States but fate leads her back to Gaza to meet her relatives and folks surviving there in the harshest situations since Israelis have seized control of the area. Her father tragically died in her childhood and her mother left her in the custody of her grandfather who brings her up

pleasantly but he also dies and leaves her alone in a foreign land and culture. She is traumatized by her view that her birth in a diaspora family has made her life catastrophic; therefore, she plugs her stomach with junk and drains it by provoking a gag reflex herself to exacerbate “self-abuse and self-loathing” (p. 165). In fact, this deleterious philosophy about oneself is to some extent the after-effects of the trauma. Every time she gagged purposely, she recalled the mistreatment she endured in her mother's house, where she was denied basic requirements and she “worked hard to be worthy. She helped clean and learned to make coffee, which was then added to her chores” (p. 82). Her mother did not spend the money that Nur's grandfather had bequeathed for her; simply put, she retained it for herself. Her stepfather also molested her repeatedly which made Nur severely ill because “the infection had gone from her tushie all the way into her ‘kidneys’” (p. 96). Nur who is raped by her stepfather attempts to evade the scathing recollections, as a consequence she “stopped sleeping well, lying in fear of what the night might bring” (p. 81). Nur fits within the group of individuals who are Palestinians by ancestry but have been detached from their homeland, beliefs, and customs due to displacement, “for all the security and freedom and opportunity she had... Nur was the most devastated person we knew. There was no place in the world for her to be” (p. 99). Nur embodies the predicament of many Palestinians who are exiled in different regions of the world: impoverished and ostracized with an irregular communication with their roots, community, and family.

Abulhawa has characterized Khaled as someone who witnesses everything, knows everything, and recounts every pain in Palestine, both before and after his birth. He conveys Nazmiyeh's sorrows who “had lived through all manner of disappointment and heartache” (p. 83). He is the type of narrator who executes the catharsis of all seven decades of misery. He describes Nur's ordeals as:

... life hurled her so far that nothing around her resembled anything Palestinian, not even the dislocated lives of exiles. So it was ironic that her life reflected the most basic truth of what it means to be Palestinian, dispossessed, disinherited, and exiled. That to be alone in the world without a family or a clan or land or country means that one must live at the mercy of others. (Abulhawa, 2015, p. 87)

Abulhawa recounts the narrative of a region whose generations have been bereaved one after another. Following the events of Naqba, Abulhawa proceeds to discuss the clashes that transpired in the years that followed. She reports the proceedings of 'The Six-Day War', also identified as '1967 Arab-Israeli War' that sustained for only six days but fetched “a new generation of Zionist soldiers parading triumphantly” (p. 57) into the lives of Nazmiyeh and her family. This war also inflicted trauma into the minds of Palestinian people as “the humiliation of that war soaked into their skins” and every person dumbfounded about overwhelmed in “another loss, new rage, and revived fear” (p. 58). The Six-Day War also carried twice over wretchedness to Nazmiyeh, as her eldest son joined the resistance after that and

was arrested by Zionist armed forces. While arresting Mazen, "they killed four, injured eleven, and kidnapped eight sons and daughters of Palestine that day" (Abulhawa, 2015, p. 63).

In *The Blue between Sky and Water*, the trauma of Naqba is also passed on to the youngest generation of the Baraka family. Even though Khaled is only a child, he is aware of the deplorable situation in Gaza; his despair is a physical or psychological reaction to the huge casualties caused by Israeli troops. For example, he describes how "we were used to being the losers," and how he feels depressed because "all this joy and laughter in Gaza is bound to bring blood and heartache" (p. 2). Khaled recounts in *The Blue between Sky and Water* how he used to savour small chocolate delicacies from stores before "the walls closed in on Gaza" (p. 1). He fondly remembers the fine intricacies of decadent chocolate eggs and maintains that their departure converted Palestinians' life into "metallic sepia, then faded to black and white" (p. 1). Additionally, he describes the unproductiveness that Palestinians have experienced over the previous seven decades. He mentions an event in which his grandmother's old friend is dying, commemorating happy moments "those were the days," and then expresses her helplessness and sadness with a "lamenting face," stating "who knew we'd die refugees" (p. 226). Nazmiyeh recounts to Khaled about her and her family's ordeals while emigrating to Gaza, including violent gang rape, the execution of her young sister in front of her, and her brother being wounded in the leg by Zionist troops while going to Gaza. After hearing her experience, Khaled's catastrophic approaches to Palestinian annexation seem comparable. He weighs everything that he has just learned from his grandmother. In fact, he re-enacts Nazmiyeh's recitation of the old days in such a way that he becomes a connection across historical eras. Khaled's voice may be perceived both before and after his birth and death: it abides in the blue, "between sky and water, where all time is now," (p. 53) between someplace he was before his birth and somewhere he is now, where he is psychosomatically absentminded. He becomes the unearthly link flanked by the beautiful days of Beit Daras and the misery, anguish, displacement, and disorientation of the present day. When Zionist troops attack Gaza again on Khaled's tenth birthday in 2008, the Baraka family suffers another tragedy. According to Khaled, "Israel sent planes for me, flying so low that buildings shook and all the windows broke open" (p. 150). He unfolds how the only flour mill was bombed, how "blood poured and dust rose," (p. 150) and how Gaza was completely engulfed in ashes. The 2008 dispute between Palestine and Israel resulted in widespread wreckage and the Baraka family also lost another member, Abdul Qader, Khaled's father. This unfortunate episode induced trauma in young Khaled's mind, and he drifted into 'blue,' "for the tremendous noise in Gaza, it became quiet here, inside the age of ten. As I hovered in the center of the silence" (Abulhawa, 2015, p. 151).

The above-mentioned descriptions of everyday life in Palestine have been set forth by Abulhawa, in an accomplished manner that describes how Palestinians are suffering from terror and trauma generation after generation for last seven decades.

Conclusion

The data analysis of the novel *The Blue between Sky and Water* by Susan Abulhawa clearly indicates the trauma of the war-stricken people where they are evacuated forcefully from their homeland in which they savoured the stature of the first rate citizens. Abulhawa reveals in her dystopian novel a situation where Palestinians are suffering from cognitive glitches and their repercussions on their upcoming generations. She highlights the fact that their emotive complications are unshakable because of the apprehensions of the imminent ruthlessness from Israelis which is passed on to their progenies along with the struggles for survival. The diverse aspects and symptoms of trauma are explored to highlight the variables of trauma in the subsequent generations.

The transgenerational trauma analysis of the selected text establishes that trauma is shifted to the succeeding generations as the study reveals how all the four generations of the Baraka family undergo corporeal and mental distress that stems from Naqba 1948. In *The Blue between Sky and Water*, Abulhawa has conveyed the information that how different characters from every age group are engrossed with the idea of retention of their free land, one after the other, and in what ways living in their territory as third rate citizens or in a foreign land in the middle of the effusively progressive set-up, they are frequently haunted by the memoirs of their glorious history and the dilemmas they are facing as a consequence of annexation. Khaled describes the dreads, uncertainties, and trepidations about routine life as well as a hopeless future. To give details regarding the tragic past, he recites the story of his grandmother and to disclose his worries concerning the future he tells the complete journey of Palestine since the time of Nazmiyeh. So it is ascertained that trauma is handed on through the generations, making the younger generation more pitiful as they try to relive the past their ancestors have faced. There is no way towards recovery of the devastated nation from the mechanisms of annexation resulting in rape, poverty and exile except resorting to their native land and freedom.

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