

KEEPING THE RHYTHM OF EMPLOYING SOCIAL PROBLEM-SOLVING TO SUSTAIN RESILIENCE – CASES FROM GAZA DURING GENOCIDE (2023-2024)

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Abstract

This literature review examines the profound impact of the ongoing conflict in Gaza on the social problem-solving capabilities and resilience of its inhabitants. Over the past year, Gaza has witnessed relentless violence, resulting in the deaths of approximately 43,000 civilians and the displacement of millions. Amidst these dire circumstances, the Palestinian population, especially children and youth, continues to confront significant social, psychological, and economic challenges. Employing a qualitative methodology, this study analyses various case studies derived from social media narratives, reports by human rights organizations, and existing literature to illuminate the innovative problem-solving strategies employed by Gazans. It explores how individuals and communities demonstrate remarkable adaptation and resilience in response to adversities through cognitive-behavioural approaches rooted in positive psychology. The findings underscore the critical role of community initiatives, collaboration, and innovation in fostering resilience. This study's implications highlight the necessity for international support and understanding of the psychosocial resilience mechanisms that enable Palestinians to endure systemic violence and humanitarian crises. This research contributes to a broader discourse on resilience in conflict-affected populations, emphasising the importance of amplifying the voices of those impacted by such profound challenges.

Keywords: Gaza, Social Problem-Solving, Resilience, Communal Bonds, Rational Problem-Solving Style, Problem Orientation, Genocide.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the face of prolonged adversity, nations and individuals often experience despair or resilience. The Palestinian nation, particularly in Gaza, has endured a devastating conflict characterised by continuous violence for over a year. The population of Gaza has faced forced displacement amidst relentless bombing, with many displaced multiple times, rendering any form of resettlement nearly impossible. Migdad and Buheji (2024b)

While hardships can break many, some individuals rise above their circumstances, exemplifying resilience. In positive psychology, resilience is defined as the ability to navigate life's challenges. Resilient individuals utilise personal assets, adaptability, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy to overcome obstacles. Migdad et al. (2024a)

This paper introduces social problem-solving (SPS) as a simple cognitive-behavioural approach to helping individuals in Gaza develop adaptive coping strategies for everyday challenges. SPS is important for facing social adversities. Thus, Gazans' challenges must be addressed through intervention and resolution (Aburezeq & Kasik, 2022).

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brief Situation of Gaza as of December 2024

When nations and individuals encounter prolonged adversity, they either lose hope and collapse or show resilience and survive. The Palestinian nation, especially in Gaza, has been undergoing an ongoing war of extermination for more than a year now. The entire population of Gaza has forcibly been displaced while being bombed, and most of them have been displaced multiple times, preventing them from settling even if that was possible. A list of 43,000 Palestinian civilians killed is published, and the number is growing every single day. Migdad and Buheji (2024b)

For the last couple of months, North Gaza has been under the most vicious genocide as described by reporters and bloggers from Gaza, who published a hash-tag that translates to North Gaza is genocided. However, the UN estimated the number of killed and injured to be much higher than currently reported (OHCHR, 2024). The natural resources in Gaza are reduced with time due to continuous bombardment by “Israel” using weapons of mass destruction.

Growing reports from Palestinians in Gaza (and the West Bank) repeating the accusation to Israel of killing and targeting families and especially children to destroy the hope of future generations and to accelerate the ethnic cleansing of the Indigenous Palestinian nation, especially in Gaza. This puts everyone in Gaza in life challenges every day, including life-threatening situations, to provide their basic needs. All are scarce, and require effort and time to find some, if possible. This paper analyses case studies of Gazan’s resilience through their social problem-solving process orientation, style, and skills. Buheji and Hasan (2024a)

2.2 How are Gazans Dealing with Hardships and Challenges?

Hardships and challenges have the power to break people, but some rise above them and become even stronger. In positive psychology, resilience is the capacity to handle life’s challenges. Resilient people overcome obstacles by relying on their assets and skills and other positive traits of psychological capital, such as adaptability, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy.

Social problem-solving refers to the cognitive-behavioural process in which one works to find adaptive ways of coping with everyday situations that are considered problematic. People use social problem-solving skills to adapt to social challenges, Buheji (2024b), Abdurzeq and Kasik (2022). In Palestine, and especially Gaza, youth are subjected to extreme social hardships in addition to military, political, economic, and environmental adversity. Access to education is considered an expensive luxury by some Gazans due to the extreme life-threatening situations Gazans have been facing every minute for more than 400 days now. Migdad et al. (2024c)

Unlike youth in many other Arab and non-Arab countries, Palestinian children and youths have been in the face of all these unbelievable situations for more than fourteen months now. They find themselves with significant responsibilities and minimal resources, if any.

2.3 Description of the Type of Complexity of the Problems that Gazans have been facing Since the War on Gaza Started on October 7th, 2024

Palestine has been occupied by Israeli militant apartheid colonising power since 1948. However, the latest war on Gaza since October 2023 forms a new level of challenges,

as over 43,000 Palestinian citizens were killed and more than 101,000 injured, at least 1.9 million were displaced, many repeatedly, including more than 43,000 pregnant Palestinian women (UNisPal, 2024). Khatib et al. (2024) mentioned that 186,000 Palestinians, comprising 8% of the Gazan population, were killed in 13 months. The victims are mostly children and women (70%, according to Aljazeera, 2024c & OHCHR, 2024c), and they were killed mainly by bombs, missiles, and explosions directed at their homes or UN refugee camps by the Israeli army. Some were shot dead while they were evacuating following the army orders, and some were in hospitals where they were receiving treatments, treating patients, or simply lying on the floor as they had nowhere else to go.

The mass killing in Gaza has been happening daily with no stop, even when Palestinians answered the order of evacuation a few dozen times and ended up living in tents on the road. On the 10th of August 2024, more than 100 Palestinians were killed. Tens were severely wounded while they were praying the Dawn Fajir prayer (5 am) in a UN refugee school sheltering 2,000 children, women and men after being ordered by the occupation to leave their homes to this “Israel”-declared safe zone (Reliefweb, 2024r; Aljazeera, 2024p). The weapon used by the Israeli army turned the men, women and children into pieces, and the remains were kept in plastic bags and given randomly to relatives and asked to assume that this is their loved ones and bury them (Aljazeera, 2024p).

70% of Gaza's infrastructure has been devastated, rendering practically the Palestinian nation in Gaza with no food, clean water, healthcare, or basic shelter, in a war “marked by a complete disregard for the protection of civilians and international humanitarian law (IHL)” (UNisPal, 2024). UNRWA, which provided critical support in health, education, and essential services, has been facing direct attacks and smearing campaigns by the “Israeli” occupation to stop from saving Palestinian lives and ban it, which will intensify their suffering as they are already in dire need.

The current raids into North Gaza have been marked by strikes on hospitals that clearly violate international humanitarian law. Israeli troops imprisoned health professionals and destroyed medical equipment at Kamal Adwan Hospital. Patients perished as a result of a lack of life-saving medical supplies, food, and water, while four ambulances were destroyed. Al Awda Hospital remains inaccessible. Reliefweb (2024), UNisPal (2024).

In October 2024, a video went viral on social media showing a human being burnt alive in Shuhada Al-Aqsa Hospital in North Gaza. He was identified later as Sha'ban Al-Delo, a college student (20 years old) by a member of his family as his mother and other family members died of severe burns in their bodies that couldn't be treated with almost any equipment at the hospital that was put under siege, a situation that is repeated of what is the lift of other Gaza's hospitals. Many received several threats and attacks, including direct explosives that burnt people alive while they were asleep in the hospital at night. Journalists from North Gaza, who were still alive by then, confirmed that this was not a single incident and that many Palestinian babies, women and men were burnt alive beyond identification in many cases (Aljazeera, 2024q).

Survivals have been eyewitnesses to all of this and more, and some were subjected to some of it but managed to survive barely with one or more lost limbs or with a disability. Almost everyone has lost someone in their family, and many have lost most members of their families. More than 900 Palestinian families were wiped out entirely

in stages (MEM, 2024). UN noted that the number of children without parents has increased dramatically and that surviving children and youth become responsible for babies, including providing milk for them. Videos shown children as young as 6 years old carrying younger siblings to take them to the hospital or simply to bring them along in the forced displacement, 6-year-old Qamar Subuh was featured in the news after a video of her carrying her injured sister Summaya went viral (NBC News, 2024).

Further, Gaza suffers from a severe shortage of drinking water, with the devastating “Israeli” war of extermination continuing since the seventh of October 2023. The “Israeli” occupation is deliberately cutting off water supplies from the occupied territories and destroying wells, tanks and various desalination plants.

Besides the fact that this is inhumane, and it is the textbook example of ethnic cleansing, atrocity, barbarism, and genocide against a nation kept hostage behind walls, military occupation, and ongoing lethal attacks by all sorts of weapons of mass destruction, an essential question regarding survival techniques is raised. How do mothers, children, men and women, young and elderly, deal with adversity and hardship at that level and for a prolonged period? Buheji (2024a)

2.4 Introduction to Social Problem-Solving (PSP)

A social problem (SP) is an issue that comes up in life and must be addressed appropriately (Aburezeq & Kasik, 2022). SP, in short, is when individuals in difficult situations, unfortunately, may not have access to effective solutions in time (D’Zurilla et al., 2004). Social problem solving (SPS) refers to the cognitive-emotional behavioural procedure people employ to address or find adaptive ways of coping with social difficulties encountered within their social framework in a conscious, self-directed and focused manner (Abu Taha & Aburezeq, 2018; Aburezeq & Kasik, 2022).

SPS skills and abilities are shown to impact people’s well-being perception and experiencing symptoms, as well as a tendency to adapt and adjust, especially in situations with an extensive range of mental and physical health issues (Heppner et al., 2004; Dreer et al., 2005 & 2009). However, routine assessment of SPS abilities in a medical context is often underutilised despite its proven impact on the health and recovery of patients (Dreer et al., 2009). Nevertheless, interventions targeting SPS abilities are proven to reduce psychological distress and depression for patients and their attending relatives (Perri et al., 2001; Cameron et al., 2004; Dreer et al. 2009). SPS processes, styles, abilities, and skills receive attention from literature in social studies, education, and medical disciplines, especially regarding coping mechanisms in stressful situations and hardship. Buheji (2024b)

2.5 Understanding How PSP Works

SPS has two main processes: problem orientation (PO) and problem-solving proper (PSP). PO, which could be positive or negative to the SPS (D’Zurilla et al., 2002), refers to the cognitive framework or concept one has on problematic situations faced in his/her daily life and how well one believes one can handle those issues, (Aburezeq & Kasik, 2022) and (Abu-Ghazal & Falwah, 2014). PSP concerns skills and techniques one employs to find and compare possible solutions and choose and apply the best ones. In positive problem orientation (PPO), problems are seen as challenges and threats in negative problem orientation (NPO). Further, one reacts to problems with self-confidence in the case of the former while realising the necessity to overcome negative feelings with needed resources. This contrasts with the latter, where

anticipating negative results and failure is accompanied by low self-efficiency. (D’Zurilla et al., 2002, 2004; Jaffee & D’Zurilla, 2003; Nezu, 2004; Abu Hamda, 2017; Abu-Ghazal & Falwah, 2014; Aburezeq & Kasik, 2022).

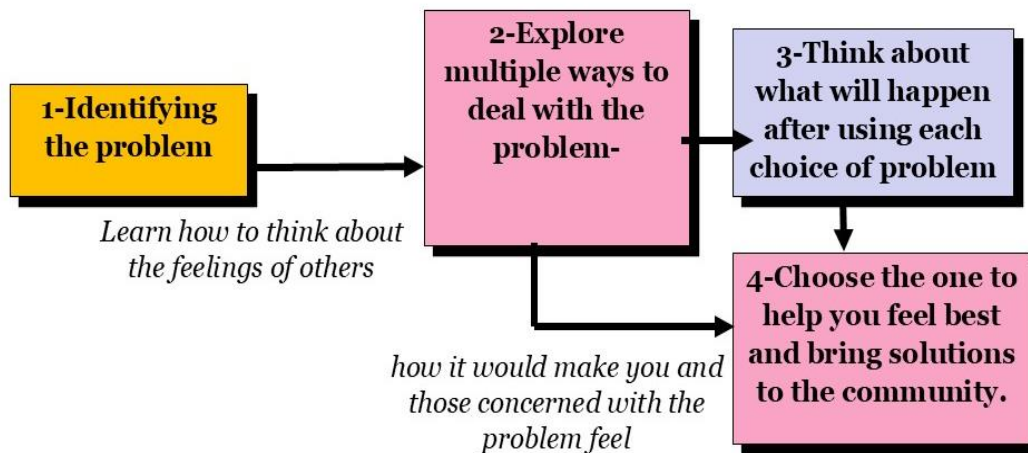


Figure (1): Represent the Basics of Social Problem Solving Process

A rational PS pattern or style is characterised by a sensible, thoughtful, and systematic application of practical PS skills to result in positive outcomes and an exit from the PS process for the issue tackled. In contrast, an avoidance pattern to PS features inaction, reliance, procrastination, and attempts to shift responsibility to others, leading to adverse outcomes and giving up more often in the PS process. However, the impulsive pattern or style comprises impulsive, rushed, negligent, incomplete and inadequate efforts to tackle problems. (Maydeu-Olivares & D’Zurilla, 1995; D’Zurilla et al., 2002; Jaffee & D’Zurilla, 2003; D’zurilla et al., 2003; Nezu et al., 2012; Kasik et al., 2018; Aburezeq & Kasik, 2021a & 2022).

2.6 Measured Level of Social Problem Solving among Gazans

In a study examining the social problem-solving characteristics of more than 400 Palestinians in three chosen ages between twelve and eighteen years old, Abdurezeq & Kasik (2022) found Palestinians to have a high level of positive problem orientation and a low level of negative problem orientation towards solving social problems. This is a good indicator of problem-solving ability. While studying positive orientation, negative orientation, rational style, impulsive style, and avoidance style, no differences were recorded between males and females in positive orientation, rational style and impulsive style.

However, girls were more inclined to negative orientation and avoidance style. The mother's educational level was found to impact the avoidance style, while the father's education was not found to impact solving social problem abilities. The age difference is shown only in eighteen-year-old participants of the study, presenting a noticeable positive orientation.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Following the daily videos and news from Gaza for the last thirteen months since October 2023, of Palestinian citizens' reactions to death, attacks, illness, displacement, occupation, intimidation, loss of loved ones, scarcity of essentials, injuries and disability, the following case studies are chosen to illustrate Palestinian

problem-solving processes and style. It is essential to state that we found dozens of initiatives worthy of mention and analysis, and it is only due to the limitation of what can be included in one paper that we could not include them all. However, they are not less important than the ones studied below.

4.0 CASE STUDIES

Applying social problem-solving skills (SPS) to the issue of Gaza means we need to measure the ability for better social adaptation by identifying, evaluating, and resolving social difficulties and challenges. Hence, the authors aim to explore and analyse the characteristics of SPS among Palestinians in Gaza as a process (PO) and style (PSP), besides addressing their details (PPO: Positive Problem Orientation, NPO: Negative Problem Orientation, Rational Style, Impulsive Style, and Avoidance Style) in connection, whenever possible, to some socio-demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, location, education) and purpose.

The following case studies are derived from either the social media posts by Gazans, or from the reports published by human rights and UN groups. A total of 100 well-known Palestinian Instagram accounts were screened, in addition to dozens that were popping in our search, and news webpages to follow stories mentioned in the social media accounts. Examples of accounts screened: Khaledmnabhann, Quds News, Saleh_aljafarawi, wearthepeace, Abod_.bt77, BisanfromGaza, yousef_sager99, MalakFada2003, Hossam_Shbt, WhisperingOliveTrees, sharekyouthforum.ps, ismail_gh2, Abdulrahman_abukarsh . Examples of human rights groups are B'tsleem and EuroMed. Examples of UN organisations are ICC, UNRWA and ReliefWeb.

It is worth noting that most Palestinian accounts faced or currently facing challenges related to being restricted, “shadow-banned”, losing posts or features, or deleted entirely, due to what Palestinians described as cyber killing, or what Human Rights Watch described as “Censoring Palestinian content” (HRW, 2023) to stop their voice from reaching the world, including just between October and November 2023, takedowns and other suppression of content Instagram and Facebook that Palestinians and their supporters had posted, involved peaceful content in support of Palestine that was censored or otherwise unduly suppressed, while one case involved removal of content in support of Israel. It is also worth noticing that problems solved in the case of Gazans are not always for one’s own sake; many times, it is a communal problem, but a Palestinian will consider it as his/her own problem or responsibility to solve the problem to ease the suffering of others. The following includes problems and resilience initiatives by different Palestinian individuals and groups to resolve them, with a focus on their SPS orientation and style.

4.1 Electricity Generations

4.1.1 Identifying the Problem

Gaza was deprived of electricity and energy from Day 1 of the war on Gaza in October 2023. Rafah was then considered one of the most densely populated areas in the Gaza Strip, after the “Israeli” occupation offensive army forced the Palestinians from the north, center and south of the Strip to Rafah, where there were about 1.4 million Palestinian citizens, according to a previous statement by the mayor of Rafah, Ahmed Al-Sufi (Nedim, 2024).

4.1.2 Exploring possible Solution

A 15-years old teenager displaced from Bait Lahiya (North Gaza) Hussam Al-Attar, also known as Gaza's Newton, succeeded in lighting the nights in their refugee camp in Rafah (South Gaza). Hussam had several inventions before the outbreak of war, such as underwater light, a safety zipper to close doors wirelessly, and a fan to cool the hot weather in the summer. Suffering from the darkness in the refugee camps, instead of complaining of surrendering to destiny, Hussam was thinking of how to light up the place. He wanted to build a windmill like what he read about in other countries. He started with a fan and installed it to convert the kinetic energy resulting from the force of the wind into electrical energy. He did not succeed at the beginning and had to try again with alterations each time.

The fans that the boy Al-Attar used as turbines to generate energy from the wind and electrical installations appear on one of the metal poles inside the camp. The brilliant Palestinian child succeeded in lighting the place intermittently when there was wind with good speed. Otherwise, darkness prevailed in the camp, which could have been solved with batteries that were not available, unfortunately.

Gaza's Newton is set to continue developing the invention and making it available for his fellow Palestinian citizens even if the operating period is limited by winds. He developed the complete electrical installations with what was available, waiting for the rest of the supplies and batteries to be available to complete the project for generating and storing electricity for the entire camp.

In February 2024, when a Turkish channel interviewed Hussam, the fans used as turbines to generate energy from the wind and electrical installations appeared on one of the metal poles inside the camp in Rafah. The genius boy's motivation was to illuminate the tents for his own family and other displaced families, and to alleviate the suffering of displacement and ongoing war. (Nedim, 2024). For the 15-year-old Palestinian Al-Attar, the deprivation of electricity-related problems was considered as a challenge or tasks requiring methodological solutions, showing a rational problem-solving style (RPSS).

4.2 Under Bombardment

4.2.1 Identifying the Problem

"Israel" army has been bombing houses, buildings, refugee schools and all shelters Gazans used after being forcefully displaced each time, including cloth and plastic tents sheltering. When bombardment starts, there is basically no safe place to go to, and staying in current location could be as risky as trying to run, as individuals and groups are also targeted while trying to walk away from bombardment. People and especially children, are often under great fear. Many cases of children dying of fear were reported. A survival child from under the rubble. Was featured with no hair stating that she lost her hair when her home was bombed, and family members killed. Therefore, in addition to survival skills to avoid being bombed, if possible, at all, skills to avoid being controlled by fear is essential for survival under this war of extermination. Some of the skills used as shown in different posts for different groups of people was to recall spiritual power and connect to a higher being and surrender to a long deep group prayer, especially for children. Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2024)

4.2.2 Exploring possible Solution

In one video, a child was seen leading the group prayers reciting a known prayer for protection and safety (On the name of God, with whom no evil can harm me). In several other videos, women were reciting the Holy Quran complete non-stop in one go. This was part of Quran certification program of completion. The level of involvement, excitement and tranquillity give you the wrong illusion that bombardment has stopped, and they are certainly in a safe area, until you hear the explosions one after the other, or see it happening to them as they were being video recorded.

Similar videos included only family members around their parents in the 2023 and early 2024 videos when people still have homes. Writing the names of kids on their hands and body parts was also made ceremonial by mothers who made it sound like fun while she was expecting a bomb in their heads any second. The process of name writing itself gives another dimension of adaptation to adverse situations. The purpose is for the mother to know and have closure if her kids were killed, instead of living in destructive suspense while the kids are already dead and there is no need to search for them everywhere in the death zone.

4.3 Life over any Sacrifice

4.3.1 Identifying the Problem

When a place is bombed, especially at the beginning of the war on Gaza, I will rush towards the bombed place and start looking for survivors to rescue them and take them to hospitals. When there were no tools to dig to extract the survival out of rubble, Palestinian men used their bare hands and nails regardless of how much their hands were harmed in the process. When hospitals run off tranquillizers and anaesthetic drugs, surgeons operate on wounded individuals, including children, without anaesthesia.

It must be a devastating experience for the doctors and medical staff to inflict that much pain on a child, but the life of the child was the priority. When heads of hospitals were threatened by "Israeli" occupation to kill their families if they did not close the hospital and stop saving the lives of patients, they stayed at the hospitals and served their patients to their best till their last second in the hospital.

4.3.2 Exploring Possible Social Solution

Dr. Abusalma, Dr. Albursh, Dr. Abusafeya and others continued to send daily reports about the situation deterioration at the hospital, in the hope of receiving international attention and action, and continued to treat their patients even when their family members were targeted like killing Dr. Abusafeya's son on November 2024 in North Gaza after putting the hospital under siege and the refusal of the head of a hospital to leave his patients.

Even when the IDF occupied Al-Shifa hospital and pointed their rifles at the doctors, Dr Abusalma ran the hospital to save patients even after being deprived of food and water, till they kidnapped him and took him, hostage, by "Israeli" concentration torture camps. A member of the family will search for food while another member will care for the injured, weak, and children.

The one searching for food risks his life, but with no food, the life of the entire family will be at risk. Adopting adverse situations during war and genocide time meant swimming in the sea trying to catch an aid package to feed a whole family or families

for a few days, although it could mean death for that one taking the risk. Hence, the life of an individual is chosen over his/her comfort pain or limb. However, the life of a community or family is selected from the life of one person or a few, even if they are very dear to that person. PPS was seen in so many social media posts, as shown in other parts of this paper.

4.4 Courage and Admiring Courage in Others

4.4.1 Identifying the Problem

A statement is known universally and used as a proverb: “Courage is made in Gaza”. Hundreds of posts give us an idea of why this is true. The way mothers receive the news of the death of children, or even the only child, is legendary. Hundreds of posts worldwide commented on that with utmost admiration and astonishment of their courage, faith and strength. Men showed courage every day in risking their lives to rescue injured and sick. Even the elderly showed courage in many ways, including taking care of their needs when they were left with no family members around.

4.4.2 Exploring Possible Social Solution

PPO set of mind and PSP by choosing to positively believe in their ability to handle the problems (Abu-Ghazal & Falwah, 2014; Abur &, 2022) and employing their skills and techniques in finding and applying the best solutions from what is possible and attainable. Journalists showed utmost courage by continuing to report from Gaza despite the significant risk while filming the crimes and the targeting of civilians and their properties and filming Palestinian daily lives in Gaza. But also, the greater risk when they receive threats from the “Israeli” occupation to target their families.

A threat that was seen in practice several times with many journalists like the “Mountain of Gaza” and Al-Jazeera reporter Wael Aldahdouh, who lost his wife and children who were with her, including his grandkids, then targeting his son separately in his car. Wael himself has serious injuries. A total of 188 journalists were killed by directly targeting them with explosions or sniper’s bullets in the head. The ones alive are either injured or blacklisted as targets for snippers, as was publicly announced by the occupation. On min November 2024, a journalist was seen in a video post reporting a laser pointer on his chest from the occupation to intimidate him. He said, remind me to add to my CV that “I can work under pressure”.

In mid-November 2024 also, a hashtag was created for saving Fadi and Ali, who are two journalists badly injured while covering the news that they needed urgent life-saving treatment outside Gaza. Still, the occupation refused to let them leave Gaza. The famous About Battah, a young self-pronounced reporter from Gaza, was kidnapped and assaulted more than once in North Gaza and was close to death after being threatened to stop publishing pictures and videos of Gazans’ suffering. Many stories are similar, and many will not be completed, as their tellers were assassinated while reporting to the world from Gaza. However, this did not stop them from giving a voice to Gaza till the last minute.

Courage is a choice; they chose to try to save their people by conveying their story to the world in the hope that the truth would be known and that some international power would stop the nation's extermination. They also wanted to keep the story of their nation alive for generations to come. Is this considered NPS, and does it lead to their assassination? However, if the aim was a higher self, family, community or nation, this could be seen as PPS and PSP.

4.5 Community Cohesion

4.5.1 Identifying the Problem

The deep familial and communal bonds appear to be more important for a Palestinian in Gaza than his/her own interest, as shown in previous literature such as Al-Muhannadi and Buheji (2024). PPS is evident over all catastrophes all over Gaza. Forced displacement during the cold winter In addition to the forced displacement, hunger and lack of everything, the cold winter started, and Gazan's Palestinian citizens could not go back to their homes to get their warm clothes nor to find refuge and warmth in their beautiful houses. Their movement is restricted, and they do not have money to buy warm clothes for their children, even if they are available on the market. Migdad and Buheji (2024a)

4.5.2 Exploring Possible Social Solution

As winter approached, an initiative was to give away any unnecessary clothes or materials. Youths initiated a collection centre and posted their contacts to be approached by anyone who cannot reach them to donate or receive certain items. Items were labelled according to age to ease the process. The volunteers who have vehicles collected and distributed the items. The project started with individuals' loss of family members and wanting to turn the grief and loss into a smile and benefit for other members of the Palestinian community suffering from the ongoing inhumane suffering.

Similarly, some Palestinian youths who were able to receive aid fundraised to buy warm clothes and displayed them in their tents, as there was no other place available, and posted videos showing the display and asking everyone in the neighbourhood to come and get one. A young electrical engineer, Abdulrahman Abukarsh, who currently lives in a refugee tent in central Gaza and is the father of little Amir, is one of those fantastic examples (Abdulrahman_Abukarsh, 2024). This shows the PPS orientation and rational problem-solving styles practised by Palestinian youths, with sensible, thoughtful, and methodical application of practical problem-solving skills according to the definition of positive orientation and rational style (Aburezeq & Kasik, 2021 & 2022).

Another initiative by another group of youths was to plant and keep planting vegetables and fruits and distributing them to people. The youths learnt from other bright examples, such as Eng. Abu Rabee', or used their own good or simple skills in agriculture and running business and turned it into a charitable initiative to produce and distribute food to save their fellow Palestinians from dying of hunger amid the worst forced famine known in this century. One example is a child Imad Za'nooneh, who started planting peppers, garlic, beans, Rocca, and cabbage.

His project is called "Green Hope", and he stated that he attempted the impossible by planting near his refugee tent to eat and feed his family and feed his neighbours as much as possible. He planted all of this in an area of 1m in 2m only, and he planted then in an artistic style using stones collected from all around (blinxnow, 2024). It is our opinion that the positive orientation towards the problem faced seems to be part of Gazan's (and Palestinian's) culture, practised in everyday situations, but shown clearly in hardship situations. Buheji and Hasan (2024b)

The communal unity and social cohesion and sense of responsibility towards each Palestinian towards others strengthen their will to survive and serve for the sake of others. The same reason makes “avoidance” style of problem-solving almost unseen anywhere in Gaza. Children and adults, men and women seem to have rational styles to the extent that quite a few initiatives and examples from different parts of Gaza seem similar and have the same resilient goal. The differences are only related to the age and expertise of the ones starting the initiatives, and the available scarce resources around them. Eng. Abu Rabee used broken tanks and made his soil from dead plants in north Gaza, while the young Imad planted on the floor in central Gaza because there is still some good soil there and used his artistic talents to make them look beautiful, adding his personal touch.

4.6 Creating Purpose and Small Steps

4.6.1 Identifying the Problem

Young Yahya could have felt like a victim of depression and anxiety, expecting to be killed at any moment amid the genocide in besieged Gaza, where enemies of life have been bombing people, buildings, trees and animals for fun, using the most advanced weapons of mass destruction designed for leaving only death, destruction and agony. Giving up is the obvious reaction to a genocidal war that continued days and nights for more than a year, with the UN Security Council failing to even request the Western countries to stop fueling the holocaust with more weapons and money. There is nowhere to run to, as the enclave is closed like any prison, with high, solid walls and snipers happy to shoot.

4.6.2 Exploring Possible Social Solution

Yahya created a purpose and set 99 goals, each requiring steps to be achieved in the best way possible. His problem-solving orientation is to positively create meaningful, great 99 memories during his life under the genocidal war in Gaza. He could be targeted and killed before he achieved them all, but as long as he is alive, he will pursue achieving each to perfection. The first memory he created was to choose one of his best outfits and present it to another kid his age and size. To perfect the goal, he looked at all his outfits, chose the ones that looked new and beautiful, and chose the one he loved the most. Then he walked more than 1 km to find a nice bag and a card. Then he wrote words from his heart that could make the other kid at the receiving end feel happy, proud, and loved. Part of what Yahya wrote is:” Only the dearest of our dear ones wears our dear clothes”. He then walked to where the kid lives and handed him the gift without filming him. After that, he folded the page where he had documented this memory and placed it in the memory glass jar.

Yahya started his account as a documentation of daily life in North Gaza since the start of the genocidal war. It documents suffering, oppression, and deprivation of life essentials. We all know that the “Israeli” war criminals (ICC, 2024 ; UN, 2024n, Aljazeera, 2024wc) weaponised water, food and other life essentials not only to force Palestinian citizens from their own homes and towns, but also as part of the ethnic cleansing and genocide. However, Yahya’s videos show the meaning, implications and details of denying Gaza’s People access to water. At one point, he published a handwritten letter or will, wishing not to be killed in a refugee school or on the road and not to be shredded into small parts for his family to collect. His wish is to die in his home where his family can say goodbye to him as a whole body and give him a decent burial. Nevertheless, he always looked for any mission, small or big, to make others

happy. One time, Yahya found a child selling homemade ice cream, and he enjoyed one of them; he decided to buy the few remaining and gift them to the first children he saw on the road. Just before Eid Al-Adhha (like Christmas for Christians, only it is a much bigger celebration with family and community celebrational programs for days involving feasts days and nights), Yahya published videos of being starved in North Gaza that they had nothing to eat but animal feeds to make bread, and how painful it is to welcome the Eid with no proper food. He sounds devastated and full of the pain of being let down by the world. But on Eid Day (15th June 2024), he was seen leading a group of children chanting Eid rituals and bringing happiness to them. Migdad et al. (2024b)

By the time we wrote this paper, he had published ten memories. The 9th was particularly painful, but he managed to deal with the pain and frustration in his unique way of facing the problems and trying to find a peaceful end. He tried delivering letters sent by people to their relatives and friends and left them in the post office because of the war on Gaza. He couldn't find the homes he sent to; they were also demolished, and no one lived there anymore. They are either killed or forcefully displaced. So he decided to open the letters and read them with us to respect the interruption of human communication and to let it be heard. One of the letters had a certificate of graduation sent by a young Palestinian citizen to his parents in North Gaza to share the achievement. Another was from relatives sending the key to their home for when their relatives decide to go visit them, and they might not be there. He honoured the letters with flowers after giving them a voice, just like Gazans (and he is one) wish to have a voice telling the world what they are going through and calling for stopping genociding them every day.

Yahya starts every video or ends it with welcoming words accompanied by the word "Watan", which means homeland. (Yahya_Mhmoud, 2024). Yahya shows positive problem orientation and a constructive problem-solving cognitive set by facing the problems and viewing them as challenges, while believing in his ability to resolve them with some time and effort. It shows his high PS self-efficacy and tendency to stay optimistic and extend it to others. He shows distinctive abilities to identify, explore and analyse daily problems and difficulties, generate options to deal with life situations, evaluate and test them and set tasks for himself and a clear purpose to stay optimistic.

People like Yahya show no negative PO or low PS self-efficiency, which could be expected while living under a continuous genocidal war;. However, problems faced daily are significant threats, Yahya does not seem to doubt his ability to deal with situations as they come. Further, with his open but very polite and kind style of expression, he talks about what he and his people face every day clearly and makes sure that he posts all of that for all to see and possibly help. However, he enjoys the simplest gestures of life. He takes full responsibility for creating cheerful moments and great memories to deal with stressful, frustrating situations for himself and the people around him. In short, he shows PPO, RS in PS and high skills. (D'Zurilla et al., 2004).

4.7 Teaching Planting Trees and Surviving Genocide

4.7.1 Identifying the Problem

Mehdi and his "Cool" initiative or "Cool Rozela Flowers" initiative have Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube accounts. It always starts with a warm "Hala Belquawali" that means "Hello the dearests" with a big smile and beautiful calm, cheerful voice. We sometimes thought we were mistaken and that he was a

Palestinian agricultural professor living in another country, especially with the dozens of videos teaching how to grow and care for trees with the utmost professionalism, focus and joy. It is only when he mentions “our refugee camp” or “here in Gaza” or when he shows the surroundings or people around that we are sure that he is Gazan himself and living under genocide. His case study is unique, among other reasons illustrated in this section. Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2023), Rozelaflowers (2024); Coolrozelaflowers (2024).

4.7.2 Exploring Possible Social Solution

Florists of “Cool Rozella Flowers” led many initiatives for the Palestinian citizens forced out of their homes and towns, such as “vegetable baskets”, “lightening the camp”, “milk and kits for children”, and “Zait w Za’tar”. But his special initiatives that show a great sense of positive orientation towards problem solving are food production teaching and focusing on children’s mental health. The Florist has been planting edible vegetables and fruits in the refugee camps, caring for them daily and teaching others how to plant every plant. His account has short videos showing how to plant onions, fool, and even apples in straightforward ways (CoolRozelaflowers, 2024f).

Mehdi YouTube channel teaches in detail how to plant a tree, and deal with issues that can be encountered in the process. Dozens of professional videos explain step by step how to plant each fruit and flower. A video explains how to grow mango from its seed in the kitchen, starting with options for extracting the embryo, and how much water is used in each stage to follow, till transferring it to soil in a pot within weeks, and when to plant it in soil and how to accelerate the wait time needed for production (CoolRoselaFlowers, 2023). Similar details are given for pineapple, cucumbers, avocado and names based on the high fertility of Palestinian soil. He turned his agricultural skills into a data bank for everyone to learn from and apply, whether they could come to him to learn or virtually through his Instagram, Facebook and YouTube accounts.

Mehdi presents everything with a cool smile and words of hope and encouragement. Plants face many problems, such as branches getting broken, or being attacked by parasites. He made unique videos to address each. In one of his videos, he turned dry or broken branches into opportunities for better production (RozelaFollowers (2024bb). Gaza’s Florist has sessions to teach children about planting vegetables, but also giving them time for learning with fun and joy in collaboration with other initiatives and building a playground for the children of refugee camps in Gaza.

Two months ago, a cool school celebrated graduating 120 children from a school term, teaching them the complete Palestinian curriculum. This was achieved in one small classroom in a tent (RozelaFlowers, 2024sc). The students were from 4 different levels, including kindergarten and intermediate- each group having their own classes, curriculum, programs and evaluation before graduation. Graduating from a term or semester amid a genocidal war that can target and burn alive children at any second is a unique and outstanding achievement, made possible with dedicated teachers and aware parents and children eager to learn and restore some aspects of their lives. The summary of Cool’s initiative is enjoying the day and making the best of it while preparing for the future by planting and caring for the plants. This was applied in both its literal and figurative or metaphorical meaning in “Cool Rozela” initiatives. Migdad and Buheji (2024c)

In Mehdi home, he had a fantastic plantation that he left when he was forcefully displaced from his home and town. In one of his videos, he showed the farm he created in the new home with some stuff recycled from his old house, which indicates that his home was destroyed. In his refugee camp, although everyone knows that it is only a temporary camp till the occupation decides to bomb them and force them to run for their lives away from everything, they created to make life a bit easier, he created a new garden and a new heaven for his children and people around him.

Every member of Mehdi's family is participating and sharing joy and fun with him. His kids participate in growing trees and caring for them, and filming and documenting the initiatives and running the social media. His elderly mother's initiative at the beginning of winter was to make wool hats, "Tawaqi", for as many children in the camp as possible to help warm them in the winter. He took one of them and started wearing it in his following episodes. (RozelaFlowers ,2024h). In one of his videos, he said that today we live full of love and laughter, surrounded by the people we love and making everyone happy. This possibly explains his positive attitude, beautiful smile, and cool style in everything he says and does.

Mehdi cannot control what the enemies of life will do, but he can control how he, as a florist full of love for life, spends each valuable hour of his day and how he impacts the lives of others, even those living far away from him, through social media. The first author of this paper has been teaching children in Bahrain and other countries in the MENA Region how to plant their food by their hands, and she considers his videos as the best references, especially for children in the Levant.

4.8 Emotional support

4.8.1 Identifying the Problem

In a situation where every family loses a member, including at least 17,000 children without parents (UNICEF, 2024), and everyone living in fear of dying or losing a close family member, emotional support is essential. There are reports of children found dead with hands covering their ears and reported dead with fear when their homes were bombed. Although emotional support was seen in thousands of videos taken by the people of Gaza themselves, there are intended initiatives aiming merely to provide emotional support. Five of these initiatives are highlighted in this case study. The grandfather of Rooh ElRooh, Khaled Nabhann has dozens of videos visiting families and individuals in Rafah refugee camps and encouraging them at difficult times like losing members of their families. He is always received with respect, appreciation and love, knowing the deep pain he carries with him. One unexpected video of him was the one with flowers he collected and started giving to random people to cheer them up and remind them of beauty and hope in life.

4.8.2 Exploring Possible Social Solution

With PPO and RPSS, Khaled managed to direct the pain of his tremendous loss, the little granddaughter he spent most of his time with, into caring and loving every child in Gaza and initiative to ease the pain of others who lost loved ones.

Groups like Sharek Youth Forum are targeting children with different programs, educational, entertainment, and psychological health support (Sharekyouthforum, 2024). Some groups, like the Emaar Association for Development and Rehabilitation in Khan Yunis, launched a mobile clinic "truck" with psychologists and equipment to provide psychological support to Gazans in the centre and south of the Gaza Strip.

Further, individual initiatives of a mobile school led by Noor Nassar, a 24-year-old female law graduate, visited refugee camps to ease the educational process for them in their relatively safe camp. She started by raising parents' awareness first, as education lost its importance, and finding survival food became the priority for families and individuals. Carrying her class tools in a bag that she carried around, Ms Nassar managed to attract children and remind them of how joyful learning and getting educated is. After months of being controlled by fear under the intense bombing and staying in her house in Rafah, she decided to take proactive action as the war is continuing with no clear end, and she felt the need to act.

Noor Nassar orientation towards problems faced could be described as negative orientation, and her style of dealing with them was more towards avoidance during those months, in the hope that problems would solve themselves and the war would suddenly end through a deal of international intervention to save the innocent civilians' lives. She assumed she would be safer in her home, and if she waited long enough, someone would solve it. But after months of being in the middle of a genocidal war against her people, she realised that hiding and staying home is not the answer and it is not making her feel good or safe. Many neighbours and other Palestinian citizens she knew were killed in random or directed bombings of their homes, where adults and children alike were subjected to death or painful suffering, physical and emotional. She needed to get out and do something, both to overcome the depression she was feeling and to help others if she could.

Through joining an NGO that works with children who have been forcibly displaced to Rafah, and ended up crowding in the refugee camps, Noor Nassar found a purpose. Children have been deprived of every child right she ever heard of, as they suffered physically and psychologically beyond apprehension, and many are clearly traumatised. She wanted to help where it mattered the most for them and still within her limited resources. She decided that her purpose in life was to change the current situation for children by giving them back their right to education.

She named her project "School on the Road" or Schools Without Borders (SWB). SWB project had only a portable hand-made whiteboard and a few flashcards with the Arabic alphabet when it started, and grew with time. With 62 schools being destroyed and 119 badly damaged (at that time), including UN-run schools, 625,000 schoolchildren were left without education (NewArabNews, 2024b). Meanwhile, there are no less than 8,000 children martyrs in the Gaza Strip at school age, and 350 martyrs among teachers, in addition to the missing, and there are more than 12,500 wounded students, including 2,500 who became disabled till August 2024. (Aawsat, 2024)

Noor faced difficult obstacles in addition to the apparent risk of being targeted and bombed while teaching children at their refugee camps. One of these obstacles is the objection of families to educating their children, which came as a great shock for her. Children were also reluctant to receive education, as they preferred finding ways to make money or gathering food for their families. Further, she is not a teacher, and she does not have an educational curriculum or educational books or materials.

Systematically, Noor managed to isolate the problems and deal with each problem separately with help from people around her. Attracting children, for instance, was solved with her big elegant bag with attractive paintings that drew children to her. Her sister made the paintings. In no time, Noor found the parents calling her and competing

with each other to reach her first, and the kids following her everywhere. (Aljazeera, 2024n)

After reading interviews with children who benefited from the project, their paintings, and their words, we believe that the initiative was needed by young people more for psychological support than education itself. Ms. Nassar's motto is, "One must be a light for others on the path filled with the smell of death." (Bnfsj, 2024; Aljazeera, 2024n).

Just like Noor, Nassar found her way from an avoidance problem-solving style into a rational one, where she helped herself and many other children to do the same. Another emotional support initiative found in dozens of videos relates to seeking spiritual power. Children are led by adults or other children to recite prayers of protection and blessing from God while the area is bombed by "Israel".

Everyone's fear was directed towards surrendering to a higher power. Similar videos were seen for groups of women, and also groups of men reciting the Holy Quran for hours.

5.0 REFLECTIONS ON PALESTINIANS' ASPIRATION AMID GENOCIDE

5.1 Mother's Aspiration

Young Palestinian gentlemen asked their mother about what they would do if they returned to Gaza to find it destroyed. Her answer is that we will return to Gaza to rebuild it. we will clean it and build it brick by brick, and we will put all our energy and power to bring it back to better than what it was, till all homes and services are back".

When one of her sons mentioned:" are we going to waste our life in Gaza?" Her answer is:" Gaza is your life. Your honour, inside Gaza, if you leave anywhere, you will live without honour. In Gaza, you will live your real life in your homeland, and you will rebuild it and stand up tall, my son, because Gaza is ours and not for any colonising power".

The son (Abdulrahman Abukarsh, 2024b) commented:" this is the answer for whoever is asking why we are resilient and staying in Gaza, because we have mothers giving us our strength and voice of wisdom.

5.2 Young Man's Aspiration

A Palestinian blogger in his early twenties shows Gaza's beauty and the rich life they enjoyed in Gaza before the Zionist occupation destroyed it. Then, another video lists what a Palestinian in Gaza is going through every day in search of something to eat and feed his kids. He mentioned staying in the same clothes for more than 20 days, walking for more than 1 km to fill water in whatever containers you can find, and searching for paper and wood waste to use for cooking while eating only beans for more than 10 days in a row.

Then, another video shows him standing next to rubble and destruction and describes how beautiful his neighbourhood used to be, such as Alrashidi Street and the sea street. Still, he says, "They think if they destroyed our beautiful life, memories and everything, then we will hate our life and prefer to die. His final sentence is:" They do not know us, our strength and how much we love life, and God with us we will stay resilient, and we will rebuild our home again" (Ahmed.ashraf_01, 2024).

6.0 CONCLUSION

Case studies related to resilience and inventions among Palestinian citizens facing genocide confirm the empirical study findings from Aburezeq and Kasik (2022) that Palestinian adolescents had the highest level of positive orientation and the least level of negative problem orientation towards solving social problems. Further, the rational problem-solving style (RPSS) was prominent in all case studies across ages and educational levels, including 15-year-olds and adults, specialist engineers and undergraduates.

Avoidance style was seen to be turned into positively facing fears and turning the process to a positive orientation of problem-solving and using rational style to both deal with one's own fears and help others to do the same. The previous empirical study mentioned that girls tend to have more avoidance style than boys; however, in the case studies analysed in our paper, we can say that the ability shown to shift from avoidance style to rational style and show positive orientation in the problem-solving process is worth studying in future empirical studies.

It is irrational to expect anyone to have a rational PS style amid genocide. However, listening to the mother who listed steps that will be taken once they return to Gaza, giving the textbook definition of Rational style, we realise that we are discovering a unique nation with unique characteristics of resilience and problem-solving skills, style, and orientation.

What is seen in Palestine, and Gaza in particular, is a higher evolution in humanity regarding SPS and many other aspects of human and nation resilience. The personal survival skills, joined with communal care and unity and enormous faith in God and love for life and homeland, bring about a legend yet to be realised, studied and idolised. The fact that this nation is targeted and annihilated using the most lethal weapons of mass destruction and torture represents not only a war crime and failure in humanity but also a massive loss for the evolution of humanity.

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