

# Building Anti-Fragile Generation – Stories on Mothers of Gaza

Mohamed Buheji<sup>1,2,\*</sup>, Mohammed Migdad<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Founder, International Institute of Inspiration Economy, Bahrain

<sup>2</sup>Socioeconomic Institute for Advanced Studies (SIAS), Rwanda

<sup>3</sup>Professor of Economics, Islamic University of Gaza

**Abstract** This paper explores the extraordinary resilience, creativity, and strength of the Palestinian mothers in Gaza, who have become the cornerstone in building anti-fragility in the future generation of the strip despite being in the world's most challenging condition. Drawing on Nassim Taleb's concept of anti-fragility—systems that thrive under stress and uncertainty—the study examines how Palestinian mothers navigate decades of conflict, economic hardship, and social instability to nurture and empower their children. Through emotional resilience, resourcefulness, adaptability, and community-building, these mothers create systems that not only withstand adversity but also grow stronger from it. The paper highlights key strategies employed by Gaza's mothers, including fostering emotional resilience, prioritising education, building strong community networks, and instilling hope and purpose in their children. Using field observations and interviews conducted in late 2024 and early 2025, the authors present live case studies illustrating how Palestinian mothers turn trauma into strength, scarcity into opportunity, and hope into hope. These stories reveal how mothers in Gaza are shaping an anti-fragile generation—one that is emotionally strong, spiritually grounded, and equipped to thrive in the face of ongoing challenges. A conceptual formula is proposed to represent the anti-fragility built by Gaza's mothers. This formula captures the interconnected components of anti-fragility, emphasising how mothers' actions create systems that benefit from volatility and stress. The study concludes that the mothers of Gaza are not merely strive to survive with their children and family, but actively build a legacy that combines anti-fragility and hope, ensuring that their children are prepared to face the unpredictable challenges with dignity and confidence.

**Keywords** Anti-fragility, Gaza, Palestinian Mothers, Resilience, Resourcefulness, Community Strength, Hope

## 1. Introduction

This paper reviews the extraordinary resilience, creativity, and love of Gaza's mothers, who continue to rise above unimaginable challenges to protect, nurture, and inspire their children. Their stories are a testament to the indomitable spirit of Palestinian women. Buheji et al. (2024).

The authors review the Palestinian mother who has endured hardship, witnessed successive wars, and patiently faced various trials and is capable of raising a strong generation that enjoys balanced mental health and a resilient spirit that will not yield or surrender, remaining unbroken and dignified no matter the adversity. Therefore, this research explores what tools or values mothers instil in their children to enhance psychological resilience. Al-Muhannadi and Buheji (2024b).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Introduction to the Unique Palestinian Mothers in Gaza

The mothers of Gaza are unique in their resilience, strength, and ability to endure unimaginable hardships while continuing to develop, nurture and raise their children under the most challenging circumstances, despite the many challenges of the wars that are causing slow children development. Buheji and Buheji (2024).

Akesson (2014) mentioned that exploration of the experiences of Palestinian mothers is crucial to understanding how best to respond to their needs. Palestinian mothers, as per Akesson, are essentially making efforts to hold everything together, dealing with the everyday challenges of taking care of their children as well as the everyday tasks related to maintaining a home, even when living displaced in a tent or between the destroyed buildings, Buheji and Migdad (2025). In the case of mothers whose husbands are absent, Akesson (2014) found that many expressed ambiguity when describing their additional hardships. The only source of alleviation came from community support, the relatives, and the neighbours

\* Corresponding author:

buhejim@gmail.com (Mohamed Buheji)

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who helped them raise children and navigate through the challenges of life. Buheji (2024a), Migdad et al. (2024b).

## 2.2. Building an Anti-fragile Generation in Gaza

Building an anti-fragile generation in Gaza, inspired by Nassim Taleb's (2014) concepts presented in his book *Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder*. Taleb (2014) mentioned that even communities and individuals could withstand shocks and mitigate, besides learning from uncertainty. Actually, Taleb believes that they can thrive and grow stronger from them. Gaza, with its unique challenges—frequent conflicts and fierce bombing, political instability, besides its economic and socioeconomic hardship, provides a context where anti-fragility can be a transformative change as part of the resilience and resistance till freedom of Palestine is gained. Buheji (2025).

Anti-fragile systems benefit from volatility and stressors, as they adapt and improve under pressure, Taleb (2014). In Gaza, the mothers play a role in teaching resilience, problem-solving, and adaptability. They also engage their children to address real-world challenges in their communities, Al-Muhannadi and Buheji (2024a). These approaches help the mothers of Gaza build a culture that is less likely to collapse under stress because they distribute risk and responsibility.

Focusing on the anti-fragility built by the mothers of Gaza highlights the incredible agile resilience, adaptability, and strength of women who have been the backbone of their families and communities amidst decades of conflict, economic hardship, and social instability, Buheji et al. (2024). Therefore, the target of this study is to see how the mothers in Gaza have developed unique strategies to create anti-fragile systems within their households and communities, ensuring their families survive and thrive under pressure. Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2023).

### 2.2.1. Emotional Resilience and Psychological Strength

Mothers in Gaza have developed extraordinary emotional resilience, turning trauma into strength and teaching their children to do the same. These anti-fragile traits are built by using stories of survival and hope to instill resilience in their children, passing down lessons of perseverance. They lean on each other, creating networks of emotional support that help them cope with loss and hardship. Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2023).

### 2.2.2. Resourcefulness and Adaptability

Mothers in Gaza are masters of making the most out of limited resources, turning scarcity into opportunity. They create nutritious meals from limited ingredients, ensuring their families are fed even during shortages. They reuse and repurpose household items, teaching their children the value of sustainability and innovation, Al-Muhannadi and Buheji (2024b). They engage in bartering with neighbours, creating informal economies that thrive even when formal systems fail. Buheji (2024a).

### 2.2.3. Education as a Tool for Empowerment

To build anti-fragile traits, the mothers of Gaza prioritise education as a way to create a better future for their children, even in the face of constant disruptions. Since schools are closed due to the war or being in unsafe situations, mothers take on the role of teachers, ensuring their children continue to learn. They foster a love of learning by encouraging their children to ask questions and explore new ideas. Many mothers advocate for their children's education, even when faced with societal or economic barriers. Kankaanpää et al. (2020).

### 2.2.4. Building Strong Family and Community Ties

Mothers in Gaza create strong, interconnected family and community networks supporting them during crises. They maintain close ties with extended family, ensuring everyone looks out for one another. They organise community events, such as shared meals or storytelling sessions, to strengthen bonds. Older mothers mentor younger ones, passing down wisdom and survival strategies. Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2023).

### 2.2.5. Teaching Practical Life Skills

In Gaza, the mothers equip their children with practical skills that enable them to navigate uncertainty. They teach their children cooking, cleaning, and basic repairs, ensuring they can care for themselves. Many mothers train their children in first aid and safety measures, preparing them for emergencies. They teach their children how to manage limited resources, budget, and save. Mansarah (2009).

### 2.2.6. Fostering Creativity and Innovation

Mothers encourage their children to think creatively and find solutions to problems. Similar to all Gazan families, the role of the mother goes beyond feeding and extends to utilise opportunities for creative play, even with limited toys or resources. They involve their children in solving household challenges, fostering a mindset of innovation. It is, therefore, normal to see many Palestinian mothers encourage their children to express themselves through art, music, or writing, providing an outlet for emotions. Ashour et al. (2025).

### 2.2.7. Instilling a Sense of Purpose and Hope

Mothers in Gaza inspire their children to dream of a better future and work toward it. They serve as role models of strength and determination, showing their children what is possible. They help their children set realistic goals and celebrate small achievements along the way. They provide constant encouragement, reminding their children of their potential.

### 2.2.8. Creating Safe Spaces

Palestinian mothers create emotional and physical safe spaces for their children, even in unstable environments. They establish daily routines that provide a sense of stability

and normalcy, Mansarah (2009). They encourage open dialogue, allowing their children to express fears and concerns. They take measures to ensure their homes, or mostly tents after October 2023, are as safe as possible, even during conflict. Buheji and Migdad (2025), Migdad et al. (2024a).

### 2.3. How the Palestinian Mothers of Gaza are Shaping an Anti-Fragile Generation?

The mothers of Gaza are not only surviving under extreme adversity but also actively shaping and inspiring an anti-fragile generation that grows stronger, more resilient, and more adaptable in the face of challenges, Taleb (2014). Their unique approaches to parenting, education, and community building create a foundation for their children to thrive despite—and even because of—the hardships they endure. Buheji (2024d).

By fostering emotional intelligence and empathy, mothers in Gaza openly discuss emotions with their children, helping them process trauma and grief to maintain the family's minimum well-being (Buheji and Khunji (2023). They also teach them to care for others in the community, sharing whatever little they have with those in need. Children develop emotional intelligence, empathy, and a strong sense of community. These qualities help them build meaningful relationships and support networks, which are crucial for agile resilience. Buheji and Mushimiyimana (2023).

Many mothers in Gaza extend their inspiration by promoting faith and spiritual strength as a source of strength. They teach their children to rely on prayer and trust in God during difficult times. They use religious stories and teachings to inspire hope and perseverance. Faith provides children with a sense of inner peace and stability, even amid chaos. This spiritual grounding helps them remain unshaken by external turmoil. Migdad and Buheji (2024).

Despite the destruction of schools, mothers in Gaza prioritise education, teaching their children at home or finding alternative ways to ensure they continue learning. They encourage curiosity and critical thinking. This creates Gazan children who grow up valuing knowledge and learning, which empowers them to think independently and solve problems. Education becomes a tool for empowerment and a pathway to a better future. Buheji (2024b).

## 3. Methodology

Based on the literature review, the authors conducted field observations and interviews with selected mothers from Gaza during December 2024 and January 2025. These observations focused on how Palestinian mothers prepare to face challenges and difficulties in life. Then, an analysis of the characteristics of Gaza mothers was carried out to understand how they managed to build an anti-fragile generation.

Based on both the research and the case studies, the paper proposes a type of formula that represents the anti-fragility built by Palestinian mothers in Gaza. This formula represents

all the collective efforts carried out by these unique women towards Palestine's liberation journey.

## 4. Analysis of Live Cases from Gaza

The mothers of Gaza are not just surviving; they are actively shaping an anti-fragile generation that thrives under pressure, adapts to change, and turns adversity into strength. Through their resilience, creativity, and unwavering love, they are raising children who are emotionally strong, spiritually grounded, and equipped to face the challenges of an unpredictable world. These mothers are living examples of how hardship can be transformed into a source of empowerment, and their legacy will be a generation that is unbreakable, resourceful, and deeply connected to their identity and purpose.

### 4.1. Observing How the Palestinian Mother Prepare to Face Challenges and Difficulties in Life?

The Palestinian mother raises her children with a positive upbringing, enabling them to endure hardships, face life's battles, and overcome obstacles. Despite her love for her children, her fear for them, and her hope in God to protect them, she sends them to advanced training courses that prepare men and build heroes who stand against the enemy without fear, striving to liberate their homeland and expel the invaders from our sacred places and homes.

#### Case 1- Living the Full Experience of the Mother - Umm Muhammad Al-Aff

Umm Muhammad is a mother of five children, thirty years old, living in Al-Maghraqa in the family home. Her family lives in the Tuffah area of Gaza. They were forced to flee with the displaced family due to intensified bombing and numerous shells falling on the house until the kitchen burned.

Umm Muhammad says: "We fled to Rafah, where my husband's family lives, and stayed there until we had to flee again after the aggression on Rafah. From there, we fled to Al-Zawayda and then to Muwasi in Khan Yunis, in tents. During these times, my family remained in Gaza. My brother was martyred in a bombing there, and I couldn't bid him farewell or greet my family, his wife, and his children. My father was injured, and my sister suffered a nervous shock from the bombing that temporarily blinded her. As for me, it was imperative in these difficult psychological conditions to take care of my family, my husband, and our five children in the tent. We constantly need water, firewood to light a fire for cooking and baking, internet to follow up on the children's education, and energy for lighting and charging phones.

All these are essential primary needs, but they are only available with great effort, exhaustion, and cost. Despite the pain, we managed to continue living. We endured the loss, as he was my dear older brother. We survived the physical and psychological injuries in the family and plunged into life, which must go on. Continuing to raise and follow up on the children to be of the best character, God helped us to follow up on our children and assist them in overcoming the ordeal,

shock, and loss of their dear uncle.

Yesterday, I went to the house with my children, their grandfather, and my husband. The bombing and destruction were comprehensive, and nothing remained of the house, its furniture, bedding, or structure. Before that, we went to the family apartment in Gaza, and we found only destruction. The children ask why, and they ask about their toys, their beds, and their bedding. They ask about their house, when it will return, and how it will return. Of course, we couldn't stay around the house; it's destroyed, and there's no life around it, no water. We had to return to the displacement tent. There is no power nor strength except with God. Here comes my role in providing a dose of patience, resilience, and understanding of reality. We also have a role in teaching them some of the school curriculum so they can keep up with their studies despite the loss and destruction we are in.'

Umm Muhammad has endured many shocks: the shock of losing a brother, the shock of the father's injury and the sister's injury, the shock of the house's destruction, the shock of losing everything we owned, and then the shock of the difficulty of life in the tent, as we are not used to tent life. But with faith and cooperation, we barely managed to overcome the shocks of living a life mixed with difficulties and pain, combined with pride and dignity. This is our situation, and this is our patience, and we only say what pleases our Lord. God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

#### **Case 2- Living the Full Experience of the Mother - Huda Ibrahim**

Huda Ibrahim is sixty years old and has seven children, all married with children except for one daughter, who is still unmarried. Huda lives near the Egyptian border in the Philadelphia axis with her children. When the Jews entered the area, they destroyed all eight houses, leaving the family without a home or workplace. The family lives on the shore and works in fishing, but with the entry of the Jews, all their boats, hooks, and nets were destroyed, leaving them with nothing to live on. The family was stunned by the significant loss of everything they owned. Here came the role of the sixty-year-old mother in bringing her children back to their senses, comforting and supporting them. What did she do? She occupied herself and those who could help her in teaching and memorising the Quran to children and girls. Huda contributed significantly to the memorisation centre, which included hundreds of children and girls, and employed dozens of memorisers, including her daughters and grandchildren. The Quran was a solace and distraction from the grief and psychological shock she faced due to losing everything they owned.

#### **4.2. Analysing Characteristics of Mothers of Gaza that Help Them to Build an Anti-Fragile Generation**

##### **4.2.1. Mothers that Un-waiver Resilience in the Face of Adversity**

During the 2014 Gaza War, Umm Mohammed, a mother of six, lost her home to an airstrike. Despite the devastation,

she immediately focused on ensuring her children had food, shelter, and emotional support. She set up a makeshift tent using blankets and salvaged materials, creating a sense of safety and stability for her family. Her ability to remain composed and resourceful in the face of loss exemplifies the resilience of Gaza's mothers.

In Gaza, the mothers demonstrate resilience daily by facing the bombings, the displacement, and the family or wealth loss with unwavering strength. Their children witness this and learn that adversity can be met with courage and determination. By living with such role models, the children internalise the idea that challenges are not insurmountable and that they can endure and overcome difficulties. This builds emotional and psychological resilience, a key trait of anti-fragility.

##### **4.2.2. Mothers that Sacrifice Their Personal Needs for the Sake of Their Children**

Heavy days passed under the siege on our people, and basic supplies were cut off from the markets. We heard the cries of children asking for a piece of bread. The Palestinian mother managed her affairs, dividing the loaf among her family members, prioritising the young over herself, claiming she was on a diet to maintain her slimness, and giving her share to the young and diabetic patients who could not bear hunger. She teaches her children that patience in hunger carries great reward and physical health, reminding us of fasting and its great benefits, as our Prophet said, "Fast, and you will be healthy."

In times of severe food shortages, many mothers in Gaza prioritise feeding their children over themselves. Umm Ahmed, a widow with five children, often skips meals to ensure her children have enough to eat. She uses her limited resources to prepare simple meals, such as bread and zaatar (thyme) and tells her children stories to distract them from their hunger. Her selflessness and creativity in providing for her family highlight the depth of a mother's love in Gaza.

##### **4.2.3. Mothers that Teach Strength and Hope Amidst Chaos**

Instilling a sense of purpose and identity is one of the significant roles of mothers of Gaza. Despite the destruction of schools and cultural institutions, mothers in Gaza teach their children about their heritage, history, and faith. They emphasise the importance of their Palestinian identity and the value of fighting for justice and freedom. In such a home environment, the children grow up with a strong sense of purpose and belonging, which helps them remain steadfast in the face of oppression. This sense of identity is an anchor, making them less likely to be broken by external pressures.

Many mothers in Gaza encourage their children to take an active role in their community, whether through volunteering, advocacy, or creative expression. They teach them that they have the power to make a difference. Thus, children grow up with a sense of agency and responsibility, believing they can contribute to positive change. This empowerment makes them proactive and resilient in the face of challenges.

This empowers Gaza's children to be agents of change in whatever role in life they would work on later.

Take the case of Umm Mahmoud, a mother of four, who uses storytelling to instil hope and courage in her children. During bombings, she gathers her children in the safest corner of their home and tells them tales of Palestinian heroes who overcame significant challenges. She reminds them that their struggles are temporary and that justice and freedom will prevail. Her ability to transform fear into hope is a testament to the emotional strength of Gaza's mothers.

#### 4.2.4. Preserving Cultural and Religious Identity

Despite destroying schools and mosques, Umm Hani, a mother of three, ensures her children continue their education and religious studies. She teaches them the Quran in the small tent she kept near her destroyed home and uses whatever materials she can find to create a makeshift classroom. Her dedication to preserving her children's cultural and religious identity, even in the absence of formal institutions, reflects the determination of Gaza's mothers to pass on their heritage.

The identity designed by the mothers in Gaza seems to blend traditional values with modern approaches to parenting, ensuring their children remain rooted in their culture while also embracing new ideas and technologies, Al-Muhannadi and Buheji (2024b). Thus, children develop a balanced worldview, allowing them to navigate both traditional and modern contexts with ease. This adaptability is a key component of anti-fragility.

Take the case of Umm Hani, who is like any Gazan mother who focuses on choosing good companions for her children, as friends can be enemies except for the righteous. She monitors, watches, and shelters her children, for they are a trust she is responsible for on the Day of Judgment. She raises her children on morals in times of peace and war, making the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) their role model.

#### 4.2.5. Mothers who are Role Models in Community Leadership and Solidarity

The Palestinian mother has always called her children "heroes" from a young age, repeating words of heroism, manhood, and strength in their ears and always telling them stories of heroes like Muhammad al-Fatih, Umar ibn al-Khattab, Salahuddin, and others, hoping her children would be like them. These words echoed in their ears, etched in their minds, and grew with them until they became a part of them.

Mothers in Gaza often come together to support one another, whether by sharing food, organising communal kitchens, or providing emotional support. They teach their children the importance of unity and collective strength. The children learn the value of cooperation and community, which helps them build strong social bonds and a sense of shared responsibility. This collective resilience makes the entire generation stronger. This fosters a culture of solidarity and mutual support.

Umm Sami, a mother of seven, organises communal

kitchens during times of crisis, where women come together to cook and share meals with families in need. She also coordinates efforts to distribute clothing and blankets to displaced families. Her leadership and ability to foster a sense of community amidst chaos demonstrate the collective strength of Gaza's mothers.

#### 4.2.6. Mothers that Turn Trauma into Strength

Instead of allowing trauma to define them, mothers in Gaza use their experiences to teach their children about perseverance and the importance of standing up for justice. They share stories of survival and resistance. Here, children learn to view challenges as opportunities for growth and transformation. They develop a mindset that embraces adversity as a catalyst for strength rather than a source of defeat. Kankaanpää et al. (2020).

Despite the dire circumstances, mothers in Gaza consistently remind their children that better days are ahead. They celebrate small victories and maintain a positive outlook on life. Thus, children in Gaza grow up with a sense of hope and optimism, which fuels their motivation to strive for a better future. This hopeful mindset is essential for anti-fragility, enabling them to see beyond immediate hardships.

Take the case of Umm Youssef, a mother of four, after losing her husband in an airstrike, channelled her grief into activism. She created local women's groups advocating for managing the impact of war on families. Her transformation from a grieving widow to an influential advocate showcases the resilience and determination of Gaza's mothers to create a better future for their children.

#### 4.2.7. Mothers that Bring Innovative Problem-Solving in Crisis

During prolonged power outages, Umm Rami, a mother of five, created a solar-powered charger using salvaged materials to charge her children's phones and tablets for online learning. She also taught her neighbours how to build similar devices, ensuring that children in her community could continue their education. Her ingenuity and resourcefulness highlight the adaptability of Gaza's mothers.

Gazan mothers are well-known for encouraging adaptability and creativity. In the absence of basic resources, mothers in Gaza find innovative ways to provide for their families. For example, they create makeshift classrooms, use solar power for electricity, and repurpose materials for daily needs. Children learn to think creatively and adapt to changing circumstances. This adaptability is a hallmark of anti-fragility, enabling them to thrive in unpredictable environments.

#### 4.2.8. Mothers that Protect Their Children's Mental Health

The Palestinian mother tells her children bedtime stories about the early heroes who stood against tyrants to achieve their noble goals and confront injustice and aggression, such as the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). She raises her children to love the Quran, strengthening their resolve, patience, faith, and steadfastness. It is the healing balm and complete solution for all that

humanity suffers from today. She does not forget to teach her children the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) so that they visualise how to live a life for the sake of religion, advocacy, and defending their noble rights. The mothers would usually emphasise that the Prophet of Islam was an orphan who lost his parents, and many orphans can be leaders following his pathways as good role models.

During all the last four wars in Gaza, the mothers of Gaza taught their children to endure physical hardships, such as hunger and lack of shelter, with patience and fortitude. They also emphasise the importance of mental toughness and self-discipline. Through this endurance, the children develop a strong work ethic and the ability to persevere through physical and mental challenges. This toughness prepares them to face life's difficulties head-on.

Take the story of Umm Khaled, a mother of three who uses art and play therapy to help her children cope with the trauma of war. She encourages them to draw their feelings and organises games to distract them from the sounds of explosions outside. Her commitment to protecting her children's mental health, even in the most dire circumstances, underscores the nurturing spirit of Gaza's mothers. Buheji (2024c).

#### 4.2.9. Mothers that Raise Children with Unshakable Faith

The Palestinian mother raises her children on courage and believing that lifespans are in God's hands, and no one but the Almighty can take them away. "When their time comes, they cannot delay it for an hour nor can they advance it" (Quran 7:34). Lifespans are written, as is sustenance, and every term has a book. A person must strive to achieve their goal no matter the circumstances, for life is not always easy or accommodating; it requires men who walk the path no matter the effort and time required. "We have certainly created man into hardship" (Quran 90:4). Life is entire of toil, hardship, and trials, and this is its nature that children must understand from a young age so they remain steadfast and face its difficulties and challenges with strong faith and resilience, despite the pain, but hope remains etched in their hearts that relief will inevitably come.

Take the story of Umm Ali, a mother of six who teaches her children to find solace in prayer and faith. During bombings, she leads her family in reciting Quranic verses and supplications, reminding them that God is with them. Her ability to instil unwavering belief in her children, even in the face of danger, reflects the spiritual strength of Gaza's mothers.

The Palestinian mother and her children lived terrifying days, with the smell of death emanating from everywhere. With the sunset of the terrible day, fires burned in many buildings and mosques, continuous heavy gunfire around the clock, and tanks spreading destruction. F-16 and F-35 planes, with their destructive missiles, shook buildings and hearts. Then came the role of the patient, steadfast mother, comforting her children, embracing them to make them feel some safety, indeed all safety, in her warm embrace. She reminds them of God's words.

#### 4.2.10. Mothers that Defy the Stereotypes and Breaking Barriers

The Palestinian mother is a good role model for her children through her resilience, steadfastness, and patience. Role model upbringing is the strongest and most successful method of indirect upbringing. She lives strongly, facing life's difficulties without yielding or surrendering, finding solutions to every problem, not knowing the impossible, and not allowing despair to find a way. She raises her children on this, as the saying goes, "The duckling swims like its mother," and "Pull the girl by her sleeve, and she will turn out like her mother."

This can be illustrated by the example of Umm Omar, a single mother who runs a small business selling handmade crafts to support her family. Despite societal expectations, she has become a role model for other women in her community, proving that mothers in Gaza can be caregivers and breadwinners. Her determination to defy stereotypes and provide for her family showcases the multifaceted strength of Gaza's mothers.

### 5. Formula of Anti-Fragility built by Mothers of Gaza

Based on the literature reviewed and the case studies collected by the second author, the authors setup a representation of the anti-fragility built by the mothers of Gaza in a formula, drawing on Nassim Taleb's (2014) concept of anti-fragility which adapted to the specific context of maternal resilience, resourcefulness, and community-building. The formula is represented by each of the components (R, A, Rs, C, H) which are functions of the mother's actions, environment, and the specific challenges faced. The sum of these components represents the overall anti-fragility of the system.

$$\text{Anti-Fragility (AF)} = \text{Resilience (R)} + \text{Adaptability (A)} + \text{Resourcefulness (Rs)} + \text{Community Strength (C)} + \text{Hope (H)}$$

Where, *Resilience (R)* reflects the ability to recover from adversity and maintain emotional and psychological strength. This is when mothers in Gaza use storytelling, faith, and emotional support networks to cope with trauma and teach their children to do the same.

*Adaptability (A)* is the capacity to adjust to changing circumstances and find new ways to thrive.

This can be seen when the mothers repurpose household items, create alternative learning environments, and pivot to new income sources during crises.

*Resourcefulness (Rs)* is the skill of making the most of limited resources and finding creative solutions. Mothers who are resourceful cook nutritious meals from scarce ingredients, barter with neighbours, and teach their children practical life skills.

*Community Strength (C)* is the power of interconnected networks that provide mutual support and collective resilience. Gazan mothers strive to build strong family and community

ties, organize gatherings, and mentor younger women, creating a web of support.

*Hope (H)* is represented in the belief in a better future and the motivation to work toward it. This can be seen when the mothers instill a sense of purpose in their children, celebrate small victories, and advocate for education and opportunities.

The key insight from such a formula is that the components of anti-fragility are interconnected. For example, resourcefulness (Rs) often enhances adaptability (A), and community strength (C) amplifies hope (H). The presence of the mothers of Gaza creates an environment for nonlinear growth for anti-fragility. The anti-fragility grows exponentially with each challenge overcome as mothers and their communities learn, adapt, and innovate. The formula emphasises that anti-fragility is not just about survival but about thriving through a combination of emotional, practical, and social strategies.

Let's take a scenario example in analogy with reality. The mother in Gaza, when they are facing a sudden shortage of food, such as the long-repeated cases during the War on Gaza since October 2023, the mother needs to be resilient (R), i.e., she remains calm and focused, drawing on her inner strength. She must also remain adaptive (A), switching to alternative recipes using available ingredients. Then, these type of mothers needs to be resourceful (Rs), and they barter with neighbours to exchange goods. They also need to build community strength (C), where they rely on their extended family and friends for support. Besides, finally, such a mother would work on hope (H), reminding her children that this is temporary and encouraging them to stay positive. The combination of these actions helps the mother's family survive the crisis and strengthens their ability to handle future challenges.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusions

The mothers of Gaza stand as living testaments to the power of resilience, adaptability, and hope in the face of unimaginable adversity. Through their unwavering strength and resourcefulness, they have ensured their families' survival and laid the foundation for an anti-fragile generation—one that thrives under pressure and transforms challenges into opportunities for growth. Drawing on Nassim Taleb's concept of anti-fragility, this paper has demonstrated how these mothers create systems that benefit from volatility, turning scarcity into innovation, trauma into strength, and despair into hope.

The stories of mothers like Umm Muhammad Al-Aff and Huda Ibrahim illustrate the profound impact of maternal resilience on their children and communities. By fostering emotional resilience, prioritising education, building strong community networks, and instilling a sense of purpose, these women are shaping a generation that is emotionally strong, spiritually grounded, and equipped to navigate an unpredictable world. Their ability to adapt, innovate, and lead in the face of constant disruption highlights the transformative power of anti-fragility in action.

The formula presented in this paper captures the essence of how mothers in Gaza build anti-fragility through resilience, adaptability, resourcefulness, community strength, and hope. It highlights the dynamic and interconnected nature of their efforts, showing how they transform adversity into opportunities for growth and empowerment. By understanding and supporting these components, we can help amplify their impact and create a more anti-fragile future for Gaza.

The formula captures the interconnected components of their efforts, emphasising that anti-fragility is not merely about survival but about thriving through a combination of emotional, practical, and social strategies.

As Gaza continues to face ongoing challenges, the role of its mothers remains pivotal. Their legacy is one of unbreakable spirit, innovation, and hope, proving that even in the most dire circumstances, humanity can rise above adversity. By supporting and amplifying their efforts, the global community can help ensure that the anti-fragile foundations they are building continue to strengthen and endure. The mothers of Gaza are not just raising children; they are nurturing a generation that will carry forward their resilience, creativity, and unwavering hope for a better future.

In the words of Nassim Taleb, "Wind extinguishes a candle but energises a fire." The mothers of Gaza are the fire—unyielding, transformative, and eternally burning with the promise of a brighter tomorrow. Their story is a call to recognise and celebrate the power of anti-fragility, not just in Gaza but in every corner of the world, where resilience and hope prevail against all odds.

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