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**RESEARCH PAPER****Trauma and Alienation in Post-Colonial Contexts: Analyzing Saadat Hasan Manto's Depiction of Psychological Deterioration**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to explore the manifestation of traumatic psychology in Saadat Hassan Manto's stories "Toba Tek Singh" and "Naya Qanoon," analyzing how societal structures contribute to emotional turmoil in characters. The acceptability of trauma in postcolonial literature is a complex issue. Manto's works, known for their realistic portrayal and societal critiques, are often examined through a postcolonial lens, reflecting the harsh realities of colonial subjugation. Manto's personal experiences and blunt style make his narratives a fertile ground for studying trauma and alienation. The study applies Frantz Fanon's framework of psychological trauma within the postcolonial context to Manto's stories. By examining the characters' struggles for emotional harmony amidst a disintegrated world, the researcher identifies how societal pressures contribute to their traumatic experiences. The analysis reveals that trauma and alienation in Manto's characters are deeply rooted in societal structures, aligning with Fanon's theories on psychological trauma. Further research could explore additional works by Manto or other postcolonial authors to deepen the understanding of trauma's role in literature and its reflection of societal pressures.

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**KEYWORDS** Alienation, Manto, Post-colonialism, Psychological Deterioration, Trauma

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**Introduction**

Saadat Hasan Manto is widely recognized as one of the greatest short story writers in the world. Throughout his life, he experienced symptoms of anxiety and pessimism, and his alcohol abuse was closely linked to both his psychological distress and his creative genius. Manto was a source of bitterness and anger, especially in his youth. Disillusioned with education and formal learning, he directed his focus toward imaginative reality. His constant restlessness and boundless imagination continued to grow, gripping his heart and mind with an unusual anxiety. Manto frequently portrayed similar sentiments throughout his life, reflecting the existential angst of a troubled youth. Although his works do not overtly display his psychological and emotional turmoil, the structures in his stories symbolically represent psychological trauma. Manto's keen observations were like a camera, capturing events as they occurred without bias, and documenting them with a realist's perspective, revealing psychological truths (M Hashmi, 2013)

Imperialism in India involved the conquest and control of territories and resources. The aggressive seizure of land and economic restructuring to facilitate European capitalism devastated Indian society, both socially and mentally. Violence was a constant presence in these acts of subjugation, impacting individuals to the extent that their physical and mental recognition of reality was diminished, a fundamental aspect of colonialism. Imperialism entails the dominance of one group of people over another. The British

colonization of India left profound effects on various aspects of Indian life and culture, creating significant psychological and moral challenges. A lack of communication and mutual respect characterized the relationship between the English and the Indians, resulting in mistrust and racial hatred. Such treatment can lead to psychological disorder.

The depiction of any individual's life often involves creative imagination. Postcolonial studies suggest that beyond physical subjugation, war, and turmoil, there is always an emotional deterioration.

Physical experiences can deeply impact the mind, often causing a profound inner turmoil. Psychology plays a significant role in understanding life, as a person's mental state is closely tied to their experiences. Trauma, often caused by societal factors, can connect individuals across societies. The notion that suffering adheres to a conservative ideal of harm, where trauma results from self-contained, catastrophic events, emphasizes this connection. Prejudice, too, can manifest as demonstrable trauma, perpetuating harm over time. The effects of colonialism become particularly evident when viewed through the lens of psychological trauma studies. Postcolonialism addresses the harsh realities of societal events, exploring the mental and social dimensions through an interdisciplinary approach involving psychology, sociology, philosophy, and history. Trauma theory examines not only obvious traumas but also the subtler issues that arise from them, potentially offering solutions (Andermahr, 2016).

Therefore, there is a need to reconceptualize trauma studies and theory. Furthermore, trauma does not always recognize the limits of its relevance, often leading to a persistent sense of internal subjugation and alienation among people in colonized nations. Trauma studies can thus be seen as a reevaluation of marginalized literature, offering insights into extraordinary events and experiences that resist understanding and representation (STEF CRAPS, 2008). Fanon's theories on postcolonialism have been extensively recognized and explored in various research contexts.

### **Literature Review**

Fanon developed as an authoritative figure in this field, generating a scholarly industry named critical Fanon-ism. The analysis of his work supervises the substance of Fanon's requirement as a psychoanalytic interpretive man (Ifowodo, 2010). Many researchers have worked on post colonialism through a utilization of trauma and considered that investigations and its portrayal of the inward postcolonial struggle with respect to Western and non-Western levels. The postcolonial subject's characters are demonstrative of authentic aporia. (Olive, 2014).

Under the effects of post colonialism, the indications of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the protagonists are also analysed by a researcher. To understand the reasons of the main character to overcome this trauma disorder, the author used collection technique and psychological method. The concepts that are utilized in this investigation are post colonialism and post-colonial trauma. The outcome of this proposition showed aspects of post colonisation, cultural mixture, imitation, and stereotype. (HARSONO, 2015)

Moreover, social trauma hypothesis in postcolonial analysis showed the progressing intrigue of progressively scrutinized as insufficient to the exploration plan of postcolonial surveys. In the exchange between trauma hypothesis and postcolonial scholarly examinations the focal inquiry remains whether subjugation and trauma hypothesis can be viably post colonialized in the feeling of being conveniently conjoined with postcolonial hypothesis (Visser, 2011).

Many researchers have built up a conversation of this subject, worried in the principle epistemological and moral contemplations; more explicitly and analysed that how these contemplations incorporate qualifications between functions of writing, hypothesis, and social contextualisation. The boundaries by which researchers have addressed this developing, fluctuated, and separated field of examination, concerning the investigation of trauma inside the compass of postcolonial investigation have been done. (Nikro, 2014)

The work on Manto's post colonialism is not limited. Some researchers have pointed out all those post-colonial impacts is that hybridity, ambivalence, double colonization, mimicry etc. have been overall and generally dealt in the analysis of Manto's works. Saadat Hasan Manto wrote in Urdu language yet the subject and aims were same as any realistic post-colonial writer. He additionally investigated in his works the subjects like persecution, embarrassment, misuse, infringement, and underestimation with all his vitality and energy if investigated under the light of post colonialism. Topics like diaspora, minimization, uprooting, personality emergency, social personality, movement, east-west combination and so on are normal topics of his accounts.

Manto's story "*Naya Qanoon*" have also been seen in the light of relationship between colonizers and colonized. The investigations have been made on the instances of post-colonial society and binary oppositions and otherness under this context have been analysed in comparative research. The language of two cultures i.e., of colonizer and the colonized have also been analysed. The use of practical joke of 1<sup>st</sup> of April have been analysed by the researcher (Francuski, Other-languagedness in Stories by R.K. Narayan, Saadat Hassan Manto, and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, 2018)

Many researchers have extended their comprehension of the effect of the partition by going to writing and trauma concentrates to discuss the manners by which that history resounds past its specific sequence as a system awful experience. A nationalist dialogue despite everything appears to win as researchers have investigated the accounts of individual traumas. More explicitly, the horrendous accident that happened as well out of nowhere for awareness to intervene the experience. Accordingly, awareness neglects to find the occasion inside a past that has passed, in this way consigning the experience to an inevitable present that frustrates character and can't be completely grasped (Yusin, 2011).

The researches on Manto's composing showed up at a basic point in the historical backdrop of the subcontinent previously and after the violent time of the introduction of the two countries, it undeniably addresses the traumas that are presently the staple of postcolonial analysis. The subject of patriotism, perspectives to imperialism, and thoughts of character and resistance to predominant has been much talked in Manto (Siddiqui, 2012).

Despite extensive research on Saadat Hasan Manto's works and their post-colonial implications, there is a noticeable gap in the comprehensive application of Frantz Fanon's psychological theories to Manto's narratives. Previous studies have addressed elements of post-colonial trauma in Manto's works but often lack a detailed exploration of how these elements align with Fanon's concepts of mental captivity and cultural alienation. Additionally, while Manto's literature is frequently analyzed for its socio-political critique, there is limited scholarly attention to how his stories explicitly reflect the psychological consequences of colonialism on individuals. This research aims to fill these gaps by providing a thorough analysis of the intersection between Manto's depiction of trauma and Fanon's theoretical framework, offering new insights into the psychological impacts of colonial rule and its aftermath.

## Material and Methods

The researcher examined the impact of culture and societal events on trauma through Frantz Fanon's 'psychological lens.' Fanon's theories, shaped by his work as a psychologist in post-colonial regions like North Africa, were applied to the Indian post-colonial context. His foundational ideas highlight how psychological instability is influenced by societal and cultural factors, providing a theoretical basis for understanding trauma in literature.

In this study, two of Manto's significant works, "*Toba Tek Singh*" and "*Naya Qanoon*," were analyzed to explore the effects of colonialism on individual behavior and mental health. Fanon's theory of psychoanalysis, particularly his insights into the relationship between madness and the contradictions inherent in the post-colonial world, guided the interpretation of these texts. This approach aimed to reveal how colonial experiences manifested in the psychological struggles and dysfunctional behaviors of Manto's characters.

By applying Fanon's framework, the researcher sought to uncover how the legacy of colonialism contributed to mental instability and identity crises depicted in Manto's stories. The methodology involved a close reading of the texts to trace these themes, offering a deeper understanding of the broader psychological and cultural impacts of colonial rule on post-colonial societies.

## Results and Discussion

To start with the analysis of *Naya Qanoon*, which was written in 1938, a pre-partition era and Manto's this story was mocking 1935's constitution of India. This constitution did not bring any change in the country but played with the minds of many. This story, "The New Constitution," incorporates a superb depiction of the collaboration between the colonizer and the colonized, as the two heroes of the traumatic dramatization. The story was composed by Manto, another productive essayist of the subcontinent (Francuski, *Other-languagedness in Stories* by R.K. Narayan, Saadat Hassan Manto, and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, 2018).

As depicted in the story, Mangu was not as much patriotic but he always liked to discuss the political issues and always considered himself greater because he thought he understands and knows everything to the fullest. This is very sense what Fanon talks about that the social happenings in a person's life can bring change to his psychology. Mangu had developed this consciousness on the ongoing situations of the British rule in India. From the start of the story till end Mangu can be seen having very disgusting attitude towards the White colour of Brithers and he referred to the Britain people as 'loathsome'. He mentioned that the colour of their skin made him cringe whenever he sees them because it's like 'the blood coming out from their flesh'. This kind of attitude is a birth of colonialism and not only the territory of India but Mangu's mind was also captivated in the thoughts of this kind of political enslavement.

Although, Mangu was naïve and uneducated being a Tonga driver, but he was psychologically so disturbed that something wrong and bad coming sooner so he kept on telling people of his circle about politics and White's monopoly, although they were also uneducated and naïve in this field. Although, he was against Britishers that they are brutal and ruling us unjustly but on the other hand he was himself ruling others. Mental captivation was so dominant in his personality as he became anxious whenever he could not find anyone from his community to describe what new is going to take place in India.

This kind of psychological deterioration is what Fanon talks about that whenever a person is mentally subjugated, he tries to take it out in the similar way or the other. Furthermore, mental traumatization leads to rebelliousness, anxiety, excitement, fear and scarcity as seen in the post-colonial analysis of traumatization by Fanon.

In the story Mangu felt burdened and was looking forward to having a breath of relief as he said "*Qasam hai bhagwan ki, in laaht sahibon kay naaz utha'ty utha'ty tang aa gya hun. Jab kabhi inka manhoos chehra daikhta hun tou ragon mein khoon kholny lagjata hai. Koi naya qanoon wanoon bany tou in logon sy nijaat mily. Teri qasam jaan mein jaan aa jay.*" It states that how much he hated looking at the white people and wanted to get rid of off them.

He was tired of following their rules and regulations, but he was mere a Tonga was he could not stand up in front of them. His psychology was invoking him to fuel and educate others that this brutalization can only stop by 'Naya Qanoon' or new constitution. Because whenever one is in wretched state of mental trauma, he always attaches all the leftover hopes to a little ray of sunlight, he seems to find, and this was what Mangu trying to do in order to revitalize the mental trauma he was facing. His happiness had no limits when he heard conversation of two 'Marwaris' about new constitution of India. He was occupied in the anxiety and happiness together.

Mangu heard students riding in his tonga expressing hope for the new constitution, set to be implemented on the first of April. According to Fanon, trauma often leads to a state of hollowness where consciousness and logic are absent. Mangu experienced this state when he spent money on ornaments for his horse, intended to be worn on the day of the new constitution, despite his limited financial means. His hope persisted even when he realized that nothing had changed on the first of April. He wished for everything and everyone to be new, like the college boys' clothes, but he overlooked the fact that the "new constitution" existed only on paper and not in society, as it was still under colonial rule. In his mental turmoil, he assaulted a White officer, believing that the new constitution would elevate his status and make him superior, as he had always desired. However, this trauma led to his mental subjugation and disgrace, a condition that remained incurable even after the end of colonialism.

Moving on to Manto's second story, "Toba Tek Singh," written after the partition and the end of British colonial rule, we see a poignant depiction of the mental state of those exhausted by prolonged mental captivity. The story illustrates how individuals can end up in an asylum, overwhelmed by the trauma of both colonial oppression and the subsequent trauma of societal upheaval, such as the partition. Fanon suggests that society itself instills trauma in individuals' minds, and the culture of rejection in one's own land can act as a catalyst for psychological distress. Society acts as a repository, creating conditions that lead to mental and physical captivity.

In this context, Bishan Singh's descent into madness can be understood as a result of his mental faculties being overwhelmed. The power structures, imposed by the British, left him so disoriented that losing his mental consciousness became the only way to cope. He became mentally unstable because his mind was crushed under the weight of these power dynamics.

Saadat Hasan Manto's *Toba Tek Singh* uncovered not just the possibility of trauma in the Indian and colonial brutality as well as it features the significance of general vices and inhumane qualities of societal structure. Because of his mental deterioration Bishan Singh spoke to Toba Tek Singh as his own entity and Toba Tek Singh spoke to Bishan Singh and eventually Toba Tek Singh became a dead zone from where he is communicating his

thoughts. According to this, his thoughts were also dead in his mental capability as he was not able to locate *Toba Tek Singh*.

Despite being impartial, Bishan Singh became an unfortunate victim of colonial brutality. He was forcibly taken from Pakistan and brought to the border under police custody along with other Hindus and Sikhs from the Lahore asylum. A couple of years after the partition, the governments of India and Pakistan agreed that Muslim inmates from Indian institutions would be sent to Pakistan, while Hindu and Sikh inmates from Pakistani institutions would be allowed to go to India. Bishan Singh seemed quite radical and resisted this decision by both governments, as he was largely detached from the politics and power struggles being conducted in the name of religion.

Bishan Singh was unable to fight because his mental traumatised condition and he could not do anything but to blame the Indian and Pakistani constitution. As he says "*Oppar the gurgur de annex the bedhiana de mung de daal of the Pakistan government*". He was mentally unable to cope up with the trauma and above-mentioned term is funny but essentially the word 'annex' has profound political undertones. Homeland of Bishan Singh was snatched from him and he was not able to conceive it. His nation was turning in unfamiliar to him and he endured the colonial atrocities before he became mentally helpless.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the themes of trauma and subjugation are vividly depicted in the context of colonial rule's impact. Manto's works powerfully illustrate the psychological subjugation and mental trauma faced by individuals in the post-colonial world. His stories reveal the deep scars left by colonialism, showing how these experiences disrupt mental stability and perpetuate suffering even after the colonial era ends.

Characters like Mangu and Bishan Singh exemplify the profound psychological distress caused by the intersection of colonial power dynamics and societal upheavals such as partition. These narratives highlight the complex nature of trauma, extending beyond physical oppression to emotional and psychological dimensions. The internal conflicts and disillusionment these characters experience reflect broader societal struggles with the legacy of colonialism, identity, and autonomy.

Fanon's theoretical framework on psychological trauma and the impact of colonialism provides a valuable lens for interpreting these narratives. The concepts of "mental captivity" and cultural alienation explored in Manto's stories align with Fanon's ideas about how colonial power structures can lead to profound alienation and existential despair.

Manto's unflinching portrayal of these realities sheds light on the lasting effects of colonialism on individuals and societies. His works serve as a powerful critique of the socio-political conditions that perpetuate inequality and injustice, urging readers to acknowledge and address the underlying psychological traumas that persist in post-colonial societies. By bringing these issues to the forefront, Manto's literature not only documents the historical and cultural context of his time but also offers a critical perspective on the ongoing struggles for justice, identity, and mental well-being in the post-colonial era.

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