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## Wounds that Speak: Exploring Social Trauma and Reconciliation with Self in Knoll's Luckiest Girl Alive

<sup>1</sup>Ms. Aqsa, <sup>2</sup>Ms. Alia Habib, <sup>3</sup>Dr. Sara Shahbaz

### Article Details

### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** Social Trauma, Restoring Identity, Trauma is not merely an incident that leaves its deep scars on the psyche of Complexities, Inner-Self, Sociocultural victims, but it often acts as a driving force in shaping their identities and Environment perceptions as well. The present study aims to explore the facet of social trauma in

#### Ms. Aqsa

MPhil Scholar/Visiting Lecturer, Department of English, The Women University Multan

[aqszulfiqar550@gmail.com](mailto:aqszulfiqar550@gmail.com)

Ms. Alia Habib

Lecturer, Department of English, The Women University Multan.

[alia.6100@wum.edu.pk](mailto:alia.6100@wum.edu.pk)

#### Dr. Sara Shahbaz

Lecturer, Department of English, The Women University Multan.

[sara.6090@wum.edu.pk](mailto:sara.6090@wum.edu.pk)

one of the mystery fictions Knoll's Luckiest Girl Alive (2015). It is aimed to highlight that trauma not merely influences the mental, physical, and emotional state of victims, but it can also affect their social affairs and deteriorate their identity. The sociocultural responses of people coerce them to suppress their traumas, detach themselves from their surroundings, avoid indulging in a challenging social situation, and adapt certain behaviors to conform the sociocultural standards. The current study utilizes the concept of trauma proposed by Vickroy (2014) to precisely demonstrate the agonizing experiences of Ani (protagonist) within a sociocultural backdrop. The findings show that the restrictive sociocultural environment enforces Ani to camouflage her past and exhibit her assured personality to the world, leading to potentially disrupt her identity. Moreover, she faces several challenges on multiple levels such as experiencing extreme anxiety, maintaining her professional and personal affairs, conforming to the sociocultural norms to survive in the world, and recognizing her inner being.

## INTRODUCTION

The word “trauma” originates from the Greek word “τραύμα”, which typically means “injury” or “wound”. Initially, it generally referred to the injuries taken place on body, but in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, many scholars advanced this concept by pointing out its emotional and psychological impact on individuals. Sigmund Freud, the renowned figure in the field of psychoanalysis, further broaden the psychological influence of trauma on individuals’ well-beings in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, from the mid of 20<sup>th</sup> century, many scholars, particularly Cathy Caruth, Judith Herman, and Bessel van der Kolk enlarged the notion of trauma theory by incorporating it into multidisciplinary perspectives, such as sociology, cultural studies, psychology, and anthropology. These scholars strive to explore the complex nature of trauma as well its long lasting influence on individuals’ identity, memory, and sociocultural relation.

The selected novel *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015) is about a woman, TifAni FaNelli, who wants to uplift her career by becoming a prosperous writer of New York Times Magazine. She has faced a series of horrific traumatic incidents in the form of sexual assault and school shooting attack in teenage, which she strives to hide from the people around her. Her past immensely torment her identity, which she tries to reestablish in her adulthood. However, the sociocultural expectations and judgmental behaviors of society make it difficult for her to restore her real self. Eventually, she manages to realize her inner self and disclose her past atrocious incidents by involving in a documentary.

Trauma survivors typically need an encouraging and supportive sociocultural environment that motivate them to recognize the intensity of their traumatic incidents and ultimately restore their real personalities. Figley and Burge (1983, as cited in Figley, 1986) elucidate the significance of “social support” where individuals perceive that they have a support of one or more people who are always there to support them “both in time of need” and assist them “with either tangible or emotional aid” (p. 103). Furthermore, sociocultural norms are the fundamental principles of any society. When people violate these norms, it leads them to question their own principles and trigger sentiments of insecurity, guilt, and apprehension within them. In such situations, they are eager to turn towards those people who will provide them “psychological safety” (Ajdukovic, 2004, p. 123).

Therefore, victims need supportive sociocultural environment that can help them to vitalize their life. Social environment is not only the source of generating trauma, but generally it

opens multiple ways that support survivors in their healing process. They also need the support of their loved ones who motivate them to verbalize their terrible incidents and achieve recuperation.

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Trauma happens when an individual endures extremely agonizing situations for an extended duration of time, which diminish his intellectual and emotional well-being. Despite of survivors' persistent struggles to eradicate the terrible memories of those harrowing incidents from their mind, they have to confront certain situations that reignite their trauma. There are diverse factors, such as the location of traumatic event or sociocultural responses, which compel survivors to re-memorize their heart-wrenching experiences.

Sociocultural responses and surroundings are the core elements that trigger survivors' sentimental responses and inhibit them to communicate or express their trauma. It infuses feeling of guilt and anxiety within survivors, which they strive to express in distinct ways. Some people express their gloominess, annoyance, and uncertainty towards their family members, while others choose to endure apprehension, which further deteriorate their relationships. They attempt to part their ways with their family members and society so they can protect themselves from social criticism. They avoid social gatherings because of the fear of potential threat, rejection, and humiliation. They predominantly prefer social isolation as they find it difficult to engage themselves in certain social activities and trust others for the fear of being-harmed again.

The current study aims to explore the sociocultural responses of people, which torment survivors' individual identity. The researcher has selected the contemporary masterpiece of Jessica Knoll's *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015) to demonstrate how sociocultural surroundings diminish main character's sense of identity as well her perceptions. When society blames victims for indulging in a certain traumatic situation, like a crime or sexual violence, they feel invalidated, leading to spark sentiments of bitterness and shame inside them. Such kind of environment influences their emotional balance and they find it critical to reconcile their trauma.

Moreover, sociocultural norms and believes restrict survivors to give voice to their traumatic incidents because they think such incidents can immensely influence their surroundings as well. Therefore, society needs to implement an encouraging and supportive environment, which help survivors to access the support they need to restore their identity. Instead of dissuading them to communicate their trauma with others, we should foster an

environment that empowers them to overtly narrate their traumatic encounters and find a path towards restoration.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Following are the main research questions of the present study:

- How do the sociocultural relations influence the identity of main character in Knoll's *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015)?
- What type of complexities primary character has to encounter in probing her reconciliation process in the selected work?

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Trauma is a repercussion of an extremely devastating incident that impairs the tangible, intellectual, and emotional functioning of individuals. It inculcates the sentiments of isolation, guilt, terror, helplessness, and resentment inside survivors. The terrible recollections, flashbacks, and perpetual contemplation not only influence their current existence, but they are more prone to confront the similar incidents in future as well. Besides, sentimental, physical, and cognitive function, trauma can also deteriorate their social engagements. They are more vigilant and diffident of forming intimate association with the people around them due to the soul-stirring events they have endured in past.

After confronting trauma, survivors need social and cultural support that help them in obliterating, departing, and navigating their path of achieving rejuvenation. The significance of the present study is that it helps to explore the social facet of trauma in the captivating work of Knoll's *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015). Moreover, the present study attempts to emphasize the complexities main character have to confront in probing her real-identities in the above-mentioned work. For this intent, the researcher delves into the theory of Vickroy (2014), who elaborates trauma specifically in a social context.

The study further highlights the sociocultural responses of people that compel survivors to feel ashamed of involving in agonizing incidents, like a crime or a rape. Such type of responses not only aggravate their trauma, but coerce them to detach themselves from the sociocultural surroundings and live in isolation. Furthermore, the judgmental behavior of people restricts their potential to revive their true-identities. Therefore, the present study paves multiple ways for the researchers to emphasize the significance of supportive environment that empowers victims to make sense of their perceptions, realize their inner sentiments, and

navigate a path of restoration. Additionally, the supportive sociocultural surroundings boost survivors to confront any formidable social situation in future as well.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Many scholars have utilized the notion of trauma theory to emphasize its influence on history, cultural studies or literature as it was not only limited to the domains of physical, emotional, and psychological wounds (Caruth, 1996). De Vries (1996) believes that survivors can only recover from their traumatic incidents when society or community recognizes their sufferings as “a meaningful mode of action” (p. 402). Trauma disrupts survivors’ cognition when society refuses to support them, leading to infuse sentiments of rejection and isolation within them. Ajdukovic (2004) illustrates certain factors, such as specific trauma spots, resettlement, and confronting social upheaval, which may amplify survivors’ trauma. Additionally, trauma of “rape, traffic accident, and random shooting” can immensely influence individuals as well as their surroundings (p. 121).

Miskatun et al. (2014) have critically elucidated how the posttraumatic experience influence the identity formation of main character in *Brutal: The heartbreaking true story of a little girl's stolen innocence* (2012) authored by Nabila Sharma. The findings of their study have highlighted that Nabila Sharma reflects on a diverse “psychological phenomena”, which plays a pivotal role in influencing the life of survivors. Moreover, she believes that through the psychological treatment, inner desires of healing, and the support of loved ones, individuals can easily addressed their traumatic experience.

Salam (2016) has explored the groundbreaking works of three American writers, such as Harry Crosby, Ernest Hemingway, and Laurence Stallings mainly from the notion of trauma. The outcomes of the study have revealed that the characters, in the works of these authors, mainly encounter various sleep disorders, flashbacks, and disjunction as the war badly influence their psyche. Moreover, the repetition of death, wound, self-destruction, and impairment are the common symbols and subject matters depicted in these works.

Alvarez (2016) has examined the portrayal of women in selective crime fictions, Knoll’s *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015) and Flynn’s *Gone Girl* (2012) by incorporating the concepts of performativity, masquerade, and plastic bodies. The results have shown that by retrieving their bodies, women in both works are challenging the gender stereotypes. Hutasuhut and Rangkuti (2022) have concentrated on the woman’s language in *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015) by utilizing Sara Mill’s concept of feminist stylistics. The findings have suggested that the words like,

“necklace”, “chubby”, “breast”, “blond hair” or “tiny figure” are used to describe women and their lifestyles while men are shown superior and dominant, which can be perceived through the words like “muscular build”.

However, the present study attempts to highlight the aspect of social trauma in Knoll’s *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015). It sheds light on the sociocultural environment, standards, and responses of people, which play a significant role in potentially influencing the traumatic experience of central character. The lack of sociocultural support and the emergence of unfavorable circumstances further create several obstacles in her journey of identity restoration. Moreover, the study depicts the complexities that the main character faces in realizing her inner self and overcome her inner anxieties.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In the present study, the researcher has implemented qualitative descriptive approach, which is typically concerned with describing a particular phenomena through close observation, interpretation, or interviews. Additionally, the researcher delves into the textual analysis to explore the most prominent subject matter of trauma in Knoll’s *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015). The researcher also determines to incorporate Vickroy’s (2014) notion of social trauma to accomplish the objectives of the study. Furthermore, the paradigm of the present study is interpretivism as it helps to understand and disentangle the subjective meanings of a text rather than the objective ones.

The study incorporates Vickroy’s (2014) trauma theory, which helps researcher to enlighten the distressing incidents of characters and their sufferings, peculiarly in a social and cultural backdrop. According to Vickroy (2014), “trauma is an individual’s response to events so intense that they impair emotional or cognitive functioning and may bring lasting psychological disruption” (p. 131). It diminishes survivors’ sense of perception, persuades them to desolate themselves from the world, and lives with disintegrated reminiscences of their traumatic encounters (Herman, 2009, as cited in Vickroy, 2014). Despite of survivors’ inadequacy and societal pressure to manifest or verbalize their traumatic encounter, readers can comprehend various responses of human regarding trauma via multiple perspectives discussed in trauma fictions.

Vickroy (2014) claims that there are three aspects, such as “social, situational, and narrative” that help to elaborate the complex nature of trauma (p. 130). These aspects go beyond the notion of Sigmund Freud who primarily relied on the childhood traumas, their

recurrence, oppression, and subjugation. However, the researcher focuses only on the social aspect of trauma in the current study. The influence of cultural standards on the traumatic experience of survivors is crucial to comprehend the repercussions of trauma on their emotional well-being.

## **SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECT OF TRAUMA**

Many clinical psychologist, particularly Laura Brown and Maria Root, declares that the sociocultural connections modify survivors' identities as well as their perceptions towards traumatic encounters. One needs to understand the survivors' cognitive function within a sociocultural environment as it plays a pivotal role in suppressing their competence to acknowledge trauma. Through the portrayal of characters, trauma fictions incorporate their "survival behaviors" and variety of responses regarding their distressing incidents (Vickroy, 2014, p. 130).

## **IMPACT OF SOCIOCULTURAL SURROUNDINGS ON SURVIVORS PERSONALITY**

Vickroy (2014) asserts that, "The Environment of social relations and cultural values can be a source of trauma or a force that silences victims out of denial or guilt. It can create veils of illusion, attempts to mask or reinterpret behaviors that induce trauma" (p. 131). These lines imply that the social and cultural norms are the source of inducing trauma and undermining victims. Social relations refrain survivors to verbalize their traumatic incidents, prompting a feeling of guilt and denial within them. It compels them to wear a mask of illusion and reevaluate their behaviors, which further trigger their trauma.

Furthermore, Vickroy (2014) affirms that trauma victims consider themselves alienated because their families, societies, or communities terminate their connections with them in order to protect themselves from social criticism. However, the circumstances arise that encourage victims to reassess their recollections of agonizing incidents and reconcile their real-selves because not everyone is subdued within a same environment. Many trauma fiction writers portray the fellow characters as the supportive catalyst who motivate victims to make sense of their traumatic events instead of refusing to acknowledge them.

Trauma disrupts one's sense of protection and infuses sentiments of shame, guilt, and rejection inside survivors. It may deteriorate their views about themselves "as decent, strong, and autonomous" individual (Janoff-Bulman, 1992, as cited in Vickroy, 2014, p. 131). Vickroy (2014) presents a more comprehensive and holistic view about trauma where the focus is on "the social and behavioral construct" instead of internalized cognitive elements as discussed in

the traditional model of trauma (p. 131). This alternative model also emphasizes that an individuals' personal encounters, their history, psychological conditions, or circumstances are crucial to understand their modified behavior after enduring terrible incidents.

## **FACTORS AFFECTING THE COPING MECHANISM OF SURVIVORS**

According to Root and MacCurdy (1992; 2007, as cited in Vickroy, 2014), there are various components that help survivors to determine how they can cope with their trauma. The first significant component is the "social environment" that may either generate or heal survivors' trauma (p. 132). The sociocultural beliefs and family responses towards trauma victims play a crucial role in either supporting or obstructing their healing process (Van der Kolk, McFarlane & Weisaeth, 1996, as cited in Vickroy, 2014).

Moreover, De Vries (1996, as cited in Vickroy, 2014) suggests that healing can exist only when a society or a community efficiently manages the adversities of individuals and consider it a substantive component of their behaviors and identities in a larger cultural backdrop. However, when sociocultural relations dissuade victims' traumatic experience, they feel alienated and "unprotected" (p. 132). The "severity of the events", individuals' attributes, and their temperaments are another components that help to determine survivors' coping mechanism (Root, 1992; MacCurdy, 2007, as cited in Vickroy, 2014. p. 132).

## **ADAPTIVE SURVIVAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Root (1992, as cited in Vickroy, 2014) contends that trauma victims may adopt certain survival characteristics to respond to their sufferings in an apathetic environment. First, they adopt the characteristic of "Egocentrism" in which they try to entirely focus on their personal priorities rather than other individuals' needs (p. 132). Second, "quickness to anger" that advances the element of anger inside them (p. 132). Third, "social and emotional withdrawal" in which they try to desolate themselves from social surroundings for the fear of sociocultural criticism (p. 132). Fourth, "rumination" where the emergence of persistent thought obstruct their healing process (p. 132). The last survival characteristic is "shutting down" where they physically, psychologically, and emotionally detach themselves from their nearby surroundings (p. 132).

## **ANALYSIS**

Ani Fanelli, the primary character of *Luckiest Girl Alive* (2015), becomes a victim of social trauma after enduring a series of heart-wrenching incidents in teenage in the form of sexual assault and a school shooting attack. The novel has been written in non-linear timeline format, which decisively elaborates Ani's alluring present life and her atrocious past incidents. Ani is a

successful writer of New York *The Women's Magazine*, but she wants to uplift her career by becoming a prosperous writer of *Times Magazine*. She constantly strives to camouflage her past incidents from her nearby surroundings, as she does not want to let them influence her present life.

Therefore, she changes her name from TifAni Fanelli to Ani Harrison because she does not want her terrible past to create several hurdles in her journey of uplifting her career. She is also familiar with the fact that by belonging to an affluent family, she can justify her chastity and seek acceptance. Therefore, she undertakes her fiancé (Luke Harrison) surname and formulates that “Changing my name had nothing to do with hiding my past, and everything to do with becoming the person no one ever thought I deserved to be: Ani Harrison” (Knoll, 2015, p.23). This line highlights her aspiration to be a part of an affluent community so she can protect herself from the harsh realities, criticism, and mistreatment of society. It can be estimated that she is adopting the survival technique of “egocentrism” to focus only on her personal priorities rather than how people perceive her if she marries Luke Harrison. Moreover, her urge to modify her name showcases her complexity of refraining her traumatic past and the adversities associated with it.

She always presents herself as an empowered woman who can potentially elevate other women to realize their inner-selves. She embraces certain behaviors to ascertain her assured personality, which can be perceived through her conduct with the hostess who appears discontented on her appeal of having “ a glass of Montepulciano” (Knoll, 2015, p. 3). She addresses that:

The hostess raised her eyebrows indignantly and I could imagine what she was thinking—that’s the waiter’s job—but I just smiled sweetly at her: See how nice I am? How unreasonable you’re being? You should be ashamed of yourself. (Knoll, 2015, p. 3)

These lines highly demonstrate her urge to publicly showcase her confident personality and facade her inner anxieties as Vickroy (2014) illustrates that trauma survivors are eager to adapt certain behaviors and responses, which help in emphasizing their path of self-reflection.

Another indication of her struggle to look quick-witted is perceived through her communication with Luke. She opines that “A study found that the act of physically closing your menu once you’ve decided what to order can make you feel more satisfied with your choice” (Knoll, 2015, p. 4). It also reflects her struggles to fit herself among other people and meet the sociocultural standards so that no one can question her past incidents. Vickroy (2014)

contends the core element trauma victims attempt to concentrate on is their “social and behavioral constructs” (p. 131). Therefore, Ani always displays her confident nature during her conversation with people, but deep inside she is constantly trying to cope her inner-anxieties which she has endured in past.

Ani also faces several complexities in fulfilling her ambitions and meeting sociocultural standards. She wants to reject Luke's offer of becoming a freelance writer but she is also aware that this rejection can profoundly influence her relationship. Luke's words highly demonstrate the societal pressure that coerces women to meet traditional social norms. He argues that:

I know you need to get this out of your system. But realistically, what? You'll work there a year, then you're going to be on my back about having a kid next, and you're not even going to want to go back to work after. Let's be rational here. (Knoll, 2015, p. 14)

These lines depict her struggles of maintaining balance between her career aspirations and personal affairs. Moreover, her experience at *The Bradley School* manifest her social trauma. Her hesitation to respond to her English teacher Mr. Larson's kind words depict her trauma as she authenticates that “I've never known the right thing to say” (Knoll, 2015, p. 33). She always struggles to accommodate herself among elite students of Bradley School and adapt their lifestyle. Her social complexity is highlighted at cafeteria where a variety of food persuades her to perceive the food choices of other students so she can meet the standards of those people

She confronts more trauma after becoming a victim of sexual assault by Dean and some of his friends. She is worried about her sexuality, morality, and her family's dignity as Vickroy (2014) embodies sociocultural standards are the primary source of instigating feelings of contrition and repudiation within victims. The repetition of her sentiments symbolizes that she has to face the repercussions of her terrible experiences, which can deteriorate her life and make it challenging for her to achieve social recognition. She is also anxious about how she can confront the acrimony of her mom when she will come to know her disgraceful act. Following lines clearly demonstrate her trauma of undermining her family's dignity:

Mom wrenched the gearshift into reverse. “You're grounded, TifAni.” She peeled out of the parking lot, her mouth set in that thin, hard line that always terrified me, that I would find myself mirroring in my fights with Luke, realizing I probably looked pretty scary too (Knoll, 2015, p. 107).

These lines also showcase how trauma immensely influences the social surroundings and emotional well-beings. Furthermore, the nuanced behavior of students, specifically her

friends Olivia and Hilary, makes her feel more disparaged and excluded as she elucidates, "Olivia ignored me, but Hilary lifted one lazy corner of her mouth, lashless eyes regarding me with an amused glaze" (Knoll, 2014, p. 112). The ignorant behavior of people coerces her to feel more ashamed, leading to instigate sentiments of guilt within her. She struggles to detach herself, socially and emotionally, to protect herself from social criticism.

Aron, a documentary director, wants Ani to participate in a short film he is making on the shooting attack held at the prestigious *The Bradley School* in which she has killed her own friend Arthur (the shooter) in a self-defense. He wants Ani to narrate the whole story, as she and Dean are the sole witness who have survived in such an atrocious incident. Although, she yearns to reveal her traumas to the world and rectify the misconceptions people had about her due to Dean's testimony of her involvement with Ben and Arthur in the shooting attack, she is concerned about Luke's reputation, her career, and sociocultural responses of people. She apprehends:

My voice so husky I was embarrassed by it, I'd told her how they were digging into the incident at Bradley, that they wanted to portray the untold story, the real story, the one the media had gotten wrong fourteen years ago. It would be worse if I didn't agree to be a part of it, I reasoned, they could paint me any way they wanted and at least if I had the opportunity to speak for myself... (Knoll, 2015, p. 57)

These lines showcase her intrinsic eagerness to proclaim her anxieties and narrate her part of the story to the world similar to Vickroy (2014) who postulates that trauma victims always want to disclose their adversities and restore their true identity in front of the world instead of subduing them. Initially, Luke forbids her to involve in a documentary film, but later Ani manages to convince him only when she assures him that she wouldn't talk about her trauma of sexual assault as Luke opines that "But you're not planning on talking about that night, right?" (Knoll, 2015, p. 100). Luke knows he belongs to an affluent and renowned family where her disreputable acts can ruin his reputation. Luke's words further enforce her to dismiss herself and stay silent. Ani contemplates:

Luke just wants everyone to get over it already. He still doesn't want me participating in the documentary. He can't quite explain why, or he can, but he doesn't want to offend me, but I know what he's thinking: You're embarrassing yourself. In the Harrison world, nothing is more admirable than rimy stoicism (Knoll, 2015, p. 96).

These lines spotlight the societal pressure, which compels her to develop resilience and

impassive facade within her if she wants to survive in this world. Such kind of behavior and discouragement embarrasses survivors, enforcing them to detach themselves from the sociocultural surroundings. Moreover, she wants to display her engagement emerald-ring on camera because she considers it the only way to uplift her status and display her as impermeable woman. She reflects that, "I know I shouldn't fall into the old trap that I'm not someone, that I haven't really "made it," until I have a ring on my finger...." (Knoll, 2015, p. 89). This line illustrates her conceptions and personality molded in sociocultural environment as it has the potential to subvert survivor's sentimentality regarding traumatic incidents (Vickroy, 2014).

Moreover, her uncertainty and insecurity is highlighted through her urge to compete and meet the standards of other women by accommodating their lifestyles. She utters, "I always eye the wife first; I like to know what I'm up against" (Knoll, 2015, p. 92). It also manifests the influence of sociocultural surroundings on her cognition. Furthermore, Luke's sarcastic reaction to her phobias and absurd comment of calling her "a survivor" persuades her to reconsider her decision of marrying him, as he does not ever encourage her to confront her traumas and prove her innocence (Knoll, 2015, p. 127).

At this critical moment, her former English teacher, Andrew Larson, becomes her supportive figure who makes her realize that she cannot marry a man who is not a trustworthy companion in her life. Mr. Larson's kind words enforce her to recognize her inner selves, fearlessly address her traumas, and restore her lost identity. Ultimately, Dean publicly confesses that he and his friends tried to sexually assault her and make false allegations on her about her involvement in shooting attack with Arthur. Therefore, Ani breaks her relationship with Luke and tells Aron to rerecord the introduction of documentary in which she first time addresses that, "I'm TifAni FaNelli." instead of Ani Harrison (Knoll, 2015, p. 374).

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

Conclusively, it can be said that apart from the physical, emotional, and psychological influence, trauma immensely influences the social functioning of individuals. The sociocultural surroundings and judgmental reactions of people instigate their traumas and deteriorate their current existence in the world. Ani is a victim of such situation where her traumas restrict her potential to move ahead in life. She endures several complexities in refraining her distressing past, balancing her personal and professional life, displaying her assured personality, disguising her inner anxieties, confronting her traumas to the world, and realizing her inner- selves.

The social criticism and snobbish behaviour of her friends even her mother persuade her to

disentangle herself and modify her name from TifAni Fanelli to Ani Harrison, so no one can recognize her from her past. Her urge to emulate others truly depicts her struggles to fit herself among sociocultural environment and achieve recognition. Despite her inner desire to address her traumas, she chooses to remain silent as she is aware of the consequences of such confrontation on her psychological and emotional well-being. Although, she appears to be very fearless and optimistic, but deep down, she is constantly battling with her past anxieties.

Additionally, Luke's persistent reluctance to be a part of documentary film enforces her to comprehend that her disreputable acts are not permitted in society. The social environment restricts her to overtly narrate and recuperate her traumas. However, with the help of her English teacher, Andrew Larson, she realizes her innate desire to confront her traumas and prove her innocence to the world, which she is trying to overlook due to Luke's reputation. Eventually, she also realizes that Luke cannot be a supportive, reliable, and compatible partner, so she ends her relationship with Luke, restores her identity, and pursues her career.

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