

**Women and Social Cognition; Responding through Dr. Amy and Hannah through identity clash and empathy in Norma Rosen's *At the Center*****Dr. S. Suganya**, Assistant Professor**Sreedevi S.** Research Scholar

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**Abstract**

Women in the social system play an integral part in developing a family, a country and a nation too. In this crossroads of life the responsibilities they had to take care of is something different from other sexes and this duty extends a connection to their conscious and develops higher cognitive skills. In the work *At the Center* Norma Rosen of American origin writes on her spiritual search as well as conjoined with the characters. The plot develops in the backdrop of anything but connecting to the life and human conscious past living in the memory of lost identity and trying to pertain something that is lost. The characters are set in a medical center, which becomes a center to their own self and leads to single destructive outcome. Social Cognition as a theoretical perspective works with processing of mind with sound information of any event and it creates a point of view, the paper is intended to dwell the theory into the literary text that is led by women characters Dr. Amy and Hannah processing difference into a single line structure.

**Keywords:** Women, Social Cognition, Identity Clash, Empathy**Introduction**

Literature is considered as the most innate expression of life, it includes every form of art and life. The possibility of literary text to be an interlinking part of psychology was made clear through many of its kind. The study of cognition is part of psychological studies it merges with the universality of literature of adaptive nature. As the societal implication especially on behavioral patterns emerge in stimulating cognitive sense, society that classified on the basis of cast, class and gender experience and perceive ideas on the essence this receiver attaches with mind controlled subconscious brain.

Norma Rosen, an American Author concentrates on women centric characters in her works, including novels and essays, the work *At the Center* is focusing on the elements of a society which is a representative of the modern world. In connection with the writer gives spiritual and religious yet the plea of a community. The after effects of Holocaust in a women is discussed in the work as a form of response from the women writers of the time, an American point of view from the female head to the world giving deep thoughts into the narrative theoretical practices of the time with a new dimension.

Social Cognition is studied as part of psychology and it extends in the detailed analysis of people representations. The idea persists, it enhances the scope of understanding people on how they react, adapt and respond to any of the given situation, the received information might be of social importance, as something that affects a group of people. On processing the same information at an individual level is distributed to the one or original point of view gained through personal experiences which is disturbing, joyful or any sort but mediates a form of emotion. In the certain study the emotional connections people find with each other especially of same family, friends, workmates etc empathies, for a certain moment this can be single line connectivity for any number of people like a movie drifts from audience responses to a movie. Similarly, the opinion is generated with various class, race, nationality and gendered differences specifically when it is taken in the case of gender, as male – female that extends not only physical but emotional connectivity and responses in variant intelligence.

The same as a study in Psychology extends to neurological and physical utterances amongst different group and studies shows that woman has greater response than men in Social Cognition. An article written in *Journal of Clinical & Diagnostic Research* states that women showcases more specific responses than men on certain occasions with a cognitive skills gained on the ground of body specific way. As the general notion exists were gender and body as separate entity it creates cognition response at variant levels to male and female because of the responsibilities they tend to be taken care of in family or in a social system.

Mental skills or cognitive abilities include attributes like perception, attention, memory (short-term or working and long-term), motor, language, visual and spatial processing, and executive functions [1]. These cognitive attributes are different in males and females. Generally, females show advantages in verbal fluency, perceptual speed, accuracy and fine motor skills, while males outperform females in spatial, working memory and mathematical abilities [2,3] ( Upadhayay)

Herman David in his work *Narrative Theory and Cognitive Sciences* states that the authority possessed by Cognitive Sciences especially when two different cultures compile together and later gets a different understanding of the world. Herman negates that the information or the knowledge in the individual is get affirmed though the conscious self that is

gained through narrative. Thus the theoretical possibilities can be categorized in two ways the first one through stories on what impact does that make in the individual, like the possible outcomes of narrative imagination making conciseness to the people advocates it, Herman cites that as this stories advantages the brains target and makes path for cognition. For example it extends with the idea of artificial intelligence proves hoe the information is generated on human demands and it generally outpours a stimulated idea in the individual mind.

Herman on storytelling holds that cognition holds a special power but though he tries find the linguistic used in formulating the idea,

Herman identifies a number of concepts informed by narratological and cognitive research: (1) positioning; (2) embodiment; (3) the distributed versus localized nature of mind; (4)emotion discourse and “emotionology”; and (5) qualia, or the idea that conscious experiences have ineliminably subjective properties, a distinctive sense or feeling of what it is like for someone or something to experience them.<sup>8</sup> (p.314) ( A .Johnson)

In this tone, pinpointing a literary text that background the Jewish hunt of someone who is second generation and living the trauma and memory of lost parents. The idea of a character is much pointed to a community and its outcry for survival, even though the war has set off its tracks in past continues. American literature on Jewish responses imported the emotional callings of the victims and as part of world literature it paved to new roads. The writings gave single handed opinions on many outcries to be more specific a male oriented perspective. The incidents let women writers to come and stand for thee victimization they faced in the field and wrote the American point of view from outside of Germany, Poland. The events gets a higher connection in American literature as it welcomed many aspects of world literature .In these representation women as writers tries to the emotional strength man had put forth on the sustaining, as the Holocaust betrayed, cheated and it sprung to many generations.

In this path Norma Rosen, the writer who had descended a Jewish and American Cultural background speaks of intellectual and spiritual conflict in the work *At the Center*. The novel is set in the backdrop of an abortion center that in both ways questioned and answered many tunes of human mind at conflict. In human understanding level the tendency to put forward emotions in everything that is speculated by individual self through years of mind- body evolution. There is always a connection body and mind establishes in formulating opinions even at the crisis times too and the same level is differently conceived by a female representative of the event.

The story of Hannah is a response of the event that not only victimized her parents who had to come and live in the new American identity; the forced migration embarked a strong sense to keep their ethnicity. As this new identity which has to be earned would create a tension that

the original must be kept away rather they would be treated as outsiders. The concept of other in the strata comes down to the negotiations Hannah had put forward to Dr. Paul, who later becomes her partner. There is a strong sense of identity issues in Hannah, because of being the second generation victim of Holocaust. In the similar way the other characters of the novel, like Dr. Charles who was the serious of among them all being the efficient and professional among them. The matter of matter clash comes in when he started an affair with Dr. Amy who came in later with the proposal of a relationship.

The main concern came in from the perspective of Hannah is that the young doctor falling for an elder doctor, who tend to share only professional relationship is letting the personal and professional life into a jam like structure. But the main concern was the moral aspect ,Amy was not thinking the popular response which may come in on preceding her character .Since Hannah is the only a staff but she predicted the future of the hospital, as this center became a quest of personal choices too, the dairy she took with herself holding the outcome by analyzing the entire events in the hospital. The main theme stays between Hannah who holds a young spiritualistic yet wounded deep in mind becomes a question to the society and morale but when the clashes are seen through the eyes of other characters it challenges the existence of Hannah itself, the place which rendered the qualities of a modern developed world with everything that extends freedom.

The idea of the center when Dr. Edgar started was to help women in need, especially in connection with the unethical practices that leading to the death of many innocent women. In this aspect point comes to discuss of the treatment of society towards women in the matter of spaces they occur ,like family for an example, it seeks the role as women who does care of everybody both living and non-living in the traditional belief system of a family. When the same situation in a society, the role gets considered from a moralistic point of view, like when a women decides to not do household chore as a traditional idea, but encourages both family members including men to equally participate in the responsibilities. The things may differ in the case financially independent women or women in living in urban care. The novel in this aspect discuss the prime concern women as a socially responsible and awarded gender their rights to share and respond as equally as men is ignored. In most of the cases women themselves consider their role must be satisfactory to the men in the family who represents the society that exceeds to unethical thought on the impure negotiations on a societal living.

The character of Amy as an young who represented a new outlook to the feminine hood and she express her love which can be physical or emotional in both way her cognitive skills to the situation imbibed her freedom, although her expression of thought might be overlooked by the people around, the other doctors and staffs beheaded to the strong idealization of women in them. In the same way, the Hannah also made this statement of future prediction. In the tone of

Dr. Charles with whom Amy was having the affair initially didn't encourage it though later he decided to take a divorce from her wife and fallen for Amy. The setting of the novel in a way is a spiritual hunt of a second generation victim of Holocaust, Hannah; she predicts the fall of a relationship with her strong moralistic outcome. The thought of any such person in this aspect is the notion of ideological clashes both Hannah and Amy have and the same which optimistically and pessimistically affected their life like a means which led to the destination.

Women and empathy connects to the experience they gain and understand from the society. In the way clustering of gender makes a serious tension on the matter of pinpointing an opinion on any social responsibilities. As the responsibility of each change the connectivity they specifically feel also becomes different and this connection seems more in women. They show it through facial expressions, body language and to an extent the body connection. The aspect of mind-body connection is detailed by the brain counterpart, our experience as a group especially when the generic idea called female body is studied. In that commonality, the idea a women can share more empathy to other women, especially during crisis situations. In the novel *At the Center*, the very first empathetic connection is felt through the eyes Dr. Edgar on first source, with his connection to the patients coming in need of medical care reminded of his sister Mimi.

The strong women is represented in the novel is through Hannah, as the character gets connected to the entire events that undergoes in the hospital. One such dream of terror Hannah experiencing is like this which foreshadows her past memories,

“She dreams that she is walking down the hallway of a house in a strange city. She turns a key in an apartment door and feels a man's embrace from behind. With his powerful arms he grips her about the neck, cutting off her breath. She cannot cry out. And besides, no one will know her on answer her cry. Who, among strangers, would hear her, or run down the stairs to aid her if they heard? ” (*At the Center*, 298)

In the case of Dr. Amy, the moment of struggle arise when she was on the abortion table and when her grandmother was asked how she is and the grandmother answered, “Very, very bitter,” comes the old lady's ponderous tone. ‘Very full of hate now, full of hate.’ Her voice dawdles sadly over the words.” (*At the Center*, 273)

At a certain time the two victimized characters Dr. Amy and Hannah connects empathetically, as Amy couldn't find the toxicity in her relationship with Charles but Hannah finds it difficult and as she predicted Amy was cheated with Charles. In the counterpart the relation of Hannah with Paul, was a religious and spiritual turn over, when the definition of a partner changes the soul finds peace in one person. The notion of choice was between Amy and Hannah is different on the intellectual and cognitive choices they have taken and that ruled their

life, both of them shared a sense of serious and impactful traits of past and present life incidents in future.

### Conclusion

Social Cognition as a concept of Psychology details not only the clinical cases but it responds in the art, literature and scientific study also. The paper entitled is an attempt following the marginalized section of women in cognitive skills or the ability of women in responding to serious event is comparatively higher in sense when compared to men. The paper examined the two different female characters holding two different decisions impacting to a hospital which later signifies separate entity but with a thought powerful impacts on the choices one makes is highly connected to social cognitive skills, especially with the themes of identity clash and empathy, they encompasses the higher sense of common origin in their deeds.

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