

# Narcissism Disorder and Its Effects in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*

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**Abstract-** *The impactful works of literature were originated in the United States. American literature depicts the reality of life in the way of advanced science, human science, and knowledge beyond science. People living for certain principles to achieve a materialistic life leads to disorder. The study on the narcissism and effect of narcissism focused mainly because of the widespread personality disorder found in the present society. In the competitive world, everyone has a certain goal to attain in their life. It leads to acting self-centredness, loss of empathy and sympathy for others, and seeking perfection and admiration of people that leads to the disorder of narcissism. Narcissism not only affects themselves but also affects society. The researcher analysed the character of Amy in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*, in psychological aspects that she has a personality disorder called 'Narcissism'. She was badly disturbed by the book series "Amazing Amy" published by her parents. In "Amazing Amy" she was portrayed as a perfect child but not in reality. She wants to be the character of 'Amazing Amy' the character created by her parents but that makes her to become a narcissistic characteristic person. Gillian Flynn focuses mainly on the crime done by Amy but, not throws light on Personality disorders. This paper focuses on narcissism and its effects.*

**Indexed Terms-** *Narcissism, personality disorder*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Literature is a mirror of human life that expresses the reality of society and the world's mysteries with some fictionalized character in an aesthetic sense. It is a mixture of culture, morals, religion, reality, and so on. The purpose of the literature is to teach human beings about the principles of living, and their mistake and make them aware of their actions and consequences. Literature is not a work of whole, it was divided into

genres like poems, Dramas, and Novels Genres emerged to portray the theme or a concept to entertain and in the same way to reach the idea to the people. Genres were identified by their length, rhyme scheme, and tone so it has written in the order of readers' taste and mindset. The novel initially emerged from retelling the story to writing a short story.

*Gone Girl*, written by Gillian Schieber Flynn, an American author screenwriter and producer. Flynn was born in Missouri in 1971, and her first book, *Sharp Object*, was published there in 2006. Flynn's 2006 debut novel, the literary mystery *Sharp Objects*, was 'an Edgar Award finalist and the winner of two of 'Britain's Dagger Awards', her other novels are *Sharp Objects* (2006) and *Gone Girl* (2012). Flynn's aspiration to be a journalist provided her source and inspiration to write a novel and also provides an idea for the theme of her novel.

*Gone Girl* focuses on the crime of the antagonist, shows narcissistic personality disorder. A "narcissism epidemic" has been described as occurring more frequently in contemporary Western countries. The percentage of teenagers who agreed with the statement "I am an important person" rose from 12% in 1963 to 77-80% in 1992. In comparison to earlier publications, more self-centred language can be found in recently published books. In comparison to "we" and "us", the personal pronouns "I" and "me" are more often used. Additionally, between 1960 and 2008, the frequency of narcissistic expressions like "I am the greatest" increased. More self-absorbed song lyrics and a higher focus on celebrities in TV shows are some signs of the increase in narcissism. These findings imply that narcissistic expressions have increased in frequency within individualistic cultures.

Narcissistic personality disorder can arise in several spheres of life, including romance, employment,

academics, and finances. People with narcissistic personality disorder may generally feel unhappy and disappointed. Narcissistic personalities affected people cannot be good company to others and may find their relationships problematic and unfulfilling. The disorder of narcissism frequently starts at the age of adolescence. The five characteristics of narcissistic personality disorder include a lack of empathy, a desire for constant attention and praise, a lack of self-awareness, and a lack of social skills.

The novel *Gone Girl* is based on the disappearance of a woman named Amy Dunnes who was a famous child character in the books of “Amazing Amy” book series written by her parents Rand and Marybeth. The disappearance slowly turned to the murder investigation by the evidence left by Amy Dunnes but, the truth is Amy disappeared herself to teach a lesson to her husband and to reveal to the public that her husband betrayed her by having an illegal affair with his student Andy. So, she framed a fake disappearance and murder scene to make the police and the public to believe that Nick was a murderer. At the end of the investigation, everyone believed Nick was the murderer, but when Nick apologised for his mistake, she returns home.

The story *Gone Girl* was an inspiration from one tragic case and the media's fascination with the couple behind it. Despite some very different endings and conflicting details, it's hard to ignore the parallels between the Dunnes and the real-life Petersons. In 1994, Scott Peterson, Laci Rocha met each other in a cafe. Laci and Scott got married and were expecting a baby. Laci's family always praises for her devoting much energy towards being the perfect housewife, enjoying cooking and entertainment. On Christmas Eve, she disappears and everyone suspects Peterson was a murderer and also Prosecutors witnessed that Peterson, 32, killed Laci because he was tired of his marriage, feeling pressure from her pregnancy and wanted to continue his affair with Amber Frey.

Amy is the antagonist in the novel. she is a well-off attractive woman was raised in New York. Amy is a successful quiz writer for a women's magazine when readers first meet her through her diary entries, and she is living in Manhattan on the trust fund that her parent the authors of the wildly successful “Amazing Amy”

children's book series, which is based on Amy's real-life successes and challenges alike, have set aside for her. Amy and Nick Dunne live out a fairy-tale existence as they defy gender standards, commit profoundly to their love for one another, and whether layoffs, family illnesses, and even financial losses with iron resolve. The investigation of Amy's disappearance and murder reveals many personalities of Amy. At the end of the novel, only some people learned about her faked disappearance to punish his husband. Amy's act and her childhood behaviour reveal the disordering in her personality called narcissism.

In the novel, *Gone Girl*, after Amy Elliot Dunne's disappearance the investigation reveals her narcissism traits from her childhood and in her adulthood. Some of the narcissistic traits are found in Amy. Grandiosity is a type of narcissistic trait that exaggerates one's sense of one's importance. Amy always believed that she was better than everyone and claimed that men in particular were obsessed with her. She also claimed that some girls in her high school followed her, including Desi Collings, a boy who tragically ended up falling in love with her. Hilary Handy also followed her and wanted to be the best like Amy.

Narcissists are perfectionists. They think they should be flawless; they think everything should go exactly as they plan and they think life should be wonderful. This is a very impractical requirement that leaves the narcissist feeling unhappy and sadly most of the time. Amy shows her perfectness in framing the entire disappearance scene into a murder story so that she sat and wrote the diary entries as a fictional character where she wrote for seven years, portraying her perfectness. People with narcissistic tendencies need to be admired by others to feel proud of themselves. The problem will be caused by narcissists once those they admired begin to distance themselves. Amy's case is also found in the same pattern of seeking admiration. She runs away from Nick since he doesn't love her and doesn't pay attention to her. Nevertheless, one time she saw her husband in an interview after her disappearance. He said that he missed her and express her feelings about her who was one of the coolest girls. Narcissists are harmful because they are manipulative, which throws other people into the issue. They tried to control everything by

manipulating traits. They always create a plot about each character in their minds based on their perspective. They act according to their plot to manipulate others. The narcissist traits of manipulation shown in Amy, makes the public, police, and her parents to believe that her husband had murdered. Hilary Handy is a friend of Amy in high school and was also one of Amy's victims. she already has traits of being superior to all when Hilary came second in a midterm test and gains popularity. Amy hates her so she wants to revenge Hilary.

Hilary became the victim to exact revenge of Amy. To put Hilary in Amy's master plan to behave weirdly in front of her parents. Amy manipulates Hilary to colour her hair. She asked to calls her parents regularly that she was Amy and the real Amy had gone. This makes Amy's parents afraid of Hilary and they make complaint in school about Hilary's abnormal behaviour.

Hilary's character was damaged and Amy's route was obvious, everyone who had previously become friends with Hilary put her aloof. Amy injured herself to make others to believe, she tumbled down the steps and pretends Hilary had done this to her. Through these incidents Amy's personality reflects narcissist personality disorder.

The paper concludes that the character is highly affected by the disorder of narcissism, being an only child is also one of the reasons for her bad childhood days and her greedy and narcissistic parents. Amy's childhood was controlled by their parents. Amy undergoes a lot of struggles with their disordered parents of narcissism. In her childhood days, she hated her parents for the "Amazing Amy" book series of her fake portrayal of life. It became a reason to gradually developed the disordered personality to attain the character in her book *Amazing Amy*, a girl of perfection.

Narcissism is an incurable disorder but it can be efficiently treated on the time of identification in the people through therapy like psychotherapy merely an act of simply talking to them and also engaging the time with them. Narcissist people feel more aloof and that was treated by psychotherapy such as family talk or a friend's talk with them It can't be curable through

specific medication for this disorder but symptoms like depression, or anxiety can be treated with medicines. To improve social interaction through Gestalt therapy as it to increases person's awareness, freedom, self-direction. It mainly focusses on moment of present rather than past because narcissistic people focus on their past.

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