



From Trauma to Triumph: The Intersection of Art, Therapy and Resilience in Acid Attack Survivors

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Abstract—This article, titled *From Trauma to Triumph: The Intersection of Art, Therapy, and Resilience in Acid Attack Survivors*, explores how art functions as a medium of healing and empowerment for acid attack survivors through the lens of resilience theory. Grounded in psychological frameworks, the study examines how individuals cope with and adapt to the profound physical and emotional trauma resulting from acid violence. Drawing from selected narratives—'Being Reshma', 'The Book of Shadows', and 'I Am Still Alive: Journey of Acid-Attack Victims'—the article investigates how creative expression, including visual arts, storytelling, fashion, recitation etc., contributes to identity reconstruction and emotional recovery. It emphasizes art therapy as a powerful tool for enhancing self-worth, fostering personal growth, and promoting psychological resilience. Through detailed case studies, the article underscores the transformative role of art in supporting survivors to reclaim their voices, challenge societal stigma, and rebuild their lives with strength and dignity. While acknowledging its limited scope, this study highlights the broader implications of integrating art into trauma recovery and resilience-building frameworks.



Keywords— Acid attack, Art, Healing, Identity reconstruction, Resilience, Therapy

I. INTRODUCTION

Resilience, derived from the Latin word '*resilire*' meaning "to rebound" or "spring back"[Concise Oxford Dictionary, tenth edition] refers to the human ability to recover from adversity, adapt to change, and thrive despite trauma or stress. It is more than just enduring hardship; it is about growing through challenges and emerging with a renewed sense of strength and purpose. In the context of acid attack survivors, resilience signifies the reclaiming of identity, the will to overcome stigma, and the courage to rebuild life. Resilience is not a fixed trait but a dynamic process, shaped by both internal capacities and external support systems.

Resilience Theory provides a multidisciplinary framework to understand how individuals cope with adversity. In psychology, researchers like Emmy Werner and Michael Rutter pioneered studies on children exposed to trauma, identifying key protective factors such as strong

relationships, problem-solving skills, and self-belief. Ken Ginsburg's 7Cs model—competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control—offers a practical guide to building resilience, especially in vulnerable populations. Meanwhile, in ecology, resilience describes how ecosystems recover from environmental stress, and in sociology, it reflects how communities confront collective trauma and inequality. Resilience manifests in several forms: psychological (mental strength to navigate stress), emotional (ability to regulate emotions during crises), physical (capacity to recover bodily health), and community resilience (collective recovery from disasters or violence). These dimensions often overlap, particularly in the lives of acid attack survivors who face complex and interconnected challenges. For them, resilience becomes a deeply personal yet socially

constructed journey, involving both self-reconstruction and communal support.

Literature has long explored the theme of resilience, even before the term was formally theorized. From classical works to modern narratives, authors have portrayed characters enduring grief, violence, and loss, while ultimately emerging with hope and healing. Novels and memoirs such as *Desert Flower* by Waris Dirie, *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, *Room* by Emma Donoghue, and *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson highlight the human capacity to endure trauma and rebuild identity. These texts underscore the transformative power of storytelling and art in recovering from deep emotional wounds.

Acid attacks represent one of the most heinous forms of gender-based violence, leaving survivors with not only physical disfigurement but also psychological and social trauma. Despite enduring permanent scars, societal rejection, and emotional devastation, many survivors demonstrate extraordinary resilience. A crucial part of their recovery is the use of art as a therapeutic outlet. Art therapy allows survivors to express pain, rebuild identity, and challenge stigma in a non-verbal, creative way. It fosters empowerment, agency, and emotional healing, aligning closely with the goals of resilience.

This article explores how art intersects with therapy and resilience in the lives of acid attack survivors. Using *Being Reshma* by Reshma Qureshi with Tania Singh (memoir), *The Book of Shadows* by Namita Gokhale (fiction), and *I Am Still Alive: Journey of Acid-Attack Victims* by Aman Kapur (non-fiction), this study examines how creative expression aids recovery. These texts offer powerful insights into the lived experiences of survivors and showcase how art becomes a transformative force—enabling them to move from trauma to triumph.

II. BEYOND SCARS: NARRATIVES OF RESILIENCE

An acid attack, also known as acid throwing, vitriol attack, or vitriolage, is a

form of devastating violence that has destroyed the lives of many all over the world. Irrespective of gender, many people have been victims of this heinous crime, even though women are more common victims of such attacks. Day by day, this violence is seen to be on the increase. In the current scenario, little girls are also being affected by vitriolage. This act of intentional acid throwing on someone's body and face leads to permanent disfigurement, blindness, and even death. It causes serious mental and emotional trauma. Acid attack leaves a life-long scar on the victim's body and psyche. The easy availability and low expense of acid

encourage the perpetrators to use acid as a weapon against victims. Despite their severity, acid attacks remain a pervasive issue, and patriarchal norms and gender-based violence, rejection of marriage, and rejection of romance are the reasons for the heinous crime. In recent years, the voices of acid attack survivors have begun to come out, exchanging their true stories of resilience and courage in the face of unimaginable suffering.

This chapter aims to examine the existing works on acid attacks, including documentaries, memoirs, and novels for a better understanding of the issues and suffering of those affected. Those who have survived acid attacks encounter several obstacles on their path to recovery, from social integration to physical therapy. It has a long-lasting impact on the survivors' mental health and welfare. Therefore, it is crucial to research the psychological effects of these attacks. Today, these acid assaults are reported commonly in developing countries. Men attack women as there is a dominance over female victims, for refusing to marry or refusing to make sexual advances. In Bangladesh, acid attacks are labelled as a “Gender crime” (Acid attacks). In some other places, women throw acid on other women about fights over male partners. Men are the bulk of victims in the UK, and gang violence is frequently a factor in these attacks.

Over time, the body of research on acid attack survivors has expanded and evolved. In the beginning, there was very little research or discussion about acid assaults. But as people came to understand about this serious issue, researchers and activists started to work on this topic. A few groundbreaking studies and publications that detail the frequency and effects of acid attacks in specific areas first surfaced in the early 2000s. These works laid the foundation for further research on the need for support services, legal action, and community involvement to avoid and react to such heinous crimes. As concern and awareness increased, acid attacks became more varied and widespread. Scholars began examining the intersection of elements that contribute to acid attacks such as gender, class, and race along with the patriarchal norms, and power dynamics included. In the early days, the focus was only on documenting the problem and its effects. As time passed, scholars started to examine the trauma and experiences of survivors themselves.

In recent years, the literature on acid attacks has enlarged to include personal

narratives, memoirs of acid attack survivors, and documentaries that give a deeply intimate, and humanising perspective on the experiences of these individuals. Documentaries and films have also played a pivotal role in raising awareness often featuring the stories and struggles

of survivors. Autobiographical works promote a sense of empathy in them. Later, the researchers explored the intersection of psychological factors, trauma, feminist perspective, mental health, etc with acid attack survivors. A few have talked about the resilience of these victims, their coping strategies, support systems, etc. There were also fictional works related to acid attacks, which may be according to the author's imagination. The literature on acid attacks has developed over time, becoming more sophisticated, multidisciplinary, and international in scope, which reflects the seriousness and complexity of this issue. A wide range of documentaries and books emerged as powerful insights into the lives of acid attack survivors and the intricate issues underlying the assault.

Saving Face (2012) is a documentary film directed by Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy and Daniel Junge, which explores the lives of acid attack survivors in Pakistan. This short subject, *Saving Face* depicts the harsh reality of assault against women in South Asia. This film follows the stories of Zakia and Rukhsana, as they overcome their challenges and seek justice against their attackers. Many women are being victimized by these brutal attacks in Pakistan, with countless cases not reported. In many cases of acid attacks, the attackers are the victim's husband or family members. They had no remorse for the act they did and blamed the victims of the attack. Attackers in this film are deeply rooted in a patriarchal culture that leads to gender-based violence and discrimination.

The article *I am Zakira: I'm an Acid Attack Survivor; I Won't Cry and I Won't Die* is

about an acid attack and domestic violence survivor Zakira. This article is a first-person account of Zakira, who is determined to face the challenges. The article was published in 2020. The strong narration of her experiences put forward a poignant analysis of the connections of gender, violence, and resilience. Zakira was attacked by her husband in 2017, which left her with severe burns causing permanent disfigurement and disability. Gradually, she rebuilt her life through makeup artistry and became a beacon of hope for other survivors. This article highlights the issues including gender-based violence, trauma, victim blaming, and the need for social and legal support for survivors. Through her strong narrative, Zakira showcases her strength and determination to face challenges and restore her life. She also challenges societal norms that perpetuate violence against women. Zakira is an icon of resilience and economic empowerment even in her physical and emotional trauma.

Acid Attack: My Story, a documentary, tells the story of Naomi Oni, a British woman who survived a brutal acid assault in 2012. It was directed by Clare Richards in 2020. Naomi was only twenty, when she was attacked with acid

by her friend, Mary Konye who used a veil to pretend to be someone else. This documentary contributes a raw account of her experiences and the long journey to recovery. The documentary depicts several sensitive scenes and shows her journey - applying, and removing makeup, her hospital appointments, spending time with family and friends, etc.. This documentary provides the themes of betrayal of trust, trauma, resilience, empowerment, hope, justice, etc. This short subject highlights Naomi's strength and determination to bounce back from her adversities and she spoke publicly about her sufferings and pain, which makes people aware of the harsh reality of acid attack.

Being Reshma: The Extraordinary Story of an Acid-Attack Survivor Who Took

the World by Storm is a memoir by Reshma Qureshi and Tania Singh, published in

2019. The book tells the journey of Reshma Qureshi as an acid attack survivor and her

growth as a model, vlogger, and antacid-sale activist. Reshma belongs to a middle-

class Muslim family in Mumbai. This book unfolds the harsh realities of a heinous

crime. As Shashi Tharoor says:

Being Reshma, is a powerful story of courage, perseverance and triumph. This crisp yet emotionally grounded narrative not

only enables the reader to connect with acid attack victim Reshma

but also brings to life the reality of violence and humiliation that

many women in India continue to face. A significant achievement

and a compelling read (*Being Reshma*).

Tania Singh, co-author says that seeing how harsh the world can be to women and she

compared her life to that of Reshma's was the most challenging aspect. She came to know

about the fact that it was a challenge to understand what Reshma goes through and so

she needed to protect Reshma from reliving the most horrifying memories she had

gone through. Change originates at the grassroots level rather than at the top.

Through this book the writer truly believes that it is the true journey of millions of survivors of gender-based abuse. This book

hits close to home for many, yet survivors are afraid of speaking out.

By putting the face to acid violence this book tries to inspire those

women who are stuck in violence and abusive relationships. This book

is a true epitome of harsh realities that women face in India (Bhana).

Reshma described herself as “a rotten piece of flesh”, which conveys the emotional pain, and

shame that she experienced as a result of the attack. She undergoes multiple surgeries and suffers a lot of physical and psychological difficulties including a financial crisis. She was very passionate about makeup and the fashion industry before the attack. Despite the challenges and trauma, she overcomes her adversities with the help and support of her

family, Ria Sharma, CEO of Make Love Not Scars Organization, and Tania Singh.

She restores her life and pursues her dream through her strong determination and

willpower. This book is inspirational to all victims who are still in fear of bouncing

back and challenging their difficulties. She became the face of Make Love Not Scars,

an organization that supports acid attack survivors.

Uyare (2019), a Malayalam film directed by Manu Ashokan explores the

powerful portrayal of acid attack survivorship, resilience, and the connection between

trauma, identity, and empowerment. The movie talks about the journey of a young

and strong woman Pallavi, who survives an acid attack by her ex-boyfriend, Govind.

The film expertly portrays the sufferings and experiences of acid violence victims, the

emotional and physical pain they undergo. Pallavi surrounds herself with a strong supportive network including family and friends, which help her to cope with the trauma and in the process of recovery. Even though she is not ready to give up, she fights for justice, and with strong determination and support, she becomes an air hostess, where she finds a new sense of purpose and fulfilment, can rebuild her life, and accepts her new identity.

Namitha Gokhale, a writer and publisher, is a prominent figure in the Jaipur

literature Festival. Her work of fiction *The Book of Shadows* (1999) opens the tale

around the matter of acid assault. This kind of violence against women made there

lives even worse. In the novel, Rachitha Tiwari the protagonist is the acid attack

victim, after the attack she sought refuge in a remote village in the Himalayan

foothills. The author has also lived in that house, as Gokhale says in the Author's note:

I too have lived in the house I have written about. This is a novel

which has its core in truth. It has been written, or it has written itself,

under circumstances which would appear strange to most people. It has

been a vehicle to resolve my personal pain, but there is more to it than

that (Gokhale).

From the beginning of the novel, we learn that Rachitha is a person who wishes to live alone. Her fiancé commits suicide by hanging himself. The suicide note justifies that he was not happy in that relationship. “Goodbye, cruel world! I bid thee farewell! You have tried me sorely; you have abused my trust! My trust with time is over! Tell the faithless one, the Delilah, that her betrayal will cost her dear” (Gokhale 5). After his death, his sister threw acid on Rachitha's face. So, she wanted to move away from society and family because of this incident. She rejects social life; she finds herself out of place in this pathetic condition. She thinks that after the incident she lost her identity. She says,

I have come to the hills to heal, to hide, to forget. To forgive, to be

forgiven. My friends all resisted my decision. My sister even insisted

on accompanying me here, but I knew that I needed solitude and

soliloquy to come to terms with what had happened (Gokhale 6).

In the novel, Rachitha's character goes through a transformation from being a victim to a resilient character. She shows her extraordinary strength and determination in her journey towards recovery while facing a traumatic experience. It is a gradual and nuanced process, made possible by the journey to the hills. Art of storytelling, nail painting, connection with nature, supernatural encounters, and self-discovery helps her to empower herself by taking control of her own life, her voice, and her story. Her process

of healing is a complex and deeply human one, marked by setbacks, which shows that healing is possible, even in the hardest of times. As a coping mechanism she indulges in nature, she goes into retrospection, and she starts enjoying her own company, so it is a process of self-discovery for her. This novel is a reminder, which shows the capacity of individuals to transform the struggles to

rebuild our lives.

I Am Still Alive: Journey of Acid Attack Victims (2016) by Aman Kapur is a collection

of ten stories of women who have survived acid attacks. This book is all about acid

attack survivors in India. The author wrote the book, by travelling to Agra to meet

them at Sheroes Hangout Cafe and writing down their true stories by interviewing the

women. The stories of ten women are told in their own words, their struggles,

experiences, and their resilience. Also, it describes the section of Indian law which

deals with acid attacks. This book takes the readers deeply into the stories of the survivors. The emotional and physical pain they undergo gives a sense of empathy to the readers.

The author succeeds in balancing the brutality of acid attacks with their resilience and the process of recovery. Each chapter focuses on each one's story of pain, struggle, determination, and resilience. **Sheroes Hangout Cafe** run by acid attack survivors in India,

which was established to empower the survivors. The cafe can be seen as an embodiment of support and a ray of hope. The ten women mentioned in the book come out of their ordeals and fight to restore their lives.

From among the various types of works on acid attacks which include documentaries, books, research articles, films, short films, etc., three books, *Being Reshma: The Extraordinary Story of an Acid-Attack Survivor Who Took the World by Storm* co-authored by Reshma Qureshi and Tania Singh, *The Book of Shadows* written by Namitha Gokhale and *I Am Still Alive: Journey of Acid-Attack Victims* written by Aman Kapur have been selected for study in this article. These books give a nuanced analysis of the struggles experienced by acid attack survivors and make us aware of the harsh realities of acid assaults. These books offer uniquely personal, raw accounts of the victims' experiences. Critically it sheds light on gender-based violence. Moreover, these three books offer an analysis of the role of art in the process of their healing. These are inspiring and informative. Therefore, in a framework of resilience theory, these books form the base for this study

that focuses on art as a creative expression and therapeutic outlet for acid attack survivors.

III. HEALING AND GROWTH THROUGH CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Art therapy is a technique rooted in the idea that creative expression can promote resilience and mental well-being. It enhances social skills, promotes self-worth and self-awareness, and fosters insight into reducing and resolving conflict and pain. This is a creative process that enriches the lives of individuals, families, and communities. Adrain Keith Graham Hill is considered to be the founder of art therapy. His 1945 book, *Art Versus Illness* documents the origin of this field, while recovering from tuberculosis in a clinic. Hill overcame his boredom through the "simple art of drawing" (Hill, 14). He writes, "I became ... a diligent and leisurely composer of precise pencil productions, each of which in the terms of my restricted medium, sought to express my reactions to the unreality of my existence" (Hill 14).

According to Hill, art evolved as a means by which to pass the time and convey his discontentment with his current circumstances (Bush). Art therapy helps people to manage their stress and trauma through a creative outlet of art, which promotes resilience. Through the process of creative expression, people can improve their social support, post-traumatic growth, stress reduction, emotional regulation, promoting personal growth which are essential for building resilience. By facilitating these resilience factors, art therapy enables individuals to navigate challenges, thrive in difficult circumstances, and ultimately enhance their overall well-being and quality of life.

Art therapy has developed as a therapeutic outlet across different fields, giving a creative and expressive medium for people to deal with trauma, stress, and mental health challenges. It has been utilized in the realm of mental health to help individuals who suffer from depression, anxiety, and sadness. Art therapy has proven to be a valuable tool in the field of trauma healing for one who has undergone abuse, violence, or natural disasters. Through this one can analyse their experiences, express their emotions, and can rebuild their sense of identity and self-worth. Resilience theory provides a framework for understanding how art therapy can help people build the ability to endure and bounce back from adversity. According to resilience theory, art therapy can improve resilience factors that one can develop like emotional control and self-esteem. Art therapy presents a distinctive chance to foster resilience for acid attack victims too. They have to experience long-term extreme physical, and psychological trauma and a sense of shame, feelings of

guilt, and social isolation. They can start reconstructing their identity and confidence through art, as well as create coping mechanisms to deal with their trauma. Art can help in their journey towards healing and empowerment.

The concept of art as a therapeutic outlet for acid attack survivors by analysing the books *Being Reshma: The Extraordinary Story of an Acid-Attack Survivor Who Took the World by Storm* by Reshma Qureshi with Tania Singh, *The Book of Shadows* by Namitha Gokhale, and *I Am Still Alive: Journey of Acid Attack Victims* by Aman Kapur through the framework of resilience theory. Resilience is being able to bounce back from difficult life experiences and eventually, being successful in overcoming those challenges. To adapt, we have to be flexible cognitively, emotionally, and behaviourally. The four main factors that help an individual bounce back from challenges are adaptability, social support, coping mechanisms, and post-traumatic growth. The commonly referred to “3Cs” by resilience theory are coping (effective coping mechanisms), comfort (social support), and control (adaptability) (Citrin). The three books illustrate the 3Cs of resilience in different ways and art stood as an important part in the life of acid attack survivors to overcome their experiences. Each factor is essential for acid attack survivors to restore their lives. Adaptability refers to the ability to adapt to new circumstances and to navigate life from trauma. Art plays an important role in the process by providing a medium through which survivors can express their emotions and experiences, helping them to accept their new identity. Art as a creative expression leads to a sense of control and empowerment which is needed for adaptability. Social support or comfort is another significant factor that contributes to resilience. It involves support from family, friends, and communities. Through the process of empathy, encouragement, love, and care from the support system which helps the victims to heal. The interactions with others help victims feel less isolated and have a sense of being more supportive and valued. Coping mechanisms involve finding healthy ways to manage their stress and emotional pain. Art reduces the feeling of anxiety and promotes mental well-being. Through art, survivors can explore and express their inner growth leading to a deeper understanding of themselves. Art therapy becomes a significant tool in the process of healing for acid attack survivors (Grotberg and Malchiodi).

Being Reshma, co-authored by Reshma Qureshi and Tania Singh, gives an understanding of the pathetic yet motivating journey of an acid attack survivor. The narrative surpasses individual experiences, illustrating the role of art and how it became a therapeutic outlet. In the framework of resilience theory, which analyses how one can adapt and bounce back from adversity. Reshma Qureshi's chronicle is

evidence of human capabilities and creativity as a process of healing. Her foremost battles with art after her attack play a significant role in her journey towards overcoming. She retells how captivating artistic works contributed to getting out of her trauma. The ideas proposed by resilience theory focus attention on optimistic reconstruction through coping mechanisms. Creative expression allowed Reshma to express her emotions, turning her internal conflicts into tactile expressions of her resilience. The process of healing here is not just a creation of art but a shifted experience, restoring her identity from a victim of violence to a survivor of rebuilding her dreams. The book also emphasises the importance of the collective aspect of art therapy, which shows its relation among survivors. Reshma tells about her participation in combined art projects, Resilience theory holds up this by highlighting the importance of social support in overcoming the difficulty. The collective artistic attempts provided Reshma and her group with a bearing community, which enforces resilience through mutual encouragement and harmony. Additionally, this book showcases how art makes possible a re-examination of her self-worth and the role of society. Indulging in art allowed her to claim back her narrative, and maintain control over her life and public view. The reaffirmation of identity is very important in resilience, where one can rebuild their self-reflection in the face of trauma. Here, art makes Reshma capable of redefining herself by promoting a sense of purpose and future thought which is essential for resilience.

The real-life tale of Reshma Qureshi, which came out to make people aware

and inspire, demonstrates the role of art as a therapeutic outlet for acid attack survivors through the lens of resilience theory. Her invasion into the world of fashion started with her ramp walk at New York Fashion Week in 2016. This was not only a significant moment for Reshma but it was a breaking down of traditionally constructed stigma on acid attack survivors. She challenges the traditional concept of beauty in the world of fashion and encourages everyone. Later, she modelled for fashion campaigns and photo shoots to raise awareness of the heinous crime. Her work with Make Love Not Scars NGO also indicates her dedication to reconstructing the survivors' life. Reshma's life offers a clear path to resilience that changes personal trauma into an artistic triumph.

Namitha Gokhale's fictional work *The Book of Shadows* offers a nuanced exploration of trauma, healing, and resilience. The protagonist Rachita Tiwari, is an acid attack victim, who was attacked by her fiancé's sister in revenge for her brother's suicide. Rachita who lost her love, and identity, feels the pain, wishes to be alone, and finds her

mamaji's home in the foothills to heal herself. She states, "I have come to the hills to heal, hide and forget. To forgive, to be forgiven. My friends resisted my decision.. but I knew I needed solitude and soliloquy to come to terms with what had happened" (Gokhale 6-7). Gokhale delves into the power of art as a therapeutic outlet, which shows it as a powerful means of survival and self-expression through resilience theory.

This book portrays a different set of aspects of the resilience of Rachita. Her journey towards healing, connected deeply with the influence of nature, which modified her challenges, choices, and changes (3Cs). After the attack, she was totally in a physical and emotional struggle, which left her with permanent scars, fear, shame, and herself questioning her security and confidence. She used to cover her face with a Muslin Chunni, she didn't even look into the mirror either. She says, "I have not looked into a mirror for months now, and my face, that familiar index of my being, has dissolved into absurdity and abstraction. Even my fingers do not recognize the changed contours of my cheeks, or the injured flesh."(Gokhale).

She needs a change from her urban life and to be alone. She needs to hide from everyone and heal herself in her own company. Thus, she decides to go back to her roots in the hills. It was the turning point in her life. Here, nature plays an important role in the process of self-discovery and resilience. Her connection with nature is beautifully explored such as the tranquil beauty of rolling hills, clear skies etc... Her influence on nature changed her physical condition and made her somewhat confident. The healthy environment of the rural village has also influenced, she states, "As we neared the house a familiar sense of elation overtook me. The air here is different, it is thinner and purer than city air, its pine-scented effervescence made me feel heady and expectant"(Gokhale 9).

In the rural setting, she adapts to a simple, natural lifestyle, this transition harmonises her with the environment. She immersed herself in nature and surroundings, and engaging with the local community gave her relief because there was no one to stare at her. She was insecure in her urban life after the attack, the news spread everywhere and she was in the news.

The press took a morbid interest in all that has happened in the course

of that summer madness. Pictures of my face it has been started back

at me from everywhere. Reality pressed upon me with the weight of

the unshed August clouds, it confronted me in the eyes of strangers,

it afforded me no relief in that crowded relentless city I had once called

my home[Gokhale 6].

She discovered herself within her ancestral heritage and understanding of the

family's past. The coping mechanism she adapted was nail painting. Here, nail painting acts as a therapeutic outlet for her in the process of healing. This art therapy provides mindfulness, self-care, and creative expression. It helps to distract from haunting thoughts and helps one to be in the present moment. "Another part of the drill is nail polish...I change my nail polish every two days. The ritual of the acetone and the cotton wool and the two clear quick strokes of colour is immensely reassuring. It works better than tablets... As I concentrate on my nail polish my state of grace is complete" (Gokhale 18-19). This technique of art is more effective in managing one's physical and emotional distress. This practice helps Rachita to maintain their sanity, which gives her a sense of contentment and achievement.

Another factor that helps Rachita to overcome is the art of storytelling. Lohaniju, the manservant of Rachita's ancestral home used to narrate stories, which provided her with a means to express and release her emotions through catharsis. This framework helps to restore her sense of control over her circumstances and to challenge them. The art of storytelling provides new perspectives to her life and helps her in her overall development. The art of reading books also helps Rachita to survive trauma. She states, "I spend the nights reading" (Gokhale 17). Towards the end of the novel Rachita Tiwari regains her strength and anticipates her future, "the garden will bloom again, the roses by the veranda, the weeds and forget-me-nots by the gravel path. I think I know that I will remain" (Gokhale 232).

I am Still Alive: Journey of Acid-Attack Victims by Aman Kapur is a collection

of real-life stories of ten acid attack victims and their inspiring journey towards

healing through the process of art. The book elaborates on the chronicles of Laxmi, Ritu, Dolly, Madhu, Geeta, Neetu, Shabnam, and Ruquyya, and here, Sheroes

Hangout Cafe stands as the symbol of resilience, empowerment, and community for acid attack survivors. This cafe managed and run by acid attack survivors, provides a supportive and empowering environment that fosters healing. This cafe provides a therapeutic outlet through art, it serves healing through different forms of artistic expression including painting, craft-making, fashion designing, etc which gives a sense of relief from their pain and encourages them to come out of their physical and

emotional distress. Through the art of painting, sculpture, and other artistic forms, these victims articulate their pain, anger, and hope. The process of creating art enabled them to restore and transform their identity from a victim to a survivor and an artist. According to resilience theory, this indulges with the concept of agency, where individuals actively engage in behaviour that promotes their well-being and recovery. The Cafe hosts programs like artistic exhibitions, recitations, storytelling ..to foster an environment of healing. While working in the cafe they have to confront different types of people, which allows them to interact with the community and be able to express their identity. Engaging with art and creative expression they can express themselves and are an inspiration for others. By engaging in art like painting and drawing too can heal wounds.

The three books illustrate the role of art in promoting resilience among acid

attack survivors, they do so with different focuses and approaches. The key similarity

across these works is the portrayal of empowerment through expression. Each book highlights how art, be it makeup, artistry, photography, storytelling, or other forms of art like drawing, fashion design, etc provides a powerful medium for survivors to restore their identities and express their stories. Therefore, art is shown to be a crucial step in the journey towards self-acceptance and empowerment for the survivors.

IV. CONCLUSION

Resilience is an innate quality that is deeply implanted within human

prerequisites, pivotal for existence and adaptation throughout history. From an

evolutionary paradigm, resilience can be considered as a survival trait necessary for

facing and triumphing over various hurdles, and sustaining species propagation. Many people hold an intrinsic power for resilience that often goes unnoticed until important challenges emerge. This inherent adaptability can be exhibited in many ways, by showing courage, unused potential, unexpected nimbleness, and solution-oriented skills. In day-to-day life, one should cope with handling daily stress, navigate to change, and recover from small obstacles, often without knowing these actions as resilience. Major challenges, however, can act as stimulus, awaken one's inner strength, and reveal a hidden source of ability to adapt that they didn't know they had. Understanding and affirming an individual's resilience can be severely empowering as self-assessment and this realisation will help

to identify the strengths and techniques already implemented to handle difficulties. Resilience may naturally be present, but it can also be developed and promoted through conscious approaches such as fostering supportive networks, encountering uplifting moments, and acquiring successful coping techniques.

The resilience shown can vary according to the situation and is strongly

influenced by matters like supportive relationships and a caring community, which enable one to access and make use of their inherent resilience more efficiently. Ultimately, resilience represents an interplay between inborn potential and external influences. It is both a natural and fundamental aspect of human survival, lying latent until activated by challenges. Identifying and promoting this through a positive environment and resourceful practices can help one not only to overcome but also to flourish in the face of difficulties. This dual nature of resilience reinforces the strength of human flexibility and the intense capacity for revival and development. Resilience theory focuses on the ability of individuals to bounce back in the presence of adversity. The key factors that promote this theory include adaptability, which is the capacity to adjust a new circumstance; social support, which shows the importance of relation or communication with others, community which fosters resilience; and positive self-perception, which involves maintaining a hopeful outlook and confidence that one should have to overcome challenges. These elements help one to recover from traumatic events and promote long-term well-being and development.

Acid attacks are a form of violence that involves throwing acid substances into another to harm, disfigure or destroy them. The victims of this heinous crime, need to suffer severe physical injuries, including disfigurement and long-term health complications. Beyond these they have to face profound psychological trauma, Resilience theory that shows resilience is a dynamic process that involves the interaction between an individual and their environment. Art therapy has emerged as an important field in trauma recovery, which offers self-expression and healing, especially in acid attack victims. Existing literature on this suggests that engaging in artistic activities helps individuals to survive the trauma and rebuild their identities.

The integrative analysis gives an idea of how art helps in healing for trauma survivors. Emotional expression and catharsis are important for one who deals with trauma. "Every act of creation is first an act of destruction" (Picasso). Engaging in creative art forms like painting, music, and writing allows trauma survivors to express their internal feelings, which might be very painful to express verbally. Creating this form of art experiences emotional

relief from anger, sadness, and fear. This will also be both empowering and therapeutic which gives a sense of control over themselves. These activities can influence a state of flow which can reduce stress and enhance psychological well-being. Engaging in art also plays a crucial role in helping trauma survivors to rebuild their identities. Trauma, especially from acid violence, can severely affect a person's sense of self, often leading to a sense of loss and fractured identity. Artistic activities allow for exploring and redefining their identities and true selves. It serves as a way to reconstruct their self-image and evokes a sense of identity as more than a victim. Social support also nurtures an environment in the healing Community spaces like Sheroes Hangout Cafe provide a sanctuary where survivors can connect with other people who have shared similar experiences. These communities provide a sense of connection and good understanding, which is essential for emotional healing. These supportive groups reduce feelings of isolation and promote resilience. The scope of this study is limited by the literature and sources chosen for analysis. The selected works offer insights into the therapeutic use of art within the acid attack survivors, it represents only a small part of a broad area. This focused selection consciously provides a deep understanding of resilience theory through specific studies and creative expressions. The lack of literature on acid attacks is a great drawback, as the low availability of books showcases the restriction to explore a wider area and its impacts. So, the study must focus only on a small number of texts that might not represent different artistic methods used by survivors. Many of the victims still are victims, they are not able to come out of it and express their experiences. This analysis of three books gives a narrow understanding of the art of healing for acid attack survivors. This study showcases how art assists in emotional healing and self-identity, pointing to the possibility of creative methods to improve therapeutic approaches. This could lead to more productive and supportive treatment tactics that classify artistic expression as a key element in recovery. This study also highlights the important role of art in the recovery and empowerment of acid attack survivors, underlining the need for policy changes that integrate art therapy into treatment plans.

In conclusion, this article underlines the profound impact that art can have on

the resilience and recovery of acid attack survivors. Engaging with artistic expression in therapeutic practices, survivors can find solace in healing. Also, this study showcases the importance of widening our understanding of beauty and strength beyond superficial appearances, recognizing the immense courage and resilience demonstrated by these individuals.

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