

REPRESENTATION OF ISLAMIC FAITH: SOCIALIZATION OF *HABITUS* IN BAPSI SIDHWA'S NOVELS *ICE CANDY MAN* AND *THE BRIDE*

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Abstract

Present research aims to study the representation of Islamic faith as portrayed in a Pakistani female fiction writer Bapsi Sidhwa's two novels: *Ice Candy Man* and *The Bride*. For this, the study follows Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice which includes habitus, capital and field. The study focuses on the representation of Islamic faith and application of Islamic virtues during socialization of men and women as practiced in a Muslim society. Following textual analysis method of qualitative research, the study finds out that the habitus of agents from both novels is socialized according to their religious faith viz. Islam. Society practices different rules based on agents' faith which mainly shows the influence of their capital and field. The habitus makes agents' dispositions which are socialized and are strongly documented in their daily practices as Muslims.

Keywords: Faith, Islam, socialization, habitus, Muslim society

Introduction

Socialization plays an important role in making agents' *habitus*. In the very early age when child's mind is *tabula rasa* (Locke, 1690) he/she is socialized for particular behaviors and trends which became part of his/her life. The socialization is mainly colored with agents' religious faith. Agents internalise the information given to them since their childhood which is according to their religious faith. Jaffrey Awang et.al (2008) define religious socialization as "the process of absorption and assimilation of religious values in daily activities" (cited in Jamaludin 2013, p.18) which are infused in agents by their family. In fact, the first field of an agent is his/her the family. From their family, they learn the meaning of what they are, to whom they belong to and what are their religious values. Thus, "the socialization process continues with various initiation rites and institutions" (Ghica, 2013, p.44).

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For Muslims, their religion, Islam, is not just a faith. It is acceptance and acknowledgment of Almighty Allah's power. It is compliance to His will, and above all, firm and strong obedience to His all-wise principles and supremacy. The very essence of the religion is conveyed by its name *Islam*-confident, active, deliberate submission to the will of God. The word *Islam* comes from the root as *salam* (which means peace), which adds to the doctrinal teachings the sense of harmonious relations with other people (Fekib, 1998).

Keeping in view the socialization of agents from their religion's point of view, the present study analyzes Bapsi Sidhwa's novels *Ice Candy Man* and *The Bride* in a theoretical framework given by Pierre Bourdieu. It includes a conceptual triad- *habitus*, capital and field. The notion of *habitus* plays the most important and essential role in this theory. The study is limited only to the socialization of *habitus* of agents as reared according to their religious and cultural values. The agents from both selected novels practice their religious norms and values. *Habitus* has been frequently used to analyze the everyday interactions of agents and their struggle for survival. Capital and field play a subsidiary role in making and reinforcing agents' *habitus*.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to explore the impact of religious faith on the lives of characters in both selected novels of Sidhwa. The study purposes to underline the factors which involve and encourage their religious faith, and to uplift their position in their field by using their resources (capital). It also aims to highlight the strong faith of Muslim community residing with other ethnic communities and highlight the position of Muslims.

Research Question

1. How does Sidhwa portray the socialization of agents according to their religious faith in both selected novels?
2. How does *habitus* of agents, in both novels, develop for their religious faith?
3. What is the role of parents and community in making the religious beliefs strong in the mind of children?

Literature Review

The development of society is almost dependent upon the quality of socialization and upbringing of its children. For this, family is the basic unit of socialization and has a significant place in socializing the children according to their religious faith. A sound religious socialization produces a sound social setup. To assess the role and importance of socialization of agents according to the religious beliefs has been a much focus in researches. There have been many researches carried

on Islamic faith and socialization as represented by various writers in literature and in practical examples.

In America, Rashid (1988) studies the complexity of socialization process for Muslim children specifically living in American states. He compares and contrasts Islamic and Western perceptions on socialization, calling them two different perspectives. He stresses that for Muslims, the process of socialization is guided with the principles of Quran and Sunnah, because these are the guidebooks. Holy Quran expresses in the best way the socialization of Muslim children in chapter 6 ayah 153.

“Verily this is My Way, leading straight, follow it: Follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from his (great) path. Thus, doth He command you that you be righteous”.

By using the theory of broad and narrow socialization, Arnett (1995) analyzes the cultural context of socialization. He studies collation and distinction between cultures in their practices of socialization. He believes that the socialization differs according to cultures; therefore, he focuses on how cultural aspect is neglected in theories of socialization. In this view, he analyzed seven sources of socialization like family, school/work, the media, peers, the legal system, community, and the cultural belief system. All these sources of socialization are interconnected and encourage the socialization within the culture, based on the cultural belief system.

Focusing on the literary writings of Muslim women writers, Ancellin (2009) analyzes the issues of identity, uniformity, displacement and conformity in Muslim characters after the incident of 9/11. The study shows that post 9/11 situation for Muslim characters became worse. They were stigmatise as terrorists. Muslim women were mocked for wearing of the *hijab*. Therefore, they strived hard to make their identities.

Sarfraz (2013), a Pakistan researcher carried a study to analyze the image of Islam as represented by Nadeem Aslam in his novel *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004). Drawing upon postcolonial and Edward Said’s orientalist discourse. The study shows that the orientalist discourses present the image of Islam and Muslims as normative and subtractive. By following this image, Aslam, depicts negative images of Islam, though these basically do not belong to Islam. These are used in the name of Islam. Sarfraz concludes that Aslam’s treatment of Islam shows him as product of western discourses.

A more comprehensive study on socialization was carried by a Malaysian researcher, Jamaludin (2013). He studies the importance of socialization process in making a valuable human

being. He focuses on different socialization agents, like family, parents, school and peers which help in making an identity of a valuable individual. Moreover, he stresses that for Muslims, without getting religious socialization, a man would remain incomplete. With religious socialization, an individual understands and incorporates religious principles of holy Quran and Sunnah in his everyday conduct. It builds an individual physically, mentally and spiritually. Therefore, an efficient socialization experience is a key to an excellent human management.

In the same year, Laeheem (2013) conducted a case study on Thai Muslims to investigate adolescent's behaviour based on Islamic beliefs. The study focuses on different patterns of behaviour based on participants' level of apprehension of Islamic values, their level of socialization according to Islamic doctrines, their participation in religious activities, and their presence at particular Islamic study courses. These all factors depend on their home, family, gender, family status, age group and educational level. From the data, Laeheem finds out that those adolescents who get higher level of supervision from their family based on Islamic values, mostly, adopt the behaviour in compliance to Islamic principles. They have more understanding of Islamic values and teachings because their socialization is based on Islamic teachings. They are mostly found participating in religious activities and Islamic study classes. Thus, it is their upbringing and supervision under Islamic principles, which moved them to behave in virtuous ways and act according to the teachings of Islam.

Focusing on representation theory and Foucault's discursive formation approach, Alireza and Abolfazl (2015), Iranian researchers, analyze the representation of Islam in post 9/11 six English novels written by Updike, DeLillo, Ferrigno, See, Halaby, and Kalfus. Researchers find out that the novels are in one line to talk about war against terrorism and determine the discourses against Muslims such as calling all Muslims the same, violent, violence promoter, and showing Zionists as innocent. Thus, four of the six novels, confirm with the power discourse, while, approach of the rest two novels is quite dissident toward power discourse. Which indicate the existence of various voices residing in America, though the feeble voice is not heard, so is the loud voice.

Bourdieuian Perspective

Bourdieuian notion of *habitus* has a central importance in the conceptual triad. It has been broadly used for various approaches (Gaddis, 2013; Papacharissi & Easton, 2013; Lo & Stacey, 2008) and it can be rightly used to analyze the impacts of religious socialization in the literary texts. Since *habitus* is a "scheme of perception, thought and action" (Bourdieu, 1992, p.53) produced during early life experiences, therefore the agents of both proposed novels rightly fit to be analyzed according to this notion. According to Jenkins (1992) and Reay (1995) subsequent

experiences of life achieved from social milieu strengthen the *habitus* of an individual in which family history and class play significant role for constructing one's collective *habitus* (see also Bourdieu, 1990).

The second notion of the triad, capital, also plays a pivotal role in making agents' *habitus*. Capital includes material, cultural and symbolic goods possessed by agents, or culturally significant elements such as prestige, power, honour, and status (Bourdieu 1986; Wacquant, 2008). As we see the practices of agents in Sidhwa's novels directly result from their capital- depending on their material possessions and achievements. Therefore, this notion justifies how characters act and react as per their capital.

Field, the third notion of the triad, is social construction, and particular context or circumstances, in which agents live and unfurl their individuality (Bourdieu, 1986). Field determines the social positions of individuals or institutions (Lounsbury & Ventresca, 2003 cited in Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2005). In Bourdieuan perspective there is an acute association among *habitus*, capital and field in socialization of children. This notion helps in understanding the nurturing of *habitus* and socialization of the agents residing in their specific fields and context.

Research Methodology

To analyze the socialization of agents based on their religious faith, the study follows qualitative method of research. The data of the study is interpreted in the descriptive form to present the key findings of the research. There are different methods of data collection based on the kind of the research. For an in-depth study of Muslims' religious faith, this study uses textual analysis method for data collection (Neuman, 1992; Bobbie, 1996). It is an appropriate technique to obtain textual meaning (Cuddon, 1999). This method enables to understand the meaning of a text by focusing its specific, symbols, tone, words, characters, chain of events and point of view of the writer.

Thus, following Bourdieuan theoretical framework, i.e., his conceptual triad; *habitus*, capital and field; the two novels of Bapsi Sidhwa *Ice Candy Man* (*published in 1988*) and *The Bride* (*published in 1983*) have been selected. With a close reading of these selected texts, researchers endeavoured to comprehend, evaluate and analyze the behaviours, mood and expressions of the characters in both the novels, and the narrator, with her tone of speaking. In this overall process of analysis, the researchers portrayed the slow but firm socialization of agents' *habitus* based on their religious faith.

Data Analysis

The word religion covers a variety of concepts, like customs, the state, conduct, politics, opinion, judgment and obedience (Fekib, 1998). Islam as a religion is “a divine institution that leads people, with their free consent, to supreme bliss... It is belief and practice...It is the link that unites straying man with God through acts of worship and the fulfillment of obligations towards God, the community or oneself” (Miskawayh cited in Fakib, 1998, p. 89).

Muslims follow the values and norms of Islam by their heart and soul and they teach the religious values and norms to their children too. This teaching starts from the very birth of a child when *Azan* is said in his/her ear. The proposed novels of this study show that the social norms of agents are already set in the field which are based on the ethnical and religious values. In *Ice Candy Man* (Sidhwa, 2015) and *The Bride* (Sidhwa, 1984) there are various communities depicted- Muslim, Hindu, Parsi and Sikh. The beliefs and customs of these communities are continuously depicted in the novels. Among these four, the main and influential community is the Muslim community, which is the focus of this analysis. It determines the *habitus*, field and capital of agents.

The first field of an agent is his/her family, which plays an important role in teaching and practicing their religious values. For understanding an agent's faith, understanding of his/her family's practices and faith is very important, which replicate and transmit the values of the religion and culture as a whole. Parents transmit the same practices to their children what they had learnt in their childhood. Their children and grandchildren are likely to follow the same what have learnt from their own experiences of socialization. Thus, this process goes on.

Religious Education

Holy Quran is sacred and divine religious scripture. Muslims regard it as their duty and obligation to read and recite it daily. Parents feel it obligatory to teach the holy Quran to their daughters and sons. Such as Qasim, a Kohistani man living in Punjab worries about his adopted daughter Zaitoon's religious education. He arranges for her to read holy Quran daily (Sidhwa, 1984, p.52).

Moreover, the Muslim characters in the novels have staunch faith in the miraculous power of Quranic verses, whenever they have any problem they recite the verses from Quran. Such as, Mariam, wife of Nikka, the nurse and guardian of Zaitoon, recites verses to ease Zaitoon's pain in stomach (Sidhwa,1984, p.54). Zaitoon too recites the verses, while wandering the mountains and prays from Allah to protect her. By this, elders make *habitus* of their children to grow with the recitation of the Holy verses, and their field supports this *habitus* by encouraging all the children to go to mosque and complete their *Qiada* and Quran.

Furthermore, the lives of prophets and Khulfa-e- Rashidin are great examples for Muslims to follow. After Quran, Muslims follow the Sunnah of the last Prophet PBUH and the sayings and actions of the Khulfa-e-Rashidin. Mothers do tell the stories of Khulfe-e Rashidin to their children to infuse in them the passions of valour, wisdom and companionship. Such as Mariam soothes Zaitoon with the tales about the valour of Hazrat Ali (R.A), the wisdom of Hazrat Omer (R.A) and the brutal tragedy of Hazrat Imam Hassan (R.A) and Hussain (R.A) at Karbala (Sidhwa,1984, p.54).

Maintaining Purdah

For a Muslim woman maintaining purdah is her most important duty. Purdah is covering oneself with a long piece of scarf from head to toe. For this, girls wear *chaddar* (a long scarf/stole) and elderly women wear *burka* (it looks like a gown). Both forms are depicted in both novels of this study. In a Muslim community, maintaining purdah is not just covering with *burka* or *chaddar*, but it has a deeper meaning. Women follow it in their daily routine practices as a part of their *habitus*. In their field, whenever a woman has to go outside home, she covers herself with *burka* and while going through the streets keeps her eyes down and bowed. Thus, the purdah is carried with multipurpose- used for keeping body veiled, which keeps away from many sins.

Mariam observes a complete purdah from her husband's friend Qasim, though they live in a same house, because Qasim is a *Na-Muharam* for her. Whenever Qasim talks to Mariam, he stands behind the curtain of the gate and talks from outside. She never appears bare head, and used to wear a shawl at the home (Sidhwa, 1984, p.53). Not only women, but men also observe purdah in some sense, whenever, men see any unrelated (*Na-Muharam*) woman visiting their home, they would left the place where women sit. The same *habitus* is maintained and nurtured in young boys and girls. Mariam nurtures Zaitoon when she started to grow, and she tells her about keeping veil and purdah. Mariam tells Zaitoon "you are now a woman... this is why I wear a burka" (p.55). Mariam tells Zaitoon that "burka hid a multitude of sins" (p. 89). Thus, Zaitoon feels delighted in copying Mariam, in a simple deception and she would sometime borrow Mariam's burka and sheath herself from head to toe. Not only Mariam, but Zaitoon's father Qasim too instructs her to cover her head and keep her head down.

Furthermore, Purdah has become an identity of Muslim women. It is observed throughout the life, specially observed during the pious moments such as at the time of *azan*, while performing *namaz* (prayer) and reciting holy Quran. Zaitoon observes that in the house of *Mullah* in their neighbour, it was an austere practice, this *habitus* was raised so intimately and honestly that even the little girls cover their head when they listen warning sound of microphone which shows that it is time for saying *azan* which is call to prayer (Sidhwa,1984).

Purdah is also observed by women in *Ice Candy Man* (Sidhwa, 2015). Women in Pir Pindo village keep themselves covered and keep *dupatta* (scarf) on their head and remain away from strangers (*Na-Muharam*). Men don't allow anyone outsider in home as Imam Din says to the mob going in their house "where are you going? You can't go to the back! Our women are there, they observe purdah!" (187).

Thus, keeping purdah and maintaining veil is not just religious obligation but it has become a cultural norm among Muslims.

Freedom of Expression

Islam has given freedom of expression to both men and women equally. Women in both the novels express their consent for the matter of their lives: by giving suggestions, by arguing and denying. Though the ratio of women's expressive *habitus* is less than that of men because culturally there are different patterns for the expression of thought. Yet women discuss and play important part in decision making, such as Mariam discusses about the marriage of Zaitoon with Qasim. She talks straight away with Qasim about Zaitoon's unmatched marriage with a tribal man. She argues logically that a girl brought up and educated in Lahore cannot be happy in mountain tribal areas. Because the tribal ways are different; they are savages, brutish, uncouth and ignorant, she will be miserable among them. They do not know how to treat women (Sidhwa, 1984, p. 93). Zaitoon also tells her wish to father when they come to hills, she says "Abba take me to the plains, I do not want to marry. If I must marry, marry me to someone from the plains. That *jawan* at the camp, I think he likes me. I will die rather than live here" (Sidhwa, 1984, p.157).

Moreover, Carol, an American wife of Farukh, an army officer, also has an immense freedom of her choice. She compares her life with that of America. She feels her life in Pakistan is rich: it is exciting and even glamorous. As an American, she has much more freedom than a Pakistani wife. She could say things and get ways with, behaviour and dress. She has become used to moving, thinking, and speaking with an increasing sense of freedom. She has not understood the strange contradictions and forces in her new life in Pakistan (Sidhwa, 1984).

Maintaining the Customs

The socialization of agents is bound to their capital and field. Those agents who possess a village lifestyle, they transmit the same to their children. For example, in villages mastering household chores is an obligation for girls. The girl who is efficient in house chores is regarded skilful and intelligent. This is what their elder women have been doing and they are transmitting this capital to the younger girls. As in *Ice Candy Man*, Khadija and Parveen remain busy with household works

like their elder women, “busy with chores, baskets of grain stuck to their tiny hips, they scuttle about importantly” (Sidhwa, 2015, p.4).

The same is presented in *The Bride*, girls’ *habitus* is brought up and moulded for the household chores. The field supports this *habitus* as an important aspect of girls’ life. Sidhwa demonstrates that from their early age, girls are trained to do household chores such as Mariam teaches Zaitoon cooking, sewing, shopping and keeping her room tidy (1984, p.55). Women also keep themselves busy and teach girls knitting or embroidery, and sewing *kurta* or *Shalwar* (shirt or trouser). At *Mullah’s* house, Zaitoon observes that women sit for knitting and embroidery, while girls feed and wash their younger brothers and sisters. Little girls carry their younger siblings.

Besides this, cooking is regarded as women’s special quality, little girls copy their mothers, they play house-keeping games with their dolls and use miniature earthenware pots and ladles (Sidhwa, 1984, p.57). When Zaitoon was married in hills, she works all the day: chaffing, kneading, washing and tending the animals and the young green rice-shoots and the sprouting maize. “She collected animal droppings, and patting them into neat discs with her hand, plastered them to the hut... occasionally she direct the flow of irrigation water” (1984, p.174).

Hence, the field in which girls survive, support them to do household chores regardless of their age, which is considered as their cultural capital and their *habitus* is formed to carry on this capital. Because field, as Gouanvic (2005) assumes, cannot be separated from *habitus*. It supports their *habitus* for house chores as an obligation for girls. Therefore, women consider that doing household chores is their potential in their field. They make themselves recognised by their experience of doing household chores. As Hamida in *Ice Candy Man*, while looking for a job in Lenny’s house, introduces herself as the one who is experienced in household chores, she says “I am not frightened of work. I will sweep, clean, milk the buffalo, churn the butter, wash clothes, clean out latrines, make chapattis... after all I have been housewife” (Sidhwa, 2015, p.196). The field and capital in Sidhwa’s both novels support girls’ early life socialization for doing all household chores which is part of their culture.

Moreover, it is depicted that Muslims keep their customs alive. They live in joint families and keep their all members in touch. The *Mullah* of the Qila Gujar mosque lives with a large joint family. He has two wives. His second wife is his elder brother’s widow. After his brother’s death, rather than leaving his widow and children to the hazards of widowed and orphaned destitution, *Mullah* had married her and adopted her three girls” (Sidhwa, 1984, p.56).

In addition to this, maintaining the practice of beard is Sunnah and very common among Muslims “In mullah’s house the men wore beard” (Sidhwa, 1984, p.58) and many characters in *Ice Candy*

Man also keep beard. Furthermore, performing *namaz* is the first priority of all the Muslims, listening *azan*: call to prayer “men gathered in the mosque and women who had performed *wazoo*, that is, had washed themselves as specified in the Quran, spread their mats wherever they could. They knelt, facing Makkah, to pray undisturbed by children crawling, squalling, running and quarrelling around them. The rest of women cover their heads and prayed silently for the duration of the call, carrying on with whatever they were doing, stirring the pot in the kitchen or breast-feeding the babies!” (p.58).

Keeping one’s promise is regarded an indispensable quality of Muslims. Once they give their word they stand to it even at the cost of their lives. This also shows their faith. Chaudhry Sahib says to Nikka “I give you my words as a Musliman” (Sidhwa, 1984, p.60). That shows his faith on his religion. Similarly, Qasim says to Mariam and Nikka when they discuss about Zaitoon’s marriage “I gave him my word” (p.93) and “on it depends my honour. It is dearer to me than my life” (p.159).

Sidhwa mentions that “*Allah ki Kasam* is an oath that Muslims will not take lightly” (2015, p.186). When Imam Din tells mob that *Allah Ki Kasam*, Ayah is not in the home, the furious people in mob turned away their faces, or look at the ground. Because they knew that this man can not lie when he vows Allah’s name.

The staunch belief of Muslims is depicted, as they pray only from Allah and ask His help. They give good wishes and *dua* to their children in the name of Allah. Such as, when Zaitoon was leaving for Kohistan, Mariam says her “God give you a long life, keep you always happy and smiling”... Nikka also says “God be with you child (Sidhwa, 1984, p.98). Moreover, in their difficult times they pray from Allah such as Misri Khan prays “Allah help us” (p. 215). Hamida mother of Sakhi also consoles her son “you must leave some things to Allah, you can’t be everywhere all the time” (p.215).

Conclusion

This paper discussed the socialization of *habitus* of agents in a Pakistani writer Bapsi Sidhwa’s two novels *Ice Candy Man* and *The Bride*. The study analyzed the socialization of *habitus* of Muslims agents according to their capital as practiced in their particular field.

Using Bourdieuan critical approach, the main focus of this study was on *habitus*, which helped to find out the answers to the research questions in this study. The analysis of both novels reveals that agents’ *habitus* is socialised from their early age for being follower of their religious and cultural teachings. This socialization becomes deeper when they grow and they teach the same to their generations. This *habitus* is developed in agents’ field where they survive and struggle.

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