



Self-realization in Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride*: A Freudian Perspective

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the importance of self-realization in Bapsi Sidhwa's (1983) The Pakistani Bride. Sidhwa (1983) not only allows her characters to narrate their own different stories but later on they all have some sort of connection with the main character Zaitoon and her struggle for freedom. Psychoanalysis was propounded by Sigmund Freud in his book A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis (1917) which is selected as a theoretical framework for this study. According to him, the aim of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious thoughts conscious and release the repressed emotion within one's self. The research carried out under certain objectives and research questions aiming to find out the achievement of self-realization by the main character of Zaitoon and the factors involved behind the gaining of consciousness by her in the man dominated tribal culture. In this regard, psychoanalysis technique of Freud is used to discover her emotional and psychological journey from unconsciousness towards consciousness. Therefore, in this study all those factors are explored through which she achieved self-realization and turned herself from a fragile and silenced specie into a strong, free and independent woman. Her whole journey towards self-realization is discussed in this educational study.

Keywords: Self-Realization, Psychoanalysis, Unconsciousness, Consciousness, Repression

INTRODUCTION

The importance of self-realization in the life of an individual cannot be denied, especially in the life of a girl or woman in a male dominant society and its impact on her mental health.

Here, it is tried to examine different and difficult situation in the life of the main female character in 'The Pakistani Bride', named 'Zaitoon' and what she has experienced towards the end of novel, attaining self-realization in the struggle for



freedom but without realizing it by herself. This novel by Sidhwa holds number of themes having universal importance and can be explored from different perspective. Some of them are the theme of marriage, honor, position of women in male dominant society, cultural conflict and struggle for freedom. Undoubtedly Sidhwa has portrayed all themes artistically but self-realization is an eye-catching element in the novel. Zaitoon after so many terrific experiences whether that is her marriage or conflict with tribal culture, Sidhwa present her as a real and strong woman and put the sense of self-realization in her because of which she decided to escape for freedom. Tribal customs and traditions are also explained quite in detail where woman is treated mere as an object and is being suppressed. Suppression of women was and, to some extent, is still a dominant issue in almost every age and in every field of life, as well as in literary representation.

According to Horney a healthy person strives for self-realization, its transformation that requires the realistic view of one's own potential and matching goals to that reach that potential. Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung also held self-realization in high regard, believing that this process also called individuation (2010) is the main goal in life. A neurotic, on the other hand, is consumed with obsessive ineffectual coping methods to the point that full self-realization is impossible. How does one become neurotic? Horney observed that neuroticism stands from childhood experiences at the basis of formation of a personalities life's social as well cultural conditions for example as child we need a certain of affection, security, love etc., to develop into healthy individuals, when these aren't received in childhood then it can lead to what Horney called basic anxiety and basic hostility. These

conditions will dominant the ways in which the effected individuals deal with their daily lives.

The story of this novel is based on a true story of an orphan girl narrated to Bapsi Sidhwa during her visit to a remote village of Karakoram mountains. During her visit she heard a story about a girl who was brought to the tribal area of Karakoram from plain area of Punjab in order to marry her father's (adoptive father) nephew. About after one month of her marriage her life became worse, and it was difficult for her to survive. She was abusively treated by her husband and was beaten by him on small issues just to show his manliness over her as a result their marriage became hell and eventually the situations became unbearable for her and she took a decision to run away from brutal marriage experience, culture: where woman is being objectified and hardship of tribal life. But after she escaped, she survived for 15 days in Karakoram mountains without knowing where to go. She was followed by her husband along with his clan's men in order to kill her because according to them by escaping she has ruined their family honor. Lately she was caught by her husband and was killed by cutting her throat and thrown to a river.

The novel '*The Pakistani Bride*' mainly revolves around the lead character Zaitoon, who is Punjabi orphan girl. As an adopted child Zaitoon spend her childhood in the area Qila Gujjar Singh Lahore with Qasim. Qasim usually feel nostalgic about his old tribal life and used to tell things about his people and about Kohistan and its mountainous beauty. As Zaitoon was used to listen about Kohistan and the people lived there so she was very much fascinated by the beauty of tribal people and natural beauty of Kohistan. But soon after her marriage her fantasy



about her husband and marriage was scattered. She faced brutal experience of patriarchy. Her struggle was not just with patriarchal society but also cultural differences, she was double marginalized. She faced numerous tortures in name of patriarchy and culture. She tried to survive in such a brutal life but then a time came when she took a decision to escape from those torments, this was a time of self-realization but it was still not Zaitoon herself who thought about self-realization it is the writer Bapsi Sidhwa who showed Zaitoon as a self-realized person. Zaitoon just ran for her life from those barbaric tribal life and traditions which has no place for women. She ran away from her marriage, husband and tribal life. She was found half dead by army officer. Sakhi (her husband) and his clan's men in the processes of finding her, also managed to reach army camp and inquired about Zaitoon in order to kill her as she has disgraced the honor of their family and clan by running away being as woman, but the soldier told them that Zaitoon died in mountains. Bapsi Sidhwa wants to create awareness about self-realization in the female section of Pakistani population; who are still struggling for their due place. This concept is put together in the major female character of Zaitoon. It is, therefore, generalized on the whole population in the shadow of that character. The researcher investigates to find out that how self-realization is inflicted in the story.

Research Questions

1. What elements forced the protagonist, Zaitoon, to move towards self-realization in Bapsi Sidhwa's 'The Pakistani Bride'?
2. What is the outcome of Zaitoon's journey towards self-realization?

Literature Review

The Pakistani Bride'

A. John Sujith and Dr. R.Suriya Prakash Narayanan (2018) in *Exposing the Pangs of Women in Bapsi Sidhwa's The Pakistani Bride* shed light on difficulty and unbearable situation of women as shown in Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Pakistani Bride*. According to them *The Pakistani Bride* is about Pakistani women being marginalized, they are treated as commodities rather than people. They are of the view that *The Pakistani Bride* is a novel that showcases the darker side of Pakistani tribal life, as well as its unsympathetic attitude, which is sometimes at conflict with mainstream morals and standards. Bapsi Sidhwa has concentrated on the topic of women being mistreated across the world. They also wrote that Sidhwa aims to hold up a mirror to society and women who are suffering in society and on the subcontinent, demonstrating how the society's harsh and dishonest social code has become a special limitation and hurdle for women. Their study examines that the novelist honors her femininity by giving voice to women who have been silenced for centuries and empowering women.

Swati Srivastava and Avneesh Kumar Singh (2016) in "*The study of female figure in Bapsi Sidhwa's 'The Pakistani Bride' and Tehmina Durrani 'My Feudal Lord'*" show that Patriarchy oppresses women economically, politically, socially, and mentally in every arena where patriarchy dominates. Women are treated as second-class citizens, defined only by their differences from male norms and ideals. The ultimate purpose of all feminist action, including feminist theory and literary criticism, is to transform the world by encouraging gender equality. Consequently, whether we are



consciously aware of these concerns or not, gender concerns play a role in every element of human production and experience, including the creation and experience of literature. Bapsi Sidhwa being as a feminist writer, she transforms her language into a feminine realm in which her books thrive. Her novel *The Pakistani Bride* deals with the repression of women in the patriarchal Pakistani society. Swati Srivastava and Avneesh Kumar Singh are also of the view that Sidhwa provides an alternate picture of a strong and confident female against Pakistani literature's dominant patriarchal rhetoric. Carol is the novel's greatest supporting actress, while Zaitoon is the novel's heroine. The novel's author comments on the treatment of a civilized, upper-class Western woman in the novel's male-dominated universe through Carol. Carol's narrative adds credibility to Zaitoon's. Both stories express Sidhwa's viewpoint on the treatment of women in the novel's setting. Women's voices are supposed to be muffled by the shadows of their husbands, fathers, and brothers. Sidhwa expresses the opinion that Pakistani families at home reject the existence of a war. The research of this study also shows that '*The Pakistani Bride*' is a prose poem written by a woman in response to her existential doom and cultural persecution. In the character of Zaitoon, Sidhwa has used complicated metaphors to choreograph a woman's numerous agonies, a successful representation of agony and suffering. She has written powerfully on a specific culture, marriage, loyalty, and honor, as well as their clash with traditional values. On other hand this study also examines the other novel *My Feudal Lord* (1995) which according to the study of this article is the archetypal representation of women's misery and oppression. It was written in a clear and specific Pakistani setting, addressing

the condition of women in patriarchal symbolic system. Durrani's art demonstrates how women are treated as personal property and assets of males in third-world nations like Pakistan, where males govern every aspect of women's lives, including their behaviors and travels. In the family, tribe, community, and society, males have the right and full authority to make decisions for women, and women must obey those decisions.

Aurangzeb (2022) highlighted morality as the key point of any society or an individual of a nation. An individual as well as group is directly affected from moral decline, morality specifies the direction of any society or individual but moral degeneration destroy or society and our norms. Moral degeneration can never lead capable nation, tolerance, healthy activities (Aurangzeb, 720)

Self-realization

Self-realization is a complicated process that requires consideration from a variety of angles in order to present a complete and more accurate picture of how individuals grow. Although Jung (1875-1961) adopted the principles of psychoanalysis and major ideas of Freud (1933, 1937) at the start of his work, he eventually believed that some of them were untrue and could not explain the delicate mechanics of mental functioning. As a result, Jung disagreed with Freud that religion was a neurosis, a return to childhood worries that had to be set aside as a sign of adult life growth. Religion, according to Jung, is psychologically vital not just for mental well-being, particularly in the second half of life, but also for social cohesiveness. "A psychoneurosis must eventually be viewed as the pain of a soul who has not yet realized its meaning," (Carl Jung quote) he



remarked, rejecting the Freudian notion that neurosis is a result of sexual tensions and repressed violent inclinations. The phrase "self-realization" was coined by Jung, and it was later adopted and explored by the humanistic psychology movement. In the systems of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, this was one of the most essential notions. Jung defined individuation as the tendency for a person's personality to evolve into a cohesive and integrated ensemble.

Bapsi Sidhwa and her work

Dr. Rachna Davi (2017) states that Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *The Crow Eaters* to give the detailed depiction of Parsi mind, social behavior, value systems, and customs. Miss Davi is of the view that on another level, *The Crow Eaters* might be interpreted as a parody on Parsi culture. A portion of the Parsi community criticized the work since it was assumed that the novel's main theme was the life of the Parsi. Sidhwa does neither glorify or demonize Parsi life in this poem. Parsi, like many other minority groups, created a little book to praise themselves. They were not accustomed to being mocked or lampooned. Sidhwa admits something about her own community. By no means are the Parsis angels. One can observe their strength, weakness, and women's strength. She concluded her article by stating that Sidhwa has assessed the Parsi community's role to India's liberation movement and division. Her research focuses on the Parsi community. She tries to draw a map of their shifting identities. She has touched a hidden corner of his private community in this way. The essential point is that their culture is a part of

their identity. Parsians are wary of disclosing Parsi culture. They have always thought that it is their responsibility to protect their culture from outside influences.

Shraddha Dhal (2021) in '*Anxiety as a Source of Motivation: A Critical Study of the Select Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa*' stated that the main aim of her research with reference to Bapsi Sidhwa's works, that how the collective annihilation worries of a decreasing group like the Parsi becomes a motivation element to engage into creative endeavors as a coping technique to assist them withstand the worry of their shrinking number. The psychological state of Parsi creative writer Bapsi Sidhwa is discussed in this work, as well as how self and identity are conceptualized in the face of death and peril. Sidhwa inherits ancestral pain and fears about her community's existence, and she is pushed to a higher level in her artistic work as a result of this communal survival fear. Her countless ethnocentric literary discourses that sustain the community's existence are the outcome of this. As a result, worry may be used to motivate people; in this sense, it not only disturbs the comfortable but also comforts the disturbed. This research sets the path for more research on annihilation fear in other ethno-religious minority who are marginalized, excluded, and fighting for existence.

Psychoanalysis

Md. Mahroof Hossain (2017) in '*Psychoanalytic Theory used in English Literature: A Descriptive Study*' stated that in the critical examination of a literary piece, psychoanalysis is a strong instrument. Its impact on literary composition is to provide the text 'legitimacy.' He is also of the that the re-normalization of a person's life is the goal of psychoanalytic therapy. It has placed a



high value on the relationship between the unconscious and cognitive processes. They argued that being aware of this is therapeutic and necessary for mental wellness. Psychoanalysis emphasized motivations, focusing on hidden or disguised reasons that aid in the clarification of literature on two levels: the level of writing itself and the level of character activity within the text. Psychoanalysis places a strong emphasis on the subject and strives to explain how meaning and identity are related to psychological and cultural processes. Moreover, he says that Psychoanalysis is subject to a variety of hypotheses. Freudian theory, Lacanian theory, and object related theory are the three basic theories associated with psychoanalysis. Md. Mahroof Hossain concluded his paper by stating that the application of Freudian concepts to the explanation of literary writings, thereby equating the text with the writer's "psyche" and giving us a deeper insight into the writer's unconscious. Finally, this study aimed to demonstrate a link between psychology and literature, demonstrating that 'Literature' employs 'Psychoanalysis' for creative objectives, enhancing the literary text's quality value and validity. Literature has the ability to affect our cognitions and internal self-structures, and this change may be properly described through psychoanalytic critique, allowing us to explore new reading possibilities. The book '*Shakespeare in Psychoanalysis*' (2005) is divided into two sections by Armstrong. From Freud's definition of the Oedipus complex forward, the first chapter, "Shakespeare in Psycho-analysis," presents Shakespeare as "both subject to psychoanalysis and a constitutive presence in psychoanalysis." The second section, "Psychoanalysis out of Shakespeare," examines a variety of contemporary forms of interaction between Shakespeare and psychoanalysis,

including memory theories and representations, psychoanalytic criticism of Shakespeare, and psychoanalytic narratives in popular culture Shakespeare films.

Aurangzeb (2023) concluded that literature is the product of the author's creativity and emotional expression is piece of literature. Literature serves as another approach for us to use our imaginations to understand the world surrounded our self and external world. It indicates that literature has a strong connection to the real world. In literature, individual experiences are generally portrayed. In writing, life is not the only subject. The truth of life is frequently reflected in the emotions that people convey via literature. An individual has a greater opportunity to appreciate and understand literature because of its elegance as a work of fiction. (Aurangzeb, 549)

Research Methodology

The researcher must use meaning-based data analysis rather than statically data analysis to assess non-numerical data. Qualitative research is inductive and process-oriented, with the purpose of learning about the topic under investigation from the perspective of the participants. According to Kothari, qualitative research looks at people's motivations, attitudes, views, and feelings. The researcher in analytical research critically examines the available facts and information in order to determine the origin and impact of the situation under investigation. (Kothari 2-3). It describes fact and information available in the text in the form of action, words, behavior, opinions, feelings and attitudes. The researcher has to describe that what kind of problems and suffering the protagonist is going through. Then he has to analyze these facts to



find out the cause and effect of these sufferings. It explores what her id wants to do and what her superego tries to prevent her from doing so.

Freud's Psychoanalysis as Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is basically the looking glass that not only takes the researcher towards the desired information through a systematic way but also provides grounds for different claims. It works as a comprehensive law behind any sort of argumentation made in the study.

Self-realization can be explored through different perspective. It can be explored through existential point of view, socio-cultural point of view and especially through psychoanalytic theory. But psychoanalysis is more appropriate tool than any other concepts to explore the issue of self-realization in the novel, *The Pakistani Bride*. It is therefore, selected as the theoretical framework for the present educational research. It's because it enters inside the mind of the novel's protagonist. As a result, this thesis is a study of the subject's inner self, which is a major topic in psychoanalysis. Only via a psychoanalytic perspective can one get access to an individual's inner self and discover how self-realization shapes his ideas and behaviors, as well as how his life is affected. As a consequence, a psychoanalytic method is utilized to evaluate the protagonist's actions, behavior, thoughts, words, phrases, and sentences in the text in question in order to investigate the variables that influence the protagonist and lead to self-realization in the book. Psychoanalysis is the appropriate tool because self is the basic notion of psychoanalysis. And in psychoanalysis, self is the main concern for the psychoanalysts.

Psychoanalyst like Carl Jung view about self -realization is that “one does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious” (p.265-266) The self, according to Carl Jung, represents the mind as a whole and represents the synthesis of consciousness and unconscious in a person. After close examination of different psychoanalyst's view, the researcher choice Freud's model of psychoanalysis to address the research problem: To what extent do self-realization
Freud's Theory of Human Mind

The most significant idea put forward by Freud was his model of the human mind in his book “*A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*” (1920). His model divides it into three layers:

1. **Conscious:** this is where our current thoughts, feelings and focus reside.
2. **Preconscious:** (also called as subconscious) this is the home of everything we can recall or retrieve from our memory
3. **Unconscious:** at the deepest level resides a repository of the processes that drive our behavior, including primitive and instinctual desires (McLeod, 2013)

Discussion

Baspsi Sidhwa's novel *The Pakistani Bride* (1983) has different themes and every character has its own story which greatly contributed to the main plot of the novel. This study examines the journey of a girl from unconsciousness to consciousness and this area of the research is investigated by applying Freud's theory of psychoanalysis which show that how ego balance the conflict between the desires of id and demands of superego and it helps that how and to what extent does the character Zaitoon



achieved her self-realization. The writer of this novel presents many characters and gave freedom and importance to be involve in life of the protagonist whether in good way to encourage her or in bad way to suppress her. The writer very skillfully touches psychological aspect of each character but the current research just deals and focuses on the psyche of the main character Zaitoon.

The salient finding of this study shows that Sidhwa's '*The Pakistani Bride*' is a psychological novel from Sigmund Freud perspective. The character Zaitoon, her life journey and most importance her struggle with her psyche proofs that this psychoanalysis theory of Freud is appropriate to achieve the objectives of this research.

Sidhwa (1983) make us, to accept the fact that not Zaitoon her other characters were also dealing with their psyche in one way or the other, whether that is Qasim, Sakki, Cerol, or even Hamida, they all were victims of their own thought, perception and psyche. Stories of all these minor characters contributed to the theory of psychoanalysis so that readers can better understand psychological journey of Zaitoon.

Bapsi (1983) wrote this novel in psychological manner and tell the readers those elements which cause to awake the unconscious mind of the protagonist, those elements are, orphanhood, marriage, cultural clash and patriarchy. All these elements brought Zaitoon step by step towards self-realization but her marriage provide a base for her realization, because her marriage was a turning point in her life and her mind actually start working and her id and superego came in great conflict with each other.

In the process of investigating Zaitoon's mind, this research slightly expose Sakki psyche as well. His id desires for marital relationship with Zaitoon but his superego demands him to act according to culture and society he is living in and to behave as a dominant gender. Sidhwa used provoking line which makes him the slave of him superego, such as, after the departure of Qasim, Sakki tried to console Zaitoon and had developed love feelings for her but his brother Younus provoke him by saying that, "How is your wife from plains? You know, she requires a man to control her..." (p.170). Quickly becoming angry was obvious because they were living in land where pride and anger were nurtured from a very young age, Sakki burned with anger which provoke him to act as the other men of his land, dominant over women.

Applying psychoanalysis theory was appropriate for analyzing the character of Zaitoon because the event which was quite enough to awake her unconscious mind, her wedding night, the desire of her id has a strong hold over her mind. Despite of being abusively treat, she enjoys the touch of Sakki and craved for it, in spite of acting in repulsive manner because of desire for sexuality she hands herself over to Sakki. During her stay in the mountain many times she has allowed Sakki to touch her because her superego demands her to act in a socially acceptable way, as the society has given a right to husband that no matter how they treat their wife, they have a right over the body of their wife.

This study also revealed that Qasim play a huge role in what Zaitoon has been gone through. Though he loves her a lot, her presence had given different meaning and direction to his



life and he was a lot more different than his clan men but his words and honor cause destruction in Zaitoon's life.

During the interpretation of the text of novel under psychoanalysis of Freud, it is found out that the main character, Zaitoon, achieved self-realization and recognized her due place in the social and cultural set up of tribal areas. Bapsi Sidhwa systematically brought her to the place where she got freedom through the journey from unconscious to conscious. The factors that led her to the achievement of self-realization were started after being married and sent to Kohistan. Here, she confronted many challenges like being treated inferior, strictly subjugated to the tribal customs and traditions and restrictions on her self-esteem and self-conscious. These factors are responsible for bringing her back from a fragile and weak specie to a strong and confident woman. Here, she discovered her consciousness with the help of self-realization.

Conclusion

The Freudian approach to the novel *The Pakistani Bride* gives a valuable contribution to the literary world and may create space for future research as well. To understand and read this work, the researcher has provided a balanced approach for critics as new ideas are associated with words and sentences which lead to result oriented conclusion. It does not reduce the scope of any single perspective nor it bound the novel to any literary theory. Sidhwa (1983), provides multiple themes through different characters which cannot be limited by exploring a single area or a character of the novel. Sidhwa (1983), in construction of the novel *The Pakistani Bride* and give it a feministic touch shows that Freudian theory of human mind can be best apply to a character of Zaitoon because it has an

ability to convey the main message of the researcher to the reader. Though Sigmund Freud has not presented psychoanalysis theory for any specific gender, but psyche of both man and woman is different and due to many social boundaries and marginalization female mind is more complex and her id and superego are always in conflict. Sometimes is conflict led her some serious mental disorder. The significance of this novel lies in how Sidhwa present each character and make them believe that each of them is right in their own regarding Zaitoon, whether that is Qasim, Sakki or even Zaitoon herself. Psychoanalysis approach perfectly expose the mind of not just Zaitoon but many other characters of the novel. The novel seems to be source of raising awareness about the importance of self being. The researcher used Freud's term of psychoanalysis to explore different elements within a text of *The Pakistani Bride* which led the protagonist towards self-realization by awaking her unconscious mind. The analysis of this novel gave the opportunity to understand the difficulties of marginalized females of our society. This novel also show mirror to the male part of our society and reminding them responsibilities as father and husband.

Recommendations

This research exposes human psyche and the importance of self-realization in Sidhwa's '*The Pakistani bride*' (1983) from Freudian perspective. Some valuable suggest and recommendation can be given by the researcher to new researcher regarding this novel which will be helpful for them in exploring new aspects in the novel. Due to the limited scope of this research, Freud's theory of psychoanalysis is applied to some extent in order to study the text

of this novel. This study will pave way for farther research in this novel. This novel can be view and studied from many different perspectives and the far most is feminism, the rights and needs of women can be explore in this novel. Similarly, one can also work on this novel by using social constructionism. Researchers can carry out research by criticizing Sidhwa for exposing female body in the novel. Researchers who are

interested in this novel have huge margin for exploring different areas and characters of this novel. Researchers can work on the character Carol from immigration point on view and what she has explore in Pakistani society and are her views about her observation. Quantitative research can also be carried out on backward area like Kohistan.



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