



## Bapsi Sidhwa's feministic thought in ice-candy-man: A Parsee perspective on partition and communal tension

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### Abstract

This work is an analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa's novel Ice Candy-Man. The main purpose of this paper is to show or underlying the problems of women in the novel. Ice Candy Man is a story told from a female perspective and Sidhwa elaborates the unique price paid by woman amidst the mayhem and violence of partition. The story deals with the abduction, rape prostitution and recovery of a Parsi family's Hindu maid is an attempt to retrieve from silence and the many untold stories that have died unspoken on the lips of their hapless protagonists. The novel really represents the scene that how women suffer at that time and they spent their time. Men using their mind powers to fulfill the needs and use women in negative way, all stress on women. Sidhwa as a writer tells about the power mind and skills of women. So we use feministic theory to analyze this novel. Feminism is a progress which plays a very massive role in highlighting the problems of women.

**Keywords:** Bapsi Sidhwa's, feministic, ice-candy-man, Parsee, tension

### Introduction

In Ice Candy Man (1988) Bapsi Sidhwa makes an honest attempt to articulate the point of multiple intersections and of territories, geographical, mental and emotional of the sufferers of partition, shaping out the credos of a new discourse named as partition literature. The strong ties between people of different communities have been portrayed by Sidhwa in Ice Candy Man and she has highlighted the sentiments of the vilalgers. Ice-Candy-Man shows an important action of a "gynocentric view" of reality in which the female mind and experiences are presented with a massive style. The women characters of the story are responsive and sure of their uniqueness and cannot be easily dominated. Lenny, her Ayah Santa her mother and Godmother confirms their independent selfhood and exhibitability of carrying new roles and responsibilities. The novel describes the reasonable or real picture of Hindu Muslim conflict and the changing political situation, emotional disorder, weak spot, killings, brutalities and much more are suffered by women. The whole story is narrated by a female leading role who shares her personal observation as well as experiences of that time. She tells us about men's behavior towards women, the lustful desires of males and the way they treat the women as sexual objects or for the fun as Aristotle says "woman is a deformed male", woman as a sexual doll" (Aristotle, 2012) <sup>[1]</sup>, if we look at the time of partition we can see Aristotle's views about women that woman is inferior to man who has no identity in patriarchal society (Ehsan *et al.*, 2015) <sup>[4]</sup>.

Bapsi Sidhwa has exposed the Parsi priests who are carrying on with outdated orthodox customs and rituals and like the Brahmins to same extent. Lenny feels like an untouchable when she grows up and says : "I experience this feeling of utter degradation, of being an untouchable excrescence, an outcast again, years later when I hold out my hand to a Parsee priest at a wedding and he, thinking I am menstruating beneath my façade of diamonds and a sequined sari, cringes."

### Review of literature

Ice Candy Man is a massive kind of novel which shows the real picture of male dominant society. She was not against gender but she wrote for the rights of women. She tells the story of 1947 the partition of subcontinent, and how the women survive at that time, how their rights are suppressed by the male. Females are seen as a weaker gender which limits end in the four Conner of the wall. Many other writers appreciated the work of Bapsi Sidhwa.

Earth Indian movie is based upon Ice-Candy-Man released in 2005 with a story of girl suffering from polio who has become the victim of the conflict of 1947. This movie got some international awards due to its subject matter and the depiction of naked society.

Another writer Milkweel published his findings in his novel in 2006. He wrote The 1947 Partition of India is the background for this great novel, narrated by an intelligent child who describes the evil situation with bravely. Sidhwa's narrator Lenny spends all the time in her home with her ayah Shanta. Lenny learns about religious changes, religious prejudice, and the evil of Partition. As the time passes, Lenny begins to recognize the differences between the Hindus, Muslim, and Sikhs how they are playing with politics. Lenny enjoys a happy, confidential life in Lahore, but the kidnapping of her beloved Ayah Shanta changed her total life. Soon Lenny knows the reality of life and cruelty of society that there is too difficult to get their rights. Pakistani and Indian women have been suffering from high rates of rape and sexual assault from the long period of time, even today. In developing countries women are dealt as property to men (Ehsan *et al.*, 2016) <sup>[3]</sup>.

Another author work on this novel Anisa G. Mujawar he composed that Bapsi Sidhwa's Ice-Candy-Man is the most real look of the division of India. It mentions alive the immense objective fact of outcasts, killings, and administration on both individual and mutual level. Being a politically novel; the entire story of the novel moves around

the uber occasion of segment and its eventual outcomes. The film is additionally made 1947-earth by renowned Canadian Chief Deepa Mehta. The moving examples of common clash in the novel present the compassionate and also the other worldly survivals in the coldhearted world. The novel is based upon the contention of Hindu Muslim people group. It covers the topic of survival against the desire full society. It will inspect the survival fundamentally on the individual and social level with reference to the significant characters as far as its socio-political-religious settings of segment and the British Raj.

### Methodology

“Feminist Methodology is a base of scientific investigations and generating premise from an explicitly Feminist Standpoint”. Feminist methodologies are different from other methodologies, because it investigates the rights of female basically a movement but it indicates on some common issues or aims. These common issues include looking for to overcome “biases in research, bringing about change in society, showing the human variety, and also tell about the position of researcher. The importance of this system is how the data is collected and how it is helpful for this movement. So this methodology helps in highlighting the issues of female. Feminism is a way to get equality for women and men. Even though all feminists struggle for femininity equality, there are a variety of ways to move toward this theory, “including liberal feminism, socialist feminism, and finally radical feminism”. Let’s moves towards the basic feminist thoughts and various types to get gender equal opportunity.

### Discussion analysis

Bapsi Sidhwa introduced the narrator Lenny who tells the story. During this way of time she also observes the position or changes of behavior of society as well as she noticed the behavior that women are treated in our society.

Ice Candy Man's radical change from a street vendor to a poet of acclaim is doubtful to the readers. The novel gives voice to the women and the female perspective is quite evident. Ice Candy Man is a novel per excellence where "..... historical tragedy and witty comedy is not the result of a compromise but it rather displays a lively authenticity which very few novels can be credited with" (Piciucco, 2000) [6]. In this world gone wary where friend betrays, ....." the women suffer the most: yet ironically, only the women can offer any hope for the salvation of humanity" (Khan, 1991) [5].

Ice-Candy-Man highlights this problem of choices with great sensitivity, irony and a great sense of witticism. The Parsi perspective in Ice-Candy-Man has been highlighted by Bapsi Sidhwa, who has portrayed the turmoil of the Partition period. Many writers have tried to write on the above issues but Sidhwa has narrated the story through eight years old Lenny, who is a Parsi stricken with Polio. Its is an unbiased view of a child. She can perceive things in her own way without any religious bias. She is not concerned about inter religious points of view and portrays the paradoxical Parsi. Situation during the pre partition days. The Jashan prayer highlighted the Parsi insecurity. The Jashan prayer is held at Lahore to celebrate the British victory in the second world war. Sidhwa juxtaposes Parsi history into art by her ingenious use of irony. The Parsis were not concerned about power play in the subcontinent but wanted to continue practicing their religion and yet being totally subservient in terms of loyalty to the

ruling persona. Sidhwa has explored in detail the attitude of the Parsi which can be discerned in *The Crow Eaters* and has highlighted how a sycophant Parsi finds it important to be a sycophant in order to live. In *An American Brat* the way a family reacts in a subdued manner towards social changes is noteworthy the find it suffocating and feel terribly restricted by in it. In *Ice Candy Man* the Sethi's Lenny's parents are so enamored by the British people.

At the time passes Lenny realized that marriage of a girl is important responsibility of parents and female gets real identity after marriage on the name of her husband. Lenny in her childhood she enjoys the love of her mother and the guard and care of her dear father but the theme and story of this novel is totally changed as compared to love because in this story Bapsi Sidhwa introduced the rights of female which they not get from this quarrel society. Lenny opened her eyes to the knowledge of truth and kindness. She watches that women are in very bad situation and being raped by men. Women are prey of men and rights are only for the males. Sidhwa's men declares dominance over each other by sexually assaulting women. Shashi Deshpande states “that rape is a violation of trust between two people and a greatest violence”.

Bapsi Sidhwa explains that women are always degraded, she always objection against it. Lenny's mother is a female character, a housewife; she also has the same case like her daughter limits up to their home. She represents the conventional woman who never asks for their rights. Through Lenny Sidhwa shows that men have to reduce their ego and women have to be physically powerful. And there is a need of mind set that women and men are equal and right should be given on equal occasion. Sidhwa exposes the society, which thought that women are inferior to men, and women are just are for the guardian of home. But bapsi sidwa has a helpful approach towards women's rights.

Bapsi Sidhwa in *Ice-Candy-Man* has doled out oodles of raucous laughter and light hearted bantering that are extremely humorous. One can discern the insecurities of the Parsis and their fearful apprehensions about the future. The brotherhood of man spirit among the masses. The Parsis however have managed to remain neutral in the wake of communal tensions.

### Conclusion

The protagonist Lenny, a Parsi in *Ice-Candy-Man* is an eight year old polio stricken girl child who views the partition through her innocent eyes. She feels alienated due to her physical deformity but her Ayah, who is a mother figure to her sees to it that she is well looked after. Ayah's sexuality is magnetic and her lovers are attracted to her like a moth to a flame. The Parsees in Lahore are a close knit community and they do not fail to go to 'Jashns' organized in the fire temple where they go to worship.

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