



The Silencing of Female Bodies during the Indian Partition and Female Agency in Postcolonial Pakistan: Analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa's Ice-Candy-Man

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ABSTRACT

This research paper analyzes Bapsi Sidhwa's novel Ice-Candy-Man which explores the effect of the Indian Partition on female bodies. It focuses on how the Partition silenced female voices, how it altered female identities, and how women were left powerless in the face of the Partition. It also explores how Sidhwa uses the novel to evoke the struggles of women during this time and how these struggles continue to find resonance today. Additionally, it examines the different themes of oppression, violence, and discrimination that are highlighted in the novel. The study discusses how Sidhwa's novel serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of female representation and autonomy. It provides an insightful look into the effects of partition on postcolonial Pakistan. It explores the role of gender, national culture, and the power dynamics between different communities in India to provide a comprehensive understanding of how partition and its aftermath continue to shape the country. In particular, it examines how violence and communal violence have become entrenched in postcolonial Pakistan. The analysis of Ice-Candy Man provides a unique perspective on the impact of partition on gender and national identities and how these identities are used to perpetuate violence and inequality in Postcolonial Pakistan.

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1. Introduction

The emergence of postcolonial writers in the twentieth century has been an important contribution to the cultural landscape of the world. The postcolonial writers have sought to reject colonialist ideology and cultural supremacy by asserting their own cultural identity and values. These writers have produced a wealth of literature that has explored the complexities of postcolonial life and the experiences of people living in former colonies. Postcolonial literature often examines the power dynamics of the colonial period, the effects of colonialism on cultures and identities, and the struggles for liberation and self-determination. From Chinua (1958) in Nigeria to Jamaica Kincaid in Antigua, postcolonial writers have used their works to challenge existing power structures and to create new, liberated narratives of identity and culture. Their works have helped to reshape our understanding of the history and culture of postcolonial societies, and their impact on the world of literature continues to be felt today. The postcolonial writers (Aidoo, 1992; Coetzee, 2019; Deshpande, 1993; Emecheta, 1976; Ghosh, 1989; Kincaid, 1988; Morrison, 2004; Naipaul, 2010; Roy, 2001; Rushdie, 1991; Smith, 2016) have sought to reject colonialist ideology and cultural supremacy by asserting their own cultural identity and values. They have used literature as a platform to challenge the status quo and create a more inclusive cultural landscape. Many postcolonial writers have also used their work to provide a voice for those who have been marginalized and to bring visibility to the experiences of people of colour. Sidhwa's work, in particular, has highlighted issues of gender, class, and race. In her novel "Cracking India" Sidhwa tells the story of a young girl growing up in India during the Partition of 1947 and how she comes to terms with the social, political and religious divisions

that were created as a result. Through her characters and their experiences, she challenges the power structures of both the British and Indian governments. Sidhwa's work is an example of how postcolonial literature can be used to challenge oppressive systems and create change.

The Partition of India in 1947 marks a significant historical event that divided the Indian subcontinent into two nations, India and Pakistan. This period witnessed a mass movement of people and an immense amount of violence and displacement. In particular, women's experiences during this time were often fraught with fear, violence, and trauma. In her novel *Ice-Candy-Man*, author Bapsi Sidhwa explores the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition and its aftermath to shape power dynamics in postcolonial Pakistan. Through this analysis, this paper examines how Sidhwa's novel portrays the silencing of female bodies and its role in shaping power dynamics in postcolonial Pakistan. In Bapsi Sidhwa (1989) *Ice-Candy-Man* (1988), the protagonist, a young girl, serves as a symbol of the gendered violence that women experienced during the Indian partition. This violence manifested in two forms: one which was intended to disgrace and damage the enemy religion and nation, and the other to target the honour and purity of the woman's religion or country. The novel demonstrates how women's bodies were reduced to a powerless state and used as a tool for men to express their hatred. Secondly, men commit violence against women to maintain the honour and holiness of their faith and nation. This type of violence was exacted on women by men of their religious community to protect the honour and purity of their nation and religion. *Ice-Candy-Man* (1988) tells the story of how women's lives were impacted by the violence and chaos that took place during the partition of India. Women's bodies became a representation of dignity and innocence, which made them a primary focus of the ethnic struggles that occurred. This symbolic meaning of physical harm gave rise to two distinct types of violence against women – one perpetrated by men from the opposing religious faction to humiliate and degrade their enemy, and the other committed by men from their religious faction to protect their honour and virtue.

Sidhwa's work puts a spotlight on the first type of violence. The figures of Ayah and Hamida allow readers to interpret the different types of patriarchy and religion-driven beliefs which existed during the time of the partition while disregarding the truth that women are people too. They were instead reduced to symbols that the male-dictated state and culture found satisfactory. In addition, *Ice-Candy-Man* demonstrates the difficulty of accurately expressing the details of a rape in a way that preserves the victim's respect. Consequently, I intend to focus on a gynocentric viewpoint of gender-based violence during the partition of India, which the traditionally male-dominated accounts of the event have largely ignored. Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man* (1988) was later released in the United States as *Cracking India* (1991). This was the first English-language novel from Pakistan that depicted the experiences of the Partition of India. It also poignantly portrays the many forms of gender-based violence that were pervasive during the ethnic genocide that accompanied the partition. It has been acclaimed as one of the most compelling accounts of the tragedy of the division of the subcontinent, and it compels its readers to bear witness to the suffering and share in the guilt and blame associated with the horror of the event. In *Ice-Candy-Man/Cracking India*, Sidhwa tells the story of the Partition of India through the eyes of seven-year-old Lenny, a Parsi girl. Lenny is privileged due to her Parsi heritage, but is still seen as an outsider by others due to her physical disability and gender. The fact that she is marginalized allows her to be more compassionate and understanding of the struggles of those who have been neglected by the powerful and official history. As a result, Sidhwa can effectively articulate her story and show the impact of the Partition of India through Lenny's point of view. Lenny's story gives a different perspective on the creation of Pakistan and brings to light the hidden female narratives that were not included in the male-centric historical accounts. She also helps to bring to light the culturally accepted codes of censorship that prevent women from speaking out or expressing their opinions. This helps to uncover stories of women who have been silenced or forgotten in the process.

Bapsi Sidhwa uses the perspective of a female child narrator to tell the story of Partition and the violence that came with it. Daiya (2011) argues that this focus on the child's perception of bodily pain and violence allows for a sensitive and ethical representation of the exploitation and sexualization of violence that Partition brought with it. In his 2008 work, Mitra shows that the novel is a "quasi-historical" text (combination of history and fiction), as it illustrates the brutality of the formation of two postcolonial countries, while also demonstrating how traditional male-dominated systems influence everyday life and the formation of nations. Begum (2012), analyzes the traumatic experiences faced by women during the Partition. By doing so, she hopes

to gain an understanding of the psychological effects that this traumatic event had on those affected. She provides an interesting perspective on the effects of the Partition on women and children. Singh (2016) puts forth a thorough analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa's Parsi perspective on the Indian Partition. Through the novel, Sidhwa gives voice to the Parsi community and brings to light the harrowing and excruciating experiences of violence during the Partition of India. The novel also acquaints us with the Parsi ethos, way of life, culture, and their hopes, aspirations, and disillusionments. It provides a deep insight into the Parsi perspective and its representation in literature. It is an important contribution to the discourse around the Partition of India and the Parsi community. Sultan and Awan (2017) look at how the feminist theory of Simon de Beauvoir is reflected in the novel *Ice Candy Man* by Bapsi Sidhwa. They focus on how women are objectified and held to different standards than men, and how Sidhwa's work encourages women to take a stand against injustice. The novel demonstrates how women can be empowered by stepping outside of the domestic sphere and speaking out against oppression. Similarly, Khan, Ahmad and Khan (2019) explore how Bapsi Sidhwa uses a feminist narrative in her writing. They argued that Sidhwa refuses to be held back by patriarchal ideals and expressions, instead giving her female characters the same freedom and ability to express themselves that men have in a patriarchal society. They suggest that women should be allowed the same freedom of expression as men have in a patriarchal society. Choudhury (2020) provides an analysis of the character of Lenny Sethi in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, *Ice-Candy-Man*. The author examines how the 1947 partition of India impacts the psychopathology of children, and how Lenny's traumatic experience is characterized by the multiplicity of source factors. Abbas (2021) have identified the colonial discourse and Eurocentric historical construct to discuss how postcolonial writers like Bapsi Sidhwa reject these and celebrate the indigenous culture and identity in their work. They provide insight into how Sidhwa's novel *Ice Candy Man* (1988-89) employs code-mixing to add indigenous semantics, delineates characters from the locality, and asserts her Pakistanines. Ghaffar and Murtaza (2022) compare the depiction of the partition events in the works of two renowned authors i.e. *Ice Candy Man* by Bapsi Sidhwa and *Tamas* by Besham Sahni. In order to investigate how the authors present the saga of partition, they employed the theoretical framework of New Historicism suggested by Greenblatt. It provides a comparative analysis of two pivotal works in the narrative of the partition and sheds light on the skills of the novelists.

2. Methodology

1. Review of literature: This study reviews relevant literature related to the impact of the Indian Partition on female bodies and identities, the representation of women in postcolonial Pakistan, and how violence and communal violence have been entrenched in postcolonial Pakistan.
2. Textual analysis: This study conducts a textual analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man* to explore the different themes of oppression, violence, and discrimination that are highlighted in the novel.
3. Interviews: The researcher conducted interviews with experts in the fields of gender and postcolonial studies to analyze the different themes and ideas presented in the novel, as well as to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of Partition on female agency in Postcolonial Pakistan.
4. Theoretical Framework: The researcher applied the theoretical framework of Intersectional Feminism to analyze how various social identities, including religion, gender and class intersect and compound to create unique forms of discrimination and marginalization. Though the theoretical framework of Postcolonial Feminism, the researcher analyzes the effect of the Indian Partition on female bodies, gender roles and power dynamics influenced by communal violence and the construction of identities in postcolonial Pakistan.

3. Textual Analysis

The novel begins shortly before India is divided into two countries, India and Pakistan and the plot revolves around the bloody partition of the Indian Subcontinent during the late 1940s. Lenny is under the care of her Ayah, a young Hindu woman named Shanta. Ayah is depicted as a strong, independent person who is surrounded by a group of friends from different religious backgrounds. Lenny notices that the group is made up of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Parsis, and observes a sense of harmony among them. This pre-partition period of communal unity is now seen as an unrecoverable past in the memories of the two postcolonial countries. This group of people serves as a representation of the changing political climate in the country. This is shown

in the different types of people who are part of this group, as well as in their behavior. Ayah is seen as a desirable woman, which causes many men to look at her with admiration. Even those who are usually pious or have disabilities cannot help but admire Ayah's beauty and sensuality. Ayah attracts a lot of attention from men. People from all walks of life look at her with admiration, including beggars, holy men, hawkers, cart-drivers, cooks, coolies, and cyclists. Ayah has the power to control the men around her and she can use it to her advantage. This shows that despite the limited freedom of movement that women faced during partition, Ayah was able to exercise her own agency and take control of her life. The men who look at her are not viewing her as an object of desire but rather, they recognize her as the judge and not the prize. Lenny notices that Ayah attracts all sorts of creatures to her, from ladybirds to glow-worms to the Ice-Candy-Man. Ayah is a symbol of racial unity and peace, as she is the center of attention for people of all backgrounds and classes in the park. She is seen as a magical figure who is capable of bringing different cultures and religions together.

Ayah's "chocolate chemistry" gives her the freedom and power to explore her desires with men from different cultural and religious backgrounds, going against the traditional expectations of society. She demonstrates her confidence and sexuality with her rolling, bouncy walk and her choice of clothing, which was seen as unconventional for a woman of her time. She was aware of her alluring sensuality and wasn't afraid to display it. Ayah's passion and passionate expression of her desires challenge the existing idea of a single, restricted definition of the nation. This idea of Ayah's sexuality gives her strength and power, which is seen as a threat by the patriarchal system and is punished. This shows that if women are accepted and recognized for their sexuality, it would lead to the destruction of the male's authoritative ideology. Ayah is treated differently for not following traditional standards of how a woman should behave. Her disobedience is seen as a bad thing and she is punished for it with physical and emotional pain. The signs of her punishment become clear before the partition takes place. Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy-Man* illustrates the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition. Ayah's story of passion and desire epitomizes the power of female sexuality and her refusal to conform to the traditional expectations of society, which are seen as a threat to the patriarchal system. Her disobedience is punished with physical and emotional pain, highlighting the silencing of female bodies in a male-dominated society. This serves as a reminder that if women are allowed to be fully expressed and accepted, the existing oppressive structures of power will be challenged and ultimately destroyed.

The plot of the novel progresses as the social environment in Lahore becomes increasingly tense and divided along religious lines. Butalia (1993) argues that during communal strife and violence, women remains non-violent. They are actually at the receiving end of violence as its victim. Similarly as the story unfolds, the female non-violent character becomes the victim of communal violence; they were objectified, harassed, murdered, raped, marginalized, and their individual identities erased. Ayah's freedom and autonomy are slowly taken away, with her decisions and actions being more and more dictated by the patriarchal struggle for land and identity. This is symbolized by the change in the physical setting of the novel, with the secular group which used to gather at Queen's Park beneath the statue of Queen Victoria, a symbol of the united religions under British rule, now moving to the Wrestler's restaurant. As tensions between Hindus and Muslims increased, women were objectified even in different communities, which was shown in the novel *Ice-Candy-Man* (1988), when Dr. Mody said, "If only they'd kicked us all the way to California.... Prettier women". (p .41) On the same meeting, they even decided to take sides on the bases of choices comparing women with vegetables; "Those who want four wives say aye! Those who want vegetarian bhats and farts say nay!" (p. 41). In the context of the narrative, Ayah emerges as a character distinguished by her unwavering confidence and unabashed expression of political ideologies, setting her apart as the sole female character within the novel unafraid to voice her political thoughts at its inception. Her independence is a hallmark of her character, epitomized by her financial dealings facilitated through Sharbat Khan, showcasing her autonomy in economic matters. She raises important questions regarding political situations;

"What's it to us if Jinnah, Nehru, and Patel fight? They are not fighting our fight," says Ayah. (p. 77)

In the later part of the novel, following the train incident, the situation in the affected area deteriorated significantly. The previously harmonious coexistence of Sikh, Hindu, and

Muslim communities, who were united in their willingness to support each other, gave way to inter-community violence. This violent upheaval primarily targeted women, and one cannot overlook its impact on Ayah, a Hindu character, who found herself deeply affected by the grim and hostile environment. This transformation in the communal dynamics and its consequences for Ayah illustrate the profound societal shifts and personal struggles that unfolded within the narrative. Ayah was moved away from the center of the group and symbolically lost her authority. Initially, the group resisted this segregation, but ultimately was unsuccessful in maintaining their unity. Lenny realized the differences between religions and noticed how people seemed to shrink into symbols and Ayah was no longer just Ayah, but a token. This showed how the redefining of their identities was in response to the changing power dynamics in the country. Ayah's story is representative of the experience of many women during the Partition. Women were often subjected to violence and abuse during this time, with their existence being defined by the political and religious conflict between Hindus and Muslims (Sharma, 2018). Sidhwa uses the character of Ayah to illustrate the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition. Ayah's story is a reminder of the intergenerational trauma endured by many women during this time. Her story of displacement and loss of identity is reflective of the experiences of thousands of women during the Partition. By centering her narrative around Ayah, Sidhwa gives a voice to the voiceless and marginalized, allowing readers to gain insight into the silenced stories of Partition.

Lenny notices that during the time of the partition, religion became the main factor that defined people's identities. Ayah, who used to be the leader of the group, is now reduced to a token and her body is vulnerable to the male gaze. Her Hindu rituals and the Muslim cook Imam Din's request for Fridays off to attend Jumha prayers show that religion has taken over and Ayah no longer has control. Ayah's ability to be independent is overshadowed by the increasing nationalist talk that communally focuses on her body. As religious fervour grows in Lahore, it becomes clear that her everyday life is being compromised by the rising religious, patriarchal culture. Likewise, Ayah's sexual appeal is seen as less important than her ability to reproduce, which diminishes her identity. It is noteworthy that Lenny's Ayah, is a symbolic representation of an undivided India. This unified India is threatened by communal fanaticism, and its destruction is reflected in the violation of Ayah. As it is evident throughout the history, in a violent conflict it is women who are raped, women who are widowed, women whose children and husbands are sacrificed (Butalia, 1993). This metaphor of a feminized India as a symbol of unity is reinforced by Sidhwa's novel, as Ayah's beauty reflects the beauty of a unified India. The defilement of Ayah is symbolic of the desecration of the country. The Indian Partition has a profound impact on the female body and its role in society. Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man* is a poignant example of how the female body is silenced during this time. Through the narrative of Lenny, the protagonist, readers witness how the body of Ayah is dehumanized and objectified. Religion becomes the main factor that defines people's identities and Ayah is reduced to a token with no control over her own body. Her sexual appeal is seen as less important than her ability to reproduce, which further reduces her sense of identity and agency.

Ayah is a Hindu, but she doesn't focus on her religion, allowing people of all faiths and beliefs to be part of her life. When *Ice-Candy-Man* asked Ayah if she was Punjabi, she replied that she was "for the most part". *Ice-Candy-Man* then asked why she didn't wear salwar kameez, which are typically worn by Punjabi women. Ayah explained that she earned less money if she wore salwar kameez than if she wore a sari, which made her seem more qualified for the job. This showed her resistance to being defined solely by her ethnic identity. *Ice-Candy-Man*'s effort to define her by her ethnic identity foreshadows his attempt to abduct her. Ultimately, even though national borders are drawn and contested, Ayah's identity is defined by her religious identity. Ayah's ability to bring people together of different cultures and religions is no longer possible once her body is violated. Before, she had been able to control the conversations of her suitors, who had been discussing religious rivalries, by threatening to deny them her company. However, in the end, she falls victim to religious fanaticism and violence. When discussing Ayah's abduction, it is important to understand that during times of ethnic genocide, women are often seen as objects to be used for violent acts. This type of violence is not restricted to any one group of people, but is seen across all social classes, religions, ages, and other identities. Veena Das (2007) suggests that the violent act of abducting women during the partition of India is a result of the exchange of women between men, as if they are signs. In the novel, the two Muslim suitors of Ayah symbolize different ideologies. Masseur represents peaceful coexistence while *Ice-Candy-Man* symbolizes aggression and the desire to prove religious supremacy. Before Ayah

is abducted, Lenny finds Masseur's body in a bag, showing the consequences of his peaceful ideology.

This violent act of abduction of women regardless of their religion demonstrates the silencing of female bodies during the Indian partition. Bell hook (1990,1989) said that there are two kinds of oppressed voices: 1) the silence of the oppressed who have never learned to speak 2) the voice of those who have been forcefully silenced because they have dared to speak. Hamida and Papoo belongs to first kind of silence while Ayah and Lenny represent the second kind of oppressed voice and Ayah's abduction is representative of the silencing of female bodies in the face of communal violence. By examining the horrendous act of manipulating a child and abduction of Ayah in the novel, we can better understand the silencing of female bodies during the Indian partition. Masseur's death is a representation of the power of communal hatred over peaceful values when India was divided during the Partition. The identity of Masseur's killer is left unknown but it is possible that it was Ice-Candy-Man, who was rejected by Ayah and killed Masseur out of his own jealousy and rage. This shows how violence is not always motivated by communal differences but can also be caused by personal grievances. Before we can make any further comments on the abduction of Ayah, we must provide a brief description of the scene during the partition riots in Lahore, an Islamic mob, which included Ice-candy-man, came to Lenny's house and demanded that the family give up the Hindu Ayah. Imam Din, the Muslim cook, lied to the mob, claiming that Ayah had already left Lahore. This lying under oath to protect Ayah reveals how people were willing to use their ethnic identities as a means to stop the political violence. The mob also asked for the Hindu gardener Hari, who had now become Muslim and was rechristened Himat Ali. The mob demanded to see evidence that Hari/Himat Ali had converted to Islam, so he displayed his recently circumcised penis to them. Ice-Candy-Man then tricked Lenny into telling him where Ayah was hiding by promising to keep her safe. Unknowingly, Lenny gave away Ayah's location, leading to a horrifying scene where the mob dragged her out of her hiding place. Ayah had a look of terror in her eyes and her mouth was open in shock, as her disheveled hair was blowing into the faces of her captors. Her sari was slipping off her shoulder and her blouse was being stretched, revealing the white stitching in the seams. Ice-Candy-Man's abduction of Ayah was a complex situation in which he used communal violence to express his personal anger and disappointment. He used Ayah's Hindu identity to objectify and violate her, pushing aside her history and making her body a place to demonstrate his power and dominance. He was a jealous lover who ultimately took advantage of the political and religious unrest of the partition to get revenge on Ayah for rejecting him

The silencing of female bodies during the Indian partition is a narrative that is explored in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man*. In the novel, the protagonist, Lenny, experiences the horrors of the partition through the abduction of her Hindu nanny, Ayah. Ice-Candy-Man, a former lover of Ayah's, was part of the mob and was the one who tricked Lenny into revealing Ayah's location. Through this act, Ice-Candy-Man was using communal violence to express his personal anger and disappointment towards Ayah, using her Hindu identity to objectify and violate her. This scene demonstrates how female bodies were silenced and violated during the Indian partition, as Ice-Candy-Man took advantage of the political and religious unrest to get revenge on Ayah. Hari/Himat Ali's conversion to Islam was marked by his body being modified. This was not something that could be done for women, as there is no physical marker which could identify them as belonging to a certain religion. Hari/Himat Ali's conversion to Islam is a key moment in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man*. His decision to change his religion reflects the religious divisions and tensions that arose during the Partition of India in 1947, and his physical transformation from Hindu to Muslim is symbolic of the physical and psychological changes that the Partition and its aftermath brought to many people. Women's relationship to religion is largely indirect, as their faith is determined by the faith of their father or husband. However, they are still expected to maintain a level of sexual purity as that is linked to the honor of the family or community. Women who are raped or abducted are seen as having crossed social, cultural and political boundaries and can no longer be seen to represent the nation (Kapur, 2017). After Ayah is taken away, she stops speaking and becomes quiet. Ayah was a person who connected different ethnic groups in the nation, however, after she was taken away by force and raped, she was no longer seen as a legitimate member of the society. People had the expectation that she would kill herself in order to be seen as pure again, even though she was dead, or she would be subjected to sexual violence and suffer social death.

Hari/ Himmat Ali changed his name and circumcised, his body serves as a shield while Ayah's body was violated and she became the property of men and the keeper of community's honor, she wasn't even given a chance to voice her opinion in this whole act of violence in which her body was involved not anyone else (Chakravarti, 2005). In times of communal violence, violence against women is subsumed into a discourse of honor, indicative of the minimal value placed on women in political life (Kumar, 2018), the coloniality of gender silenced many women during the partition of India. As in the novel, the character of Ice-Candy-man shows how men were the instigator of violence and active in the act of silencing female bodies while women like Ayah and Hamida were at their receiving end. It felt so real when Butalia (1993) said that violence is almost always instigated by men but its greatest impact is felt by women. Men have been known to use rape as a way to hurt and attack women of other religions, as a way to express their dominance and take revenge. This form of violence is seen as a conversation between men, even though the woman is not present or has no say in the matter. Ayah's abduction and rape is a very common occurrence during the time of partition, as many women were victims of the patriarchy's power and the colonization's brutality. Ice-Candy-Man took revenge for disrespecting, raping Muslim women's, and violating their bodies but the target of his revenge was another women. He don't even feel an ounce of shame for his actions:

"I lose my senses when I think of the mutilated bodies on that train from Gurdaspur....I want to kill someone for each of the breasts they cut off the Muslim women..." (p. 159-160)

Ayah and Masseur do not emphasize their respective Hindu and Muslim identities. Instead, they have a more global outlook, seeing themselves as humanists rather than members of a nation or religion. This idea is unpopular in a time where people are expected to conform to a particular religious identity, and anyone who does not is either killed or punished. The abduction of Ayah demonstrates that during the partition of India, there was a significant amount of violence against women that was both very noticeable and hidden. Nationalism creates communalism, which allows for oppressive acts on women's bodies in order to demonstrate male dominance. Women, nations, religion, and history are all connected to each other through acts of sexual violence. As communal tension rises in Lahore, Ayah's body goes from being seen as sexually attractive to being seen as a vulnerable Hindu, which leads to her abduction and rape. Didur (2006) suggests that Ayah's body, which was a source of her agency, is now the focus of power struggles between communal nationalism. The violence of partition reduces Ayah's identity to a symbol in a patriarchal power game, taking away her individual, multifaceted identity as a human. Hai (2000) argues that the novel conforms to the nationalist view that stories about women who were abducted and raped should not be part of the narrative of nation-building. However, Hai fails to recognize that by leaving Ayah's rape story untold, the novel shows the difficulty of creating a complete history of the Partition based on first-hand accounts or fictional ones. Ayah's silence represents the unease official historical accounts have in facing the violence that accompanies the Partition, as acknowledging it would be an acknowledgment of public defeat for the community whose woman was violated. It is important to think about the long-term repercussions of Ayah's abduction. Across the globe, when women are sexually assaulted, they are met with disgrace and dishonor. Zhao (2013) argued that nations can feel the same way, and after the split of India and Pakistan, the concept of national honor was reflected by the virtue of women. When women were violated, their bodies became a representation of the humiliation of their country, which caused them to be excluded from their nation.

The act of rape is often seen as something too terrible to talk about, and it is this idea of silence that (Bahri, 1999) captures. She also suggests that it can almost be seen as a form of death if the act is spoken about. In *Ice-Candy-Man*, Bapsi Sidhwa attempts to address this by not directly narrating the rape, instead choosing to show the aftermath in order to avoid turning the act into a form of entertainment. By doing this, Sidhwa represents the difficulty of expressing extreme horror, as well as avoiding the gaze of "erotic fascination" as stated by Stokes (2009). Subramanian (2013) also points out that Sidhwa's choice to place the rape outside of the narrativity of her novel shows her awareness of the unspeakable nature of the act. Bahri's statement explains why Ayah chooses not to talk. Ayah has suffered a great deal of psychological and social suffering, and her silence is her way of refusing to recall and express the terrible memories of what happened to her. Her silence is a way of resisting the pain of her past. *Ice-Candy-Man* kidnapped Ayah and forced her into a life of prostitution in Hira Mandi. He was using her body as a way to make money. This can be seen as punishment for Ayah's choice to be

sexually active before her abduction, which was seen as a violation of traditional Indian standards of female behavior. Ice-Candy-Man exploited and objectified Ayah, punishing her for her previous expression of sexual freedom. Sidhwa's work examines the way women who break the boundaries of accepted femininity are treated with abuse and violence from those near to them. This is further explored in the way Ice-Candy-Man takes advantage of Ayah and the way he takes pleasure in her suffering. Additionally, upon the discovery of the mission to rescue abducted women, Ice-Candy-Man quickly marries Ayah, renaming her Mumtaz. Ayah's name is unilaterally changed by Ice-Candy-Man and is renamed Mumtaz. By this, Bapsi Sidhwa highlights the suppression of a women's life- long, personal identity and foretells Ayah's sidelining in her own life. Stokes (2009) suggests that when Ice-Candy-Man gives Ayah a new name, he is using language to show his control over her and the destruction of her previous identity. This renaming is a symbol of the end of her previous identity.

Ayah is a victim of the patriarchal system. She has lost herself, even her name is changed to discard the fragrance of her free self. She had her freedom taken from her and was forced into a life of prostitution and marriage with her abuser. This experience left her without her usual brightness and liveliness, and she was reduced to an empty shell of herself. She lost her sense of wellbeing, she suffers just because she is a woman. When Lenny saw her after her abduction, she was wearing clothing that made her look like a courtesan and had a vacant expression in her eyes. It also caused her body to acquire a hidden history of difference. She noticed that the spark in her was gone, and it seemed as if her soul was extracted from her body. Her vacant eyes, indicate that Ayah no longer held any of her own individuality. Lenny observed that Ayah seemed like a ghost, as if she no longer belonged in her old home. Ayah in the hand of a brutal system suffers double loss, loss of her human self and loss of her sanity. Her only words were that she wanted to be with her family, regardless of whether they accepted her or not. Here, the question why they wouldn't accept her? Butalia (1993) answered this question in detail that the fear of not being accepted was real in women at that time. Their non-acceptance by the Hindu families became the major problem. When Godmother said "That was fated, daughter. It can't be undone. But it can be forgiven.... Worse things are forgiven. Life goes on and the business of living buried the debris of our pasts.... That's the way of life." This shows how women in a communal strife and violence are sacrificed in the name of national integrity and unity and they were not accepted by their families because they considered them impure. They were told to accept their fate. Ayah decision to go back to her family after going through all of this showed that she was aware of her changed social status, but that she still wanted to be with her loved ones.

Ayah makes a decision to not stay with her rapist in Pakistan, but to go back to India instead. This shows her strength of character and her desire to not accept the place society has put her in and the consequences of being excluded from the nation on the other side of the border. Her decision to come back to her family in India and rejecting the idea of socially accepted position she occupies as a wife reveals her strength and resilience (Daiya, 2011). By rejecting the idea of accepting a domestic life with her rapist, Ayah is able to exercise her agency and autonomy, ultimately challenging the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition. In this way, Sidhwa empowers Ayah by depriving Ice-Candy-Man of his sense of superiority; moreover, she exposes the magnitude of his vulnerability. By doing so, Sidhwa not only unveils the oppressive structure of patriarchy but also allows Ayah to be the privileged subject of the narrative (Rastegar 2006: 31). In Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man*, the protagonist, Ayah, is able to reclaim her agency through her rejection of the discourse of suicide and nationalism. Through this rejection, Ayah is empowered and the reader is shown the oppressive structure of patriarchy. Furthermore, Ice-Candy-Man's power is diminished as the novel progresses, and he is reduced to a weeping mess at the end. The conversation between two women's; Ayah the victim of patriarchal society and Lenny's Godmother shows how female victims were given a choice by another women and their final choices were even supported by women of other religion. Even though Godmother showed her the two sides of her future but she still asked her what she wanted that's what pushed Ayah to the center and gives her voice: "I will not live with him", 'Whether they (family) want me or not, I will go.' And her rejection to even accept the tea served by her oppressor, "I don't want any" (p.266-267) shows she had reclaimed her agency. This serves to expose his vulnerability and show that Ayah is the privileged subject of the narrative. By focusing on Ayah's strength of character and her ability to reclaim her agency, Sidhwa is able to effectively illustrate the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition.

In Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man*, the author sheds light on the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition. Through the experiences of the protagonist Ayah, Sidhwa explores how the violence of Partition deeply impacted the lives of women and girls. The novel exposes how women were vulnerable to harassment, rape and displacement. The female characters in the novel are often relegated to a space of subordinate victimhood, and their voices are often silenced. However, Sidhwa also highlights moments in the novel where female characters reclaim their agency and use their voices to confront the oppressive socio-cultural norms of the patriarchal society. For example, Lenny's Godmother challenges Ice-Candy-Man about his crimes, asserting that he has destroyed the modesty of his wife and lived off her womanhood. Her interrogation of Ice-Candy-Man runs for several pages in the novel, and her truth-infused hard-hitting words gradually silence his weakly-worded self-defense. Another female character Lenny also stood for herself several times in the novel and warned his cousin to behave and don't touch her without permission even though she is a child she knows how to stand for herself.

"Can't you talk straight?" I say, ready to hit him. 'You've been to Kotha! You visit the dancing-girls! And you want me to talk straight?' 'I think the heat has scrambled your brains,' I declare, standing up in disgust. 'If you want me to stay,' I say, 'you'd better mind how you talk!' (p. 271).

This scene highlights how Sidhwa allows female characters in her novel to use their voices to reclaim their agency and counter the oppressive socio-cultural norms of the patriarchal society. The novel ultimately ends with Ice-Candy-Man following Ayah across the border to India, implying that even though the ethnic genocide has now ceased post partition, the threat of gendered violence continues. Through this ending, Sidhwa highlights the ongoing struggle of women in a patriarchal society to reclaim their agency and challenge the oppressive structures that continue to silence their voices. The scene in which Godmother rescues Ayah from Ice-Candy-Man in Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy-Man* is a powerful example of how female bodies are silenced during the Indian Partition. This instance stands out among other literature of partition because it shows the guilty being held accountable and shamed into silence, which echoes the same fate of the victim. Through this scene, Sidhwa shows the power of femininity being asserted, as well as the active engagement of Lenny's female relatives in rescuing and rehabilitating abducted women and saving people from religious violence. Despite this, the text shows that there is power in feminine sexuality and that the women in the novel are actively involved in the struggle for survival. Hai (2000) asserts that the body of a female Hindu domestic servant is the only place where the harsh realities of life can be seen. She believes that Ayah is used to emphasize the superiority of the Parsee women who try to help her. Hai implies that only the privileged upper-class can have the power to speak out against injustice. However, I think Bapsi Sidhwa's novel offers a different perspective, as it highlights the female solidarity that exists across class and religious boundaries.

The novel demonstrates that women can take part in creating a nation, even if they are not seen as privileged members of society. Through her characters Ayah and Lenny, Sidhwa demonstrates the way in which women of different social classes are adversely affected by the patriarchal order. Ayah, a lower class woman, is raped and abducted, and is forced to make decisions regarding her life without the ability to make her own choices. Similarly, Lenny, a member of the upper class, is marginalized due to her disability. Both Ayah and Lenny are victims of the patriarchal order and demonstrate the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition. Hamida was another character in the novel who was the victim of communal violence and was one of the 'fallen women'. Rana's story sheds lights how women were raped and stripped naked in a sacred place and their husbands were murdered and children massacred. Furthermore, Sidhwa's novel also reveals that even upper class women are victims of gendered violence. Lenny's mother is a powerful woman who rescues raped and abducted women during the Partition, yet is a victim of her husband's cheating and physical abuse. These examples show the extent to which the patriarchal order affects all women regardless of class, and how female bodies are silenced during the Indian Partition. Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man* provides a powerful insight into the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition. Her character Lenny, a young girl, witnesses firsthand the atrocities inflicted upon women by men and is motivated to rescue sexually violated female victims of the Partition riots. Sidhwa's description of Lenny's experience demonstrates how shared violation of rights and bodies by men holds all women

together, instigating a sense of compassion towards each other. This theme is explored further in the novel through the character of Shanta, who is subject to a traumatic experience at the hands of men. Lenny's compassion and willingness to rescue sexually violated female victims of the Partition riots speaks to the strength of female unity and solidarity in the face of patriarchal oppression. By providing an intimate and vivid description of the violence and suffering inflicted on female bodies during the Partition, Sidhwa's novel serves as a powerful reminder of the resilience of women in the face of adversity.

3.1. Analyzing Expert Perspectives through Interviews

The interviews with experts (see. appendix) have provided valuable insights into the multifaceted themes and societal commentary present in Bapsi Sidhwa's "Ice-Candy-Man." This discussion aims to synthesize their perspectives and examine the overarching themes that emerge from these interviews.

- **Partition and Its Trauma:** The consensus among the experts is that "Ice-Candy-Man" serves as a potent reminder of the trauma and violence unleashed during the Indian Partition. Dr. Nadeem and Dr. Afsheen emphasized how the novel vividly portrays the horrors of Partition, from the uprooting of dreams to the devastation of once-thriving communities. The experiences of characters like Ranna and Ayah exemplify the tragic consequences of historical events on individual lives.
- **Silencing of Female Voices:** Dr. Talaat and Dr. Sara both highlight the silencing of female voices as a central theme in the novel. Women, during the Partition, were often relegated to passive roles, with their voices stifled by the overwhelming chaos and brutality. Dr. Sara underscores the ongoing relevance of this theme, emphasizing the need for female representation and autonomy in postcolonial Pakistan.
- **Female Agency and Resilience:** Dr. Amnah underscores the resilience of women during times of crisis, highlighting that "Ice-Candy-Man" acknowledges the strength of women in the face of unimaginable challenges. The novel portrays female characters who, despite their marginalization, exhibit remarkable agency and courage. This resilience becomes a powerful testament to the enduring spirit of women.
- **Communal Violence and Its Consequences:** Dr. Nadeem's insights into communal violence within the novel shed light on the motivations and consequences of such acts. The character of the "Ice-Candy-Man," seeking revenge for atrocities, serves as a stark reminder of the destructive nature of violence fueled by communal tensions. This theme reflects the broader implications of communal violence in shaping societies.
- **Gender and National Identity:** Dr. Amnah's research delves into the impact of partition on gender and national identities. The novel provides a lens through which to examine the entrenchment of violence and inequality in postcolonial Pakistan. The role of gender, national culture, and power dynamics in shaping the country's identity is evident through Sidhwa's narrative.

The interviews conducted with these experts collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of "Ice-Candy-Man." The novel serves not only as a historical account of the Indian Partition but also as a mirror reflecting contemporary struggles for gender equity, representation, and reconciliation in postcolonial Pakistan. Through the lens of literature, gender studies, and postcolonial analysis, we gain a deeper understanding of the enduring impact of Partition and its profound implications for society. Bapsi Sidhwa's work continues to be a source of reflection and discussion, urging us to confront the past and work towards a more equitable future.

4. Conclusion

The silencing of female bodies during and after the Partition of India had a significant impact on the power dynamics in postcolonial Pakistan. The silencing of female voices and the subjugation of women's bodies served to reinforce the power of men and traditional gender roles. This is exemplified in the novel through the character of Ice-Candy-Man. Ice-Candy-Man is determined to keep Ayah silent, he not only controls her body by trickery and even had the power to determine her religion. He is portrayed as the patriarchal head of the family and his power is reinforced through the silencing of Ayah's voice. This serves to represent the power dynamics that were further shaped in postcolonial Pakistan due to the silencing of female bodies. In conclusion, Bapsi Sidhwa's novel Ice-Candy-Man serves as a powerful representation of the

silencing of female bodies during the Partition of India and its aftermath shapes the power dynamics in postcolonial Pakistan. Through her novel, Sidhwa portrays the violence that women faced during this period of time and the silencing of their voices in the aftermath. This serves to illustrate the power dynamics that were shaped as a result of the silencing of female voices and the subjugation of women's bodies in colonial India that continued as a legacy in the postcolonial Pakistan. However, in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, *Ice-Candy-Man*, Lenny's compassion and willingness to rescue sexually violated female victims of the Partition riots speaks to the immense strength of female unity and solidarity in the face of oppressive patriarchy (Sidhwa, 1989). Through her vivid descriptions of the violence and suffering inflicted on female bodies during the Partition, Sidhwa's novel serves as a powerful reminder of the resilience of women in the face of adversity. By highlighting the plight of female victims of the Partition and the strength of female solidarity in the face of oppression, Sidhwa is able to reveal the importance of female agency in postcolonial Pakistan (Sidhwa, 1989). By emphasizing the importance of female agency in postcolonial Pakistan, Sidhwa's novel serves as an important reminder that despite the silencing of female bodies during the Indian Partition, women can still wield power and make their voices heard.

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Appendix- A

Interviews with experts in the fields of gender and postcolonial studies are a valuable source of data for this study. Through interviews, the researcher gain insight into the different themes and ideas presented in the novel, as well as the impact of Partition on female agency in Postcolonial Pakistan. The experts provide an in-depth understanding of the power dynamics between different communities in India and how these dynamics have been used to perpetuate violence and inequality in postcolonial Pakistan. In particular, experts provide a more nuanced view on how the Partition has shaped the identities of women in postcolonial Pakistan, as well as how the novel can be used to challenge traditional ideas of gender and power. Additionally, experts provide insight into how violence and communal violence have become entrenched in postcolonial Pakistan, and how the novel can be used to challenge these ideas. Finally, experts provide an understanding of the importance of female representation and autonomy in postcolonial Pakistan and the role of gender in achieving this. Some interviews are shared here.

Interview # 1: Exploring the Trauma of Partition in "Ice Candy Man"

Interviewer: Hello and welcome to our interview. Today, we have the pleasure of speaking with Dr. Urooj, an expert in postcolonial literature with a special focus on Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, "Ice Candy Man." Dr. Urooj, can you start by giving us an overview of your research and your interest in the trauma of Partition as depicted in this novel?

Dr. Urooj: Thank you for having me. My research revolves around the portrayal of the trauma of Partition in South Asian literature, with a specific emphasis on Bapsi Sidhwa's "Ice Candy Man." This novel provides a unique perspective on the events surrounding Partition, offering a blend of humor, parody, and allegory to explore the trauma experienced by the characters, particularly Lenny, a young Parsi girl.

Interviewer: That sounds fascinating. Could you elaborate on how "Ice Candy Man" portrays the trauma of Partition, and why this approach is distinctive?

Dr. Urooj: Certainly. What sets "Ice Candy Man" apart is the way it presents the trauma of Partition through the eyes of a child, Lenny. She recounts her memories with a touch of humor and allegory, which serves to underscore the absurdity and horror of the events. By using humor and satire, Sidhwa provides readers with a unique lens through which to understand the trauma and complexity of Partition. It's not just a straightforward historical account; it's a visceral and emotional experience.

Interviewer: Can you give us some specific examples from the novel that illustrate this portrayal of trauma?

Dr. Urooj: Absolutely. One notable example is Lenny's recollection of how friends and neighbors, once close and supportive, become helpless and ineffective when faced with mob frenzy during Partition. Sidhwa uses irony and satire to depict the breakdown of social bonds and the inability of people to prevent the violence and chaos. It's both a critique of the society at that time and a poignant commentary on the human condition during times of crisis.

Interviewer: How does this unique portrayal of trauma in "Ice Candy Man" contribute to our understanding of Partition and its impact on individuals and communities?

Dr. Urooj: "Ice Candy Man" challenges traditional narratives of Partition, which often focus on political and historical aspects. Sidhwa's approach humanizes the experiences of those who

lived through Partition, showing the emotional toll it took on individuals and the profound societal changes it brought about. By using humor and allegory, she invites readers to empathize with the characters and reflect on the lasting trauma that can result from such historical events.

Interviewer: Thank you, Dr. Urooj, for shedding light on the novel's portrayal of Partition trauma. It's clear that "Ice Candy Man" offers a unique and emotionally resonant perspective on this historical event.

Dr. Urooj: You're very welcome. It's been a pleasure discussing this important work, and I hope it encourages more people to explore the rich literature surrounding Partition.

Interview #2: Exploring Power dynamics and female agency in Pakistan.
This interview was conducted with Dr. Talaat, an expert in the fields of literature, gender and postcolonial studies.

Interviewer: Welcome Dr. Talaat! Could you please provide a brief overview of your research areas?

Dr. Talaat: Certainly! My research focuses on postcolonial literature, particularly examining the power dynamics between different communities in India and how they have been used to perpetuate violence and inequality in postcolonial Pakistan. I am particularly interested in how the Indian Partition has shaped the identities of women in postcolonial Pakistan, and how this has affected female agency.

Interview #3: Exploring female representation and autonomy in Pakistan
This interview was conducted with Dr. Sara is an expert in the fields of gender and postcolonial studies. Interviewer: Welcome Dr. Sara! Could you please provide a brief overview of your research areas?

Dr. Sara: Sure! My research focuses on gender and postcolonial studies, specifically examining how violence and communal violence have become entrenched in postcolonial Pakistan. I am also interested in how the Indian Partition has shaped the identities of women in postcolonial Pakistan, and how this has affected female agency.

Interviewer: Could you tell us more about your views on the importance of female representation and autonomy in postcolonial Pakistan?

Dr. Sara: Absolutely. I believe that female representation and autonomy are essential in postcolonial Pakistan, as they are key to challenging traditional ideas of gender and power. Through the novel *Ice-Candy-Man*, Sidhwa is able to highlight the importance of female representation and autonomy, and to challenge oppressive ideologies that have become entrenched in postcolonial Pakistan. Additionally, the novel serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of female representation and autonomy in postcolonial Pakistan and of the role of gender in achieving this.

Interview #4: Exploring Feminism in "Ice-Candy-Man"

Interviewer: Welcome to another insightful interview. Today, we have the privilege of speaking with Dr. Sadia, an expert in literature and gender studies, with a focus on Bapsi Sidhwa's novel "Ice-Candy-Man," also known as "Cracking India" in its American edition. Dr. Sadia, could you please start by sharing your perspective on the feminist themes present in this novel?

Dr. Sadia: Thank you for having me. "Ice-Candy-Man" is a rich tapestry of feminist concerns and narratives, and it offers a unique lens through which to examine the experiences of women within patriarchal societies, particularly in the context of Partition-era India.

Interviewer: That sounds intriguing. Could you elaborate on how the novel addresses these feminist concerns?

Dr. Sadia: Certainly. "Ice-Candy-Man" delves into the lives of its female characters, highlighting their struggles, victimization, and suppression within a deeply patriarchal society. The story revolves around Lenny, a young Parsi girl, who serves as our guide through this world. Through her eyes, we witness the complex lives of the women around her, each grappling with the societal constraints imposed upon them.

Interviewer: Can you provide specific examples from the novel that exemplify these feminist themes?

Dr. Sadia: Of course. One striking example is the character of Ayah, Lenny's nanny. Ayah's experiences as a low-caste woman, her vulnerability to male exploitation, and her struggle for dignity and survival are central to the narrative. Sidhwa uses Ayah's story to shed light on the harsh realities faced by marginalized women.

Furthermore, the character of Lenny herself represents a form of feminist awakening. As she navigates the chaotic and often violent world around her, she begins to question the societal norms that restrict her agency as a woman.

Interviewer: How does this exploration of feminism in "Ice-Candy-Man" contribute to the broader discourse on women's issues?

Dr. Sadia: "Ice-Candy-Man" is a powerful literary work that contributes significantly to the discourse on women's issues, especially within the context of patriarchal societies undergoing tumultuous changes like during Partition. Through the stories of its female characters, it humanizes the struggles faced by women and invites readers to empathize with their experiences. It prompts critical reflection on gender roles, power dynamics, and the impact of societal upheaval on women's lives.

Interviewer: Thank you, Dr. Sadia, for shedding light on the feminist themes in "Ice-Candy-Man." It's evident that the novel provides a valuable perspective on women's experiences and challenges within the cultural and historical backdrop of Partition-era India.

Dr. Sadia: You're very welcome. I hope our discussion encourages readers to engage with this exceptional work and further explore its feminist themes.

Interview #5: A Short Analysis of "Ice-Candy-Man"

Interviewer: Welcome to another enlightening discussion. Today, we're joined by Dr. Amara, an expert in South Asian literature, who will provide us with a concise analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, "Ice-Candy-Man." Dr. Amara, could you start by giving us a brief overview of the key themes and elements in the novel?

Dr. Amara: Thank you for having me. "Ice-Candy-Man" is a powerful exploration of societal interactions and the complex web of relationships in a multicultural and multi-religious setting during the time of Partition. It touches upon crucial aspects of life, including caste, religion, and ethnicity.

Interviewer: That's intriguing. Can you provide a short analysis of how the novel portrays these themes and the implications it carries?

Dr. Amara: Certainly. "Ice-Candy-Man" offers a profound insight into the dynamics of society. It vividly illustrates how individuals from different castes, religions, and ethnic backgrounds interact with one another, both in times of harmony and conflict. The story shows how these interactions are influenced by historical events, such as the partition of India, which creates an atmosphere of tension and uncertainty.

One of the central themes in the novel is the feeling of exclusion that some characters experience due to their caste or religious background. We see this in the character of Ayah, who belongs to a lower caste, and in the tensions that arise between different religious communities during Partition.

Interviewer: Could you elaborate on how the novel handles the idea of people feeling left out or marginalized due to their caste or religion?

Dr. Amara: Certainly. The novel portrays the sense of exclusion and marginalization experienced by characters like Ayah, who is treated as inferior due to her low-caste status. It also highlights the growing religious tensions and communal violence during Partition, which further exacerbate the feeling of being left out or persecuted based on one's faith.

Through these character experiences and interactions, "Ice-Candy-Man" offers a critical commentary on the prejudices and biases that can divide a society, especially in times of upheaval. It underscores how divisions based on caste and religion can have profound consequences on people's lives and relationships.

Interviewer: In summary, what does this short analysis of "Ice-Candy-Man" reveal about the novel's broader themes and societal commentary?

Dr. Amara: In a nutshell, "Ice-Candy-Man" is a complex and layered narrative that delves into the intricacies of human relationships and society's divisions. It illustrates how historical events and societal prejudices can shape the lives of individuals, particularly when it comes to caste and religion. The novel provides readers with a thought-provoking exploration of these themes within the backdrop of Partition-era India.

Interviewer: Thank you, Dr. Amara, for your concise analysis of "Ice-Candy-Man." It's clear that the novel offers a rich tapestry of themes and social commentary that continue to resonate with readers.

Dr. Amara: You're welcome. I hope this analysis encourages readers to engage with the novel and explore its multifaceted narrative.

Interview #6: Unpacking the Main Theme of "Ice Candy Man"

Interviewer: Welcome to another enlightening conversation. Today, we have the privilege of speaking with Dr. Afsheen, a literary scholar with a deep understanding of Bapsi Sidhwa's work, particularly "Ice Candy Man." Dr. Afsheen, could you share your insights into the main theme of this novel?

Dr. Afsheen: Thank you for having me. "Ice Candy Man" is a profound work that explores several themes, but at its core, it is primarily centered around the theme of the partition of India. However, it also delves into the tragic tales of uprooted dreams, the haunting emptiness that fills the streets of Lahore, and the betrayal of human trust.

Interviewer: That sounds like a rich tapestry of themes. Let's start by discussing the central theme of Partition. How does the novel approach and portray this historical event?

Dr. Afsheen: "Ice Candy Man" uses the partition of India as its backdrop, and through the experiences of its characters, it vividly illustrates the human cost of this momentous event. It conveys the chaos, violence, and upheaval that occurred during the partition, as well as the lasting scars it left on the people who lived through it. The characters, particularly Lenny and Ayah, are deeply affected by the partition, and their personal stories reflect the broader tragedy that unfolded during that time.

Interviewer: You mentioned the tragic tales of uprooted dreams. Could you elaborate on how the novel explores this theme?

Dr. Afsheen: Certainly. "Ice Candy Man" paints a poignant picture of the dreams and aspirations of its characters, only to shatter them in the wake of the partition. Ranna, for instance, represents the idea of unfulfilled dreams, as her artistic aspirations are disrupted by the violence and chaos of the partition. The novel explores how the dreams and hopes of individuals were abruptly upended, leaving them with a profound sense of loss and despair.

Interviewer: What about the concept of the enormous vacuity of lifeless air in Lahore's streets? How does the novel address this theme?

Dr. Afsheen: The depiction of Lahore's streets filled with an enormous vacuity of lifeless air serves as a powerful metaphor for the desolation and emptiness that prevailed in the aftermath of the partition. It captures the eerie atmosphere of a city that was once vibrant and bustling but was now haunted by the scars of violence and loss. This theme underscores the devastating impact of the partition on the urban landscape and the people who called it home.

Interviewer: Lastly, the betrayal of human trust is an intriguing theme. How does the novel explore this aspect?

Dr. Afsheen: The betrayal of human trust is portrayed through the breakdown of relationships and the unraveling of social bonds during the partition. Characters who were once close find themselves on opposing sides, and trust is shattered in the face of communal violence and conflict. This theme highlights the heartbreaking aspect of human relationships being torn apart by the circumstances of the partition.

Interviewer: Thank you, Dr. Afsheen, for your insightful analysis of the main themes in "Ice Candy Man." It's clear that the novel offers a profound exploration of these themes within the context of one of the most significant events in South Asian history.

Dr. Afsheen: You're most welcome. I hope this discussion provides readers with a deeper understanding of the novel's complexities and encourages them to engage with its themes and narratives.

Interview #7: Examining Communal Violence in "Ice Candy Man"

Interviewer: Welcome to another enlightening conversation. Today, we are joined by Dr. Nadeem, an expert in literature and history, with a particular focus on Bapsi Sidhwa's "Ice Candy Man." Dr. Nadeem, could you please help us understand the portrayal of communal violence in this novel?

Dr. Nadeem: Thank you for having me. Communal violence is a central and harrowing theme in "Ice Candy Man." The novel vividly depicts the horrors and motivations behind communal violence during the partition of India.

Interviewer: Could you elaborate on the character of the "Ice-Candy-Man" and his justification for indulging in communal violence?

Dr. Nadeem: Certainly. The character known as the "Ice-Candy-Man" justifies his participation in communal violence by claiming it is an act of revenge. He cites the killings of Muslims and the mutilated bodies on the train from Gurudaspur as his reasons for seeking vengeance. In his mind, he believes that by lobbing grenades through the windows of Hindus and Sikhs, he is avenging the atrocities committed against Muslims.

Interviewer: How does the novel portray the motivations and rationale behind such violent acts, particularly in the context of the partition?

Dr. Nadeem: "Ice Candy Man" delves into the complexities of communal violence by showing how personal grievances, fear, and a desire for revenge can drive individuals to commit heinous acts. The character of the Ice-Candy-Man represents the depth of hatred and the cycle of violence that gripped the region during the partition. His actions, while horrific, are portrayed as a response to the brutality he perceives against his own community.

Interviewer: How does the novel convey the consequences of such communal violence, both for the perpetrators and the victims?

Dr. Nadeem: The consequences of communal violence are starkly portrayed in the novel. While the Ice-Candy-Man may feel a temporary sense of satisfaction through his violent acts, the larger consequence is the perpetuation of hatred and division among communities. Innocent people, regardless of their religion, become victims of this cycle of violence, leading to a tragic and senseless loss of life. The novel underscores the futility and devastating impact of communal violence on society.

Interviewer: In summary, what does the portrayal of communal violence in "Ice Candy Man" reveal about the broader themes and messages of the novel?

Dr. Nadeem: The depiction of communal violence in "Ice Candy Man" serves as a stark reminder of the horrors of the partition of India and the deep-seated animosities that tore

Interview #8: Unpacking the Silencing of Female Bodies during the Indian Partition

Interviewer: Today, we have the privilege of speaking with Dr. Amnah, a distinguished researcher in the fields of gender studies and postcolonial literature, with a specific focus on Bapsi Sidhwa's novel "Ice-Candy-Man." Dr. Amnah, thank you for joining us to discuss your research on the silencing of female voices during the Indian Partition and the issue of female agency in postcolonial Pakistan. Could you provide us with an overview of your research and its key findings?

Dr. Amnah: Thank you for having me. My research centers on Bapsi Sidhwa's "Ice-Candy-Man," which offers a profound exploration of how the Indian Partition impacted female bodies, identities, and agency. The Partition silenced female voices, leaving them powerless in the face of tremendous upheaval. My research delves into how Sidhwa employs the novel to evoke the struggles of women during this tumultuous period and how these struggles continue to resonate in today's context. It also delves into themes of oppression, violence, and discrimination that the novel highlights.

Interviewer: That's a compelling research focus. Can you elaborate on how the Indian Partition silenced female voices and altered female identities as depicted in "Ice-Candy-Man"?

Dr. Amnah: Certainly. "Ice-Candy-Man" portrays the harrowing experiences of female characters who found themselves marginalized and voiceless during the Partition. The trauma and violence of the time forced many women into the shadows, and their identities were reshaped by the events they witnessed. They were often reduced to passive observers or victims of the larger historical narrative, and their voices were stifled by the overwhelming chaos and brutality of the Partition.

Dr. Amnah: You're very welcome. I hope that our discussion encourages readers and scholars alike to engage with the novel and continue exploring its multifaceted themes.

Interview # 9: Struggles of women during the Partition

Interviewer: How does the novel highlight the struggles of women during the Partition, and why is this portrayal significant?

Dr. Hussain: The novel provides a visceral depiction of the struggles faced by women during the Partition, from the loss of loved ones to the physical and emotional trauma they endured. It's significant because it sheds light on the untold stories of women who lived through this turbulent period, giving them a voice and acknowledging their resilience in the face of unimaginable challenges. These portrayals serve as a reminder of the strength and resilience of women during times of crisis.

Interviewer: Your research also touches upon themes of oppression, violence, and discrimination. Could you share how these themes are explored in the novel "Ice-Candy-Man" ?

Dr. Hussain: "Ice-Candy-Man" masterfully weaves these themes into its narrative. The novel exposes the oppression and violence inflicted upon individuals and communities during the Partition, often driven by religious and ethnic divisions. Discrimination based on identity and nationality is starkly depicted, revealing the deep-seated prejudices that fueled the violence of the time. These themes provide a critical lens through which we can understand the complex dynamics at play during the Partition.

Interviewer: How Sidhwa's novel serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of female representation and autonomy. Could you elaborate on this aspect and its relevance today?





Dr. Hussain: Certainly. "Ice-Candy-Man" underscores the vital need for female representation and autonomy in society. By highlighting the silencing and disempowerment of women during the Partition, the novel serves as a powerful reminder of the ongoing struggle for gender equality and agency. It prompts us to reflect on the progress made since then and the work that remains to be done to ensure that women's voices are heard and their agency respected.

Interview # 10: Exploring the role of gender and power dynamics in shaping the country's identity

Interviewer: how does Sidhwa's novel contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the effects of Partition on postcolonial Pakistan and the role of gender and power dynamics in shaping the country's identity?

Dr. Sadaf: It contributes to a holistic understanding of postcolonial Pakistan by highlighting how the Partition and its aftermath have deeply influenced gender roles, power dynamics, and national identity. It underscores the ways in which violence and communal violence have become entrenched in postcolonial Pakistan, perpetuating inequalities and divisions. By examining these dynamics through the lens of gender, my research offers valuable insights into the complex interplay of historical events, gender, and national identity in the region. Interviewer: Thank you, Dr. Sadaf, for sharing your profound insights into the themes and significance of "Ice-Candy-Man" and its relevance in understanding the impact of the Indian Partition on gender and national identities in postcolonial Pakistan.

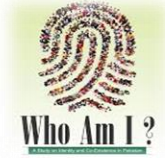
Appendix- B

Theme	Description	Evidence	Icon/image
Partition and Its Trauma	The novel explores the violence and displacement caused by the Partition.	"What's it to us if Jinnah, Nehru, and Patel fight? They are not fighting our fight," says Ayah. (p. 77)	
Silencing of Female Voices	Women were often silent victims during Partition, their stories stifled amidst the chaos.	"A women was sleeping on a charpoy. He reached for her.... He realised with a shock she was dead. It was chaudhry's older wife. He discovered three more bodies." Rana Story. (p.207) 'Hamida was kidnapped by the Sikhs,' says Godmother seriously. Once that happens, sometimes, the husband ___ or his family – wont take her back.' 'Why? It isn't her fault she was kidnapped.' Says Lenny. (p.220)	
Female Agency and Resilience	Despite marginalization, women displayed remarkable agency and strength in overcoming challenges.	Godmother showed her the two sides of her future but she still asked her what she wanted that's what pushed Ayah to the center and gives her voice : "I will not live with him" , 'Whether they (family) want me or not, I will go.' And her rejection to even accept the tea served by her oppressor, "I don't want any" shows she had reclaimed her agency. (p.266,267)	
Communal Violence	The novel reveals the destructive power of communal violence, illustrated by revenge-driven acts.	"I lose my senses when I think of the mutilated bodies on that train from Gurdaspur.... I want to kill someone for each of the breasts they cut off the Muslim women..." (p. 159-160)	

Gender
National
Identity

and The novel explores how Partition shaped gender roles and national identity in postcolonial Pakistan.

Ayah was a person who connected different ethnic groups in the nation, however, after she was taken away by force and raped, she was no longer seen as a legitimate member of the society. People had the expectation that she would kill herself in order to be seen as pure again, even though she was dead, or she would be subjected to sexual violence and suffer social death.



Source Credit: All images used in this work were sourced from Google Images. The evidence and textual references were taken directly from Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man*. The themes and expert insights were extracted from interviews conducted with scholars and experts, whose perspectives contributed to the analysis presented in the table.