



## Sidhwa's Feministic Thought in *Ice-Candy-Man*: A Feministic Study in the Light of Religion and Social Laws

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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. The novel shows the real picture of the era that how the males behave with the women. Bapsi Sidhwa presents disobedience of human rights and bad conditions during the partition of subcontinent in 1947. Through this character of Lenny, Sidhwa provides the scene of how the political changes affect the people of Subcontinent. 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. So there is inequality in society and women are suppressed by the hands of men. Bapsi Sidhwa shows the real happening of society and a pain full truth.

**Key words:** Feminism; Women suppression; Inequality; Injustice; Feministic theory

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### INTRODUCTION

Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice-Candy-Man* (1988) describes the real picture of the subcontinent in 1947 and the after effects of partition. This is the first novel written by a woman author from Pakistan in which she analyses about the luck of the people in Lahore. The novel starts with the poetry of Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal from his poem *Complaint to God*, with this, "the child-narrator Lenny is introduced". She is lame and totally helpless. She finds that her society between *Warris Road and Jail Road* is restricted. She sees the rescue army wall with exposure to air slits which makes her feel depressing and alone. The writer describes about the localities in Lahore through the Child-narrator. Lenny observes: "I feel such sadness for the dumb creature I imagine lurking behind the wall." Lenny is shy person and she is immersed in her private world. *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. They also open the patriarchal biases present in the current modern perceptions. So we are analyzing this novel regarding feministic point of view. Through this, we are underlying the problems of women which they face at that time and in modern age also. Feminism is a group or society which plays a very important role in showing the control of women in a male dominated era. In this society women are considered inferior to male and rights are only for the men. "Many of authors talk about different solutions to the deprivation of women based on cast, creed, religion and gender biases". In this novel, Sidhwa describes a number of female characters who survived the most terrible time of 1947

in subcontinent. 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), 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). In this novel, she also portrays the themes of injustice and inequality. She wants to show what the modern man does and how they became inhuman, lust for money and much more which they perform for their own comfort. But they don't think that what they doing. So this paper shows the issues of male dominant society and also draws the light on various issues of the women in the daily life, on the basis of feministic point of view.

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## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

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*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).

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.

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## 2. METHODOLOGY

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"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.

Basic feminist thoughts

- Feminists consider in "effective to raise equality". That there must be equality on every cost.
- Feminists also think in "expanding human choice". Both genders should develop human traits.
- Other feminist principle, "eliminating gender stratification", treated on the basis of equality.

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## 3. DISCUSSION ANALYSIS

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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. The whole lesson helps her to build up an adult revelation of life style of women. She provides a real picture of the society which indicates the relationship of men and women. Being a lame her life is totally different from the other people and just limited to her home. She spends her time with her mother. She had no tendency to female possession. Her life is totally bore no playing at all. The sexual identity forces upon her again and again. At that time, she was stopped by taking classes in the study institution because she was handicapped and suffering from polio by the advised of doctor. Doctor advised her she can get married and live a good life. She does not require taking burden of studies. This advice made her life totally limited and strange and then she observes the brutality of this world, the male dominant society. She also realized that women are only puppets in hands of men. Since from the early ages it is considered that woman's responsibility is just to look after the house work and responsibilities of children and devote her life for the family. Shashi Deshpande suggests that women should be given enough space to realize their true personality. Simon de Beauvoir holds the opinion that mothers are responsible to inculcate the sense of submission in women.

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".

Lenny surprised to see the two faces of men and she became aware of spiritual changes. She knows that men cannot be a friend of women they just love women to full fill their lust, Lenny appears as brave, courageous and strong character in the novel. Sidhwa has provided feminist touch to novel that moves forward although many hurdles. By observing the life of many women she perceived the boundaries connected with women lives in male dominant society. 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.

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#### 4. FINDINGS

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As so far as findings in concern do there are a lot of main issues in the novel which Bapsi Sidhwa underlines or highlights, and there is a great need to overcome these problems as soon as possible. For example:

***Inequality in gender:*** Is a main issue and serious problem because the early ages women's are treated as a weaker sex. So there is need of change of mind think positive. Almost in every religion, the clergyman preached about equality or equal rights according to the law.

***Education for women:*** Is another major issue that is in most of the countries especially in eastern countries where females are not allowed to attend school and education is only for males. So these are injustices with the females and so there is need of the mind set and awareness that education is necessary for both sexes.

***Government responsibility:*** Government should provide the security to the people and maintain law and order. Authority moral duty is to provide rights to each and every individual according to law. Respect is given to all genders. So government should take some serious steps regarding this issue.

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#### 5. RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW REGARDING WOMEN RIGHTS

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In every religion, there are equal rights for the females. Females are not inferior to men. It's their legal rights to enjoy or learn what they want. In every religion, it is said that men and women both are born independent. They can live enjoy and learn equal rights. According to Islamic point of view women have equal rights in every basic or routine of life. Islam provides all necessary rights to both genders whether in property or in daily necessity of life and also Islam provides law for the control of women disrespect. There is only need to take some serious steps or mind set programs.

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#### 6. CRIME LAW AND PUNISHMENT

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In Islam, sexual activity between a Muslim woman and any man to who is not married is known "Zina", a massive kind of a religious sin. This contains extramarital, and rape it is known as a *massive crime*, that is a crime against God (murder of a Muslim; theft of a Muslim's property; "Zina"; consumption of alcohol or other intoxicants; and apostasy. The punishment in Islam for unlawful sex is fixed at a

100-lash public flogging, or stoning to death. Critically anyone of sex crime or rape, without proper witnesses, is also a big crime. So it's a moral duty of government they maintain law and order. Punishment is must be given to guilty people. Rights are civil liberties of females.

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## 7. PROPERTY RIGHTS

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As far as rights are concern so women suffer on every occasion whether the issue of marriage or the issue of property rights. It's their legal rights to get share in property like man gets. But most of the time people say that rights are only for the boys and female are not parts of it. So its injustice and according to rules and regulation or law women have right to take part from the property of their parents on the basis of government right. In Islamic law, it is also stated that property rights are for the both gender male and females.

- "No nation can ever be worthy of its existence that cannot take its women along with the men. No struggle can ever succeed without women participating side by side with men. There are two powers in the world; one is the sword and the other is the pen. There is a great competition and rivalry between the two. There is a third power stronger than both, that of the women." — Muhammad Ali Jinnah.
- So Bapsi Sidhwa is successful in showing the real picture of that time through the character of Lenny a small child victim of Hindu Muslim conflict. She was born independent but suppressed by this cruel society. There right has been snatched from her and born with mental slavery. She said who is responsible for this. Every individual has right to live and enjoy independent life Men and women both.

Rusell is known as champion of liberty talked about individual liberty that men and women have equal rights to enjoy and live, nobody has right to suppressed the life of women. She born independent and legal right to spent independent life. Liberty is their right.

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## CONCLUSION

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In *Ice-Candy-Man*, Sidhwa exposes the picture of male dominant society and the survival of women. By this novel, she explains the rights of women, that women are not inferior to men. They have also some desires which they want to fulfill in the life. So there is need of liberty, in which every individual gets their rights according to

rule and regulation. God created both male and female and its nature law that without female life will not move forward. It's only a mother (female) who gives birth so rights are for both male and female. It's a legal right of the female that she gets married to their own choice, she lives where they want, education is her legal right nobody can suppress her under the walls of the home. So Sidhwa is the successful to show the real picture of the society and work female rights.

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