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Abstract

The current study aims to analyze the discursive construction and representation of the processes of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation among Pakistani students in America in Dur e Aziz Amna's novel American Fever (2022). The study utilizes Homi K. Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and mimicry (1994) to unveil students' strategies during their stay in America. Fairclough's three-dimensional model (1992) was also employed to examine linguistic choices underpinning power and resisting strategies used by the protagonist to establish her position in society. The findings indicate that Pakistani students adapt to American norms, contrasting their native culture. Power dynamics play a significant role in identity negotiation, as Islamophobia and the Pakistani identity of the students affect their power position in American society. The author has used evocative language, metaphors, intertextual references, and code-switching to render the complexities of cultural adaptation and manifest her resistance to prevailing ideologies, including Islamophobia and gender norms.

Keywords: Cultural Adaptation, Power Dynamics, Diaspora, Identity Negotiation

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Abstract

The current study aims to analyze the discursive construction and representation of the processes of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation among Pakistani students in America in Dur e Aziz Amna's novel *American Fever* (2022). The study utilizes Homi K. Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and mimicry (1994) to unveil students' strategies during their stay in America. Fairclough's three-dimensional model (1992) was also employed to examine linguistic choices underpinning power and resisting strategies used by the protagonist to establish her position in society. The findings indicate that Pakistani students adapt to American norms, contrasting their native culture. Power dynamics play a significant role in identity negotiation, as Islamophobia and the Pakistani identity of the students affect their power position in American society. The author has used evocative language, metaphors, intertextual references, and code-switching to render the complexities of cultural adaptation and manifest her resistance to prevailing ideologies, including Islamophobia and gender norms.

Keywords: [Cultural Adaptation](#), [Power Dynamics](#), [Diaspora](#), [Identity Negotiation](#)

Introduction

Background

In a world characterized by interconnectedness, cultural adaptation, studying abroad and international exposure become more significant. Whether this immigration is driven by economic opportunities or academic pursuits, it lays a foundation for the dynamic process of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation in a new society

and culture. It is an intricate dance between one's pre-existing identity and the changes that come through immersion in a foreign culture. Globalization has left a huge impact on the modern world, and it gives more validation to differences among people rather than similarities among them (Imbert, 2004). The landscape of globalized society has rapidly evolved. It has also increased the complexities of identity negotiation and cultural



adaptation. Cultural adaptation is defined as the ability of a person or process to adjust to new cultural surroundings and learn to adjust one's actions and communication methods to better communicate with those who belong to the target culture (Tedjanegara & Azeharie, 2021). Due to immigration, globalization, and the simple fact that the world has become a smaller place, people face the challenge of cultural adaptation and struggle with questions of identity because globalization facilitates the exchange of culture and language amongst individuals coming from different countries, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds (Raikhan et al., 2014). The process of cultural adaptation is not just about learning new languages and traditions. It goes deeper and more about how we perceive others and how others perceive us (Su, 2017). In this dynamic scenario, cultural adaptation and identity negotiation rise as important themes. Cultural adaptation is one's ability to communicate, behave, and engage with people according to the norms and discursive practices of the host culture (Kim, 2017).

The identity of an individual is a collection of a person's traits, beliefs, self-knowledge, social roles, relationships, group affiliations, and cognitive structures; past, present, and future self-representations, which means what he has experienced in the past; how he sees himself now and how sees himself in the future. When all these elements are grouped, they become the identity of an individual (Guenther et al., 2020). Every human being carries a unique personal identity, as all human beings have different experiences; even in the same society, each human being is conditioned differently; he thinks and believes in a set of beliefs that is different from others' set of beliefs, which constructs his unique personality. The identity of a person is socially constructed, and the process of identity construction starts in childhood (Fraser, 2016). Identity negotiation occurs when two individuals encounter each other. Like identity construction, identity negotiation is also an ongoing process. Once the social context is clear, individuals explore their identity in that particular social context. At this stage of the identity negotiation process, cultural adaptation becomes very relevant. Besides adjustment and adaptation, conflict resolution also takes place during identity negotiation. Conflict resolution refers to clearing the confusion or resolving the resolution between two

or more aspects of one's identity (Swann & Bosson, 2008). Following Swann and Bosson's argument driven by Identity Negotiation Theory (INT), cultural adaptation and identity negotiation are deeply interconnected and go hand in hand.

Literature as an art form is a mirror to society that explores complex themes through the stories of fictional characters. It serves as the reflective mirror of society (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014). The experiences of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds in America have been a recurring theme in literature. Several literary works delve into the themes of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation contextualized around Pakistan-America. There is a significant Pakistani diaspora in America. The majority of the Pakistanis go to America and make America their second home. In 2007, the number count of the Pakistani diaspora varied between 400,000 and 600,000, which represents a visible population size (Mohammad-Arif, 2007). In this context, negotiation of identity has become an essential and never-ending process. Despite that, each diasporic ethnicity has its cultural products and elements like music, dance, literature, food, and other forms of art, but as a diaspora, they adopt a few products hosting culture (Nindyasmara, 2016). The incident of the attack on WTC has left deep marks on the identity of Pakistani Muslims in the United States because of their ethnicity and religious identity (Ikenberry, 2015). Considering the following argument, it becomes relevant and significantly important to study the experiences and shed light on the challenges that the Pakistani diaspora faces in the United States while negotiating their identity. Other than cultural shocks and challenges in terms of cultures, they face many challenges in terms of language, such as language barrier, dialect, and lexical choices. Language attitudes and ideologies of the people play a very impactful role during the negotiation of identity between two individuals and cultural adaptation (Nyamekye et al., 2023).

Existing literary works such as "Golden Girl," "American Darvesh," and "Zara Hossain is Here" offer adequate insight into the aspects of experiences of Pakistani Americans, but they are falling short in providing comprehensive exploration of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation within the Pakistani diaspora in America, as there is a very limited representation of newcomers, particularly students. The experiences

of an individual who embarks on this journey as a newcomer and a student who is there for a limited time remain unexplored. The experiences of a Pakistani student or a newcomer in America remain underexplored. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by exploring the experiences of Pakistani students in America who stay in the US for a limited time, as portrayed in the novel "American Fever" by Dur e Aziz Amna. A comprehensive analysis of the novel uncovers the cultural adaptation and identity negotiation within the Pakistani diaspora. This research focuses on the lexical choices of the characters during identity negotiation and cultural adaptation. Culture cannot be disparate from the language because it mirrors the social and discursive practices of the culture (Akhtar, 2020).

Problem Statement

In the contemporary globalized scenario, exploring the experiences of Pakistani students studying in America has become significantly relevant. The existing body of literature has touched upon various facets of identity negotiation and cultural adaptation among the Pakistani Diaspora in America. However, an in-depth analysis of the experiences of Pakistani students as newcomers in the United States remains unexplored. The available literature focuses on the challenges faced by 1st and 2nd generation of Pakistani Americans who are raised and settled in American culture that leave a noticeable gap. This research seeks to address this gap by investigating the distinctive experiences of Pakistani students studying in the U.S., particularly through a critical discourse analysis of the novel "American Fever," authored by Dur e Aziz Amna.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the cultural adaptation and identity negotiation processes experienced by Pakistani students during their temporary stay in America.
2. To examine the role of power and language in identity negotiation and identity construction presented in selected texts.

Research Questions

1. How do the linguistic choices of the characters in American Fever reflect the process of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation?

2. How do the power dynamics influence the characters' ability to negotiate their identity in the postcolonial context presented in American Fever?

Literature Review

Identity-related issues have become a global phenomenon, and it has received considerable research attention. The 21st century is considered the age of technology and innovation. The entire world is enjoying the fruit of the revolution in technology that has converted the world into a global village, and going to advanced countries to pursue higher studies has become a prevailing fashion in the developing world, including Pakistan (Kamran & Zahoor, 2019). Every year, many Pakistani students go to advanced countries like America, the UK, Australia, China, and Canada to pursue higher studies in different fields. During their stay in foreign countries as international students, they experience and face different challenges in multicultural society. Many authors, novelists, and research scholars have participated in the debate on the role of language and power in identity negotiation and cultural adaptation. There are a significant number of fictional works addressing cultural adaptation and identity negotiation of the Pakistani diaspora in different countries, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and Europe. Moving abroad has created perplexing problems like hybridity, alienation, and identity crises, which people face as a diaspora (Akhtar et al., 2021). Identity negotiation and cultural adaptation often result in forming a new hybrid identity that involves the process of deconstructing one's existing identity. Five factors have a very significant influence in forming a new identity in the case of diasporas of colonized countries in the Western world which are whiteness, family, education, culture, and media (Obeyesekere, 2023). Constructing a new hybrid identity of the immigrants as a diaspora in hosting culture and identity is rooted in their immediate colonial past (Alaazi et al., 2020).

Many authors have written novels covering the life of the Pakistani diaspora in America and attempted to highlight the challenges that the Pakistani diaspora in America faces in terms of identity negotiation and cultural adaptation. To cover these themes in the context of Pakistani Americans,

different novelists have used different perspectives and characters to explore the challenges in the life of Pakistanis living in America. *Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid, *Homeland Elegies* by Ayad Akhtar, *Saffron Dreams* by Shaila Abdullah, *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid, and *Home Boy* by HM Naqvi are popular contemporary novels that researchers have taken up to study and analyze to explore the above-mentioned themes and perspectives. The above-mentioned novels cover the stories of 1st and 2nd generations who are well-settled or raised and born in America, but the experiences of Pakistani students as newcomers in terms of identity negotiation and cultural adaptation in the United States remain unexplored.

Muslim Identity After 9/11

The fall of the Twin Towers or the 9/11 terrorist attacks were not merely the fall of two buildings or a terrorist attack we see in media reports. The 9/11 attacks left a huge impact on the lives of billions of people. It changed the lives of Muslims residing in America, especially with Asian and Arab backgrounds. Most of the literature published in the Western media painted Islam as a terrorist religion (Mansoor, 2012). One of the novels describing the challenges that Pakistanis face as immigrants is *Reluctant Fundamentalist* (Hamid, 2007), a popular novel that examines the problem of identity and the kind of challenges that Pakistani immigrants face in America. Akhtar et al., (2021) analyzed *Reluctant Fundamentalist* and argued that the roots and history of the characters play an important role in building the identity of a character. Pakistani diaspora in America tries to negate their past to get adjusted to multicultural American society, which creates problems for them because leaving the past and roots is a difficult process (Akhtar et al., 2021).

Homeland Elegies (Akhtar, 2020) is also a famous contemporary novel that discusses identity problems in the context of the Pakistani diaspora in America. Busyeiri and Ruslianti (2022) have researched the novel and attempted to explore the challenges for Pakistani Americans in identity negotiations and cultural adaptation presented in *Homeland Elegies*. This research investigates the first and second generations of Pakistani American immigrants. This article also explores the identity negotiation between first and second-generation Pakistani immigrants because second-generation

adapted to American norms too quickly adjusted to the society and negated their belonging to Pakistani and Islamic culture (Busyeiri & Ruslianti, 2022).

Another novel that describes the experiences of Pakistani people as immigrants is H.M. Naqvi's novel "Home Boy" (2009) is also an immigrant's tale that sheds light on how the lives of Pakistani Americans changed after the incident of 9/11. Mansoor (2012) has explored how ethnic and religious identity is declared terrorist or supporter of terrorism after the 9/11 attacks. This research argues that despite the impact of the War on Terror on Pakistanis at the individual and collective level, Pakistanis have been able to form a unified Muslim identity. Terrorist and violent identities were associated with Pakistanis and Muslims. Change in the attitude of people after the negative portrayal of Muslims and Islam in global media and literature that led to harassment, polarization, and tension between Muslims and non-Muslims pushed Pakistani Muslims to opt for a hybrid identity, which directly impacted the power position of Muslims and Pakistanis in identity negotiation.

Rise of Islamophobia

Islamophobia exploded in the West, particularly in Europe, after the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 in America. Muslim communities faced social discrimination, prejudice, marginalization, and social exclusion in the Western world because Muslims were collectively being blamed for the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Fekete, 2009).

Saffron Dream is a novel by Shaila Abdullah that tells the account of a Pakistani Muslim living in America who faced Islamophobia in American society and changed her identity negotiation strategy. Asiyah (2022) analyzed the novel "Saffron Dreams", set in a post-9/11 period. It deals with the identity problem of a Pakistani Muslim woman in America who is trying to fulfill her roles as a daughter, wife, and mother. In the post-9/11 era, Islamophobia became the biggest challenge for Muslims and Pakistanis in America, and subsequently, it created identity issues for them. Pakistani Muslim women in America changed their identity and started to negotiate their identity through a mindful approach after 9/11. The veil was becoming problematic as society was becoming Islamophobic after the 9/11 attacks and Pakistani Muslim women in America started to wear

American clothes in the name of modest dress, which is acceptable in society. Aasiya (2022) has used the perspective of a Pakistani Muslim woman living in America.

Mohsin Hamid is a popular Pakistani English writer who has written several novels covering various themes, including cultural adaptation, cultural differences, identity, experiences of immigration, and alienation in foreign countries (Shakir, 2014). *Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Moth Smoke* are two famous novels by Mohsin Hamid that cover the experiences of being an immigrant and identity issues in a foreign country. Ghilzai and Shahnaz (2023) studied these novels to understand cultural hegemony and the politics of identity. This research examines how the characters in these novels negotiate their identity in reaction to oppressive power structures.

The above-mentioned studies have left a gap in the study of the experiences of people who have recently moved to America and were not born and raised in America. Existing literature on cultural adaptation and identity negotiation focuses on the experiences of settled Pakistani immigrants in America.

Research Methodology

In this research, qualitative design to investigate the cultural adaptation and identity negotiation processes in "American Fever" of Dur e Aziz Amna. Qualitative research explores the multifaceted dimensions of human experiences, behaviors, and interactions. This research employed Fairclough's 3D model as an analytical framework, and Homi informed the analysis. K. Bhabha's concepts of mimicry and hybridity.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is also a very important component of research methodology. Considering the research questions and research objectives, postcolonial theory aligns best to analyze the text of "American Fever" to specifically understand the cultural adaptation and identity negotiation of a student from the colonized country (Pakistan) in America. Postcolonial theory offers a theoretical lens to critically examine the effects of colonialism and the ongoing struggle of the people for justice, equality, and self-determination in formerly colonized societies in today's globalized world.

Following key concepts of postcolonial theorist Homi. K. Bhabha's 1994, concepts are used:

Othering

Seeing people from colonized regions as inferior often leads to discrimination and marginalization in the colonizer's society.

Hybridity

It is the blending of colonized and colonizer cultures, identities, and practices that occur because of colonial encounters, challenging the notion of fixed, essential identities.

Data Collection

The primary source of data to explore the experiences of Pakistani students in America to navigate their process of identity negotiation and cultural adaptation in American society is "American Fever." For this research, data is collected through the purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling ensures that data is relevant, detailed enough, aligns well with the research objectives, and enhances the depth and quality of the findings of the study (Luciani et al., 2019). To ensure that text selection aligns with the objectives of the study, the following inclusion/exclusion was used:

Inclusion Criteria

1. Relevance to Research Objectives: The selected text must directly address the central themes (cultural adaptation, identity negotiation, and the experiences of Pakistani students in America) outlined in the research objectives.
2. Sufficient detail: Selected text must contain rich descriptive detail and narrative depth, providing enough material for in-depth analysis of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation processes.
3. Language and Discourse Analysis Potential: Selected texts must lend themselves well to language and discourse analysis techniques, exhibiting linguistic features, discursive strategies, and power dynamics suitable for qualitative analysis.

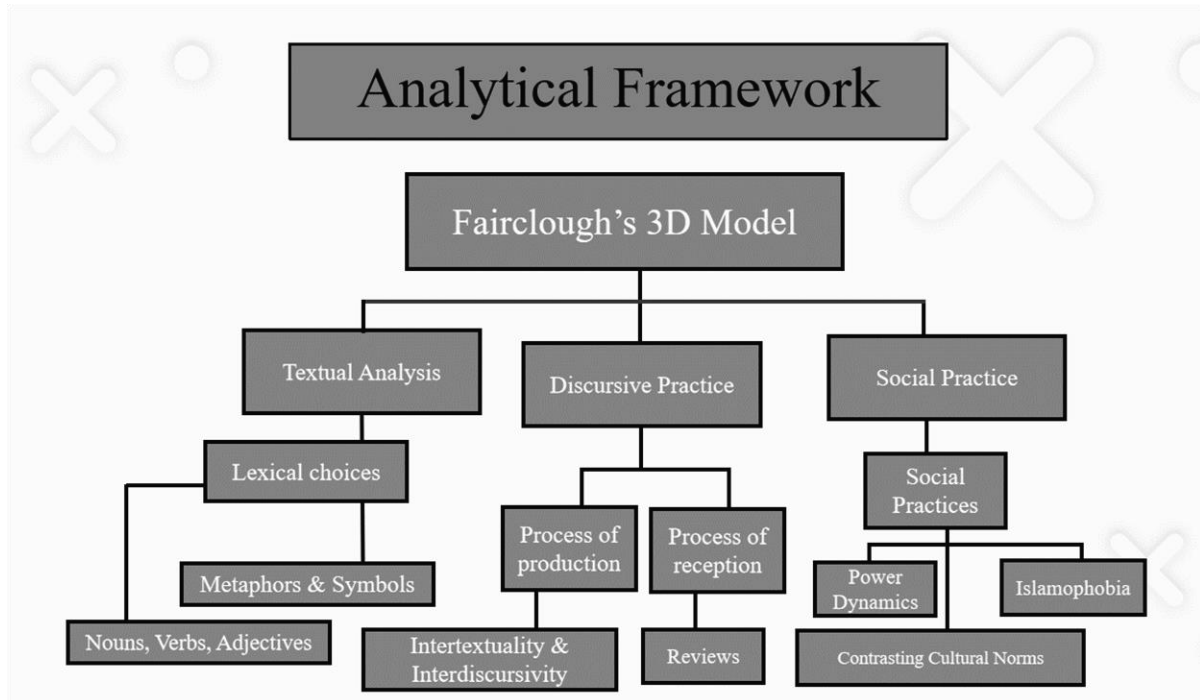
Analytical Framework

This research uses Fairclough's 3D model as an analytical framework for critical discourse analysis.

Fairclough's three-dimensional model for discourse analysis offers an analysis of the text at three levels (Fairclough, 1992). This model takes language as a social practice and analyzes the role of social and political dominance in the discourse. The three-

dimensional model investigates power relations and uncovers how existing power structures are being challenged and how power is exerted through language, which refers to ideological struggles.

Figure 1



Data Analysis

Textual Analysis

Text 1: He read the last one out loud and peppered in some cautionary tales: the kid who had woken up his host mother before dawn so she could make *sehri* for his fast; the girl who had refused to clean her own bathroom, saying she never did that back home in Lahore.

“American moms,” he said, “are not like Pakistani women. They have jobs, and they’ve volunteered to host you.

In this excerpt, the program coordinator of Hira is explaining the protocols and rules of conduct to program participants in America. For a better understanding, he has quoted examples of participants from previous batches who didn’t follow the instructions and faced troubles during their stay in America.

In this text, some nouns, verbs, and adjectives are used that reflect social and cultural context, such as the author used the nouns “host mother,” “Pakistani woman,” and “American Moms.” Likewise, she has

used the verb “refused” and adjectives like “American,” “Pakistani,” “back,” and “own.” The word refused expresses unwillingness in very harsh manners. In this text, “American Moms” and “Pakistani Women” can also be seen as symbols that suggest differences in both cultures, cultural expectations, and cultural behaviors. These symbols imply the contrasting expectations regarding household duties and gender roles in Pakistani society and American society.

In this text, the author is talking about the story of a kid who woke his “host mother,” who is an American woman, to prepare a *sehri* meal. This instance also refers to cultural differences and encourages cultural adaptation. In Pakistani society, generally, mothers prepare the *sehri* meal, and it is considered their duty, “fast(ing)” is the religious practice of Muslims, but America is a Christian society. Following this instance, he tells the story of a girl who refused to clean her own bathroom. In this sentence, the author has used the word “refused” and emphasized the word “own.” The author has chosen these examples to illustrate the difference

between Pakistani and American women and to provide an image of the culture and society they are living in. To fit in American society, they are required to adapt to certain cultural changes in their behaviors, and they need to revisit their thoughts on gender roles and expectations from the society in which they are going. The words "Pakistani women" and "American Moms" are referring to these particular gender roles.

Text 2: *"Unlike most of the girls, Zahra had made friends with the boys in the program, once even sneaking out for ice cream with them after midnight. She had asked me to come along but I refused. We were not allowed to leave the hotel premises, and I was so worried we would get caught and Abbu would find out, and there would go America, my golden year, and there I would be, back with those schoolgirls I had just left."*

In the excerpt, some nouns, verbs, and adjectives are used which reflect cultural context, cultural identity, and gender dynamics. The excerpt includes words like "girls," "boys," "ice cream," "midnight," "hotel premises," "Abbu," "America," "golden year," and "schoolgirls." The text primarily consists of nouns (girls, boys, midnight, hotel premises, Abbu, America, schoolgirls) and verbs (made, sneaking, asked, refused, allowed, worried, get caught). These parts of speech refer to the identities, emotions, and actions. "Girl" and "boys" are major gender-related lexical highlights in this excerpt, and the words "sneaking" and "midnight" refer to the social and cultural context in which the mixing of girls and boys is odd and discouraged as well because the word sneaking is suggesting something being done reluctantly and midnight is hinting towards Zahra wanted to keep that meeting secret. Hira's refusal to go with Zahra at midnight to meet the boys also refers to the unacceptability of this activity in Pakistani culture as the students were staying in a hotel in Karachi before their flight to America. The author also uses the word "get caught," which refers not only to Hira's fear but also to her will to go out and hang out with the boys. In this text, the author also uses the metaphor "America, my golden year," which serves as a representation of Hira's hopes, dreams, and aspirations, which are associated with their experience in America. "Back," "schoolgirls," and "left," these words represent and refer to the social culture she is coming from, and she expresses unwillingness to go there again.

Text 3: *"Mind putting your seatbelt on?" she asked as we exited the lot. I apologized and hastily clamped the buckle. My parents never wore seatbelts—Abbu had gotten the warning beeper shut off a day after we got the car."*

Kelly requests Hira in very polite manners (through lexical choices) to wear the seatbelt, and Hira fastens the seatbelt very quickly because she realizes that she is in a different society and culture where wearing the seatbelt is mandatory; otherwise, they will fined the police. She apologizes, which means she accepts her negligence and wears the seatbelt, which implies that she accepts and adapts to the norms of the American culture in which she is going live next year. Her apology is particularly referring to her thoughts that not wearing a seatbelt is a wrong or unethical practice that should not be followed and her willingness to adapt to the good norms of American society and culture. After this conversation, she talks to herself, and the author sheds light on the practice of wearing car seatbelts in Pakistani culture and society through Hira's thoughts. Hira recalls that her parents, who are well educated and considered civilized people of society, "never" wore the seatbelt, and her father has removed the seatbelt sensor, which beeps as a warning in the car, which implies that wearing the seatbelt is not widely practiced in Pakistan. The average seatbelt use rate was 20% in 2014, and back then, not wearing a seatbelt was not considered an offense other than Motorway M-2 (Klair & Arfan, 2014).

Hira's act of wearing a seatbelt can be seen as Homi. K. Bhabha's concept of "mimicry" is imitating the behavior that is expected of her in America by considering it right and better in her subconscious mind. Hira's action reflects a negotiation between her native cultural identity and the cultural norms of her host country, America.

Text 4: *"I savored each bite, not telling Kelly or Amy that this was the first dinner I had ever participated in making. Both my parents had grown up in households where cooking was the wretched task of the least respected."*

Hira has cooked for the first time in her life after coming to America. She is 16 years old, but in Pakistan, she never cooked because generally, mothers or house help staff cook in Pakistani society. On the contrary, kids are encouraged to do chores and to participate in households in American

culture and society. When Hira came to America, she participated in cooking without even asking. This action of Hira in this text manifests Bhabh's concept of "mimicry" as she didn't question but simply accept the norm of cooking. To avoid social awkwardness, Hira didn't tell Kelly and Amy that this was the first dinner she had participated in making, which also uncovers the post-colonial mindset of Hira. Hira has gone to America from a culture where cooking has a very negative perception as if it is the job of servants or people who are not capable of doing other jobs. The negative perception of Hira's parents about cooking represents the cultural attitude of Pakistani society towards domestic tasks or chores. Going from Pakistani society, where doing chores is associated with the least respected people and less capable people, to American society, where doing chores is part of the routine, then adapting this culture manifests Bhabha's concept of "hybridity" as she negotiates her Pakistani cultural identity with American cultural norm of doing chores forms a new identity.

Text 5: *"Abbu prided himself on never having to enter the kitchen. Sometimes over dinner, he told Faisal and me to be grateful to God for the food that appeared, fully prepared and steaming hot, on our dining table, which was an odd way of referring to Aliya's labor."*

This excerpt explicitly represents the cultural difference between Hira's native and host cultures. The lexical choice of the author in this excerpt reflects the cultural attitudes and cultural experience of Hira in America. The author has used the nouns like "Abbu," "kitchen," "labor," and "job." These nouns refer to cultural roles and identities. Likewise, she uses a very strong verb to manifest the attitude of Hira's father; "pride," which refers to a sense of satisfaction, relief, and achievement. Her father considers it a relief and achievement as well because cooking is the job of the least respected people or laborers. The author uses the word "way out" to describe her mother's thoughts about getting rid of cooking as she is an educated woman.

While comparing both cultures, Hira realizes that her family has a very negative perception of doing chores, and she recalls that her father used to take pride in never entering the kitchen, which implies that he never cooked either for himself or anybody else. Besides, in her family, they have servants to do

chores, even for cooking, but in America, cooking or helping to prepare meals in the kitchen is very normal for every member of society. American women participate in chores along with their jobs. This text indicates the difference between the cultural attitudes of Americans and Pakistanis towards domestic responsibilities. In this text, Hira carries two cultural identities, negotiating her identity of being Pakistani with the cultural norms of American society, which refers to Homi. K. Bhabha's concept of "hybridity".

Analysis of Discursive Practices

Discursive practices refer to ways in which language is used in a particular social or cultural context to produce meaning, establish social identities, challenge existing power structures, or exert power (Fairclough, 1989). He emphasizes on interconnectedness of language and social practices and institutions.

Process of Production

Like many other debut novels, "American Fever" is also an autobiographical novel. The author of the Novel, Dur e Aziz Amna, also went to the US on an exchange program during her high school, like the protagonist of the novel, Hira. Dur e Aziz Amna's inspiration for 'American Fever' likely stemmed from her personal experiences, keen observations, and contemplations surrounding themes of cultural identity, immigration, and the quest for belonging during her exchange program in the US. With her roots in Pakistan and an educational background in English literature, Amna may have drawn upon her nuanced experiences of cultural adaptation and negotiation as a catalyst for the novel's narrative exploration. Intertextuality and interdiscursivity are two major components of the texts that uncover the ways texts are produced and situated in broader discursive practices.

Intertextuality

In "America Fever," Dur e Aziz Amna also employs intertextuality to deepen the reader's engagement with the text and enrich the narrative. To begin, the epigraph page of the novel acknowledges the influence of three languages on the author, featuring quotes and verses in Urdu, English, and Punjabi. On the epigraph page, Amna has taken four verses of Faiz Ahmad Faiz in Urdu, two verses of Munir Niazi

in Punjabi, and one quotation from George Steiner in English.

*Raat yoon dil mein teri khoyi hui yaad aayi
Jaise veerane mein chupke se bahar aa jaye
Jaise sehraon mein hole se chale baad-e-naseem
Jaise beemar ko bevajah qarar aa jaye
(Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Nuskha Hae Wafa)*

English translation of the verses of Faiz:

*Last night your faded memory came to me
As in the wilderness spring comes quietly,
As, slowly, in the desert, moves the breeze,
As, to a sick man, without cause, comes peace.*

These verses of Faiz refer to the author's longing for her home and homeland; perhaps this is the reason she has chosen the Urdu language to express her longing, which is largely spoken in Pakistan in the segment of the society she belongs to. These verses represent the author's feelings after moving to a new culture.

Intimacy ... be it of hatred or of love, can be defined as a confident, quasi-immediate translation.

(George Steiner, After Babel)

Then she took a quotation from *George Steiner* from *After Babel* in which he defines confidence through intimacy.

*Kujh shehr de lok vi zalam san
Kujh sanoon maran da shauq vi si
(Munir Niazi, Safar Di Raat)*

English translation of Niazi's verses:

*Some, city people were repressive
Some of it was my affection for death.*

Besides, Hira exchanges her predominantly Anglophilic bookshelf, which includes Dickens, Blyton, and Austen, for literature by Emerson and readings on the American Civil War. The change in Hira's bookshelf symbolizes her evolving cultural and intellectual journey. This shift reflects her efforts to understand and adapt to American culture and society. During quarantine, Hira got the chance to read "Nuskha Hae Wafa" by Faiz Ahmed Ahmad. Reading this poetry in Urdu when she is stranded in a foreign country was a homecoming for her. Faiz Ahmad Faiz is the most significant literary presence in the novel. His verses are scattered throughout the novel.

Interdiscursivity

Dur e Aziz Amna has integrated various interconnected discourses in her novel which contribute to the story. The clash and convergence of American and Pakistani cultural norms and values is one of the significant discourses which are explored in the novel, *American Fever*. Hira, the protagonist, sketches the differences between Pakistani and American society in food, language, customs, and social expectations during her stay in America. The interconnectedness of cultural discourse is very noticeable in *American Fever*. The novel also has other intertextual references to literary texts from Urdu, Punjabi, and English language. Hira bridges between Pakistani heritage and her experiences in America through literature that highlights the interconnectedness of literary discourses in the novel. Broader social and political discourses such as religion, gender dynamics, and immigration are also leaving a mark on the characters' identities. Hira and her fellows face aggravation motivated by Islamophobia, which reflects on the interconnectedness of political and social discourses.

Reception of Text

Reception of discourse refers to the interpretation of the novel by readers because readers bring their perspective based on their cultural background, and personal experiences to the interpretation of the novel. Readers with a Pakistani background might interpret it as Hira's journey of going abroad and adapting to American culture but readers with an American background can investigate this novel to gain insight into cross-cultural dynamics and immigration issues. To investigate the reception of the novel, the researcher has incorporated comments from the readers and reviews from the critics of the novel.

Khawaja (2023), a Pakistani who graduated from the University of Columbia, describes this novel as delightful and captivating, emphasizing its ability to hook the reader from the beginning. She resonated with protagonist Hira's story, reflecting on the concept of home and its emotional significance. She resonated with Hira's story because she would have found it relatable during her graduation from Columbia as cultural adaptation and identity negotiation are always challenges while studying abroad.

Court (2021) from London (a non-Pakistani) commends the novel for its compelling narrative and humorous portrayal of young Hira's transformative journey from Pakistan to rural Oregon. She acknowledges Amna's skillful use of language to keep the reader engaged throughout the story. Louise Court is looking at this novel as a transformative journey of a Pakistani student, unlike Khawaja.

Bareerah Ghani, a Pakistani reader, has applauded the boldness, unique perspective, and narrative style. She said that Amna's storytelling is unapologetic, which makes it authentic and relatable. The reader feels connected. Ghani also appreciated that Amna portrayed her experiences in Pakistan without looking for validation from external sources (Ghani, 2022).

Analysis of Social Practices

This dimension of the analysis explores how the text interacts with broader social structures and investigates power relations and ideological struggles. In this analysis, Islamophobia, power dynamics, and contrasting cultural norms are explored, focusing on cultural adaptation and identity negotiation.

Islamophobia

The novel *American Fever* by Dur e Aziz Amna is set in 2011 when Islamophobia was one of the major challenges that Muslim communities in America faced. The text reflects this social-political scenario.

Textual References

1. Hamid said. "There was this kid, Kyle, who asked me if I knew where Osama bin Laden was hiding."
2. "Hey, Amjad," he said. "They say Pakistan's hiding bin Laden. What do you make of that?"
3. I thought back with envy about Hamid's poise at school. A couple of boys had taken to calling him Ahmed the Terrorist.
4. "Ahan," said Faisal, sounding unimpressed. "he was calling Hamid a terrorist."

In the above-mentioned excerpts, Pakistani students in America are being harassed by American students because of their identity. Pakistani students are being called "terrorists" and inquired about "Osama Bin Laden" because of their Pakistani and Muslim identity. This harassment and attitude

of Americans towards Pakistani students is motivated by Islamophobia. Hira and her fellows had to face alienation and othering in American society; they faced hatred and were seen as a threat by the white kids in the school. This discourse challenges the harassment motivated by Islamophobia and resists Islamophobic attitudes within American society.

Contrasting Cultural Norms

Besides Islamophobia, the author has drawn a comparison of Pakistani and American society to discuss the complexities of cultural hybridity and diasporic experiences.

Difference in Gender Roles

Gender roles in Pakistani and American society are completely different. Most Pakistani men do not participate in chores and jobs like cooking and cleaning but men in American society participate in the chores. Similarly, the role of women in Pakistan is more traditional; they take care of the house and are supposed to stay at home to manage the house. On the contrary, American women do the jobs and maintain a balance between their work life and familial responsibilities.

Textual References

Text 1: "Abbu prided himself on never having to enter the kitchen."

Text 2: "American moms," he said, "are not like Pakistani women. They have jobs, and they've volunteered to host you."

In these excerpts, the author compares the gender roles of Pakistani and American women. She says American women have jobs other than chores, unlike Pakistani women.

Difference in Expectations

Cultural differences between Pakistani and American societies are also reflected through the difference in cultural expectations in the novel. Kids in America are expected to participate in chores and do jobs like cleaning their room, washroom, and washing the dishes which completely contrasts with Pakistani culture and society. In Pakistan, kids neither participate in the chores nor are expected to.

Textual Reference

Text 1: *The girl who had refused to clean her own*

bathroom, saying she never did that back home in Lahore.

This excerpt from the novel suggests that a Pakistani girl from Lahore who went to America under the exchange program was expected to clean her washroom, but she refused because she had never cleaned the washroom in Pakistan because kids in Pakistan are not usually asked to clean their washrooms.

Power Dynamics

After the 9/11 attacks, the power position of Pakistanis and Muslims was badly affected, which completely changed power dynamics. These power dynamics and changes in identity negotiation strategies are also reflected in the novel. Hira's ways of identity negotiation, disagreement, argument, and enforcement of her thoughts completely changed when she went to America because her power position had changed. In Pakistan, she was arguing and fortifying her thoughts very confidently and boldly because her power position is strong in Pakistan but in America, she was reluctant and tentative about reinforcing her thoughts and arguing.

Textual References

Text 1:

Seeing my long, baggy kameez, she nodded.

"Allah approves of this length, ma'am?" I asked.

"Arrogance is a terrible look," she said. "And trust me, our society does not forgive it in young ladies like yourself."

"I'll see that for myself, ma'am," I said, holding her gaze until she looked away.

In this excerpt, Hira is having an argument with her teacher in Pakistan over the length of her shirt and her attitude. Here, she does not let anyone walk over her, and she bluntly says what she thinks which suggests that she is enjoying a strong power position in Pakistan while negotiating with cultural norms and identity.

Text 2:

"Yes, but life is long," she says. "And you're smart. I'll be shocked if you don't find your way back to America."

"You're assuming I want to."

"Well," she says, frowning. "They do say it's the land of opportunity."

In this excerpt, she is also having an argument that involves her personal preferences and identity with her host sister Kelly, but she seems very hesitant in saying what she thinks because her power position has changed now. The change in Hira's way of holding a disagreement and enforcing her thoughts in text 1 and text 2 reflects on the power dynamics in American Fever.

Conclusion

Findings

This research reveals that Pakistani students changed their identity negotiation strategies when they reached America. They adopted the cultural norms of American society despite the contrast in cultural norms between Pakistani and American society. Power dynamics play a significant role in identity negotiation. Hira and her fellow participants faced Islamophobia and cultural norms contrasting with their native culture. Power dynamics and gender roles were completely different for them in American society. Hira, who was bold and fearless in sharing her perspective and opinions in disagreements, appeared a little reluctant and unassertive. Gender dynamics and cultural differences further complicate their interactions with others and dealing with challenges. The author has used evocative language and vivid imagery to illuminate the complexities of identity negotiation and cultural adaptation. Intertextual references to other literary works enrich the narrative and add layers of meaning. She has employed various forms of figurative language, such as metaphors and symbols to convey the meaning effectively. Through this novel, the author has resisted existing power structures, cultural norms, and ideologies, including Islamophobia, a norm of Pakistani men not entering the kitchen, forcing young girls to wear Hijab, and dressing according to the standards set by society and Americans considering themselves rulers of the world. Amna has manifested power through the representation of her characters, narrative construction, and linguistic choices.

Discussion

Existing studies have indicated that the rise of Islamophobia in the United States after the 9/11

attacks impacted the identity negotiation of the Pakistani Diaspora in the US of Islamophobia, the Pakistani diaspora faced othering, marginalization, and alienation in American society. Pakistani Muslims changed their identity negotiation from mindless to mindful (Aasiyah, [2020](#)). They left their veils, which is one the most prominent parts of the identity of Muslim women, as a strategy to deal with Islamophobia. They opted for an American Muslim style of dressing as a response to Islamophobia society. They also changed their names from Arabic language to American style. Some studies also indicated that Pakistani students comfortably engage with American students, but they maintain a distance, which suggests co-existence. The findings of this research partially align with the existing body of knowledge on identity negotiation and cultural adaptation of the Pakistani diaspora in the United States, particularly after the 9/11 attacks i.e. Aasiyah

(2020). This research reveals that in 2011 cultural adaptation was not a big challenge after 10 years of the 9/11 attacks. They didn't have to make significant shifts in their dress choices, names, and building styles to deal with Islamophobia and tension with natives. Before landing on American soil, Hira and her fellow participants were already convinced to adapt to the new cultural norms and gender roles. Students were already excited to enjoy the freedom of wearing the clothes of their choice. Despite being willing to change and accept the new cultural norms they had to feel the heat of Islamophobia. This change in the Pakistani diaspora regarding identity negotiation strategy from mindless to mindful over the 10 years after 9/11 suggests that the Pakistani Muslim community in the United States has succeeded in adopting a new identity negotiation strategy but the particles of Islamophobia are still in the air and power dynamics haven't changed much.

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