PTSD And Child Suicide Bombers In Torbaaz: A Schematic Discourse Analysis

Muhammad Adnan Akbar¹, Dr. Farzana Masroor², Anish Nazir³

¹Lecturer, Higher Education Department & PhD Scholar, Air University, Islamabad

Email: adnandhandla@gmail.com

²Associate Professor, Department of English, Air University, Islamabad

Email: farzanamasroor@hotmail.com

³Secondary School Teacher of English & M.Phil Scholar, Azad Jammu and Kashmir University, Muzzafarabad

Email: anishnazir7@gmail.com

Abstract

Current research unveils the discursive practices shaping innocent minds into extremists. The child suicide bomber is an emerging phenomenon in past few years when the Taliban has started using innocent souls to fulfill their evil designs. Current research will explore the impact of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in shaping extremist behavior and strengthening the ideologies. Theme Identification will be used as a method and Discourse Analysis will be used as a methodology. Cognitive Stylistics Analysis and more specifically schema theory along with The Social Cognitive model of Van Dijk will be used as a tool to analyze the dialogues of the movie and will provide a theoretical framework of the study. The Schematic appraisal model for suicide (SAMS) will also be applied to understand and evaluate different prevailing themes that are contributing towards suicidal ideation. The epistemology will be an interpretive technique as data will be interpreted through the standpoint of language, cognition, and ideology. This research will demystify the role of psychopathy and conditioning in evolving this new face of terrorism. Sports help in mitigating the revenge sentiments and works as group therapy for the treatment of antisocial behavior. This research will further analyze this possibility in the light of DSM-V and abnormal psychology. PTSD, suicidal ideation, sports therapy, and SAMS are contemporary research interests to unfold the psycho-social plight of refugees in Afghanistan. This research combines all these perspectives to unearth the socio-cognitive mindset of refugees children who become easy victims of militants.

Keywords: PTSD, Terrorism, Refugees, Ideology, Schema Theory, Foregrounding, Cognitive Stylistics, Sports Therapy, SAMS

Introduction

War on terror and especially US involvement in Afghanistan has caused panic and bewilderment among the masses. Many people were killed during this so-called war on terror and many young ones witnessed their loved ones being killed which caused contempt for foreigners and particularly non-Muslims (Ahmad, 2021). Direct experience of these traumatic events and particularly the death of

loved ones caused Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in children of age ranging from 5 to 10 which has further been manipulated by the Taliban. The current focus of study 'Torbaaz' is a newly released Bollywood movie that revolves around the story of a young child who has been trained by the Taliban to carry out a suicide bombing plan in Afghanistan. Ex-army doctor, Nasser Khan, who has lost his family in a child suicide bomb attack, comes to Afghanistan on an invitation sent by his wife's

friend. There he comes across an idea of making a cricket team consisting of refugee children who have been cut off from the rest of the world to bring happiness and peace in their lives and also to forget the traumatic events of the past. Nasser Khan meets Baaz who has been trained by the Taliban yet in drone strikes has lost from them and reached a refugee camp. Baaz had lost his father in a drone strike and revenge is the sole purpose of his life as dictated and conditioned by extremist intelligentsia (Kanyal, 2020; Dey, 2020).

Torbaaz portrays war-trodden Afghanistan in which there are grave human rights violations. People are under constant threat from the Taliban and security forces both because there is an atmosphere of complete mistrust. Masses at large are under constant threat of life and existence is a matter of importance. Drone strikes also do not differentiate between extremist or non-extremist people so there is permanent confusion and uncertainty in people. Traumatic events are part of life and every day there are casualties. Young minds are not able to cope with these adverse situations and fall prey to psychopathologies like posttraumatic stress disorder (Sharma, 2020).

Death of loved ones and witnessing traumatic events in person increase the likelihood of PTSD. These events are happening regularly so it is not easy to repress those feelings. In such adverse situations, the defense mechanism collapses, and one starts to believe negatively about oneself and one's surroundings. Concentration problems, sleep disturbance, angry, and irritable behavior become more prevalent. These symptoms further cause suicidal ideation in the victim as one is unable to control one's environment (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Problem Statement

This research unfolds the discursive practices changing suicidal ideation in suicidal bombing behavior by arousing revenge sentiments in children suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder. This study also observes the role of psychopathy and conditioning in evolving certain attitudes. The current study also highlights the possibility of sports therapy in mitigating these revenge sentiments that are supplied by schema-preserving discourses. Previous studies show that sports therapy is helpful in coping with PTSD and this research will further investigate different possibilities of sports therapy.

The Rationale of the Study

PTSD is a most recurring phenomenon in refugees that has been investigated from health and psychological perspectives. Film and media houses are the strong mediums of propagating ideologies and current research is a schematic analysis of Torbaaz which is a recent Bollywood release that encompasses certain vital contemporary issues like child suicide bombing and PTSD. This movie is inspired by real-life events and portrays how so many players make their journey from refugee camps to the Afghan national cricket team. It pictures the possibility of sports therapy in treating psychosocial issues. Current research is based on a schematic appraisal model for suicide and schema discourse theories for deciphering the mindsets of potential child suicide bombers and probing into sports therapy as an approach to alter this mental schema.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous hypotheses on the nature of film and how it affects viewers' perspectives have existed from the very beginning of the medium. Cinema serves as both an entertainment medium and a means of disseminating ideas and philosophies. Regarding how movies affect viewers' minds, cognitive ideas have also been put forward (Bordwell, 2011 p.357-59). Bordwell applied discourse analysis to film studies for understanding the meaning process of cinema. Bordwell understood that the whole process had four different types of meaning.

Referential meaning is limited to the artificial world of film. Both theme meanings, implicit and explicit, are present, although implicit is less evident. The observer is mostly responsible for the symptomatic meaning since the rhetorical device creates a variety interpretations. Bordwell combined cinema studies with cognitive science, and subsequent extension of his views is cognitive stylistics (Colm, 2011 p.317-321). Kiminori in his article 'On the possibility of film stylistics discusses Chatman and Borswell's theories to support his idea of the possibility of film stylistics. Film stylistics is a new discipline and there is a lot to decipher regarding data collection and data analysis methodologies so in the beginning logocentric view will be used to assess the stylistics dimension of films (2015).

Multimodality and the Study of Popular Drama is an argumentative and comparative study that explores the possibility of multimodality in the study of drama and films. Kay Richardson's article unfolds the possibility of a logocentric approach in the study of drama. Films and TV dramas are multimodal texts. In his article, he compares two articles, one from stylistics and the second from film studies, to establish his claim of multimodal logocentric methodology in the study of TV drama and film. Richardson's review skillfully unfolds different issues regarding analysis of dialogue and addresses those ones. The article provides clarity in an area that has been neglected previously. Richardson quotes Raymond William (writer of 'Modern Tragedy') to emphasize the role of drama in the lives of people in the modern and contemporary world endeavor. justify his Richardson's conclusion is in line with his basic assumption that has been formulated in the introduction section where he asserts that the logocentric approach is a legitimate one in the study of popular drama because there is no other approach that can provide a thorough analysis of films and TV dramas from multimodal perspectives (2010 p.390).

In order to examine how character impressions are formed, Taheri (2018) also constructs a technique in her PhD thesis that draws on the schema idea, speech act theory, and cognitive cinema theory. This paradigm makes an effort to comprehend the character using pragmalinguistic, social, and narrative information. Additionally, this study reveals the multimodal discourses created by cinematic characterisation.

In the contemporary world, refugees are an emerging reality, and the refugee population is at its highest level. With migration, many psycho-social disorders are associated. Usually, these migrations are resulted due to any trauma that has also affected the mental health of refugees. PTSD is the most common psychological issue among refugees (Ferrada et al.,1998). PTSD is a significant psychological issue that has also been investigated by many researchers. Studies suggest that PTSD can be treated with physical exercise, physiotherapy, and sports/group therapy (Knapp et al., 2019; Nilsson et al., 2019; Nordbrandt et al., 2020). These studies show positive mental health outcomes after conducting such therapies on PTSD patients in refugee camps.

This study also explores the connection between posttraumatic stress disorder and the patterns of juvenile suicide bombings in post-9/11 Afghanistan as shown in the film "Torbaaz," continuing current cognitive stylistics research in the field of cinema studies. Sports Therapy is portrayed as helpful in mitigating the revenge sentiments and creating hope in the disturbed souls. This research further evaluates the effectiveness of sports therapy in the case of Baaz and his transformation within the movie. In this manner, the study will contribute to the plethora of information already available in the field of studies, cognitive cinema stylistics, psychopathologies, and therapies.

METHODOLOGY

The theme identification technique of Gery Tyan and Russell Bernard is utilised in this qualitative, subjective study to spot recurrent and overlapping themes that appear throughout the text. To evaluate them using a planned theoretical framework. repetitive comparable patterns having a language relationship to the topic under research have been identified (2003, p.90-95). By establishing recurring patterns in the texts that aid in the interpretation and analysis of the data, themes reveal something crucial about the study's goals and fundamental concerns (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Freeman (2000:253) asserts that literary texts are "the products of cognizing Minds" and that interpretations are "the products of other cognizing Minds in the context of the physical and socio-cultural worlds in which they Have been created and read" in order to support the relationship between literature and psychology (cited in Glotova, 2014: 245). Cognitive Woldemariam stylistics, according to (2015:18), puts cognition and contextual effects at the centre of its analytical area. The sentence and the text are respectively the focal points of the formalist and functionalist stylistic models' analyses. The majority of them are textimmanent models. But the cognitive stylistics away from textualist paradigm moves interpretation and toward contextualist interpretation. The cognitive stylistics model and Van Dijk's socio-cognitive discourse model will be employed as the theoretical foundation for the present study.

In the cognitive stylistic model, particularly foregrounding and schema theory will be applied to decipher the mindset of key characters, Baaz and Dr. Naser Khan. The model from Van Dijk is used as a tool to analyze the dialogues from the movie, providing a theoretical framework to the study. As previously narrated, cognition plays a key role in assembling different schemas in memory which at times has been accomplished by selective perception rather than active

perception. Standard schematic structures allow a very limited number of categories for active engagements in discourse formulation. These mindset and mind models allow certain discourses to produce meaning. These rigid mindsets disrupt any contrary discourse to effect so it is difficult to evade the impact of latent discourse. Counter discourse is molded and misinterpreted by prior schemas. (Dijk, 2018 p.29)

Socio-cognitive discourse study is combination of many methods to unearth ideologies making subjects subservient towards power structures. Van Dijk's model mediates between shared social cognition, social structures, and text and talk. Social cognition is largely dependent upon knowledge, attitude, and ideologies (Dijk, 2015 p.67). Social understanding with cognition further strengthened by the foregrounding and schema theory from the cognitive stylistics framework. It will be studied how these discourses further strengthened existing schemas by the process of schema preserving discourse and schema reinforcing discourse. Through these methods, it becomes difficult to rescue PTSD patients from these distorted and disturbed perceptions. Khan generated schema disrupting discourse to evade the impact of prior schemas to help suffering children. (Gibbons et al., 2018 p.176

The schematic appraisal model for suicide has a dual approach towards suicidal tendencies as it does not only explain negative appraisal which causes suicidal ideation but it also inculcates the impact of positive self-appraisal that mitigates the tendencies of suicide in psychopathologies (Johnson et al., 2009). This approach has also been utilized to draw inferences between suicide and schizophrenia that has proved its clinical and theoretical utility (Johnson et al., 2008). The SAMS provides an outlook towards the apprehension of suicidal ideation in refugee children yet it also helps to decipher the possibility of sports therapy as a

schema disruption discourse that creates schema disruption discourse.

The Schematic Appraisal Model for Suicide has also been used by Panagioti in her doctoral dissertation to study a relationship between PTSD and suicidal ideation. Suicidal ideations have been studied in war combat, refugees, police officers, and HIV patients. The SAMS is used with The Cry of Pain approach yet CoP does not provide an insight into positive selfappraisal as a resilient factor against suicidal ideation (Panagioti, 2011). The SAMS encompasses negative and positive selfappraisals both which also helps in this study to understand the first phase of Baaz's life which is dominated by negative self-appraisal and afterward transformation as a positive selfappraisal.

Interpretive phenomenology is used as an epistemological standpoint from which data is interpreted by considering the ongoing processes of cognition, ideology, and language. Bringing into focus, an evolutionary phase of child terrorism, this research has furnished the role of psychopathy and conditioning. Dialogues of key characters selected and analyzed by cognitive stylistics and cognitive discourse studies method to demystify the relationship between child suicide bombing and posttraumatic stress disorder. The SAMS provided a theoretical understanding of both negative and positive self-appraisal causing different schemas in the mind of the characters.

Method (theme identification), methodology (discourse and cognitive stylistics studies), theoretical framework (schema, foregrounding, and mindset theories), and epistemology (interpretive phenomenology) all components complement each other and make the whole process smooth. Lived experience is a part of movies and the visualisation process as well. Since phenomenology is a perspective from which lived experiences are properly understood, interpretative phenomenology is used in this project. Cognitive stylistics is used

along with Van Dijk's socio-cognitive discourse method which is interrelated and helps in developing a better understanding.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Ferrada and Sundbom' study suggest that nearly 64% of PTSD refugee patients have suicidal ideation and approximately 46% of them actually committed suicide previously (Ferrada-Noli & Sandbum, 1996). Torbaaz is a story of PTSD child who witnessed the death of his mother before his eyes in the beginning of the movie. A couple of scenes later, the entire village is bombed by NATO forces to kill Taliban's leadership, but many innocent persons became victim of this aggression. A sort of schema, a mind-set, has been created in the minds of the people that foreigners are not there friends but enemies. This conception has been misused by the militants to achieve their evil designs. Habib Ullah says, "These outsiders are demons, not human beings" (Mittra, 2020, 07:13) and he planned to prepare children for suicide bombing to take avenge from NATO forces and Afghan Army. The phenomenon of child suicide bombing was started in Afghanistan in 2007 (Mittra, 2020, 00:1:06).

For the fulfillment of their evil design, children, who were residing in refugee's camp and fighting traumatic disorders, were an easy victim. Baaz, Khush Bakht, and Bakht are having torturous past as they have witnessed destruction. Before the end of the movie, Dr. Naser develops an intimacy with these potential suicide bombers. They tell him how they were robbed from their innocence. They narrate the scene of death of their loved ones and describe every detail of the trauma. Bakht, Khush Bakht, and Baaz were living a peaceful life when all of sudden their lives changed by the sequence of traumas and they were not able to escape that situation. Bakht's family lived on a hill-top, and in a single day, his whole family was killed in a drone strike. Khush Bakht witnessed the death of his younger brother and he was told that this

was done by security forces. Baaz's mother was a suicide bomber who followed the foot-step of his husband. Baaz's mind is conditioned by the militants that he is a self-sacrificing soldier who is going to achieve the ultimate cause (Mittra, 2020, 01:34:20). Uncertainty, hatred, violence, revenge, helplessness, and pessimism are recurring patterns in their account of lives that present negative schema. This negative schema strengthens their suicidal ideation as meaning in life has been narrowed down.

These negative schemas are channelized by schema reinforcing discourses as these children have been told time and again regarding sacrifice of their loved ones and their duty towards them to join them in their noble cause. Abdul Qazar, a militant leader, tells Baaz, "Your mother used to say one life should be for action! Mere thought is not enough... When Allah question you on the judgment day? You will be ashamed. Your father and mother will be ashamed" (Mittra, 2020, 1:16:48). In these lines, Qazar threatens Baaz religiously and emotionally. He exploits his emotional bond with his family by referring to his deceased parents and also evokes his religious sentiment by mentioning Allah and judgment day. No new information has been added to Baaz's mind-set but tuning process has been carried out to reinforce schema discourse already present.

PTSD is developed after witnessing the death of loved ones and being in a traumatic situation for a longer period of time. These children are spending most of their time in trauma loaded atmosphere of refugees' camp or training camps of the militants where conditioning process is ever going. In training camps, they have been told time and again that they are chosen for some great purpose which will not only satisfy their thirst for revenge but also suffice their departed loved ones. One militant says to the children while dropping them to the playground, "Go, remember this, our fight is our highest purpose. Ours is a different world" (Mittra, 2020, 1:32:02). Closely observing the

statement of militant, it is clear that this declaration is full of ideological burdened words in which possession is asserted by claiming whole process as ours and also differentiating their world as different from the rest of the world. A mind-set is developed that their world is a different and others have intruded so it is necessary to stop this disturbance.

PTSD child has negative self-appraisal and he is caught in a sense of defeat and entrapment which is strengthened in war-like situations. Past, present, and future all are become dark and one starts to evaluate oneself and social surroundings in negative connotations. This scenario leads towards suicidal ideation as a negative and dark schema of one's life has been completed. Suicidal ideation gives a sense of escape and relief from the burdensome and torturous existence. At this stage, a child who is caught by militants is accredited with a new ideology in which meaning is attached to one's suicide. Though the process of accretion and tuning, suicidal ideation is converted into suicidal bombing by evoking the revenge Schemas of sentiment. revenge, purposefulness, holy war, fight, and hate are generated and channelized through discourses. In the absence of schema disruption discourse, these schemas are reinforced by continuous tuning and prevailing uncertain traumatic events.

No one in the refugee camp is ready to accept those children who are having militant background because they have been seen as potential militants. As Gulab comments, "He is a Talib! A Taliban Supporter! He says Taliban wants progress for our country. If you kill the infidel, you'll go to heaven" (Mittra, 2020, 44:08). From Gulab's commentary, it is inferred that these children have been ideologized to the extent that they are propagating the agenda of the militants even in their absence.

Uncertainty and chaos further strengthened PTSD impact. Baaz's mother was a suicide bomber and he is facing taunts all the time from fellow children. He is called Talib and he is unable to make space among other children. He is always discriminated against due to his past that's why his schema is preserved due to these humiliating discourses. The cognizance of 'our world' and 'their world' is reinforced. So, he becomes alienated and isolated. Baaz's monologue shows his deplorable state of mind. He starts preparing himself for a war. His ideologies, min-set, and schemas have been portrayed in this monologue. He is full of aggression and projecting his anger on a doll by cutting her head. A doll is a plaything yet he is unable to disseminate this thing. In the wake of prevailing ideologies and mindsets, he is taking a doll as his enemy. He says, "We are ready to fight! A holy warrior is not afraid of anybody! I have my parent's permission. I will cut the enemy's throat" (Mittra, 2020, 45:28). The schema of an enemy is clear as anyone, who is an anti-taliban, is an enemy. Ideological patterning is obvious as he is ready to fight and kill anyone falling in the schema of the enemy.

Sports Therapy works on two levels; first it encounters schema-preserving discourses by reconstructing and generating schemadisrupting discourse, secondly it works as a resilience approach towards negative schemas of the schematic appraisal model of suicide that are leading towards suicidal ideation in traumaaffected children. As previous discussion also shows that hate-speech, aggression, and stereotypes are prominent and recurring themes of conversation between Gulab and Baaz. Both are having a strong negative schema for each other. Baaz is an all-rounder player and Gulab is a good batsman. Cricket works as a unifying power that reconstruct their schemas and enable them to play as a team.

Cricket is shown as a remedial power for hate speech and stereotypes. Cricket creates positive self-appraisals among players as they start perceiving social support in positive connotations. Positive self-appraisal works as a resilience towards PTSD (Panagioti, 2011). Dr. Nasser, an ex-army doctor who has lost his family in a child suicide bomb blast, foresaw a possibility of transformation in children's lives through cricket. Foreigners are not revered as trustworthy and face strong condemnation from people as Baaz bluntly tells Dr. Nasser to go back as "outsiders are not be trusted" (Mittra, 2020, 46:53). Dr. Nasser disrupts this schema by accrediting a new schema in which he is a doctor, helper, rescuer, and fan of Baaz's allround batting potential.

Baaz, Gulab, and Imlal three belong to diverse psycho-social set up that's why they are reluctant to play with each other in the first instance. Gulab and Baaz both are Pashtuns but they differ on the Taliban issue which creates a tussle between them on a couple of occasions. Yet, they join hands against a Hazara child, Imlal, and denounce Dr. Nasser's proposal of Imalal's entry as a fast bowler in the team. Sadiq, a young fellow, warns Dr. Nasser by telling him, "You're an outsider, you don't understand our culture. The Pashtuns and Hazaras are archenemies. We will not play with them" (Mittra, 2020, 51:00). Cricket influences their rigid mind-sets by disrupting their prior schemas and makes them a new human being devoid of any prejudice against each other. A study supports this notion that sports do influence and help mitigating prejudice issues (Peachey et al., 2014). Similar pattern can be seen when all children, irrespectively of their ideological backgrounds, are requesting Dr. Nasser to coach them and they also assure brotherhood with each other.

"Pashtun and Hazara are brothers! We are all like brothers. We are brothers" (Mittra, 2020, 1:02:20), there is a gradual shift in their ideological mind-set which is evident in their slogans. In the first instance, brotherhood is assured with distinct identities yet in the second instance identities are diffused but separated by 'like'. In their last slogan, they achieve a union with each other and dissolution of conflicting

identities has been achieved. After achieving union, they develop a team spirit and each one of them is supportive and caring for others.

With passing time, Dr. Nasser attains the status of guide and mentor. He does not remain an outsider. Baaz and his fellows start paying heed to his ideologies. That's why Baaz questions moral aspect of suicide bombing from Qazar when he is recaptured by them. Baaz mentions, "I always aspire to make the ultimate sacrifice. But someone told me, you take away lives" (Mittra, 2020, 1:16:48). A schema disruption process has been started that transforms Baaz altogether into a new person. A suicide bombing plan is executed by Baaz but he kills Qazar to rescue the rest of the team. Revenge sentiments are changed into a sacrificial attitude.

Conclusion

This movie portrays the struggle of those players who made their journey from refugee camp to afghan national cricket team. It is a story of an extraordinary struggle that depicts that PTSD refugee children are not potential suicide bombers but they become an easy target of the militant's ideologies. A new distorted worldview is accredited in suffering minds and it is tuned regularly to create an ideological schema. Dr. Nasser observes, "Children living in refugee camp are not terrorists. In fact, they are the first victims of terrorism" (Mittra, 2020, 1:21:46). Dr. Nasser's sports therapy does work to mitigate the revenge sentiments and disrupt suicidal ideation schemas. Cricket casts a spell as Dr. Nasser predicts beforehand that bats and balls will cause wonders. Sports Therapy enhances positive self-appraisals players that help them to put resilience against suicidal ideation caused PTSD and also curb revenge sentiments by transforming them into a passion for sacrifice. The above analysis provides hope for a better tomorrow devoid of any violence.

"We hope the children of war, the next generations will pick up bats and balls instead of guns" (Mittra, 2020, 2:05:59).

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