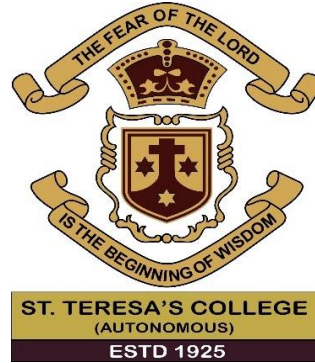


**IMPLICIT BIAS AND FORMATION OF IDENTITY IN
*THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST AND THE KITE RUNNER***



*Project submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University in partial fulfilment of
the requirement for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS in
English Language and Literature*

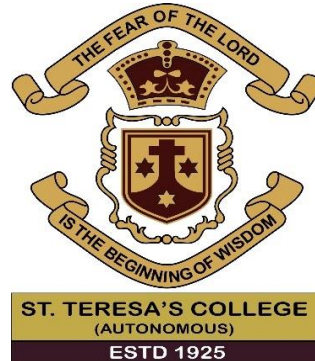
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I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “Implicit Bias and formation of Identity in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Kite Runner*” is the record of bona fide work done by me under the guidance and supervision of Ms. Niveda Sebastian, Assistant Professor, Department of English and Centre for Research, and that no part of the dissertation has been presented earlier for the award of any degree, diploma or any other similar title of recognition.

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this project entitled “Implicit Bias and Formation of Identity in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Kite Runner*” is a record of bona fide work carried out by Stephanet.M.S under my supervision and guidance.

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An Abstract of the Project Entitled:
Implicit Bias and Formations of Identity in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and
The Kite Runner.

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Humans often like to think that their actions are shaped by their choices, and their choices are mostly shaped by careful and well-thought-out deliberations. However, Implicit Bias theory states that a wide range of automatic habits and unintentional biases shape all aspects of social life. The project examines two semi-autobiographical works such as *The Kite Runner* (2011) by Khaled Hosseini and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) by Moshin Hamid, portrays the fact that most Americans have an Implicit bias against the Muslim people. An implicit bias is an unconscious association, belief, or attitude toward any social group. In this research, the researcher in the first chapter has given an explanation about Implicit Bias Theory. The second chapter is the Review of literature and Methodology. The third chapter is a detailed analysis of both the novels using Implicit Bias Theory. The research discusses the issues that an individual's, perceptions and behaviors can be influenced by the implicit stereotypes they hold. Due to implicit biases, people may often attribute certain qualities or characteristics to all members of a particular group, by a phenomenon known as stereotyping. The research throws light into implicitly biasing people based on his /her culture rather than looking into his /her individual capacities and therefore attributing Imposed identity on them.

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Introduction

Thoughts and feelings are implicit in nature if one is unaware of them or mistaken about their nature. To survive in this fast-developing environment, one must possess quick judgment and decision-making ability. Unconscious associations, however, might sometimes result in errors when making quick judgements. For instance, is it possible to look back on one's life and attempt to recall all the data the brain has processed since birth? It is an impossible task. In the course of life, one's brain gathers an immeasurable amount of information about the world from interactions with parents, peers, books, strangers, and a myriad of other experiences. One's brain uses all of this information to form associations and identify patterns that aid in understanding how the world functions. Therefore, implicit bias training is essential in this world.

Conscious or explicit bias is a completely different thing and it's the kind of racism or sexism. Nonetheless, although being more common, unconscious bias can still be detrimental. Every choice a person makes is influenced by their unconscious bias, which produces distorted results. More quickly than the conscious mind, the unconscious brain processes information. Whether a person likes it or not, it searches for patterns, and this affects their behaviour, probably without one even being aware of it. Unconscious prejudices frequently rest on incorrect, uncompleted, or incomplete information. These prejudices can significantly influence the hiring, promotion, and recruitment processes in the workplace. Unconscious prejudice is a sign of being human, not a sign that one is a bad person.

On eleventh of September, 2001, the militant Islamic extremist network Al-Qaeda launched four coordinated suicide terrorist attacks on the United States. These attacks

are popularly referred to as the 9/11 event. Four commercial aircraft slated to fly from the East Coast to California were hijacked that morning by nineteen terrorists. The first two hijacked aircraft collided with the World Trade Center Twin Towers in New York City, while the third crashed into the Pentagon in Arlington County, Virginia, not far from Washington, D.C., which serves as the seat of the US military. A passenger uprising caused the fourth plane, which was also meant to crash into a Washington, D.C., federal building, to crash into a field. Over three thousand people died in the assaults, which also launched the global war on terror. Following 9/11, there was an upsurge in implicit bias against Muslims.

When one think of a terrorist, one typically doesn't picture a white individual. There are two widely spread, but untrue, myths concerning terrorists attacking the United States. They appear on television, in movies, and in the news. In the article "Terrorist are always Muslim but Never White: At the intersection of Critical Race Theory and Propaganda" by Caroline Mala Corbin states that "terrorists are always (brown) Muslims" (Corbin 455) and "White folks are never terrorists" (Corbin 455), is the second statement. The first statement looks at the part that implicit biases play in the creation of stereotypes, like the stereotype of the 'Muslim terrorist'. White privilege, such as the right to be exempt from the terrorist designation, is the subject of another statement. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid and *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini are the two books that the researcher has chosen for this study. In both works, the researcher examines how implicit or unconscious biases against particular people or groups lead people to attribute traits to members of the target group.

Mohsin Hamid is a British Pakistani novelist and writer. Hamid was raised in the United States from the age of three to nine when his father, a university professor,

was enrolled in a PhD programme at Stanford University. He was born to a family of Punjabi and Kashmiri ancestry. Then, he relocated back to Pakistan's Lahore with his family, where he enrolled in the Lahore American School. At the age of eighteen, Hamid returned to the United States to continue his education. In 1993, he earned his B.A. with honours from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs after completing final thesis on the topic of "Sustainable Power: Integrated Resource Planning" in Pakistan under the guidance of Robert H. Williams. Hamid studied with Toni Morrison and Joyce Carol Oates at Princeton while he was a student. Hamid completed the first draught of his debut book for a fiction class Morrison was running. After college, he went back to Pakistan to continue working on it.

Hamid afterwards enrolled in Harvard Law School and earned his degree there in 1997. He paid off his student loans by working for several years as a management consultant at McKinsey & Company in New York City since he found corporate law to be uninteresting. He was given permission to take three months off each year to write, and he used this time to finish *Moth Smoke*, his debut book. *Moth Smoke* was a major success in Pakistan and the United States, and it was even turned into a TV miniseries, allowing Hamid to focus solely on writing.

In 2007, Pakistani novelist Mohsin Hamid released his 'metafictional book' *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. A bearded Pakistani man named Changez tells an uneasy American stranger about his love connection with an American woman and his subsequent departure from America during the course of one evening in an outdoor Lahore Café. The novel uses a frame narrative structure. The novel discusses the aftereffects of 9/11 events suffered by Changez, which shattered his dreams and desires and forcefully made him develop another identity which he didn't possess.

The title of the book, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, is significant because of how it contradicts itself. It alludes to the extreme measures used by the American administration to maintain national security in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. The narrative depicts Changez's life (a Pakistani man living in the United States). He represents the immigrants of the upper class. Changez's accommodating American way of life was torn apart by the growing wave of Islamophobia that developed after the 9/11 attacks.

Changez finds it difficult to comprehend his basic identity. American sentimentality becomes a fundamentalist effort to dominate national security. This prompted them to use cruel techniques like torture to elicit information from alleged terrorists. About two thirds of the American people have, at one point, backed the same tactics if they happen to prevent a terrorist attack, despite the fact that these processes have always been controversial due to their lack of principles. All of these were caused by Americans' implicit bias against Muslim community.

Khaled Hosseini is an Afghan American novelist. He was born in Afghanistan. His family relocated to France when Hosseini was eleven years old, and subsequently, the Soviet War prevented them from going back to Afghanistan. When Hosseini was fifteen years old, his family migrated to California after submitting an asylum request in the US. Hosseini attended the University of California's medical school and practiced medicine for ten years before being able to transition to a full-time writing career due to the success of *The Kite Runner*. Much like Amir, the protagonist of the novel *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini did not return to Afghanistan until he was thirty-eight years old. *The Kite Runner* is his first and best-known novel. His other works are *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *And the Mountains Echoed*.

An affluent Afghan kid named Amir and Hassan, the son of his father's servant, form an unusual bond in Khaled Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner*. After Hassan's death, Amir learns that Hassan was actually his half-brother all along. The story is set in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1978, during the Soviet invasion, and it describes life in a country that is being torn and destroyed. The harshness of violence and rape, the influence of education, the cost of betrayal and the fight for forgiveness, and the authority that fathers have over their sons are all topics discussed in this book.

The Hazara people are shown as being continuously oppressed and marginalised in Khaled Hosseini's book *The Kite Runner*. The Hazara are denigrated in comparison to the Pashtuns, who make up the dominant socioeconomic class. Through the clashing Afghan culture, Hosseini depicts the struggles that different social classes in Afghanistan society faces. The contrasting belief systems that these two social strata adhere to—the Pashtuns who adhere to Sunni and the Hazaras who adhere to Shi'a—contribute to intergroup conflict and oppression of one another. The Pashtuns dominate Afghanistan's population, comprising between forty and sixty percent of the country's total. They vastly outnumber the Hazara. Due to their lack of education and Mongolian facial features, the Hazara people are marginalised in Afghan society. Here, the researcher examines Amir's implicit biases that caused him to mistakenly attribute negative features to Hassan (Hazara) and that over time forced Hasan to develop an imposed identity which led to his marginalization.

Studies regarding ethnicity and social construction in Afghanistan had been done using the works of Hosseini. But an aspect of implicit bias is an unexplored field in both the novels. Over the past few years, understanding implicit bias has been a major topic in businesses, academic institutions, and a variety of groups. Implicit bias educators attempt to better understand how prejudices against people based on their

ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other identities affect their work settings, educational opportunities, and hiring procedures. Implicit bias in this situation is a racial or gender stereotype-based unconscious belief system that unintentionally shapes one's attitudes and behaviours towards members of particular groups in ways that one may not even be aware of.

Because most people do not want to accept that they would be prejudiced or biased against others based on group membership, these biases might result in pernicious conduct. Issues resulting from implicit biases cannot be handled without a knowledge and awareness that all humans have prejudices that one acts on, knowingly or unknowingly, that can harm others.

Programs for implicit bias training (also known as unconscious bias training) claim to make people aware of their biases, provide them tools to change automatic thought processes, and finally get rid of discriminatory behaviour. These taught preconceptions, according to some studies, are automatic, appear to be associative, accidental, deeply embedded, ubiquitous, and capable of influencing one's behaviour. Increasing implicit bias awareness is a crucial part of implicit bias training, and current research suggests that this awareness is growing. Since 1998, the Implicit-Association Test (IAT) online has offered the general public a venue to evaluate their unconscious biases. This research focusses on the importance of implicit bias training through analysing the novels *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Kite Runner* by using Implicit bias theory.

Chapter 1

An Exploration of Implicit Bias Theory

What makes humans behave in a certain manner in certain situations? One often likes to think that one's actions are shaped by one's choices and that choices are shaped by careful and well-thought-out deliberations. Yet, studies in cognitive science demonstrate that people have a variety of unconscious biases and automatic behaviors that influence all facets of social interaction. 'Implicit' or 'automatic' mental processes can be used to explain why social injustices and inequities continue to exist in a variety of situations, such as in workplaces, hospitals, and informal 'everyday' settings. Employees from many industries are now expected to participate in implicit bias training, where they learn about these prejudices and their negative impacts.

Implicit feelings and thoughts manifest without the conscious knowledge of the individual exhibiting them. Hence, implicit bias refers to people's unintentional opinions and accompanying biases towards particular individuals or groups. Definition of implicit bias distinguishes it from confirmation bias, which analyses data to confirm preexisting opinions. Implicit bias influences behaviour by attaching traits to target group members. Stereotypes that are attributed can be either good or negative. Implicit biases are challenging to manage since they function and emerge unintentionally. In fact, researchers claim that these biases are unconscious and do not always coincide with people's identities and perceptions of themselves. Depending on their colour, religion, gender, social status, nationality, and sexual orientation, people exhibit either positive or negative stereotypes.

Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald, two psychologists, first described implicit bias in 1995. Born in 1956, Mahzarin Rustum Banaji is a psychologist at

Harvard University. Her work in popularising the concept of implicit bias in respect to ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and other factors has earned her widespread acclaim. She was raised by a Parsi family in Secunderabad, where she attended St. Ann's High School. Banaji graduated with a Doctorate from the Ohio State University in 1986 and worked as a postdoctoral researcher for the NIH at the University of Washington. Social scientist Anthony Galt Greenwald has taught psychology at the University of Washington since 1986. Greenwald graduated with a B.A. from Yale University in 1959. He earned his M.A. from Harvard University in 1961, and in 1963, he finished his Ph.D. there as well. He then finished a postdoctoral position with the Educational Testing Service, which lasted from 1963 to 1965.

Mahzarin Banaji, a social psychologist, is at the forefront of the 'implicit revolution', a psychological paradigm change that has been redefining the connection between unconscious and conscious mental processes since the 1980s. Banaji and Anthony Greenwald used the interconnected ideas of attitude, belief, and identity to apply the idea to social psychology. The Implicit Association Test (IAT), designed to identify and assess automatic, unconscious biases, was first proposed by the pair in 1995. They also defined implicit social cognition and developed the phrase 'implicit bias'. Banaji and her colleagues have been able to identify hidden biases by using the IAT and other techniques to identify attitudes and beliefs (stereotypes) about gender, race/ethnicity, age, sexuality, and other typical social group identifiers. Banaji, who was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2018, provides evidence in her Inaugural Article (IA) that implicit beliefs and attitudes are inexorably linked because of common evaluative content. The research was based on techniques that were first created to investigate how memories operate subconsciously, like semantic priming. The phrase 'implicit stereotyping', which describes the use of gender without being

aware of it, was initially used by Banaji at Yale University while working on studies with students Alex Rothman and Curtis Hardin.

By dividing our mental processing into two components, System 1 and System 2, Daniel Kahneman presents a well-recognized paradigm for understanding human cognitive functioning in his 2011 book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. System 1 deals with cognition that takes place subconsciously. This system is highly quick and automated. One might, for instance, halt an automobile at a red light. One instinctively crosses the crossing when the light turns green. With the speed and efficiency of System 1, experienced drivers automatically realize that green signifies go, therefore this mental association doesn't involve any conscious or laborious thought. System 2 is conscious processing, in contrast. One uses it when performing mental tasks that call for concentration, like filling out a tax form. This task takes serious, deliberate concentration, not automatic, quick concentration.

Together, these two systems aid in understanding how the world works. One piece of information out of the millions that could exist, can be processed every second. Most neuroscientists concur that most human cognitive processes take place unconsciously. In addition to its vastness, System 1 cognitive processing is also notable because it helps us understand that many of the mental associations that affect how one perceives and acts are operating implicitly (i.e., unconsciously). Therefore, System 1 is responsible for the associations known as implicit biases.

Implicit biases do not always coincide with one's explicit ideas and expressed goals because they develop outside of conscious awareness. This means that even those who claim to be egalitarian and work to treat everyone equitably may unintentionally act in a way that reflects their hidden prejudices rather than their explicit biases. So,

even those with the best of intentions can act in a way that results in unfair outcomes for certain groups.

Furthermore, because implicit biases are unconsciously and automatically engaged as a component of System 1, people aren't even aware that they exist, even though they can have a significant influence on decision-making. Implicit biases can be triggered by any number of different identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender, or age, that one perceives in others, according to a significant corpus of social science research. Everyone has implicit biases because these strong associations are a crucial part of System 1 processing, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, or other characteristics. No one is immune. As a result, there are several consequences of unconscious prejudice for people in a variety of occupations other than education. For instance, studies have found unconscious biases in people who work in law enforcement, the medical field, and even occupations that demand proclaimed pledges to objectivity. These ingrained assumptions affect educators. That is these unconscious prejudices have a strong negative influence on educators as well.

Implicit bias develops and manifests mostly in the brain. Implicit bias develops and manifests mostly in the brain. Humans are frequently exposed to a wealth of information, and the brain adjusts by condensing this information to make decisions. The brain typically uses short cuts to organize and understand all the info it is exposed to. These shortcuts establish the prejudices and stereotypes linked to individuals or groups. Indeed, the information one is exposed to shapes their thinking and behavior towards different people and situations.

Implicit biases are a result of the brain's innate propensity to filter, group, and categorize data about the outside world. These inclinations make people vulnerable to

bias. In general, people like to look for patterns. The brain's innate propensity to search for patterns and relationships in the external world leads to implicit bias. This capacity to create associations about the outside world is essential for social cognition, which is the capacity to retain, analyze, and apply information about others in social contexts.

Implicit bias results from the brain's propensity to attempt to simplify the outside world, just like other cognitive biases. Mental shortcuts help the brain process information more quickly and easily since it is continually presented with more information than it can possibly process. Experience and social conditioning are important factors. Although these opinions might not be the direct product of personal experience, implicit biases are nevertheless influenced by experiences. Implicit associations that people have with members of other social groups can be influenced by cultural conditioning, media depictions, and upbringing.

Implicit bias can result in the 'stereotype threat' phenomenon, in which individuals absorb unfavorable stereotypes about themselves depending on group affiliations. For instance, research has shown that young girls frequently acquire implicit ideas about math ability and gender. Girls have been found to display unconscious views that women favour language over arithmetic at the age of nine. The stronger these implicit beliefs are, the less likely girls and women are to pursue math performance in school. These subliminal attitudes may also prevent women from pursuing employment in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Research has shown that unconscious bias can have a significant impact on educational access and academic attainment. Implicit bias can also affect how teachers react to student conduct. African American children—and African American males in particular—were more likely to be ejected from school for behavioural

difficulties, according to one study. Teachers were more inclined to concentrate on Black children than White children when instructed to monitor for problematic behaviours.

Most implicit bias examples are ingrained from an early age as a result of society, institutions, and family. For example, people are more receptive towards people with similar backgrounds and interests. In contrast, society is more wary of and untrusting of other civilizations. Recruitment team while hiring managers favour candidates with specific demographics or personal characteristics without good cause, they are also engaging in implicit prejudice. Stereotypical views of African Americans illustrate how this kind of prejudice also appears in the workplace. According to recent surveys, White job searchers had a twofold higher chance of being hired than those of colour with the same qualifications. Another form of unconscious bias is unequal access to job opportunities brought on by unreasonable attitudes and opinions. One final example is when employers assign technological duties to younger employees because senior individuals are implicitly viewed as less technologically capable.

The term 'Implicit Bias' describes attitudes or prejudices that influence one's perception, behaviour, and decisions without conscious awareness. These biases, which include both positive and negative judgements, are generated involuntarily and without a person's knowledge or deliberate control. These prejudices, which reside in the subconscious, are distinct from known biases that people may choose to cover up for the sake of social and/or political correctness. Implicit biases, on the other hand, are not discoverable through introspection. One develops opinions and feelings about other individuals based on traits like race, ethnicity, age, and appearance due to implicit associations they carry in their subconscious. As a result of exposure to both direct and indirect messages, these associations are formed throughout the course of a

lifetime, beginning at a very young age. Together with early experiences, media and news programming are frequently mentioned sources of implicit associations. Implicit bias is widespread. Everyone has them, even those who have publicly pledged to be neutral, like judges.

One's implicit associations may not even reflect positions that one would expressly support or even agree with their stated opinions. Although research has revealed that individuals might still harbour implicit prejudices against our ingroup, one often has a tendency to support our own in group. Implicit biases are malleable. Because of the incredible complexity of our brains, implicit associations can be gradually undone only using a variety of debiasing strategies.

Implicit biases including those based on age, gender, ability, and colour and ethnicity are very common in society. When people unintentionally neglect a Hispanic employee for a job that requires excellent English communication skills, for example, it is known as race and ethnicity bias. This occurs when people make assumptions about someone based on their race or ethnicity, such as that all Asian students are good at math or that all Hispanic people struggle with the English language. Implicit racial bias must be distinguished from actual racism or discrimination. Implicit biases are associations that people unconsciously make in their minds. This indicates that the person is probably unaware of the biased association. Individuals may unintentionally engage in discriminatory behaviour due to implicit racial bias. This doesn't imply that the person is blatantly racist; rather, it just means that their perceptions have been influenced by experiences, and these perceptions may lead to prejudiced ideas or behaviours. No one is immune from having unconscious thoughts and associations, but becoming aware of implicit racial bias creates an avenue for addressing the issue.

Age bias occurs when people unintentionally assume certain things about other people based on their age. For example, a hiring manager looking for a social media savvy candidate might reject a resume because the applicant's graduation date suggests that they are middle-aged, making the assumption that they won't be skilled at managing social media. Unconscious gender bias is defined as automatic and unintended associations in the mind that are based on gender and are influenced by society, experience, traditions, conventions, and/or values. No matter how experienced a candidate is, gender prejudice happens when people feel one gender is more suited for a certain job, such as welding or childcare. Decision-making is aided by automatic associations, which enable a rapid evaluation of a person in light of their gender and gender stereotypes. While organisations can take action to combat gender and other types of bias, the existence of unconscious gender bias in one person does not inevitably lead to bias in the workplace.

The effect of training on long-term behavior or racial disparities in the criminal justice system has not been thoroughly studied. Yet, the assessments that have been made have yielded some encouraging results. Trainings that use mental imagery and expose participants to counter-stereotypes have been found to moderate implicit stereotypes, and those that result in a change in individual perception seem to be a practical and workable approach to dealing with implicit racial bias among criminal justice system professionals. However, only a short-term reduction in implicit racial bias was observed, necessitating further investigation into how long-lasting the beneficial training effects are.

Understanding and addressing biases you may possess are important so you can be aware of how you treat and interact with others, both consciously and subconsciously. The Implicit Association Test is often used to measure implicit bias in individuals.

This test, offered online through Harvard University, measures the strength of associations between concepts (example white people, gay people, old people) and evaluations (example good, bad) or stereotypes (example athletic). In essence, combining items that are thought to be similar makes responding easier. So, the time it takes to sort through the words and finish the pairings determines the IAT score. Beyond just doing the evaluation, reflecting on past prejudices is an excellent method to become more conscious of implicit biases that might be present in one's life.

The second method of measuring implicit bias uses randomized experiments on populations of people. Randomized trials on human populations are used to measure implicit bias in the second way. Each participant in this research is asked to rate a particular object, which could be a resume, a picture, or a description of a job's duties. That item has a feature whose variation is random. For instance, in one kind of trial, each assessor views the same resume that has either a man's or a woman's name assigned at random. Although they claim they have no a priori preference for a man or woman, if the evaluators who have seen the resume with the guy's name are more likely to hire the applicant, this indicates that, on average, this set of evaluators is showing implicit bias.

Studies reveal that people are more likely to hire a male candidate for a science position, to give someone's athletic ability a higher rating if they believe the person is African American than white, and to give someone's writing abilities a higher rating if they believe the writer is a woman than a man. Stereotypes may be made up or true generalizations about a certain demographic group, but both can result in inaccurate judgements about specific people. For example, when asked to assess the heights of subjects standing in a doorway, for instance, evaluators frequently underrate the heights of women while overestimating the heights of men. Men are typically taller

than women, therefore the bias in this example is based on a genuine generalisation. Nevertheless, when applied to assessments of specific individuals, the bias results in inaccurate predictions about the individuals.

People's opinions and behaviour are impacted by repeated exposure to images and themes. Because of this, mass media campaigns have been used to successfully change Americans' behaviour, such as by promoting the use of designated drivers, lowering drug usage, and enticing parents and mentors to have frank conversations about pregnancy with young women. So, it is not surprising that visuals and mass media have been demonstrated to have an impact on implicit bias. The use of implicit racial, gender, or other bias can be reduced by exposing subjects to counter-stereotypes (such as descriptions or images of black or women leaders or by asking subjects to come up with their own examples of women leaders) and teaching subjects to use counter-stereotypes in their evaluation of candidates. In one study, participants were given an exercise that required them to adopt the perspective of an elderly person. This exercise reduced the influence of implicit prejudice towards the elderly, and a similar effect on national origin bias was seen when participants went through a simulated adoption procedure.

Implicit bias has remained prevalent throughout the past few decades, proving its enduring nature across generations and time. Although the effects of such interventions are frequently transient, active interventions can occasionally diminish implicit prejudice. Instead of attempting to eradicate implicit bias, a good objective is to lessen its influence on people's conduct by raising awareness of implicit prejudice and encouraging individuals to consciously consider their opinions of others in order to lessen bias impacts.

Implicit biases favour some groups while disadvantageous other groups. These biases can be observed in the hiring process for jobs, university admissions, and even in the classroom. Diversity is significantly impacted by these biases in a number of ways. To raise awareness of this problem and eliminate these biases, there are numerous workshops, training sessions, and seminars available. A excellent strategy to deal with the issue is to have conversations about how implicit prejudice impacts the classroom, job, and daily life. Ultimately, recognising and being aware of one's implicit biases is similar to checking one's blind spot – a critical effort to try to safeguard everyone's well-being.

The majority of people desire to be fair yet are oblivious of their own biases. The inclusion of unconscious prejudice in the public conversation will alter understanding of and responsibility for bias, enabling respectful discussions without anybody feeling accused or held accountable for issues with diversity. The country can lower a significant barrier to creating the finest workforce, where individuals are judged on their abilities and accomplishments rather than on preconceptions and assumptions, by increasing awareness of implicit bias and highlighting actions that lessen or moderate its effects.

For the study, the researcher analyses the novels *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid and *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini by using implicit bias theory. Here in both the novel the main protagonists Changez and Amir have implicit bias or prejudices towards specific people or groups there by attributing characteristics to these groups which they don't really possess which ultimately results in their identity formation.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature and Methodology

This research makes an effort to analyze Implicit bias or ‘automatic’ mental processes that contribute to societal injustices and inequities in a variety of situations, including business, healthcare, and informal ‘everyday’ settings. Implicit feelings and thoughts manifest without the conscious knowledge of the individual exhibiting them. Implicit bias refers to people's unintentional attitudes and accompanying prejudices toward individuals or groups.

Methodology is a body of methods or the analysis of the principles or procedures of inquiry in a particular field. Here the researcher has used qualitative research methodology. Here the researcher does a comparative analysis of the novels *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid and *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini by using implicit bias theory put forward by Mahzarin Banaji. In both the novel we find implicit bias or prejudices towards specific people or groups there by attributing characteristics to these groups which they don't really possess which ultimately results in their identity formation.

The research investigates how implicit bias influences a person's life cycle. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Kite Runner* both use words, phrases, and sentences to point out instances of ‘Implicit Bias’. A close reading method and comparative study is used to collect and analyze data. The texts along with a detailed analysis of scholarly papers, research articles and other secondary sources.

Mohsin Hamid is a British-Pakistani novelist wrote *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* a metafictional novel in 2007. The book became an international bestseller, got shortlisted for the man Booker prize and was adapted into a feature film. Amani

Salmeen's research titled "*The Reluctant Fundamentalist: Hybridity and the Struggle for Identity*" focuses on Changez, the main character of the book, and his struggle with hybridity and identity. The term 'hybridity' in this context refers to the blending of Western and Eastern cultures. The formation of culture and identity within the framework of colonial discourse is referred to as hybridity. Changez struggles to remain in-between in this situation, but his personal, social, and political experiences influence him to make a challenging but necessary choice.

Changez is from a society where principles are upheld, and elders are revered. He knows what it's like to suffer and endure hardships every day. On the other side, he observes young people who are born into wealth but lack intellect and good manners. Changez attempts to live up to the American way of life in order to blend in and gain access to power. Changez begins to 'imitate'; the mindset, vogue, and conduct of the other culture.

Ishtiaq Ahmad has conducted research titled "The Nostalgic Impact on Characterization in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*". According to this study, nostalgia is defined as a mental sentimentality for one's past or the feeling of being homesick. Everyone has some degree of nostalgia, and it has a significant impact on people's daily lives and experiences. The words, sentences, characters, and their actions in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* have been studied through the lens of nostalgia. Through the lens of nostalgia, this study looked at the characters' personalities, works, social lives, behaviours, and reactions in order to examine the impact of nostalgia on Changez and Erica in particular. This study discovered that nostalgia shapes and affects people's lives and experiences.

In Avirup Ghosh's research titled "I was not certain where I belonged": Integration and Alienation in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*" focuses on the contrary impulses of alienation and integration in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Changez, the narrator, describes his experiences in America as a worker at the valuation company Underwood Samson and his subsequent return to his native Pakistan, where he adopts what seems to be an ultra-nationalistic political viewpoint. This is to claim that Changez's failed endeavor to organically assimilate with a Pakistani way of life has its roots in both his cultural alienation and racism in America, especially in a post-9/11 America, and his frantic desire to take on this position. The paper attempts to demonstrate how Changez's criticism of American corporate fundamentalism derives from his lack of a sense of belonging and from a feeling of problematized identity by exposing certain discrepancies in Changez's ideological vocabulary.

The Reluctant Fundamentalist is examined from the standpoint of identity crises by Humaira Tariqin in the research paper titled "Identity at Stake: Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*". She states that an immigrant loses his original identity when he leaves his native country. He strives to establish his new identity in the new country, but he ends up becoming an outsider there as well as sometimes feeling foreign to his native country. She goes on to discuss how Muslims share a common identity that is moulded by two factors: their interactions with other religions and their citizenship in Pakistan. She talks about how Islam has played a crucial role in the emergence of the Muslim identity in non-Islamic nations.

In his article titled "*The Reluctant Fundamentalist: A Novel*", Irfan Khwaja explains that Mohsin Hamid's motivation for writing this book was to draw attention to the danger and anxiety that exist in both nations. While Muslims dread being

slaughtered by American fanatics, America is also in risk due to the widespread interest in Islam around the world. There is a reluctance amongst the people of both nations that the story of the book, as succinctly summarised by Anderson (2009), centres on the protagonist, a young man with ambition and enthusiasm, but after 9/11, the mutual mistrust and uncertain connections cause severe and painful changes in his life. His goal in writing this article is to analyse the nature of prejudice and perception, which is prevailing highly in a globalized world.

American author Khaled Hosseini, who was born in Afghanistan, published his first book, *The Kite Runner*. Hosseini learned that the Taliban had outlawed kite flying in Afghanistan in 1999 through a news story. He was brought back to his childhood in Afghanistan, where he had played this kind of sport, by the news. He found the incident to be incredibly cruel and unfair toward the children, and it inspired him to write a short narrative about two boys who like kite flying. On the advice of one of his friends, he started to turn this short story into a novel in March 2001. This book was eventually released in 2003, and since then it has gained a lot of popularity and been rewritten in other languages. *The Kite Runner* centers on the relationship between Amir and Hassan, one of Amir's servants. Hosseini focused on showing the two boys' bond in the first half of the book. The focus of the second half was Amir's efforts to atone for his sin by saving Hassan's son.

Since its release in 2003, *The Kite Runner* has gained a lot of recognition and attracted numerous academics both domestically and internationally. They examined this book from a variety of perspectives. *The Kite Runner* is considered by Luckhardt in paper titled “Building Cultural Competence Through Multicultural Fiction” as a masterful illustration of the potential and power of multiculturalism, which can be a useful teaching tool. Jefferess in the research paper titled “To Be Good: The Runner as

Allegory of Global Ethics” emphasizes how Islamic culture separates ‘good Muslims’ from ‘bad Muslims’ from an ethical standpoint in the book *The Kite Runner*.

In their article titled “On the Images of the Kite in *The Kite Runner*”, Zhang Guangyun and Wang Zhilin examined the kite imagery in the book *The Kite Runner*. ‘The kite, as an image, is a carrier of various metaphors’ they assert. Cao Hu in her essay titled “An Examination of the Symbolic Art Techniques in *The Kite Runner*” believed that Khaled Hosseini used symbolic art techniques to show various societal issues in Afghanistan. In the essay titled “On the Spatial Narrative Elements in *The Kite Runner*”, Yu Wengang examined the spatial narrative tactics used in the novel's narrative process from changes in the geography environment, unique narrative space elements, and the hero Amir's psychological space.

Though there are a few studies done on the select works the theory of Implicit Bias is yet to be used to explore the natural mental process that are undergone by the characters. The study analyses how implicit bias results in the formation of identity in *The Kite Runner* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

Chapter 3

Imposed Identity Formation in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Kite Runner*: An Analysis

The Reluctant Fundamentalist is a ‘metafictional’ novel by Pakistani author Mohsin Hamid, published in 2007. In the novel, a bearded Pakistani named Changez tells an uneasy American stranger about his romance with an American woman and his eventual departure from America. This conversation takes place over the course of one evening in an outdoor cafe in Lahore. Focus on the Fundamentals, a short tale taken from the book, was published in The Paris Review's fall 2006 edition. The 2012 Venice Film Festival saw the world debut of director Mira Nair's film adaptation of the book.

The world is examined in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* in the late 1990s and early 2000s, with a focus on Pakistan and the United States. The World Trade Center attack on September eleven, 2001, is the single most significant historical event in the book. Hamid demonstrates how this incident sparked the ‘War on Terror’ in the Middle East and Southwest Asia and how it affected American society. Another significant occasion in the story is the India-Pakistan Standoff of 2001–2002, which causes Changez to worry about the safety of his family. Finally, Hamid makes reference to the recession of the early 2000s, which corresponded with the bursting of the dot-com bubble and resulted in higher unemployment rates globally.

Many books about the September Eleven terrorist attacks focus on exploring the aftermath and traumatising effects on the white population. The narrative of *The*

Reluctant Fundamentalist is told from the critical vantage point of an American Pakistani who for a time was a victim of the dominant and imperialist American system. This book begins over a conversation between a scared American stranger and a Pakistani named Changez at a cafe table in Lahore. They have tea and dinner together in the historic Anarkali market, and Changez then follows him through the dark Lahore streets at night to his hotel room. Changez addresses in a lengthy monologue his experiences in America as a student and as a worker for the assessment company Underwood Samson.

Changez is a member of an honourable family in Lahore. After receiving a scholarship to Princeton and a lucrative position at Underwood Samson, he relocates to New Jersey. He falls in love with a young American woman Erica while on vacation in Greece with other Princetonians. Erica is uneasy because her childhood love, Chris died. She likes Changez and sees him as a shadow of her ex-lover since she finds it difficult to start a new relationship because of her ex-lover's memory. Changez travels to see his family in Pakistan, which he believes the US is equally involved in as it stands on the verge of conflict with neighbouring India. Changez keeps his beard as a reminder of his past in his present when he comes back to America. He encounters discrimination in the job, on the streets, and at airports. Erica has been transferred to a clinic in the interim while her mental condition worsens.

Despite noticing Changez's disappointment, Underwood Samson company still values him and sends him on a business trip to Chile. Changez is not motivated by his work nor enchanted by the reputation of his company since he is worried by the current political climate and preoccupied about Erica. He challenges the designated company's leader. He gives up on the task, fully aware that doing so will result in him losing his employment and his American visa. When Changez returns to New York to

pack his bags, he finds that Erica has vanished from the clinic and is thought to have committed suicide. Before he leaves, her mother hands him a copy of Erica's work.

Changez joins the University of Lahore as a lecturer and activist after returning to Pakistan, where he rallies against American foreign policy. The episode concludes with Changez accompanying the stranger back to his hotel, leaving questions about Changez's activism unanswered. Whether the American was a secret operative agent or whether Changez and the American just happened to meet by accident is left unanswered when the novel's final page closes.

Implicit bias manifest without the conscious knowledge of the individual exhibiting them. Here in the novel Changez, the protagonist, serves as Mohsin Hamid's spokesperson in order to deliver his message through a dramatic monologue. By using first-person narration, Mohsin Hamid has added an autobiographical element to the book. At the very beginning of the novel itself one finds the protagonist Changez saying that "Don't be frightened by my beard: I am a lover of America" (Hamid 1), itself shows the implicit bias unconsciously running in behavior of the American man who appears to be on a mission of some kind. The moment the American man sees Changez with a beard, he becomes 'alarmed'. The entire novel's narrative is characterized by feelings of mistrust and suspicion. Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, mutual respect, trust, and understanding between American and Pakistani common people have been damaged. Islam and Christianity, two opposing Eastern and Western religions, come together in an atmosphere of mistrust. The moment the American man sees Changez with a beard, he becomes alarmed. The beard of Changez, which once served as the sources of religious pluralism and cultural diversity, has grown unpopular and raised suspicions in the wake of 9/11. Through this one finds that implicit bias is a natural tendency of the brain to sift, sort

and categorize information. This leads to attributing particular characteristics to people which they don't really possess, and this leads to stereotyping and then to identity formation.

Changez states that because he is a native of Lahore and speaks English, he'll give the Stranger his assistance. He continues by saying that, in contrast to the Stranger's attire, skin tone, or athletic frame, he can tell that he is unmistakably American based on his unusual bearing. He says "Instead, it was your bearing that allowed me to identify you"(2). In an effort to connect with the Stranger on a personal level, he evaluates him based solely on his appearance, just like minorities in the US are. He tries to find common ground between the Stranger and himself, but he does so by judging the Stranger based on his appearance, much as minorities in the United States are treated. Changez comes across as somewhat sinister because he feels the Stranger is uncomfortable around him yet still questions him; this suggests that his obedient demeanour could not be entirely sincere.

Changez ponders the American stranger's visit to Old Anarkali and he offers the following explanation: he came for a cup of tea. Despite the fact that it is a hot day the stranger refuses to remove his jacket. The Stranger won't take off his jacket and continues to sit with his back to the wall. Changez argues that he is aware of what is and isn't typical because he has lived in the United States and has attended Princeton University. He observes that the Stranger's behaviour is unusual for an American—it is perhaps too formal. He has a military awareness about him that suggests he might actually be an agent of some sort, as evidenced by his decision to keep his jacket on and sit close to a wall. Or it may be due to unconscious negative prejudice that he possesses about India which made him vigilant. Implicit bias made him assume certain characteristics to people of India and he is not aware of his biased association.

His perceptions resulted in biased thoughts or actions. Another instance when a waiter approaches the table where Changez and the American Stranger are seated in the café. The American Stranger reaches inside his jacket as Changez observes that he appears to be frightened. The lines “You seem worried. Do not be; this burly fellow is merely our waiter” (5) itself shows the automatic mental process which arises in minds of American people after the 9/11 tragic event which led to the destruction of Twin Towers of the World Trade Center and created an unconscious suspicion towards the east. He is even suspicious towards the food that the waiter serves it is clearly visible in the lines “Do not look suspicious. I assure you, sir, nothing untoward will happen to you, not even a runny stomach” (11). Changez switches the teacups and samples each course at dinner to show the American fellow that the food was not contaminated and would not harm him. More evidence of the complete lack of faith and trust between these two nations can be seen in the bearded man wearing a jacket and the hotel server, who was referred to as “burly fellow” (5).

In Princeton, at first Changez is dazzled by Princeton’s bright students and old-fashioned architecture, he quickly realizes that his college is less impressive than it seems. There are a thousand Americans in his entering class but only one other Pakistani student, despite the fact that the United States’ population is twice that of Pakistan. Changez claims that non-American students are frequently more gifted than Americans since they have far lower odds of being accepted to Princeton. However, because Americans have the preconceived concept that they are useless and that only Americans are talented, they are excluded and do not receive opportunities that match their talents. Here one sees the racial prejudice which resulted from implicit bias present in American society. Along with the educational, legal, political, social, or religious integration of any minority into any society, the opportunities and rights are

highly important for upholding fundamental obligations and human rights. Denial causes a group or its members to become alienated or disenfranchised because of their appearance, colour, ethnicity, political beliefs, class, or other characteristics.

Changez is nervous for his job interview with Underwood Samson and Company. His interviewer, Jim, is well-built man. He also was judgmental and was watching him like a jeweler when he inspects a diamond, he intends neither to buy nor to sell. After some time, he asked him to tell something about his homeland. He remarks that Changez must have truly needed the money when he learns that he is in the US on a scholarship. He asks him whether his friends are aware that he is there on a scholarship because he seems polished and smart and that most people would believe that he comes from a wealthy household. This shows race and ethnicity bias that unconsciously made him categorize the East as economically inferior to the west. This made him take actions that reinforce these biases.

After 9/11, everything is different: the young analyst's American ideal is destroyed, and the stability of the foundation of his new life in New York is shattered. Before the unfortunate events, no one noticed his foreignness; nevertheless, now, his Pakistani nationality is obvious and raises suspicion. Changez initially experiences this while boarding a plane bound for New York from Manila. He gets chosen to go through an additional check at the airport. His immediate surroundings have changed. The F.B.I. is searching mosques, shops, and even people's homes while beating Pakistani taxi drivers. Although Changez is a Princeton graduate earning eighty thousand dollars a year, his Pakistani identity plays a crucial role when the world is falling apart.

Not the 9/11 attacks themselves but preexisting social constructs that positioned Arabs and Muslims as persons who would easy carry out and approve of such acts,

were to blame for the harsh portrayal of these groups in the United States following 9/11. These social constructions were the result of labelling and interpreting processes that interested players conveyed through significant American social institutions throughout the course of the last decades of the 20th century, not something that happened on eleventh of September. In American society, Arabs and Muslims are portrayed as a monolithic group with a natural propensity for violence and a morally corrupt religion that condones murder. The process of identifying "evil people" (74) in the wake of the 9/11 attacks that killed innocent New Yorkers played a part in the racialization of Arabs and Muslims as groups that imperil American cultural ideals and personal liberty.

The terrorist acts of September eleven, 2001 marked his life's rapid decline and collapse. His passion for the US waned as his American ideal was dashed. He was perplexed by the strange treatment and foreign attitude, and he was forced to leave America by the natives' harsh dealings, pervasive suspicion, and steadfast mistrust. He used to be clean-shaven but has since grown a beard on his face, become a fervent activist, and organized protests against the 2003 American assault on Iraq. It demonstrates how Changez, a Pakistani immigrant and American lover, through a complete transformation and is pulled between the alluring pull of his adopted country and patriotism.

Here, the implicit bias present in Americans is having an impact on Changez's life, which confuses him and causes him to develop an identity that was not previously a part of him. Due to implicit bias, he encounters weird skepticism and a foreign attitude from Americans, which causes him to change from an ardent supporter of America to one who fervently opposes it.

The Kite Runner is the first novel by Afghan American author Khaled Hosseini, published in 2003 by Riverhead Books. It chronicles the tale of Amir, a little child from Kabul's Wazir Akbar Khan district. The story is set against a background of turbulent events, including the Soviet invasion, the fall of the Afghan monarchy, the emigration of refugees to Pakistan and the US, and the creation of the Taliban dictatorship. Hosseini has stated that he views *The Kite Runner* as a tale of a father and son relationship, highlighting the familial aspects of the story—a device he carried over into his following works. The work has a lot to say on guilt and repentance, and a key sequence shows how Amir's friend Hassan is sexually assaulted in a way that Amir is powerless to stop, which ends their friendship. The focus of the second half of the book is Amir's efforts to atone for this sin by saving Hassan's son two decades later.

Beginning with King Zahir Shah, who was deposed by his cousin Daoud Khan in 1973, the novel moves through a significant portion of Afghanistan's turbulent history. After the communist party came to power in 1978, a conflict known as The Soviet War broke out between Russian forces and guerillas supported by the US. The nation became the Islamic State of Afghanistan after the fall of the Soviet Union, but violent infighting between parties continued. An extreme Islamic group known as the Taliban took over the nation in 1996 and started enforcing a rigid and deadly religious law. The novel concludes soon after the Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks on the World TradeCenter on September 11, 2001, the ensuing American invasion of Afghanistan, and the overthrow of the Taliban.

Religion and race are particularly difficult factors in problems over friendship and other issues that arise in Afghanistan during the colonial and post-colonial periods. For other authors, it is extremely different because the majority of their stories discuss

culture shock, despair, and isolation. Readers' eyes can be opened by Hosseini to the reality of Afghanistan's life, which has long been hidden from the outside world. Hosseini wrote about Afghanistan before the Soviet war because that is largely a forgotten period in modern Afghan history. Afghanistan is often associated with the Soviet war and the Taliban in the minds of many people in the west. Hosseini wished to bring attention to the fact that Afghans have been able to live in peace and anonymity.

The novel is divided into three distinct places by following the life of its main character. The novel's environment is divided into three separate locations by the main character's journey through life. Initially, Amir and his family were still residing in Kabul, Afghanistan. Afghanistan was not at war at the time. The second is when Amir and Baba relocate to America's state of California. This environment makes Amir's motivation for relocating to America quite clear. He wishes to conceal his previous life in Afghanistan. Amir and Baba are moving to America in the hopes of finding peace of mind. The third time period is when Afghanistan is governed by the Taliban (Shi'a). The setting before and after Afghanistan is created by the author. Afghanistan has become uninhabitable; it is a wrecked country with many bodies lying on the ground and many demolished structures. In other words, Afghanistan has become a dangerous place.

Even though the settings are in various times and locations, the social context is always determined by Afghan cultural laws and customs. Afghan society is quite rigid and traditional. There is an order by class and race. Although Pashtuns are at the top as masters, Hazaras are at the bottom as the servant or peasant class. Pashtuns can dwell in a large, opulent house because they are the highest race. They can pursue higher education as well. To pursue better education, some of them are moving

abroad. In addition, Pashtuns regularly throw lavish parties to demonstrate their status as Afghanistan's most affluent and powerful group. The life of Hazara is in stark contrast to this situation. The Hazaras are forced to lead miserable lives. They live in a little mud hut that serves as their only home. They lack the opportunity to attend school, hence they are also uninformed. They are so limited to serving others.

The implicit associations harbor in one's subconsciousness cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race and appearance. Here there Hazara's being the minority group, Pashtuns develop associations in their mind which attribute negative stereotypes to them, which they don't really possess. Due to the ingrained racial and religious prejudice in Baba's mentality, Ali is never referred to be his friend and Amir also never refers Hassan as his friend. Yet, Hassan's face comes to mind when Amir thinks of Afghanistan, and he remembers their childhood as one long playtime together. But implicit bias or unconscious knowledge in him that Hassan is a Hazara made him never address him as his friend.

Unintentional discrimination results from implicit bias, which subsequently fuel injustice and violence. Here, subconscious bias against Hazaras turns into physical appearance-based prejudice against them. They call Ali "Babalu" (Hosseini,8), or the Boogeyman, and make fun of his appearance and limp. Ali and Hassan are members of the Hazara ethnic group of Afghanistan, which is despised by the Pashtun majority (Amir and Baba are Pashtuns). The Pashtuns appear more Arabian, whereas the Hazaras have more Asiatic features. Due to this, Hassan has earned nicknames such as Flat-Nose, A loyal Hazara, and Loyal as a dog.

The Pashtuns are Sunni Muslims, while the Hazaras are Shi'a Muslims, which is another difference between them. Amir is aware of his status as a Sunni Muslim and Pashtun. Nothing can alter who he is since history is a difficult obstacle to overcome.

The lines:

The curious thing was, I never thought of Hassan and me as friends either. Not in the usual sense anyhow. Never mind that we taught each other to ride a bicycle with no hands. Never mind that we spent entire winters flying kites, running kites. Never mind that to me, the face of Afghanistan is that of a boy with a thin-boned frame, a shaved head and low set ears, a boy with Chinese doll face perpetually lit by a hareliped smile. Never mind any of these things. Because history isn't easy to overcome. Neither is religion. In the end, I was a Pashtun and he was a Hazara, I was Sunni and he was Shi'a, and nothing was ever going to change that. Nothing. (Hosseini 24)

This statement shows the implicit bias in Amir transforming into stereotyping and then to discrimination towards Hazaras. Amir, a Pashtun, differs from the other youngsters in terms of his outward look, religion, nationality, and mentality, especially from his servant Hassan, a Hazara. His distinctions elevate him to a higher social status in Afghanistan. Also, it is evident how differently he looks from others in this quotation.

The Hazaras have entirely negative characteristics such as being socially low, impoverished, belonging to low class, having physical flaws like Hassan's harelip and Ali's leg polio, and only working in low-paying jobs like that of a waitress, beggar, or servant, like Ali and Hassan as servants. Also, the majority of Hazaras are illiterate since they lack the funds to attend school, like Hassan and Ali, who are unable to read

books. As a result, the majority of Hazaras were assumed to be illiterate from the moment they were born. According to that statement, the stereotype of the Hazara is that they are uneducated and poor.

Hassan, who is nonetheless illiterate due to social constructs and stereotyping, is enthralled by stories. Amir frequently reads to him. When Hassan doesn't grasp a complicated word that Amir reads, Amir likes to tease him occasionally and makes up a definition for it. So, Amir creates his first story, which is about a man whose tears become pearls and who deliberately causes himself to suffer in order to continue crying and accumulate more wealth. When he reads the story to Hassan, he praises it and predicts that Amir will one day become a famous author, but Hassan then questions why the man in the story didn't just make himself cry by chopping onions. Amir feels resentful because it is ingrained in him that Hassan is just another uneducated Hazara who doesn't have the ability to question him. Amir once more demonstrates his self-centeredness and conceit by constantly trying to outdo Hassan and using his wealth and education to discredit him whenever Hassan demonstrates his superior intelligence. Amir's subconscious is firmly imbued with the Pashtun belief that Hazaras are inferior.

Hassan was physically assaulted as a result of implicit bias. Here the unconscious bias is turned into racism and becomes a tool for injustice. Hassan's identity changed in a significant way when he was sexually assaulted. Rape is not something that people can just start coping with. In the book, Hassan belongs to a small ethnic group. He is a Hazara, although the rapist Assef, are both Pashtuns. This raises the difficulty level of Hassan's struggle with his past. He would be unable to simply cry wolf, as others would not do anything about it based on who he is. "You! The Hazara! Look at me when I'm talking to you!" (7). Hazaras do not receive equal treatment or are

elevated to the same status as others. Given that he was the victim of this terrible incident but was powerless to stop it, this has an adverse influence on Hassan's identity. Social injustices are individuals acting on racial stereotypes and prejudices.

In *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, the themes of immigration, displacement, acculturation, assimilation, mimicry, the impact of science and technology, reciprocal relationships, cultural admixture, and in-between space are discussed. Yet, it also addresses topics like diaspora, identity crisis, nationalism, rootlessness, etc. It tells the narrative of the Jewish immigrants to America during the Holocaust in Europe. Muslims who have emigrated to America have their own culture, which blends with other facets of American society. Jews lose their authentic native culture as a result of cultural fusion with America. But they are unable to fully forget. They must slant towards the two civilizations they are straddling. A third new culture known as hybrid culture emerges from the existence of both cultures.

One sees the detrimental effects of implicit bias in both novels. This incorrect assumption that 'all terrorists are Muslims' and 'no white terrorists' is evident in the book *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. In the United States, it is often believed that Muslims are terrorists. The idea that Arabs are terrorists has come to dominate the mainstream consciousness long before the 9/11 attacks. Orientalism, which has a long history, has portrayed Arabs and Muslims as exotic, barbaric, and deadly 'others'. Of course, the terms Arab and Muslim are not synonymous. In actuality, most Muslims in the United States are not Arabs, and most Arabs are not Muslims. Yet, a racialized group presently known as 'Muslim' which includes Muslims as well as those who appear Arab or Middle Eastern, is frequently associated with terrorism. Following the 9/11 attacks, more people began labelling Muslims as terrorists.

On September Eleven, 2001, the militant Islamic extremist network Al-Qaeda launched four coordinated suicide terrorist attacks on the United States. These acts are often referred to as the September Eleven attacks or 9/11. Four commercial aircraft slated to fly from the East Coast to California were hijacked that morning by nineteen terrorists. The first two hijacked aircraft were destroyed by the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, and the third aircraft was destroyed by the Pentagon (the seat of the US military) in Arlington County, Virginia, close to Washington, D.C. A passenger uprising caused the fourth plane, which was also meant to crash into a Washington, D.C., federal building, to crash into a field. The assaults resulted in almost three thousand fatalities and launched the global War on Terror.

American Airlines Flight Eleven had the initial impact. At eight forty-six in the morning, it struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center complex in Lower Manhattan. At nine (seventeen minutes later), United Airlines Flight one seventy-five struck the South Tower of the World Trade Center. During an hour and forty-one minutes, both 110-story skyscrapers collapsed, resulting in the demolition of the five buildings that made up the World Trade Center complex as well as many other nearby structures. At nine thirty-seven a.m., American Airlines Flight seventy-seven collided with the Pentagon, resulting in a partial collapse. Flight ninety-three of United Airlines, the fourth and last flight, headed for Washington, D.C. Because of the other attacks, the passengers of the aircraft sought to take control of it, but at ten a.m., the hijackers crashed the plane in a pitch in Stonycreek Township, Pennsylvania, close to Shanksville. The United States Capitol was the objective of Flight ninety-three, according to investigators.

The Central Intelligence Agency identified Al-Qaeda as the perpetrators just hours after the assaults. As a formal response, the United States declared War on Terror and invaded Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban because they had refused to comply with requests to drive out Al-Qaeda from Afghanistan and deport its leader, Osama binLaden. Bin Laden retreated to the White Mountains as American-led ground forces surged through Afghanistan, narrowly escaping capture. After first denying any involvement, bin Laden formally accepted credit for the attacks in 2004.

The attacks caused at least Ten billion in infrastructure and property damage, Two thousand nine hundred and seventy-seven non-hijacker fatalities, an unknown number of injuries, and serious long-term health effects. With seventy-two fatalities, respectively, it is still the deadliest terrorist assault in the annals of humankind. It is also the single deadliest incident for police enforcement and firefighters in the annals of the United States. The collapse of the World Trade Center and its surroundings caused significant economic harm to New York City and shocked the world markets. Many were traumatised by this, which led to the implicit assumption that all Muslims are terrorist and increased suspicion towards them.

Outside geopolitics, 9/11 has had an impact on society and culture as a whole. Early reactions to 9/11 included an emphasis on family and home life, increased church attendance, and more displays of patriotism, such as flying American flags. The attacks have since been referenced as background, narrative, or thematic aspects in film, music, literature, and humour. The radio industry responded by eliminating specific songs from playlists. Television programmes also represented post-9/11 societal concerns. Even though professional scientists, engineers, and historians have not supported them, 9/11 conspiracy theories have become a popular phenomenon. 9/11 also had a significant effect on many people's religious beliefs. For some, it

strengthened their faith as a means of solace in order to deal with the loss of loved ones and move past their grief. For others, however, it led to doubt or complete loss of faith because they were unable to make sense of it in the context of their religious beliefs.

Following the attacks, America's society is characterised by heightened security demands, fear, and concern over potential terrorist strikes that affects the majority of the country. The rise in national anxiety related to commercial air travel has also been validated by psychologists. Hate crimes against Muslims increased by about ten times in 2001, and they have since stayed approximately five times higher than the pre-9/11 rate.

It's astonishing how little Islam is portrayed in media like television and film. A study of more than nine hundred Hollywood movies came to the conclusion that persons of Arab or Muslim descent were frequently portrayed as terrorists or other clichéd bad guys. This demonstrates the innate bias that mankind has had since ancient times. Reliance categories are an implicit shortcut. Depending too much on categorization will lead to predictable errors. The application of false prejudices when classifying people based on race is a predictable mistake. As a result, when one hears the word 'terrorist' one subconsciously links it to a variety of concepts, including, ironically, brown and Muslim offenders.

The personal mental health of these white Christian fanatics has repeatedly received attention. Usually, media goes out of its way to pinpoint any psychological characteristics that could have contributed to non-Muslims going over the line. If it's a Muslim, on the other hand, it's assumed that they did it because of their religion. The primary presumption is that, as a white terrorist, some form of personal suffering must

have precipitated violence. The Muslim offender, in comparison, has no past, no mourning family, and his motivation is obvious enough. He is like a stock villain in a movie. It does not imply that all white terrorists lack mental illness; many do. But many Muslim terrorists are as well. But, because white people are presumed innocent, one tends to blame mental illness for terrorist acts committed by white people rather than non-white people.

It is unacceptable to evaluate individuals more harshly because of their race or ethnicity, but that is exactly what most people do like an old -school, first-generation racists. These biased evaluations are not always deliberate. Instead, it is most likely the outcome of implicit processes. People have created specific cognitive short cuts to help them process the information because their minds are overloaded with it. These shortcuts can lead to predictable errors.

Bias frequently steers one in directions that one doesn't expect, doesn't plan, and that one might even disagree with if one were aware of its influence. When people allow these biases to influence how they behave towards particular groups, it can be damaging. Implicit bias is shown to be causing stereotyping in both of these novels, which eventually results in the creation of an imposed identity. A person's-imposed identity is the identity that is imposed on them by others. As Aradhana Mudambi in her article *Imposed Identity Versus Actual Identity* states that "Imposed identity is identity which other people place upon an individual". (Mudambi 2)

Humans go through a complicated process called identity formation, also known as identity development or identity building, during which they come to have a distinct and clear understanding of who they are and what makes them who they are. Identity formation is intimately tied to the development of self-concept, personality, and

values. The process of individuation is essential to identity development. Implicit bias prevents the development of identities in these two works. Continuity and inner unity are key components of healthy identity formation. A disruption in either of these factors could be seen and labelled as abnormal development; certain circumstances, such as childhood trauma, can contribute to abnormal development. Identity development is influenced by a variety of elements, including race, ethnicity, and spirituality.

There are numerous, both internal and external, elements that influence identity. Identity is shaped by a variety of elements, including society, family, friends, ethnicity, culture, geography, the media, interests, self-expression, and life experiences. Internal factors are those that people consider to be personal characteristics that are unaffected by external stimuli. Self-expression refers to how a person chooses to present themselves to the outside world and is dependent on how they want other people to see them. Culture and ethnicity are things that a person is born into, and they have a significant impact on identity because they shape how others perceive that person. External influences on identity include things like geography, the media, a person's family and friends, and society. The things that may be seen from the outside can contribute to the development of beliefs and values that define individuals. Here in both novels *Changez* and Hassan's identity changes due to external influence acting upon their identity formation. And the key reason for it is the negative impact of implicit bias. Thus, implicit bias training should be implemented to reduce its detrimental effects.

Conclusion

People's perceptions of others are shaped by their lived experiences as well as by cultural history. According to research, the majority of people makes judgements and see other people in ways that are influenced by implicit, unconscious beliefs. Expectations or presumptions about a person's physical or social features that are based on stereotypes based on that person's race, gender, age, or ethnicity are examples of implicit prejudice. Even those who have the best of intentions and think themselves to be egalitarian occasionally impose prejudices. Through the research, the researcher discovered that in both the novels *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *The Kite Runner*, people exhibit implicit bias in a variety of ways, some of which are manifest in their actions and others of which are embodied in their inaction. Both of these ways can degrade the quality of the workforce and foster an unjust and harmful workplace environment.

In the novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Americans have an inherent bias against Muslims, which led to the labelling of Changez as a terrorist and the destruction of his profession, aspirations, and dreams. His actions were scrutinized to look for flaws in him just because he belonged to the Muslim community, as he had been treated with mistrust following the 9/11 event. Additionally, the researcher discovers that in the novel *The Kite Runner* that Amir has implicit bias against Hazaras, which is ingrained in him as a result of his environment and conversations with people who marginalised them, leading to their miserable lives and lack of access to opportunities like going to school and finding a good job. Because of these, Hassan and Changez have developed imposed identities that are not natural to them and were placed on them as a result of people's Implicit bias. It further led to marginalisation.

Explicit bias refers to attitudes that are knowingly held and self-reported and that influence how people perceive or act towards members of a certain group. Contrarily, implicit bias operates mostly unconsciously and automatically. It is activated without conscious awareness. Because of this, detecting implicit prejudice requires more nuanced methods, and doing so is difficult. Both individuals who hold them and those who are stereotyped negatively by others suffer from bias. There are a number of various tactics that people might employ to combat and eliminate implicit biases. Attempting to recognize and comprehend your hidden prejudices, being proactive about being inclusive, and spending time with individuals who are different from you are a few examples. The implicit associations that people develop about the members of other social groups can be influenced by cultural conditioning, media depictions, and upbringing.

Identifying your implicit bias is the first step towards overcoming them. Consider your prejudices and take the initiative to recognize the unfavourable assumptions you have about others. Using Implicit Association Tests, which gauge traits like ethnicity, gender, weight, and religion, is one technique. To combat implicit bias, debiasing techniques have been adopted. The first debiasing tool for implicit bias is how to bridge the gap between intention and action. Second is Approach Mindsets. The mindsets one takes into our social interactions are essential for shaping how one gets along, and whether one acts in biased or unbiased ways. One study examined the different mindsets one might have when meeting or collaborating with someone from a different social group. An approach orientation increases the likelihood that interactions will commence with a good start and progress favourably. In general, when one likes something, one tends to approach it. Studies further suggest that when

one practices or imagines approaching something, one also comes to like it a bit more, too.

The third debiasing tool is creating common ground mindset. When people meet a member of a noticeably different social group, they are more likely to look for and notice their differences than to pick up and build on what they share in common. It is necessary to support methods for fostering shared perspectives that take into account group heterogeneity. It results in reducing implicit bias. Mindfulness is the fourth debiasing technique. When a person is aware of the biases they possess, they should be aware that they are more prone to succumb to take wrong decisions while under pressure or when having to make rapid decisions. Take a few deep breaths, take a moment to gather thoughts, and then only engage in making decisions.

So, after one has recognised their own biases, they can actively work to be more inclusive. Check your media bias, for instance, by looking at the blogs you read, the television series you stream, or your favourite social media accounts. One will discover that they are all generated by people who are very similar to you. Although that kind of attachment is natural, it also feeds into prejudices and biases. Look for media outlets that target various demographics. Thus, one will be able to hear opposing viewpoints and discover different people's perspectives on the globe. And should understand the fact that Implicit bias requires time to overcome. Recognize that deprogramming your biases is a lifelong process that demands ongoing awareness and effort.

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