The Politics of Innocence: A Semiotic Analysis of the Pakistani Animated Cartoon Series
Burka Avenger

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ABSTRACT

The animated cartoons occupy a significant part of a child's upbringing, but its contents can be considered debatable. Though parents prefer such animations which can protect their children from potentially harmful awkward images in the media, yet the examination of their content has so far been limited. The analysis of media texts is closely connected with the actual problem of demonstration in children's animated cartoons and movies that not only contribute to the development of children's imagination, the formation of the child's ideas about moral values and the surrounding world, but also cause irreparable harm to the fragile child's psyche. The purpose of this research is to investigate the manipulation of various concepts in the Pakistani animated cartoon series Burka Avenger. This study draws upon Roland Barthes' (1957) semiotic theory for deeper understanding of the meanings, conveyed by the selected images. Moreover, Norman Fairclough's (1989) three dimensional model of critical discourse analysis (CDA) is used for deeper understanding of the socio-cognitive effects of the concerned text (images). This research will help parents to be careful while choosing the media contents to be shown to their kids. It will also be a source of realization for the Pakistani producers and directors of kids' contents, that they should play their role positively for nurturing our future generation instead of preferring their personal benefits only.

Key words: Animated Cartoons, Semiotics, CDA, Manipulation, Influence on Children

INTRODUCTION

We all deal with language every day. We may have never thought of this, but the statements are made up of words, syllables and letters (sounds in speech) and all of these are one system, whereas, semiotics gives a complete interpretation of this system. Language is the formation of signs that serve to save the transmission of information, which has a physical nature. Its function is to communicate in the various processes of human activity. Though, language is an influential means to understand communication yet as a descriptive schema it has its borders because it overlooks other kinds of communication (e.g. visual) (Trenholin, 1986).

In this globalization era the role of visual communication is inseparable from everyday human life and has become very important. Manusia dengan kesibukan sehari-hari yang menyita sebagian besar waktunya, cenderung mengutamakan efektivitas.Humans with daily activities that take up most of their time tend to prioritize effectiveness. Efektivitas dapat dicapai dengan mengkomunikasikan suatu informasi atau pesan secara visual.Effectiveness can be achieved by communicating information or messages visually. So, to communicate people use signs to make meaning mediated by culture and personal experience because, as Lester (1995) has proposed that linguistic signs are generally symbols. So, the symbol is a sign and a sign can be in the form of a word, a sound or visual picture. Chandler (2000, p.11) stated that "we live in the world full of signs and we have no way of understanding anything except through signs and the codes into which they are organized".

Semiotics has become one of the studies that have even developed into a convention in communication theory. Tradisi semiotik terdiri atas sekumpulan teori tentang bagaimana tanda-tanda merepresentasikan benda, ide, keadaan, situasi, perasaan dan kondisi di luar tanda-tanda itu sendiri.Semiotic tradition includes a set of theories on how signs stand for different entities, conditions, ideas, emotions and situations outside the signs themselves (Littlejohn, 2009 : 53). (Littlejohn, 2009). Semiotik bertujuan untuk mengetahui makna-makna yang terkandung dalam sebuah tanda atau menafsirkan makna tersebut sehingga diketahui bagaimana komunikator mengkonstruksi pesan.Semiotics seeks to find out the meanings enclosed in a sign or infer the meaning so that it is known how the communicator constructs the message. Konsep pemaknaan ini tidak terlepas dari pers-

pektif atau nilai-nilai ideologis tertentu serta konsep kultural yang menjadi ranah pemikiran masyarakat di mana simbol tersebut diciptakan.It is not possible to separate certain ideological viewpoints, values and cultural notions from the concept of meaning which is the monarchy of the thought of the community where the symbol was produced. To reveal the unseen ideologies behind various signs, CDA (critical discourse analysis) reflects both on the texts and social processes as object of exploration. Thus, to understand this critical approach the concept of power and ideology provides a fundamental basis. Thompson (1990) states that ideology is the transmission of representational forms in the social world through and within specific social forms and practices, therefore, the study of ideology includes the analysis of "the means in which meaning is built and put across by various symbolic structures".

This study focuses on media discourse especially the media contents produced for children. It intends to look at the manipulation of various concepts in Pakistani animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger* and to illustrate that what parents think better for their children to be exposed of, may not be prove useful for their healthy mental growth and maturity of moral values. This research spotlights the exploitation of different concepts in 3D animated Pakistani cartoon series *Burka Avenger* produced by Unicorn Black and its possible influence on the psyche of children. It also aims to explore the hidden dangers in the invented world of animation. It will be helpful for parents to be cautious even when exploring their kids to the media contents which are specifically designed for the children.

There are number of animated cartoons produced in Pakistan for children, presenting various social issues and culture of the country. *Burka Avenger* is one of such 3D animated cartoon series, being on-aired on various channels of Pakistan successfully and other than Urdu dubbed in Pashto, Arabic, Persian and Indonesian for international broadcast. Although *Burka Avenger* brings into light the sensitive social issues of Pakistan as girls' education, women empowerment and racial discrimination, yet the manipulation of certain concepts and their possible socio-cognitive effects are the concern of this study.

Research Questions

1. How are the various concepts manipulated in the Pakistani animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger,* to convey the desired ideology?
   i.   What are the denotative and connotative meanings of 'pen' used in the animated cartoon series of Pakistan *Burka Avenger*?
   ii. What are the denotative and connotative meanings of 'book' used in the animated cartoon series of Pakistan *Burka Avenger*?
   iii. How is the modern scientific technology presented in *Burka Avenger*?
   iv. What is foregrounded in the images chosen for analysis?
   v.   What is backgrounded in the images selected for the study?

2. What are the socio-cultural impacts of the manipulation of different concepts in *Burka Avenger*?
3. What are the cognitive effects of this exploitation on children's psyche?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Costello et al. (2012) stated that visual communication is an area to examine the transmission of ideas and information through visual forms and symbol. On a deeper level, it also investigates the cognitive and affective processes that affect our perception or sense of visual stimuli (p.95). However, the stress on the value of visual messages does not signify that words are less important as compare to images. Words and pictures are used in combination equally in the most influential and significant messages (Lester, 2000). Images and language can sometimes be connected and be separated at times. This flexibility increases the difficulty of understanding and studying visual communication.

As a fundamental and meta-science, semiotics investigates the question of the symbolism of cultural and natural phenomena. Thus, it offers an interdisciplinary forum to different disciplines and fields of practice and also provides theoretical foundations for the analysis of intercultural understanding (German Society for Semiotics, 2019). Chandler (2007) states that semiotics is not only the study of 'signs' in daily communication, but it considers anything that stands for something else. From semiotics' viewpoint, signs can be represented in the form of images, words, sounds, objects and gestures. The signs are not studied in isolation but also with the ways they represent the meanings and the reality.

Human beings use language or signs to communicate. They can convey their ideas, reflections and emotions through language. However, now the definition of language has evolved according to its function not only as a mean of communication. Today, language has become a mediator in the exercise of power through ideology. Even language contributes in the process of dominance of others by other parties (Fairclough, 1989, p.2). Language does not include sentences only but surrounds text or discourse as well, in which there is an exchange of intent with one another in interpersonal contexts. The context is not empty of social values in the exchange of intentions as the socio-cultural context of the community has strong influence (Halliday, 1978). So, the main agenda of the CDA (critical discourse analysis) is to uncover the ways authority, supremacy and inequality are applied, opposed or reproduced by written texts and talks in political and social contexts. Thus, the CDA stands on a radical place or resists the current of domination within a large framework to struggle against social prejudices. Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p. 270) recognize the features of CDA as follows:

- Pay concentration to social issues.
- Consider that power relations are discursive or are present in discourse.
- Believe that discourse plays a significant role in the construction of society and culture.
- Believe that discourse has a decisive role in the construction of ideology.

- Consider that discourse is historical.
- Interpretative and explanatory
- Discourse is a type of social exploitation.

Discourse as a form of communication act cannot be separated from a statement thought by the messenger (addressor). A discourse also contains ideological content, namely an understanding of an idea from the addressor. Therefore, a text can be analyzed its ideological content by studying it systematically and scientifically. An ideology conveyed by the addressor to the addressee sometimes is not necessarily accepted. Van Dijk (2000) said that the ideology that was conveyed could be a lie of the truth or an attempt at colonialism over truth. According to Geetrz (1973, p.201) ideology is a belief in its existence as a cultural system that contains elements of knowledge, beliefs, norms and values. This is because an ideology can emerge due to the influence of other factors such as power. Furthermore, the ideology is considered correct because there is a coercion to be believed by the addressee.

Ideologies that are attempted to be conveyed by writers through existing languages may be rejected by readers and even the general public, however sometimes the ideology will still be accepted by some readers because the viewpoints they have may be the same as those of the author. Ideology is closely linked to the construction of discourses and creation of meanings. Schieffelin et al. (1998) described ideology as "an abstract representation of ideas, mental phenomena and beliefs which are considered to be the ideal for a certain individual (p.7). Machin and Mayr (2012) defined ideology as "belief systems held by individuals or collectives". Van Dijk (2000, p.20) argues that 'ideologies are the fundamental social beliefs that organize and control the social representation of groups and their members'. Fairclough (1989, p.2) states that ideologies are directly related to power:

> The nature of the ideological assumptions embedded in particular conventions, and so the nature of those conventions themselves, depends on the power relations which underlie the conventions; and because they are a means of legitimizing existing social relations and differences of power, simply through the recurrence of ordinary, familiar ways of behaving which take these relations and power differences for granted.

Within these relationships, ideologies provide principles to justify or legitimize the exercise of power. In other words, they act as "the core practice of the dominant group members" (Van Dijk, 2000, p.20). Power is one of the many concepts that organize the various relationships between discourse and society.

According to Fairclough (1989, p.2), "the exercise of power, in modern society, is increasingly achieved through ideology, and more particularly through the ideological workings of language. Today, material strength and physical abuse are being replaced by discursive ideological means of power". The connection between discourse and power is evident from the definition of discourse where discourse is described as "the actual use of the language in which power operates" (Dijk, 1998, p.17). On the other hand, since power is enacted and exercised in discourse, so it can be said that discourse contributes to the reproduction of power.

Further, manipulation is one of the crucial notions in critical discourse analysis that requires unusual consideration because it implies exploitation of discursive power (Dijk, 2008). Manipulation does not deal power only but the abuse of power that is domination is of central importance here. More particularly, manipulation involves the execution of an illegitimate form of authority through discourse. Manipulators make people believe or do things that are in their interest and against the best interests of those who are manipulated (Chouliaraki, 2005). The essential difference between persuasion and manipulation is that in persuasion the interlocutors are free to judge or do something according to their satisfaction, depending on whether they agree to the persuader's arguments or not. While in the manipulation the receivers are usually given a more submissive role and they are also prey of manipulation. Hence, in general the manipulative discourse's harmful outcomes occur when the receivers are not able to comprehend the actual intention or to perceive the all effects of the ideas or deeds supported by the manipulator (Dijk, 2008). This can be the case in particular when recipients do not have the precise knowledge that could be used to oppose the manipulation (Wodak, 1989). According to Bird and Dardenne (2009), the manipulation, construction and distribution of images, their amalgamation with words, the interpretation of public about them and their roles in the manner the story gains dominance offer massive potential for essential, motivating and crucial research (p.213).

Keeping in mind the idea that ideologies are shared and considering that the present study is interested in explaining that how media discourse aims at ideologies, it should first be considered the manner in which these ideologies are repeated and their function at the social level. To do this, it should be affirmed that the social role of ideologies implies the idea of organizing, managing and reproducing such ideologies i.e., how they are connected socially. To support this idea, the role of public institutions must be considered, since according to van Djik (1998) they are the political and social counterpart of ideologies. In the modern world of technology and media, the importance of the media as a means of disseminating information is enlarged and it benefits the particular group or class and forms ideology according to authoritarian control. In the overall power game, the media has a strategic place and forms a social relationship (Aqsa, 2015). The media establishes meaning-maps that help us to understand what is happening. In matters that we do not experience directly in our daily lives, this is of great importance. Undoubtedly, now the media plays a central role in all the matter of a society because of having capability to select and present the information, the opinion and the topic. It could be said that in a definite way the media discourse is and conditioned through those who manage it according to a certain set of interests. Therefore, the media possess a manipulative or controlling ability because the information it transmits is easily accepted by the users of the media and it could have considerable consequences since it directs the minds and attitudes of the people (Naghy, 2010).

Cartoons specifically animated cartoons have become a significant part of the media. Cartoons have been known

since the 1940s. With technology that was still simple at that time, Walt Disney, among others, produced masterpiece films such as Pinocchio and Snow White. Cartoon is a movie made with animation and not a live actor, especially a funny movie devoted to children (Thompson, 2010). Cartoons are a multifaceted social, psychological, and aesthetic facts and a document that consists of stories and images together with words and music. Cartoons have become more family-oriented so more people would be attracted to look at their show (Habib & Soliman, 2015). Cartoons grab the children's interest hurriedly so influence them enormously. Therefore, the children's great attention would sharpen their observation about what is presented in cartoons. Watching cartoons can help in developing children's cognitive skills. As it works, it forms long-term memory, children's focus, logic, reasoning, visual processing and hearing. Cartoons can teach various languages to children, thus helping children develop their linguistic abilities. Not only children observe everything but they mimic whatever they watch in the cartoon. Most of the children are very impressed with the cartoon as they can learn about the world around them and life issues (Ghilzai, 2017).

Animated cartoons form a great part of daily programming for almost all the television channels. Children who have access to television are so captivated by it that they spend more time watching cartoons on television than they spend in any other activity like reading or playing with each other (Jeffres, 1997), so they consume television through primary involvement. Because of the great involvement of cartoons in kids' early learning stages, the parents have questioned the function of media that it has played in their children's lives, as child is like a white paper on which you can draw his personality and behavior. A child accepts external influences and behavior which may affect its personality in future (Tripathi & Singh, 2016).

According to Habib and Soliman (2015), our habits, opinions, recollections and intelligence are created by the connections that cells form in our brain. The connections of cells in a child's brain are strengthened by repeating experience or are weakened if not used. In their view the initial incidents have a fixed stamp in the brain structure of a child and thus influence the children's thinking pattern and behavior. The brain's structure still has an impact of even less frequent practices yet till the age of 12 the repeated actions are very useful and leave everlasting effects. An experience for a child is that he observes with his eyes, hears with his ears and experiences his sentiments. Considering the above mentioned three facts, as well as the reality that up to the age of 12 the child followed 18,000 hours of cartoons means that cartoon is one of the main factors that sculpture the human brain, resulting in a predetermined set of thinking and behavior.

Rawan, Dar and Siraj (2018) employed content analysis and survey techniques to study the impacts of *Doraeomon* cartoon on the learning of young viewers in Pakistan. They concluded that exposure to cartoon programs of television leads to incidental learning among children. So animated cartoons can be used for teaching purposes to kids at homes and at schools as well, keeping in view the conditions to avoid bad physical effects like eyestrain.

Sarwat Rahman (2018) selected three Pakistani animated cartoon series *3 Bahadur (2015), Burka Avenger (2013) and Quaid Say Baatein (2013)* to study the positive effects of Pakistani cartoons on children. She proved that these programs are set in Pakistani culture so they play an important role to familiarize children with Pakistani culture and customs. According to her, the contents of these programs convey the message of peace, harmony and solving problems through logical reasoning and sharp thinking. She further adds that through the repeated themes in these programs, Pakistani media wants to promote in the minds of children, the constructive things around them to direct their attention away from negative impacts.

Dr. Rukhsana Kausar, Nida Zafar and Maryam Arshad (2018) used correlation research design to explore the relationship between cartoons addiction and executive functioning like problem solving, gratification, organization of materials, working memory, scheduling, self-regulation and scrutinizing, in school going children. After conducting research, they found that there is a noteworthy connection between cartoon obsession and poor executive functioning in school going children. The children who are captivated to watch cartoons persists their parents to purchase the same dresses as put on by their favorite cartoons. Cartoon addicted children become lazy, passive and incapable to gain ethical values because they spend more time with cartoons than with their parents.

Rai (2017) conducted a study on 200 children of age 05-15 years to explore communicative, behavioral and habitual changes in the children because of watching cartoons. He found that 33% of children showed an increase in violent conduct and 64% of children ignored the things told by their parents while watching cartoons. 61% children tried to copy stunts of their cartoon characters, 45% children became violent when their parents switched off the TV and 81% children showed an increase in interest towards creative subjects. So, he concluded that watching cartoon programs had significant effect on the behavior of the children.

Oyero and Oyesomi (2014) adopted survey method for uncovering the opinions of children as well as their parents and to investigate the influence of television cartoons on the social behavior of children of Nigeria. The results of their study showed that kids are regularly exposed to television cartoons and this level of contact is an important factor in determining their behavior. However, in the view of some parents, cartoons are terrible for children because they have negative influence on children's behavior as they fight much particularly boys: "they pick up some skills that you did not know they had, like my son now who will just be behaving like the cartoon characters combating". A child said that "I learn the fighting style from Ben10, sometimes I do whatever Ben10 does for instance anytime he punches someone and I feel like hitting my brother. I know it's not fine but still I do it because of Ben10". Though, Oyero and Oyesomi stated that cartoons,

solely, are not the cause of influencing children. Parents of their sample indicated some other factors as books, peer groups, parental influence, customs, school atmosphere and religious beliefs etc., which can affect the social behavior of children.

Shumaila Ahmad (2014) examined the gender representation of male and female characters in the animated cartoons and movies broadcasted on Cartoon Network (during the period of January-June 2013), through content analysis. She asserted that the male-oriented animated cartoons outnumbered the female-oriented animated cartoons in the recent most popular animated cartoons of the famous channel Cartoon Network. Furthermore, she proved that male characters are shown as physically more powerful, strong, active, aggressive and dominating while female characters are shown as beautiful, sexually attractive, intelligent, weak and passive in most of the animated cartoons. The animated cartoons in which the females were presented as hero, even there they were under the domination of male characters most of the time which conforms to the existing social order under the patriarchal and commercialization implications.

Hassan and Daniyal (2013) surveyed 300 school going children of age group 06-13 years, from different public and private sector schools of Bahawalpur. The purpose of their study was to investigate the impact of cartoon programs on the behavior of the children. They revealed that there is a strong relationship between the violence shown in cartoons of Cartoon Network and the behavior of children in the class. They described that this impact can be observed by the lifestyle of school going children, their dressing, their language and their aggressive and violent behavior.

Islam and Biswas (2012) used Saussure's semiotics theory and Phillipson's (1992) language and cultural imperialism theory to find out that how Hindi language is dominating Bangla language and how the children of Bangladesh are learning and using Hindi easily because of *Doraeomon Cartoons.* They concluded that as Bangla is our mother tongue so we should not provide any chance to Indian media to destroy our mother tongue and identity.

The findings of above reviewed researches strongly represent that the messages conveyed through cartoons play a vital role, directly and indirectly, in the child's developmental process. Green (2012) believes the children are shaped by the ideas which are frequently represented in the animated cartoons particularly when it comes to language-stereotypes and ideologies because children are not passive agents. They are very capable of incorporating prejudice and bias at a very young age. Ahmed (2014) states that television content for children is loaded with ideological viewpoints that play crucial role to shape and to propagate information and ideas about society. Media, especially television upholds dominant ideology of the leading social group and animated cartoons is a special genre that allows hiding many ideological attitudes. Animated cartoon is a kind of so-called 'soft power' that affects children, which is very dangerous to underestimate because the children who are brought up today under the influence of these cartoons, tomorrow will determine the fate of their society and country.

Keeping in view the review of relevant literature, the purpose of this study is to reveal the deliberate construction of images by provoked sign makers for transmitting the particular social and ideological messages.

METHODOLOGY

The current study is qualitative by nature so the most suitable type of research is descriptive research that can be connected to this approach. The present research is descriptive and among diverse types of descriptive research i.e., investigations, chronological research and content analysis, the researcher used the last one as this study investigates the contents of the assembled images from Pakistani animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger*.

The selected population of this study is Pakistani animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger*. This series consists of 52 episodes. For this research 12 episodes out of 52 were selected as sample, purposefully. The reason behind purposeful sampling is to select information loaded cases for an in-detailed exploration. The episodes were downloaded from different online available web resources like Dailymotion, Youtube and *Burka Avenger's* own website. For an in-depth analysis, the still images or screenshots of relevant scenes were taken by using the software Lightshot (5.4.0.1).

The category of visual discourse incorporates cartoons in it, so semiotics is the base of this research work which is concerned with the visual analysis of the images taken from Pakistani animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger*. Among several models of semiotics, Roland Barthes' model (1957) is applied to practically extract the meaning of the collected still shots cartoons. The detection of signs is the initial step in the analysis process, second, the literal meanings and finally their connotations are interpreted. An insight is also taken from CDA to explore the hidden power relations behind communicating the manipulated concepts and Norman Fairclough's model is adopted for this purpose. He put forward a three-dimensional model of CDA in 1989 in his book Language and Power. This representation is considered an integrative approach for exploring discourse in detail, since it considers language as a type of social practice and spotlights the means of exercising social and political dominance in the discourse by text and talk. Furthermore, the production and reception processes of a fragment of discourse in a specific perspective are emphasized in this three-dimensional model.

DATA ANALYSIS

The semiotic analysis, based on Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, is segregated into two levels of meaning. The identification of sign and interpretation of its denotative or literal meaning is the first order of signification. Whereas, exploring the connotation or interpreted meaning of the sign is the second order of meaning. The analysis of the selected images is presented in tabulated from under the titles of the chosen episodes.
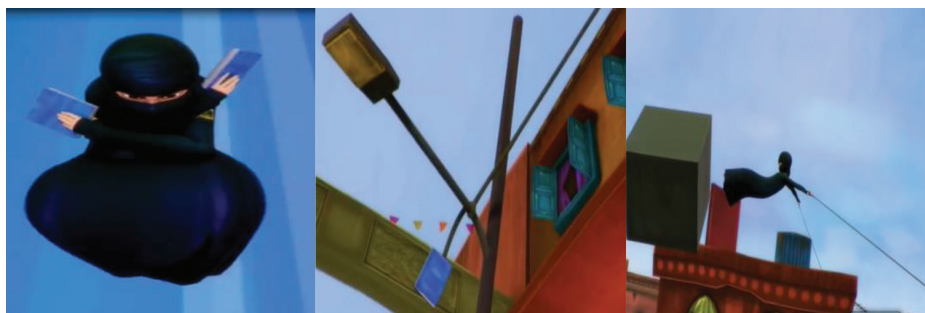
Burka Avenger vs. the Giant Slingshot Tank

| | Fig. 4.1.1 | Fig. 4.1.2 | Fig. 4.1.3 |

Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.1.1	Books	A girl wearing *burka* is holding closed books in her both hands.	The way she is holding books, shows that she is going to throw them to hit something. Here she is using books as a weapon to aim at.
	A girl in black burka (*Burka Avenger*)	*Burka Avenger* is in the air with her arms are crossed.	The posture of the body shows that she is jumping to hit while looking at her target and the crossed arms show her self-defensive or dominant behavior while attacking.
4.1.2	A book with a rope	A book is hanging on an electric pole with a rope.	The rope of the hanged book may be used to dive in the air as many superheroes are accustomed to do (by using ropes or their secret powers) in various animated cartoons these days.
4.1.3	*Burka Avenger* holding ropes in her both hands	With the help of ropes *Burka Avenger* is diving in the air to hit the giant slingshot tank.	The books can be hanged on electric poles and can provide enough support to dive to hit against something in the air. Further, it is not dangerous to go near an electric pole and use it as a support for drooping.

Girls' School is Shut

| | Fig. 4.2.1 | Fig. 4.2.2 |

| | Fig. 4.2.3 | Fig. 4.2.4 | Fig. 4.2.5 |

Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.2.1 4.2.2	Book	The book attached with rope, is tied around the leg of Tinda (one of the companions of the villain Baba Bandooq) that causes him to fall.	These images represent the misuse of power of book as this action cannot be performed in actual. Though the hidden meaning could be that knowledge gained by books can hinder the way of evils if used positively, yet the difference of what is shown and what is hidden is almost impossible for kids to perceive.
4.2.3	Pen	*Burka Avenger* is holding a pen in her hand and the gesture shows that she is going to throw it with anger in her eyes.	The pen can be used as a tool to point at something for showing aggression or for devastation.
4.2.4 4.2.5	Pen and a broken lock	The pen is aimed at the lock of the gate which breaks it.	The pen can be used like a hammer or an arrow for breaking it. The power of pen is misrepresented here as it is not possible to use the tip of pen like an arrow or blade. It depicts the violent use of power of pen.

***Burka Avenger* vs. Discrimination**

Fig. 4.3.1   Fig. 4.3.2

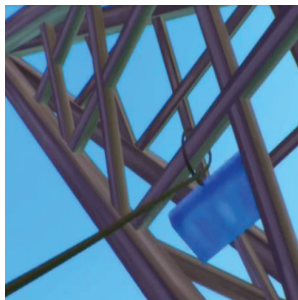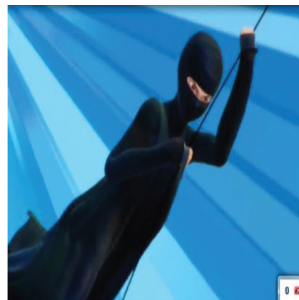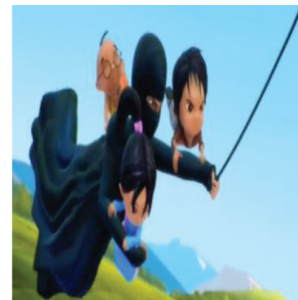| Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.3.1 4.3.2	Pens	*Burka Avenger* throws pens in the air focusing on her target.	The pen can be used as a physical weapon to point at the target and to destroy it. It can be thrown like an archer shoots arrow with a bow, or a shooter fires bullets with a gun.

Kite Flying Festival Attacked

Fig. 4.4.1   Fig. 4.4.2   Fig. 4.4.3
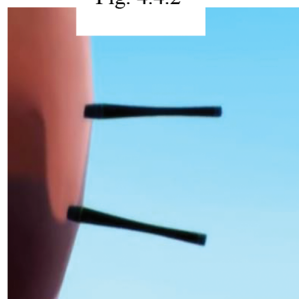
Fig. 4.4.4   Fig. 4.4.5   Fig. 4.4.6

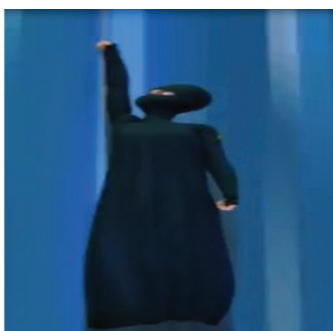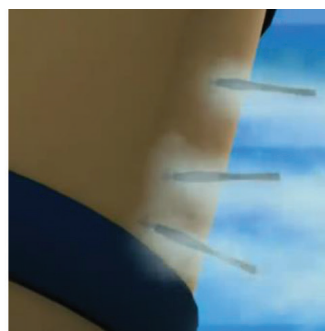| Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.4.1 4.4.2 4.4.3	Book attached with a rope	*Burka Avenger* ties the book attached to a rope, with a tower. She then hangs with the cord and flies in the air to save kids from falling down.	In real situations, where it is not possible to help people through land transportation as in case of floods and earthquakes etc., this action is done by suspending with rope attached to a helicopter. So, again the misuse of the power of book is publicized here as a book fixed with a support cannot provide enough strength to hang and fly in the air.
4.4.4 4.4.5 4.4.6	Pens	*Burka Avenger* uses pens to deflate the air-balloon of Baba Bandooq and to destroy his flamethrower.	Instead of nails, the nib of pen can be used to puncture something. It is also possible to destroy the weapons with the help of pen rather than the use of anti-weapon technology.

Traffic Rules

Fig. 4.5.1

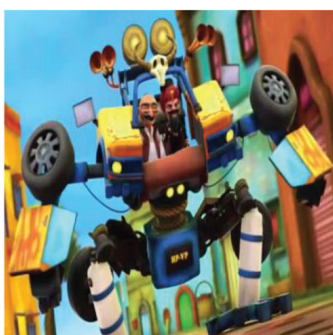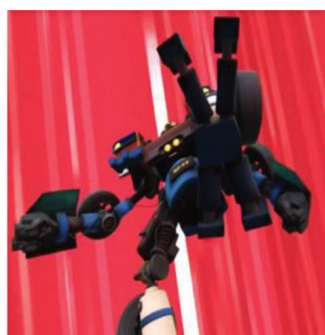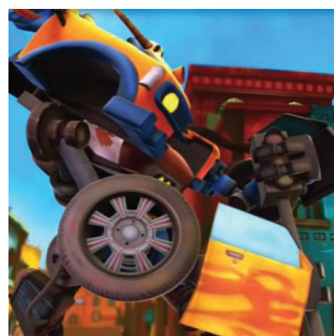Fig. 4.5.2

Fig. 4.5.3

Fig. 4.5.4

Fig. 4.5.5

Fig. 4.5.6

Fig. 4.5.7

Fig. 4.5.8

Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.5.1 4.5.2	Book	*Burka Avenger* ties the book attached to a rope, with an electric pole. Then, she flies up in the air by holding that rope.	The traditional concept of book (it is a mean of gaining knowledge) is manipulated here by using its power in physical form to hang and fly in the air.
4.5.3	Pen	The pens are penetrated in the tire to puncture it.	The tip of a pen can be used in place of nail or other pointed tools, to deflate the tires and to damage air filled things.
4.5.4	Wheel	*Burka Avenger* is hit by a tire which causes her to lose her balance while flying in the air.	The tire which is simply a mean of providing support to vehicles and other machinery for efficient working. But this image demonstrates its violent application as it is used to hit and harm a person physically.
4.5.5	Robotic Pajero	There is a huge robot named as Robotic Pajero in this cartoon series, which Baba Bandooq and Vadero Pajero are controlling.	It gives an idea to the viewers about the use of modern technology in the world.
4.5.6 4.5.7 4.5.8	Robotic Pajero	These images depict the aggressive behavior of the robot and the destruction which he does in his anger, following the instructions of evil Baba Bandooq.	The latest technology is used for destructive purposes most of the times in *Burka Avenger* so it may be inferred that advancement in science and technology is more for the devastation rather than construction, of human beings and this world. The actions of the robot show his dominance over the human beings who are unable to stop him from evil deeds.

Robo Cow

Fig. 4.6.1   Fig. 4.6.2   Fig. 4.6.3

Fig. 4.6.4   Fig. 4.6.5

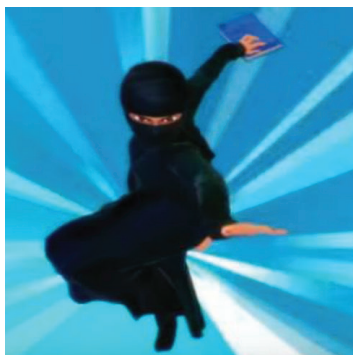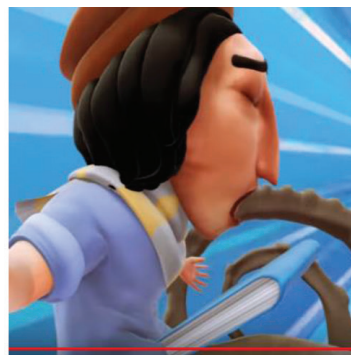| Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.6.1	Book	*Burka Avenger* ties the book attached to a rope around a tree and flies in the air by holding that rope.	The traditional concept of book (it is a mean of gaining knowledge) is manipulated here by using its power in physical form to hang and fly in the air.
4.6.2 4.6.3	Robot-cow	The appearance of robot-cow is presented. Robot-cow is attacking in anger.	A robot is used for negative purposes like to attack and to produce unhealthy food.
4.6.4 4.6.5	A bottle full of milk	The bottle full of milk is used as a bomb or bullet to attack on *Burka Avenger*, by the robot-cow.	The use of bottle of milk as a weapon contradicts the traditional concept i.e, milk is used to drink and a bottle is used to carry any liquid. The use of bottle to attack a person is an example of violent content.

Markhor in Danger

Fig. 4.7.1   Fig. 4.7.2   Fig. 4.7.3

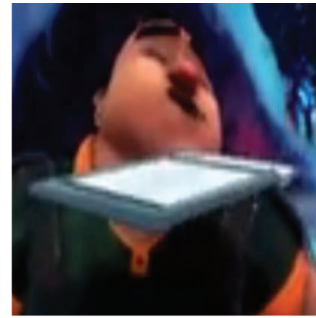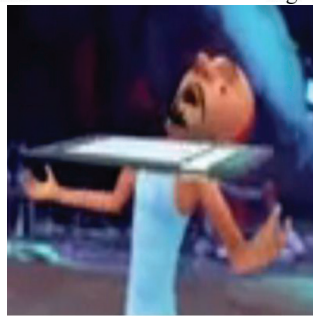| Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.7.1 4.7.2	Book	*Burka Avenger* throws the book at one of the companions of Baba Bandook.	The book can be used as an object to hit someone which is opposed to the status given to a book in Pakistani society.
4.7.3	A bright-colored rickshaw	Baba Bandook is sitting in a rickshaw with the guns connected to it.	Rickshaw which is a simple mean of transport can be used as a gunship helicopter. It demonstrates that simple and daily useable objects can work as tools to hit and destroy one's surroundings.

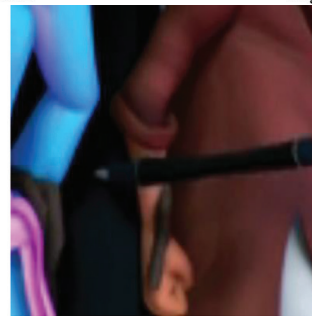## Books on the Bonfire

| Fig. 4.8.1 | Fig. 4.8.2 | Fig. 4.8.3 |

| Fig. 4.8.4 | Fig. 4.8.5 |

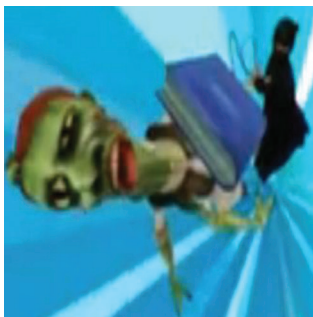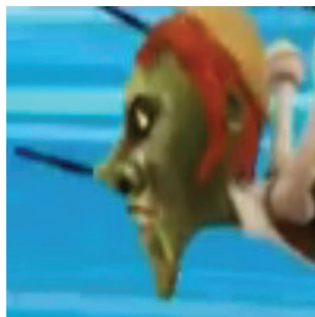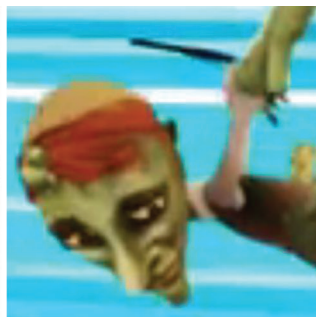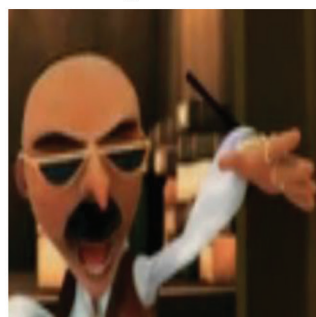| Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.8.1	Electronic book(E-book)	*Burka Avenger* has an e-book in her hand n introduces it by saying that this is the age of technology. Even if books are burnt, the spread of knowledge cannot be stopped.	Introduction of modern technology to children which is a positive aspect of this cartoon series.
4.8.2 4.8.3 4.8.4	E-book	E-book is thrown by *Burka Avenger* to beat the villains.	Immediately after introducing e-book, she hit the villains with it which can influence the children's thinking about the utility of e-book.
4.8.5	Pen	*Burka Avenger* uses pen to cut the rope with which children are tied to the tree.	The rope can be cut with the help of scissors, knife and axe. The use of pen for this action may direct children's attention about the real function of a pen.

Protecting the Environment

| Fig. 4.9.1 | Fig. 4.9.2 | Fig. 4.9.3 |

Fig. 4.9.4

Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.9.1	Book	*Burka Avenger* throws the book towards the mutated peon to stop him from running away.	The power of book is misrepresented.
4.9.2 4.9.3	Pen	The pens are penetrated into the head, nose and arm of the mutated peon.	Pen can also be used like an arrow and knife to hit a person.
4.9.4	Pen	*Burka Avenger* stops Vadero Pajero from escaping by fixing his sleeve on a pillar with the help of the pen.	Pen can be used instead of rope to tie a person with something.

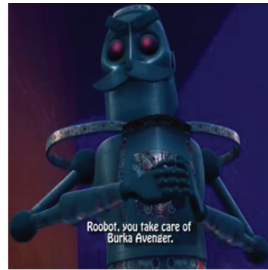## *Burka Avenger's* Fight Against Polio
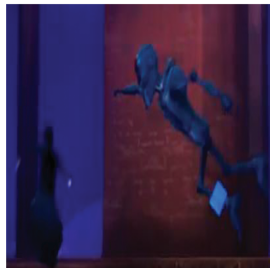

Fig. 4.10.1

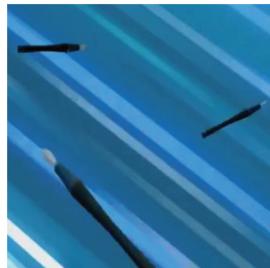Fig. 4.10.2

Fig. 4.10.3

Fig. 4.10.4

Fig. 4.10.5

Fig. 4.10.6

Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.10.1 4.10.2 4.10.3	Robot	The robot is liable of harmful activities like stealing, threatening the kid and chasing *Burka Avenger.*	Robots or artificial intelligence can be used in negative ways and for destruction only.
4.10.4	Book	Book is tied to the leg of the robot that stops him from following *Burka Avenger.*	Misuse of the power of book.
4.10.5 4.10.6	Pens	*Burka Avenger* throws pens to puncture the air-balloon of Baba Bandook.	Pen can be used to deflate anything like a pointed tool.

Mand Control

Fig. 4.11.1

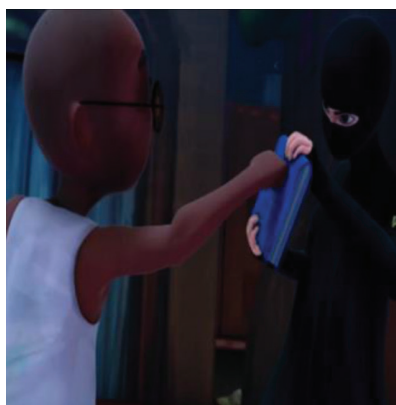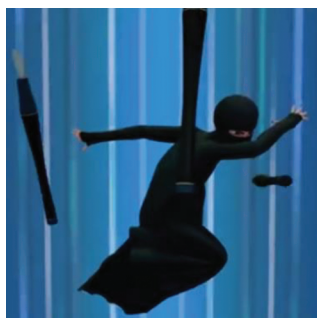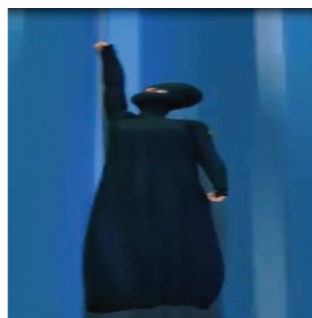| Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.11.1	Book	*Burka Avenger* uses a book to save herself from the punch of the man.	A book can be used as a shield for one's defense against physical assault.

Fake Books

Fig. 4.12.1   Fig. 4.12.2   Fig. 4.12.3
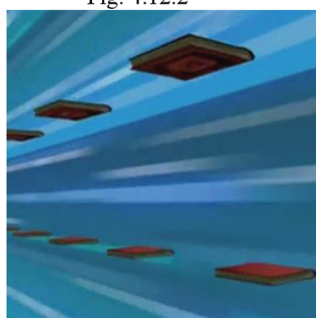
Fig. 4.12.4   Fig. 4.12.5   Fig. 4.12.6

Fig.no	Sign	Denotation	Connotation
4.12.1	Pens	*Burka Avenger* throws the pens to hit the robot.	Pen can be used like a weapon to hit at something.
4.12.2 4.12.3	Book	*Burka Avenger* uses the book to fly in the air.	Book can be used like a magical flying carpet which helps in flying in the air.
4.12.4 4.12.5	Robot	Robot is used in a negative way to attack *Burka Avenger* by firing books at her.	Books can be fired like bullets of the gun or cannon balls to hit the target.
4.12.6	Books	The robot is buried under a pile of books.	Misuse of the power of books. Books can be used for physical attack.

The above analysis of different images of Pakistani animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger* clearly depicts the harmful use of book, pen and scientific technology. Children are affected by such actions unconsciously because the destructive effects of the cartoons are not understood by them. Odukomaiya (2014) reviewed Kellner (1995), who asserted that cartoons serve as a means of entertainment and at the same time mislead children about the real life. Media entertainment plays a significant role in the domination of children's identity, socialization, attitude, style and behavior.

Application of Three-dimensional Model of CDA by Fairclough (1995)

The second and third dimensions of Fairclough's model which are discursive and social practices are applied here for identifying and explaining the power relationships behind the selected visuals.

i. Second dimension: processing analysis—Interpretation

The second dimension of the Fairclough's model focuses on the production and reception processes of the images of animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger* in a specific social and cultural background. In this dimension, two kinds of context are described below regarding the selected visuals.

a) Situational context

As this type of context discusses the time and place of the text construction, so it involves three elements specifically when the text is in the form of visual:

- **Agent** is the entity whose message the product represents, which in this discourse is the "Unicorn Black".
- **Scripter** is the being that devises the structure or substance of the message. With regards to the discourse under debate, the screenwriter would be the designers who are Aaron Haroon Rasheed, Arslan Naseer, Adi Abdurab, Ghania Ejaz and Ahmer Naqvi.
- **Actor/character** is the entity who actually conveys the message, such as the "Burka Avenger and Baba Bandook (two main characters)" in this Pakistani animated cartoon series.

Discussing about the production time of this animated series is concerned, the first episode of this animated cartoon series was on-aired on July 28, 2013 while the last episode was showed on January 13, 2016.

b) Intertextual context

The intertextual perspective emphasizes the association of discourse to its originators and the recipients.

The Relationship of Product and Producer

It is important to throw light on Aaron Haroon Rasheed, the director and the producer of *Burka Avenger,* to recognize the connection of product to its producer. He has been leading 'Unicorn Black' a company that works on a wide range of innovative production and tech projects. It endeavors to merge education with entertainment through its productions to empower, engage and instigate viewers. These consist of animated videos that promote patience and harmony in society and Public Service Messages (PSM) to instruct young people and the objective of this animated series (*Burka Avenger*) is to spread awareness about justice, peace and education for all.

Product-recipient Relationship

As the children are the target viewers or receivers here so their connection to the product can be illustrated in terms of their intention of watching it. The target audience in this discussion, children, do not watch cartoons for any specific purpose. They are just attracted by the color, music, background and graphic images displayed by the media.

Fairclough asserts that the situational agent who is engaged in some discursive practice indicates the 'power in discourse' for the reason that it reflects on the background or the existing conditions in which the discourse works. Thus, in the selected images all those diverse scenarios that are displayed, are considered as situational agents, for example locale of daily life in a Pakistani village, the world of music and imaginary setting (e.g, changing role from a female teacher to *Burka Avenger*, flying in the air and physical use of book and pen's power).

ii. **Third dimension: social analysis (rationalization)**

As pointed out in the theoretical frame the third element of the Fairclough's model mentions the organizations, communal bodies and norms of a culture that rule the production practice of text. In the images that are analyzed, these social activities or aspects behind the discourse may be lined up as:

*   Production company–Unicorn Black
*   Animated cartoon series– *Burka Avenger*
*   Context– Pakistani village
*   The promotion of justice, peace and education for all
*   *Burka Avenger* and Baba Bandooq occupy the dominant socio-cultural roles

While talking about power behind the discourse, it is necessary to consider the social institutions that operate at the rear to structure and to direct the relations of power in discourse or visuals. These social organizations are entitled as 'institutional and societal agents' by Fairclough, which construct a bit of discourse work in the social order (Baig, 2012). Social and institutional mediators work as power at the back of discourse by stimulating the processes of creation and reception of the text. All social groups and organizations, the customs and standards that administer the role of power at the rear of the discourse may work as such agents. In this animated series, the power behind the discourse is being applied by Unicorn Black, media, animated cartoons, culture (music and colorful settings), politics (revolution) and religion.

DISCUSSION

The semiotic analysis of different images, taken from the twelve episodes of Pakistani animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger,* demonstrates difference in their denotative and connotative meanings. Most of the times in this cartoon series, the book and the pen are used to function in the same way as can be performed by knife, arrow, gun and other weapons. This depicts the misuse of power of the book and the pen which may develop violent behavior in the children. Because before seven years of age, it is a tricky task for the children to decide about what should be imitated from television as the division between the real world and the imagination takes place only after this time period. Children of the age group seven to eleven think that the programs of children are humorous and appropriate for their imaginary world (Dogan & Goker, 2012). Also, a person cannot be completely protected from the effects of violence in the media. It should not be ignored that the extent of aggression a child is exposed to, together with family conditions at the developmental age, determine the effect of violence on children (Turkmen, 2016). Barry (2002) states, there are more than 2000 studies which relate media violence with increasing aggressive activities and behavior in the developing generation. Although violence is a multifaceted behavior caused by several factors, yet media has a significant function in legitimizing violent behavior by glamorizing it as a pleasing activity.

Barthes believed that the connotation effectively hides the denotation. Thus, the ideological meaning attributed to something actually dominates the denotative meaning of the thing itself. As in this research the representation of book and pen as a weapon may destroy the concept of power traditionally attached with them, in the children's mind. Because according to Barthes mass media uses connotation as a primary way of communicating ideological meanings (Seiter, 2013).

Moreover, the use of scientific technology like robot, rickshaw as gunship helicopter and the use of air balloon, is presented negatively most of the times which may illustrate only the disadvantages of scientific inventions to the developing minds, because messages conveyed through cartoons, both directly and indirectly, play a crucial role in a child's developmental process. According to Stocchetti and Kukkonen (2011), the contents of visual communication are neither irrelevant in a social context nor unbiased politically. Visual communication either sustains the prevailing set of values or challenges it. Values are transferred to the receiver by making choices about what is presented or left out in the image and in what way it is presented. Visual illustration can be a powerful tool for creating a new or for shaping actuality in the imagination of the perceiver.

The negative content for children intentional or badly managed could direct a child to distrust his raising, his ca-

pabilities, his beliefs and the lifestyle that he has grown-up along with. David Satchev (a US surgeon general) reported on teenager violence in 2000, said that watching violent contents on TV frequently, cause more aggressive behavior in young children (Rai, 2017). Thus, it can be said that animated cartoon as an audiovisual media text, while remaining an effective means of solving noble tasks of raising a child, is now becoming an instrument for manipulating children's consciousness.

Though, *Burka Avenger* is a good source of acquainting the children with the Pakistani culture and issues in Pakistani society, yet the violent use of pen and book can incite the aggressive behavior in children. Where animated cartoons may assist language acquisition and development of cognitive skills in children (Ghilzai, 2017), there they are also a vital mean of politicizing and manipulating any ideology in the way, the producer wants. Any aspect of these cartoons, which is used to reinforce and reproduce certain ideologies, should be considered a serious threat. Because the target audience is children, who are not mature enough to look at these cartoons with a critical eye and are unable to distinguish dreams from reality and from good to bad. These consequently create a large part of their world through what they observe and consider the characters together with their actions as their role models Thus it is very important to analyze the messages communicated by animated cartoons of children to avoid the negative changes in their behavior and viewpoint.

CONCLUSION

In today's world nobody can challenge the view that the spheres of power struggle, power sustainer and media are closely mingled. As stated earlier in this research, the actual role of the media is to disseminate information on the current affairs which are attention-grabbing for the general public, to educate and entertain people and shape or reshape the identities of young people. However, with the rise of capitalism everything within society including media has turned into an instrument to mount up profit and capital. Thus, the media sphere has lost its elucidative role and has turned out to be a market of gaining revenue. As a result, the media began to serve the dominant ideology to survive in harsh market conditions. Meanwhile, powerful social and institutional agents strive to put the media on their side to spread their view of the world to the public through the media's ability to simultaneously reach thousands or billions of people. Although this situation is contrary to one of the guiding aspects of the media, freedom of expression, yet it is widely practiced specifically in case of media contents for the children. The current research work coped with the semiotic examination of the images taken from Pakistani animated cartoon series *Burka Avenger*. Norman Fairclough's CDA approach was also applied to find about the power groups actually working behind. No doubt, *Burka Avenger* is a marvellous effort to bring into light the issues like racial differences, women empowerment, equal right and education for all in Pakistani society,

yet it does manipulate the power of pen, book and modern scientific inventions which may affect the minds of the nurturing generation negatively.

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