

**PERPETRATORS ARE NOT TOTEMIC!: AN  
ANALYSIS OF THE ‘MALEFACTORS’ FROM *THE  
RUNAWAYS* BY FATIMA BHUTTO AND *IN THE  
COMPANY OF STRANGERS* BY AWAIS KHAN**

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**by Awais Khan**

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## THESIS AND DEFENSE APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read the following thesis, examined the defense, are satisfied with the overall exam performance, and recommend the thesis to the Faculty of Arts & Humanities for acceptance.

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## ABSTRACT

**Title: Perpetrators are not Totemic!: An Analysis of ‘Malefactors’ from *The Runaways* by Fatima Bhutto and *In the Company of Strangers* by Awais Khan**

Perpetrator pertains to an individual or group accountable for perpetrating acts of violence or harm, propelled by resolute ideological convictions. An act of perpetration denotes the actual violent action or offense carried out by the perpetrator, guided by their extremist beliefs or motivations. Dana K. Nelkin's and Michael Mann's ideas on Moral Responsibility and Ideological Killers have been diverse concepts evident in the selected Pakistani literary texts. Grounded in perpetrator studies, this research aims to qualitatively analyze how the perpetrator and the act of perpetration in Pakistani fiction are different from or similar to the selected perpetrator typologies (Moral Responsibility and Ideological Killers) set forth by the theorists in the global north. Furthermore, it seeks to explore how a perpetrator cannot be held responsible wholly for his action without considering the reasons behind his perpetration. The present study concludes that political, psychological, personal, social, and ideological reasons lead the perpetrators toward an act of perpetration. The comprehensive research validates that the perpetrator typologies set forth by the theorists in the global north are ubiquitous. The study, likewise, discovered how a culprit could not be held accountable entirely for his perpetration without being mindful of the factors involved, as those reasons appear to be tenacious. Social, political, ideological, personal, and psychological problems impel people to drift apart from the laws and act vilely. Hence, considering people erroneous and imposing sanctions on them for something unchangeable is not apt precisely if the contributory reasons are psychological. Understanding perpetrator psychology and the complexities surrounding acts of perpetration is crucial to unraveling the mysteries of violent behaviors within specific contexts and ideological frameworks.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research thesis is a heartfelt tribute to my dearest father, the unsung hero who defied conventional norms and fueled my dreams with boundless support. In the tapestry of challenges and triumphs, his unwavering dedication is the guiding force behind this endeavor. As I reflect on my journey, I extend my heartfelt wish to every aspiring individual, especially young girls, that they may also be blessed with such a pillar of strength in their pursuit of dreams. May your path to success be adorned with the same unwavering encouragement and love I have received.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Specifically focusing on the similarities and differences between the typologies put forth by theorists in the global north, Dana Kay Nelkin and Michael Mann, the researcher sought to identify the factors and grounds that motivate protagonists and antagonists to commit crimes at the third, micro level of perpetration. Set models for offenders, such as Moral Responsibility and Ideological Killers, have been acknowledged as universal and thought to apply to perpetrators worldwide. The researcher has attempted to ascertain whether or not the culprits from the global south fit into these typologies. The researcher has used Michael Mann's concept of ideological killers and Dana Kay Nelkin's moral responsibility concept under the pretext of perpetrator analysis.

The perpetrators have always been viewed as totems and villains without considering the circumstances. There has been a significant increase in studies investigating and evaluating the perpetrator's narrative over the past few decades, marking a new trend. An act of perpetration can never be justified. However, it is past due for us to recognize that we must hate the perpetration rather than the perpetrator. Second, there are reasons for every crime, and we need to look into these reasons to classify them further and determine how much impact they have on the offender. The urgent question is whether a person can be considered a perpetrator if the reasons are psychological and political. If that's the case, shouldn't everyone involved in provoking and leading someone to commit a crime be referred to as a perpetrator?

In the context of the present study, 'Totemic' refers to the perception of perpetrators as symbols or agents of a certain ideology or group, often oversimplifying their motives and actions. When perpetrators are seen as totemic, they are reduced to mere signs of a larger cause without considering the complexities of their motivations and the factors that lead them to commit acts of perpetration. This stance can limit the interpretation of the underlying reasons behind their actions and overlook the personal agency and psychology of the perpetrators. 'Malefactors' refers to people who commit detrimental or criminal acts,

especially violence, harm, or wrongdoing. "Totemic" allows for the consideration of how individuals are perceived within a larger ideological or group context, while "malefactors" focuses on their individual responsibility. Ergo, Using "totemic" and "malefactors" reminds us to consider the interplay between collective ideologies and individual choices. In the present study, the researcher has analyzed the 'malefactors' from the novels "The Runaways" by Fatima Bhutto and "In the Company of Strangers" by Awais Khan, examining their actions, motives, and the contextual factors that contribute to their perpetration. Using the term 'malefactors' has enabled the researcher to focus on the individuals accountable for acts of perpetration rather than reducing them to mere symbols of an ideology.

Fatima Bhutto's novel *The Runaways* was published in 2018. The novel narrates the story of three adolescents from entirely different backgrounds and how they get themselves entrapped in odious crimes, ending up in Mosul, Iraq. Anita, Sunny, and Monty, the three runaways, represent and depict the obstacles people want to circumvent. The main characters' journeys serve as poignant portrayals of the deep and abiding loneliness that permeates their lives, ultimately propelling them towards embracing a 'sacred' war against the West. Bhutto intricately explores the emotional complexities of these characters, revealing their profound sense of alienation and isolation from the broader society. This alienation stems from various factors, such as societal marginalization, disconnection from their cultural roots, and personal traumas, which leave them yearning for a sense of belonging and purpose.

Alienation, as depicted in the novel, encompasses the feeling of being estranged from one's community and heritage, often resulting from social and cultural pressures that lead individuals to feel like outsiders in their surroundings. The characters' experiences of alienation are compounded by their sense of isolation, wherein they feel cut off from meaningful human connections and left to grapple with their inner struggles alone. This isolation deepens their vulnerability, making them more susceptible to the allure of extremist ideologies that promise camaraderie, identity, and a higher purpose through participation in a 'sacred' war. Through the characters' narratives, Bhutto delves into the multifaceted nature of alienation and isolation, highlighting how these profound emotions can drive individuals to seek solace and purpose in extreme ideologies. The novel

poignantly underscores the human desire for belonging and significance, revealing how the absence of these essential elements can lead people down dangerous paths in search of identity, acceptance, and meaning.

Asim Karim, in his article, states that “Fatima Bhutto, in her latest novel *The Runaways*, pulls down myths surrounding hijab and the piety of Muslim women in the West (47).” Through her characters' experiences and journeys, Bhutto deftly dismantles misconceptions, revealing the complexities and diversity of Muslim women's lives. By portraying her female characters' inner struggles, aspirations, and agency, she also dispels the notion of hijab as a one-dimensional symbol of oppression. Bhutto's subtle storytelling dismantles stereotypes, emphasizing the individuality and strength of Muslim women.

Awais Khan's 2019 novel, "*In the Company of Strangers*," offers a gripping exploration of the intricacies of Pakistani society, skillfully peeling back the layers of deception and hypocrisy. Through a masterful narrative, Khan delves into the stereotypes that plague the community, illuminating the facades upheld by its members. The novel's brilliant tapestry of characters exposes the reality behind Lahore's esteemed society, showcasing the struggles beneath the surface. As these characters navigate their inner dilemmas, they are compelled to challenge societal norms and expectations in their quest for personal happiness and truth.

One of the central characters, Ali, finds himself unwittingly entangled with a terrorist organization, grappling with the weight of his circumstances and the pursuit of reconciliation. Motivated to save his brother's life, Ali is driven to adopt morally ambiguous means of acquiring money. Mir Rabiullah, who initially extends a helping hand to Ali, later calls upon him to return the favor by engaging in illicit business ventures. This reveals the intricate web of choices and compromises that individuals like Ali face in their pursuit of survival and well-being.

Throughout the novel, Khan presents a compelling portrayal of individuals who defy traditional stereotypes and emerge as complex, multi-dimensional figures. The characters' journeys challenge the notion that perpetrators are inherently antagonistic, instead illustrating how circumstances and motivations shape their paths. Khan's storytelling magnificently captures the essence of Pakistani society, exposing its

vulnerabilities and shedding light on the transformative power of personal agency and resilience.

The novel is an enthralling tale that unravels the façade of Pakistani society, delving into the struggles and choices of its characters. The story powerfully challenges stereotypes and emphasizes the impact of circumstances on individuals' actions, demonstrating that perpetrators are not solely totemic figures but individuals molded by their environments and experiences. Literature is vital in illustrating the human condition and proposing insights into the multifaceted facets of human behavior. Literature offers a platform to analyze the complex interplay between individual agency, societal influences, and moral dilemmas by delving into characters' minds and actions. In this regard, perpetrator analysis in literature delves beyond traditional heroic constructs to explore the darker aspects of human nature, challenging conventional notions of protagonists and antagonists.

The choice to utilize these theoretical constructs emanating from criminal psychology and sociology in the literature analysis may initially seem exotic to the discipline of literary studies. However, it is essential to acknowledge that literature has always grappled with exploring human behavior, including acts of perpetration. By engaging with these theoretical frameworks, literature expands its purview beyond the traditional boundaries of storytelling and enters the realm of psychological and sociological inquiry. This interdisciplinary technique enhances our understanding of the intricacies of perpetration, bridging the gap between literary analysis and the study of human behavior.

Dana Kay Nelkin's concept of moral responsibility is an influential theoretical postulate within this research. Moral responsibility is a crucial aspect of ethical analysis, studying how individuals can be held accountable for their actions based on their understanding of right and wrong. In the context of literature, moral responsibility provides a lens through which the motivations and justifications of characters' criminal acts can be explored. The study aims to deepen our understanding of the moral complexities inherent in perpetration by analyzing the characters' choices and the ethical frameworks they employ.

Michael Mann's concept of ideological killers is another critical theoretical framework employed in this research. Ideological killers commit crimes driven by an

adherence to a particular ideology or belief system. In literature, this concept explores the underlying ideological motivations that lead characters to engage in criminal acts. By analyzing the ideological underpinnings of the character's actions, the study seeks to uncover how literature reflects and comments on societal and political ideologies.

The selected novels, Fatima Bhutto's *The Runaways* and Awaiz Khan's *In the Company of Strangers*, offer rich narratives that lend themselves to the examination of perpetration. Both texts present multiple perspectives and delve into the motivations and consequences of the characters' actions. *The Runaways* portrays the struggles of three adolescents from diverse backgrounds who are drawn into a world of criminality and ideological extremism. The novel challenges stereotypes and explores the complex motivations that drive individuals toward violent acts. *In the Company of Strangers* uncovers the secrets and hypocrisies of Pakistani society, presenting characters who navigate their inner struggles and are pushed to commit crimes due to their circumstances. These narratives provide fertile ground for analyzing the perpetrators' moral responsibility and ideological motivations.

By employing Nelkin's concept of moral responsibility and Mann's notion of ideological killers, this research aims to unravel the complexities of perpetration within the selected literary works. Through textual analysis, the study seeks to illuminate the reasons behind the characters' criminal acts, examining the moral dilemmas they face, the ideological influences that shape their choices, and the broader social implications of their actions. In doing so, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexities of perpetration within the context of literature, bridging the gap between disciplinary boundaries and enriching our comprehension of human behavior and societal dynamics.

The importance of these selected concepts in literature lies in their ability to provide a nuanced understanding of the complexities of perpetration and its representation in literary works. When the framework is drawn from criminal psychology and sociology, the analysis moves beyond traditional notions of heroism. It explores the darker aspects of human nature and allows for a more realistic and comprehensive portrayal of characters, as literature reflects the complexities of the human condition. By examining moral responsibility and ideological motivations, the research uncovers the underlying factors

that drive characters to commit crimes, ultimately offering insights into the broader socio-cultural and political dynamics.

The choice to employ concepts such as moral responsibility and ideological killers derived from criminal psychology and sociology make it an interdisciplinary approach that enriches the analysis of literary texts, enabling a deeper exploration of human behavior, moral complexities, and the impact of societal forces. By delving into the motivations, circumstances, and consequences of characters' actions, perpetrator analysis in literature provides a unique lens through which to understand the intricate interplay between individual agency, societal influences, and the construction of narrative worlds.

In the light of the concepts, moral responsibility by Dana Kay Nelkin, and Michael Mann's ideological killer, the researcher has conducted a qualitative analysis of Fatima Bhutto's *The Runaways* and *In the Company of Strangers* by Awais Khan to discover the reasons behind the perpetration of the perpetrators found. The texts mentioned above fulfill the requirement of the researcher's analysis as in both of the novels, multiple standpoints have been given. The stories have been revealed from the perspective of different characters. By exploring the motivations and justifications of the characters' criminal acts, the study aims to deepen our understanding of perpetration within the context of literature. This interdisciplinary approach bridges the gap between literary analysis and the study of human behavior, enriching our comprehension of the complexities of perpetration and its representation in literary works.

## **1.1 Thesis Statement**

The researcher has been seeking to analyze the reasons, causes, and factors behind perpetration on the micro-level and to see if the perpetrators described in the selected literary texts have been forced to take extreme steps. The researcher has tried to analyze how the different typologies set forth by the theorists in the global north are different from or similar to the perpetrators and the act of perpetration in Pakistani literary texts.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

The present study seeks to analyze how the perpetrator and the act of perpetration in Pakistani fiction are different from or similar to the perpetrator typologies set forth by the theorists in the global north. The study also aims at identifying political and psychological reasons that lead to committing an act of perpetration. Furthermore, it seeks to explore how a perpetrator cannot be held responsible wholly for his act without considering the reasons behind his perpetration.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

1. In what ways is the analysis of the perpetrator, and the act of perpetration in Pakistani literary texts different from or similar to, the perpetrator typologies set forth by the theorists in the global north?
2. How can political and psychological reasons lead to committing an act of perpetration as portrayed in the selected texts?
3. Keeping in view the selected fiction, in what ways can a perpetrator not be held accountable exclusively for his perpetration without considering the factors behind his perpetration?

## **1.4 Significance and Rationale of the Study**

The present research holds significant importance in understanding the multifaceted phenomenon of perpetration analysis, which has become the essence of selected contemporary Pakistani fiction. In delving into the motives and complexities underlying acts of perpetration, the study aims to develop a comprehensive anti-crime policy that can effectively prevent further crimes and their global proliferation. However, tackling such intricate issues necessitates adopting synthetic and interdisciplinary



approaches, urging a thorough exploration of the subject matter. Perpetrators often find themselves condemned without thoroughly understanding the factors that drive their actions. To talk about crime and insecurity more effectively, examining the backgrounds and circumstances that lead individuals to commit such acts is crucial.

On a micro level, discerning the reasons behind perpetration within literary works proves challenging, as the motivations are often veiled and multifaceted. Pakistani fiction serves as a rich repository of narratives that portray perpetrators grappling with their inner struggles, causes, and the social forces that compel them towards acts of violence. These depictions offer a fine portrayal of the human psyche and the complex interplay of individual agency and external influences, thus making perpetration an integral and inseparable element of selected contemporary Pakistani fiction. By analyzing these literary works, the research aims to assist readers in deciphering the underlying reasons behind acts of perpetration, which often remain obscured. This endeavor seeks to open pathways for in-depth analysis of the perpetrators and the acts themselves, fostering a deeper understanding of the character's motivations and actions.

Moreover, the study challenges and deconstructs myths and stereotypes commonly associated with Pakistan, particularly terrorism, lawlessness, undemocratic practices, and violent acts. Through a comprehensive exploration of perpetration within the context of Pakistani fiction, the research aims to present a more nuanced and empathetic portrayal of the nation and its people. By unearthing these narratives' human struggles and complexities, the study offers a fresh perspective that moves beyond generalizations, allowing for a more informed and objective appreciation of the nation's literary contributions.

Hence, the research into perpetration analysis within contemporary Pakistani fiction is a profound inquiry into the human condition, unraveling the half-soul of these narratives. By shedding light on the intricate motivations of perpetrators and their actions, this study aspires to enrich our understanding of literature and society, encouraging a deeper engagement with the complex realities underlying acts of perpetration in Pakistani fiction.

## **1.5 Delimitation**

The present research has been delimited to the contemporary Pakistani novels, *The Runaways* by Fatima Bhutto and *In the Company of Strangers* by Awais Khan. Under the umbrella term of Perpetrators' Analysis, Michael Mann's concept of Ideological Killers and Nelkin's view of Moral Responsibility have served as the theoretical underpinning for the research. The research has been conducted on the micro level.

## **1.6 Organization of Study**

The present study has been divided into five Chapters of opaque toil, reft into banners subaltern to them. Chapter one comprises the introduction of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, methodology, the significance of the research, its delimitations, and the organization of the study, which has portrayed the intrinsic tenor of this research to the readers. After the end of the first chapter, the researcher reviewed the previous work done on Perpetrator Analysis. Some other researchers have espied offbeat aspects of literature in Fatima Bhutto's *The Runaways* and Awais Khan's *In the Company of Strangers* in the second chapter of research. It has stood by this research work and shows how other researchers whose research has been published in time lost have applied their theories and analyses to this work of art. The third chapter, Research Design, deals with the theoretical framework and the research method the researcher has used in the thesis. It has let slipped Perpetrator Analysis be used in this research. The fourth chapter has the most implication, embracing solely the Data Analysis in which occurrences from the novels have been used. Conclusively, the last chapter of the researcher's work, Chapter five, consists of the conclusion drawn from this research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review section revolves around the review of the previous studies. The researcher has divided the literature review section into three parts: the complex relationship between the glorification of the perpetrators in the modern era, the point of view of the perpetrators themselves, and the classification of genociders, honor killers, and terrorists as perpetrators. While these three ideas may initially seem detached, a deeper analysis demonstrates a powerful nexus that ties them together. The glorification of perpetrators in the contemporary era highlights the unsettling sensation of society's fascination with and admiration for individuals involved in heinous acts. Media, popular culture, and social platforms often sensationalize and romanticize perpetrators' actions, inadvertently donating to their glorification. By analyzing this phenomenon, we can earn insights into the societal elements that contribute to the perpetuation of such glorification and the probable outcomes it may have on public perception and the criminal justice system.

#### **2.1 The Exaltation of Perpetrators in the Modern Epoch**

In the article, “*Introductory Reflections on Perpetrators of Crimes Against Humanity and their Representation in Documentary Film*”, Fernando Canet talks about the novelty of the perpetrator tale deceits in the transferal viewpoints. The perpetrators are their heroes now, instead of the person who faced atrocities. Numerous documentaries have been released in the first two decades of the century in which the focus lies on the perpetrator's viewpoint. The research paper analyzes how perpetrators are presented worldwide in recent documentary films—viewing the previous studies and diverse approaches to sightsee perpetrators' convoluted and delineating the distinct concern by introducing this preliminary article along with the nine types of research that contour the particular

problems are the report's objectives. The researcher argues that perpetrator studies should not just focus on the monstrous actions and the causes behindhand, but how they have been dealt with in the present time by the perpetrator should also be addressed. It means the time frame that talks about the pedigrees to the repercussion of the problem “is another feature that should define the study of the perpetrator, including the reasons/justifications, the context or dynamics of the acts perpetrated and their consequences, how the perpetrators resolve their possible cognitive dissonance and, finally, how they continue dealing with their acts in the present (167).” Contrarily, a person can act and retort in identical circumstances. The researcher’s primary focus lies in how the perpetrators deal with the factors behind their perpetration. However, it does not matter how they deal with them after committing a crime. What matters is how these factors have pushed them to do perpetration.

In the study, “*Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection?*” Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Malec̃kova ruminate sources of terrorism as feeling of disgrace, indignity and exasperation tutored in political milieus that are oppressive and repressive. They propose that rather than considering terrorism an unswerving reaction to the lack of opportunities, it should be viewed precisely as a retort “to political conditions and long-standing feelings of indignity and frustration that have little to do with economics (119).” They hold that a parallel link cannot be created between less education or poverty and terrorism even though it seems like terrorism is affiliated meticulously to crime. I disagree with the researchers because social justice is the basic need of human society. If a person’s basic needs are not fulfilled because of poverty, how is he supposed to stay sane? On any level, be it micro or macro, one factor, lack of opportunities can never be overlooked.

Asfandyar Shah, Dr. Humaira Riaz, Umar Sajjad, and Sajjad Ahmad conducted qualitative research ‘*Irreversible Damage to Psyche*’: *Representation of Trauma in Fatima Bhutto’s Narratives* by using theory of trauma by Caruth. They hold that trauma is crucial part of Freudian psychoanalysis. Trauma impacts the psyche and mentality of individuals throughout their life. Focusing on Fatima Bhutto’s narratives the researchers analyze literary depiction of trauma. The theory aids to comprehend the trauma depiction as permanent and irretrievable destruction to psyche of the characters. Traumatizing experiences of character of the novel *The Runaways* are the fetal reason. Such as, Anita’s

school environment and disappearance of Layla for Monty are the memories that leave a permanent mark on their lives. These reasons behind their suffering, pain and trauma are linked to socio-psychological circumstances of the characters. It is the society that coerces individuals to take steps. “One thing is common in all these characters that all of these characters runaway due to their personal problems and sorrows (1364).” The story represents fictional characters in a way that their own experiences and sufferings lead them to war and the factors like terror attacks, death, loss of loved ones and raw memories are the reasons of trauma.

## 2.2 The Epistemology of Perpetrators

Browning, in 1992, conducted influential research about direct perpetrators. He ‘laid the cornerstone for a micro-turn in the study of mass violence and genocide’ (1). Browning’s research revolves around 500 Nazi Reserve Police Battalion 101 members. The term ‘ordinary men’ was introduced by him, which, at that time, was used by the lecturers to denote this level of perpetrators frequently. He has also raised the emblematic query: ‘If the men of Reserve Police Battalion 101 could become killers under such circumstances, what group of men cannot?’ (189) These two acumens summon us to consider the perpetrator, not as an evil monster. Instead, we should consider them humans and individuals who can retort and act preposterously under such situations. This opinion accentuates the significance of concentrating on the conditions and circumstances along with the subjects and the acts that led them to become perpetrators. It is worth underscoring that the attention of this concern falls into the category in which massacre is practiced under scarce circumstances. Consequently, Waller holds the societal milieu ‘must be addressed if we hope to shed additional light on the actions of ordinary citizens . . . (9-10)’. Waller’s point about the societal milieu is significant if we look at their reflex actions. The societal milieu is categorized predominantly by ethical background administered by a state that not just sanctions but emboldens and rationalizes delinquencies against the ‘*Other*.’ Such dominant situational dynamics allow the perpetrators to justify themselves and circumvent the question of their discrete agency. It is necessary to consider the perpetrator’s point of view as important as the victim’s viewpoint.

Fernando Canet, in his study, “*Documenting atrocities around the world: Why engage with the perpetrators?*” holds that many documentaries have been released carrying the theme of human rights violation since the first decade of the century. Many issues have been reported at the start of the same decade. Primarily, the victim's standpoint is projected, but a new trend also deals with Perpetrator's viewpoint. Fernando Canet, seeks possible answers to a fundamental question, "Why to engage with the perpetrators?" although it is apparent that engaging in Perpetrator's perspective can be complicated. Canet's article sightsees five documentaries and the reflection of filmmakers on their rendezvous with perpetrators. It analyses literature on this issue and some researchers and lectors' divisive responses to these films. He postulates a theory endorsing that “the 4Rs (remembrance, recognition, remorse, and redemption) are necessary steps toward the fifth and final R (806).” The researcher concluded his argument by claiming that the perpetrators partaking is needed “because they are protagonist of the 4Rs (817).” For a distributed society to solve its problems and to achieve peace shortly, the perpetrator’s involvement is indispensable.

In an article, “*Analysing the Intersection of Marxist and Postcolonial Paradigms in Selected Pakistani English Fiction*” by Asim Karim a link between Marxism and postcolonial archetypes is explored in selected Pakistani texts. This paper confers class differences and ideological state apparatuses and invokes discussion on Marxism. The researcher has mentioned that states like Pakistan are divided into haves and have-nots. About *The Runaways* the researcher holds that “Fatima Bhutto’s *The Runaways* realistically sketches the life and impoverished conditions of the people living in such mega cities as Karachi (85).” Institutes run by the state are also tend more towards oppression of the subalterns and marginalized rather than supporting them.

In the study, *Muslim Author Response to 9/11 Fiction*, Kim Worthington and Somayyeh Ghaffari mention that after 9/11, many novels have been written and they represent stereotypical image of Muslims which leads to Islamophobia. Muslim writers, living abroad have started responding to them by writing their own version and emphasizing on radicalized heroes. Although these texts do not glorify terrorism and crime, they provide the other side of the picture. Notably, these narratives highlight constant discernment, the hectic lives of immigrants and its damaging effects. The writers hold that in the novel *The Runaways*, Fatima Bhutto discovers the reasons of people behind joining

the war against the West. The writers have also mentioned one of her interviews in which she was asked: “Your characters are all young and feel alienation in different ways, so they dice with extremism. Was it important to you to humanise them?” She answers that her job as a novelist is to observe and portray people and not to indict them. She goes on to say that people, wherever they are and whoever they are, want to belong, to be respected, to be loved and cared for (29).” She claims that when masses are not provided a vision for their impending life, they feel left out and start finding their vision elsewhere.

### **2.3 Perpetrators, Genociders, Honor Killers, and Maleficent Insurgents**

This literature review section seeks to elucidate the nexus that connects genociders, honor killers, and terrorists as perpetrators. By classifying them under this standard label, we recognize their shared role in executing heinous acts that impose extreme physical, psychological, and societal damage. Despite their different reasons and contexts, these groups converge as agents of brutality, necessitating a thorough study to discover the underlying affinities.

Exploring the nexus permits us to disclose the interplay of diverse elements that contribute to the emergence and persistence of these acts. Although genocidal acts, honor killings, and terrorism may emerge from various circumstances, they often share extremist ideologies, contorted beliefs, and unconcern for human life. Identifying these typical ideological foundations provide beneficial insights into the mechanisms that stimulate and sustain perpetration across different contexts.

Furthermore, comprehending the nexus sheds light on the societal and systemic elements that contribute to their presence. We can determine systemic deficiencies, societal vulnerabilities, and structural constraints that inadvertently foster or perpetuate violence by dissecting broader subjects such as cultural practices, historical events, economic discrepancies, and political turmoil.

This comprehensive strategy stresses the need for a multidisciplinary approach to address these issues effectively. It accentuates the significance of comprehensive

interventions that tackle violence's root causes, boosts education, foster inclusivity, strengthen social cohesion, and address the underlying resentments that push individuals toward extremist ideologies and violent acts.

By establishing the nexus between genociders, honor killers, terrorists, and the broader concept of perpetrators, we can provide a comprehensive framework to understand the complexities enveloping these acts of violence. This holistic knowledge facilitates us to develop targeted policies, interventions, and initiatives that address the underlying causes and seek to deter and eradicate such violence from society.

According to the study, *“Perpetrators’ Knowledge: What and How Can We Learn from Perpetrator Testimony?”* testimony is an essential practice to carry out or to institutionalize awareness. It is not just a source of proof but a significant foundation that has a unique role to play in the jurisdiction, tradition of culture, religion, and historiography. The present study discriminates between witnesses: “the eyewitness” and “the victim or survivor witness.” The character or the perpetrator himself as evidence is missing in this binary opposition. Sibylle Schmidt, in his paper, holds that “Nowadays one can observe how the act of testifying and confessing has become an essential part of the perpetration itself (88).” This study aims to bridge that gap left by the absence of the perpetrator as evidence. It seeks to sightsee the precise interpretation and ethical issues that appear while dealing with perpetrators’ records. I agree with the researcher’s point. The perpetrator is also evidence, just like the victim. He has also observed the act of perpetration, so his presence is needed to explore this field.

In the study, *‘Who Was I to Stop the Killing?’: Moral Neutralization among Rwandan Genocide Perpetrators*, Kjell Anderson proposes that on both levels, i.e., individual and collective, Genocide is a brutal act of violence. Sketching from specific neutralization techniques in violence and Genocide, people pursue to restructure their partaking. These techniques can be motives’ vocabularies to simplify the norm destruction and justification of violence after it is committed. The researcher has utilized the moral neutralization theory of Gresham Sykes and David Matza to examine moral neutralization. The author has interviewed sixty-eight Rwandan Genocide perpetrators, and their excerpts are used to support each technique. The research holds that the perpetrators use moral



neutralization to legitimize with concomitant regulating apprehensions and assumptions to conserve their image as moral human beings. According to the author, “Moral neutralization, therefore, facilitates perpetrator alignment with the dominant moral system both during and after genocide (61).” However, violence is never justified. We cannot abandon the perpetrator's viewpoint by thinking it will provide them a chance to explain their perpetration. We need to think rationally and logically while dealing with perpetrators, and we must not snatch freedom of speech from them as they are also evidence of the crime. Sibylle Schmidt's in the study above, considered perpetrators the evidence, as well.

The study, “*Agency, Responsibility, and Culpability: The Complexity of Roles and Self-representations of Perpetrators,*” claims that during the genocide, perpetrators’ agency was highly questionable and momentous to deal with before, after, and end of the issue. In this scenario, ascribed roles, i.e., perpetrators, eyewitnesses, and preys, are employed to restrict accountability and innocence. This meek and unequivocal classification contradicts the intricacy of the position that individuals can enlist their activities amid destruction and mass murder. Although it is easy to categorize them as perpetrators, victims, or rescuers, they can fit in their more nuanced positions fittingly amongst these sets. The researcher holds that many perpetrators, during interviews, argued, “They had no agency during the Khmer Rouge regime; they invoke this in order to avoid the label of the perpetrator and to claim victimhood (40).” The study analyses numerous acts of the lower-level Khmer Rouge cadres and explores how they epitomize these acts. It discerns numerous tactics they adapt to rationalize these self-images. These acts and self-representation echo the impression of agency of lower-grade perpetrators in the scenario of despotic genocidal rule. They pretend to be sufferers primarily and seldom as the culprits and perpetrators.

Sara E. Brown's study, *'They Forgot Their Role': Women Perpetrators of the Holocaust and the Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda*, provides a proportional and insightful analysis of women's roles in these horrific events. By foregrounding the experiences of women perpetrators, Brown's research sheds light on the ways and reasons behind their involvement in genocide, despite operating within intensely patriarchal structures in 1994 Rwanda and Nazi Germany. “Women perpetrators like Liselotte and Suzanne played central roles during the Holocaust and the genocide in Rwanda, albeit

within the context of a deeply entrenched patriarchal system that constrained women (166).” The study examines how tranquility in patriarchal command opened gates for women's input in perpetration, as societal norms constrained and impacted their actions. Gendered indulgences regarding women culprits also played a role in their post-genocide trajectories as they grappled with hushed involvement and inconspicuousness in the grand narrative.

The researcher holds, “the mobilization, actions, and post-genocide trajectories of women perpetrators, comparing it to women rescuers who chose to take action to the benefit of their community, rather than to its detriment (163).” Brown highlights the importance of studying women perpetrators' mobilization, actions, and post-genocide trajectories while comparing them to women rescuers who chose to act for the benefit of their community rather than its detriment. This comparison offers a nuanced understanding of women's diverse roles during these genocides, challenging conventional literature that often portrays female perpetrators as atypical and atrocious while standardizing male perpetrators. In the present research context, Brown's study provides valuable insights into the gendered nature of perpetration and the complexities surrounding women's involvement in acts of mass violence. It reinforces the significance of exploring perpetrator analysis from an inclusive and nuanced perspective, moving beyond stereotypes and recognizing the multifaceted motivations and actions of both men and women perpetrators. The present study aims to contribute to a more comprehensive and empathetic understanding of this complex phenomenon by drawing parallels between Brown's findings and the portrayal of perpetrators in contemporary Pakistani fiction.

In "*Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method. Berkeley*", Blumer explains the interactionist view. He claims that according to the interactionist approach, crime's origin is in a few conventions. First, the individual's behavior depends on how he perceives reality. Second is the learning process and positive or negative reactions towards the individuals or institution. Third, the learned meaning decides how a person will gauge his behavior. People with predominant positions in society determine what is right and wrong. They are the ones who rule and make and enforce decisions upon the needy and penurious. Blumer argues that women are murdered in the name of honour killing and a certain mindset of people justify these acts rather than condemning them (48). The section

from Blumer's work on symbolic interactionism provides valuable insights related to this study on perpetrator analysis, particularly on the micro level. Blumer emphasizes the significance of individuals' perceptions of reality in shaping their behavior. This notion aligns with the idea that understanding the motivations and underlying reasons behind acts of perpetration is crucial in comprehending the complex phenomenon of crime.

Blumer's discussion on the learning process and how individuals' interactions with others and institutions influence their behavior resonates with exploring women perpetrators' roles in honor killings and other forms of violence. The research can benefit from examining the learned meanings and justifications that certain mindsets use to rationalize these acts instead of condemning them. Moreover, Blumer's observation that predominant individuals in society dictate what is considered right or wrong, and make and enforce decisions upon marginalized groups, is highly relevant to examining perpetrator behavior in the context of Pakistani fiction. Understanding how societal power dynamics influence the actions and choices of perpetrators can provide deeper insights into the complexities of perpetration.

In exploring perpetrator analysis, Sabeen Rahim's study, *"A Comparative Study of Thinking Styles of the Honor Killers, Other Offenders and General Population,"* is a crucial and pertinent source of understanding. Published as a comprehensive examination of honor killings and their perpetrators, Rahim's research delves into the intricate thought patterns and attitudes of individuals involved in such heinous acts. "The present study is aimed to provide insight to honour killing in the perspective of criminality (2)." Rahim's study, conducted with a comparative approach, evaluates the thought styles of three distinct groups: imprisoned offenders, other criminals, and individuals from the general population. The research reveals significant differences in thinking patterns among these groups, particularly about felonious thinking, which predicts the inclination towards honor killings.

The study's findings are especially relevant in comprehending the motivations and justifications behind acts of perpetration. Rahim's research sheds light on how criminal thinking styles may differ from those prevalent in the general population, underscoring the need to recognize the unique thought processes of individuals engaged in perpetration. Furthermore, Rahim's investigation illuminates the impact of sociocultural factors,

particularly the influence of a patriarchal society, on attitudes toward honor killings. By understanding these complex interplays of societal norms and individual mindsets, researchers can develop a more nuanced understanding of the multifaceted nature of perpetration. Rahim's study offers valuable insights that are indispensable in examining perpetrators in historical genocides and contemporary literary works. Incorporating her research into the literature review broadens the scope of the analysis and enriches the understanding of the intricate dynamics surrounding acts of mass violence.

Mitchell, Tafrate, Hogan, & Olver, in their research, "*An exploration of the association between criminal thinking and community program attrition*," examine the link between criminal thinking and community program attrition as suggested in the title. Two collaborative programs are the parts of their samples. In both instances, distinct cognitive influences have been seen. Lack of sympathy, compassion, and empathy for others is the most protuberant article in the sample. Result proposes that rehabilitative program failure is linked with criminal thinking and that it perils caused by repetition. Whereas, "desire for risk taking and thrill seeking" according to Mitchell, Tafrate and Hogan are the factors most concomitant with dropout. Lack of sympathy and compassion are very apparent in Pakistani society, but the need of the hour is to look at the factors behind no mercy.

Z.A. Malik, He Zhilong, and M. Rafay conducted research titled "*War on Terrorism in Pakistan: Challenges and Strategic Steps*." The paper holds that 9/11 is the bloodiest incident in history. Since 2001, Pakistan has tackled many problems because it was forced to join the Global War on Terrorism. The army had to do numerous operations to eradicate terrorism from the root because the security state worsened after Pakistan joined Global War. Wars adversely affect the economy and the countries' political situations. Pakistan has also faced all these issues, and its economy was affected sternly. Z.A. Malik, He Zhilong, and M. Rafay have conferred the motives behind terrorism, how it has impacted the state's system, and the ways that can help eradicate it. Geographic position, sectarian issue, state-actors' engrossment, political variability, Pak-US clash, Pak-India conflict, and media's deleterious role (3-7) are the reasons behind terrorism according to the research. The researchers concluded that this hazard is incorrigible for Pakistan by using power. To solve the issues of society, the establishment needs to implement varied and intricate plans that ponder the factors that provide the base for terrorism. Such reasons significantly impact

the state's education, security, fundamental interests, and economy. These reasons are found on a macro and meso level, but the researcher missed tracing the grounds at the micro level. These elements open the way for an individual to participate in radical organizations.

In a study, *"Terrorism in Pakistan: Incident patterns, terrorists' characteristics, and the impact of terrorist arrests on terrorism,"* Syed Ejaz Hussain evaluates 2,344 terrorists' police data and claims that the base of every terrorist movement is conflicting. According to the lecturer, "The main hypothesis is that terrorism is the culmination of a conflict process. But the conflict needs some attending conditions to reach to that end (24)." Hussain states that in the situations of all the criminals, one element exists recurrently is that they belong to a conflict zone. Conflict zone is important to consider but psychological, political and societal factors that lead a person to take extreme steps cannot be avoided.

In the article *"The Causes of Terrorism"*, Martha Crenshaw enlists two types of causes allied with terrorism: permissive factors and direct situational factors. Firstly, noteworthy variance can be seen amid prerequisites, elements that provide the base for terrorist acts and contestants, particular incidents that instantly antecede the terrorist manifestation. Secondly, additional sorting splits prerequisites into the factors that are permissive, which offer chances for the occurrence of terrorism, and circumstances that stimulate and provoke terrorist movements. Crenshaw mentions, "Modernization produces an interrelated set of factors that is a significant permissive cause of terrorism (381)." So, industrialization, urbanization and modernization can be permissive factors. Criticism, biasness, astuteness, inadequate chances to join politics and elite cynicism can be the factors that are directly situational. However, Tocqueville, mentioned in Brynjar and Katja H-W, highlights social disparity as an element accountable for terrorism. Tocqueville claimed that "almost all of the revolutions which have changed the aspect of nations have been made to consolidate or to destroy social inequality (17)." While I cannot agree more with the latter part of the argument, agreeing that revolution changes the aspect of nations to consolidate social inequality is a mere miss on the bullseye. Revolutions are brought by the people being crushed under the heels of the bourgeoisie, and they fight for social inequality, mostly, rendering this argument moot.

Hasan G. López Sanz in his study *The Perpetrator in Focus*, reviews a book written by Anacleto Ferrer and Vicente Sánchez-Biosca named, *El infierno de los perpetradores: Imágenes, relatos y conceptos* and states that the preliminary definition of perpetrators suggests that approaching the perpetrator is a complicated attempt which entails a multidisciplinary and imperturbable emphasis. The introduction of the book which serves as a theoretical framework, as well, answers the question how has the perpetrator acquired that preeminence? Three major trials, i.e., the Nuremberg Trials, the Jerusalem Trial and the Frankfurt trial have been conferred by the editor. The novelty of the Frankfurt trial lies in its focus unswervingly on the culprit's 'bare criminal culpability'. A considerable part of the book is inquisitive of the depiction of perpetration and perpetrators in cultural context of our modern society. In the second chapter of the book, the writer used *Shoah's* case and is intrusive of the question who the perpetrators were and why did they act in a certain way? He stresses on the connection between contempt for the culprit and the prey. Through this investigation, "Herzog seeks to deploy a theoretical language that would make it possible to understand the suffering inflicted on another as disdain" (267). The denouncement suggests that it impossible to entirely condense the voice of misery veiled.

Michael Mann in his book *The Dark Side of Democracy Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*, elucidates the importance of postwar trails and testimonies to understand perpetrators separately. However, numerous complications are there. Perpetrators conformed because of their controlled. Some of them convicted each other and somehow confessed having dialogs with their contemporaries regarding ongoing genocide. Their testimonies would make it look like an ideology-free milieu where common people were entombed by intimidating and administrative institutions. Hitherto it would be imprudent to accept self-centered testament of mass murderers. It is uncertain to test wholly if the perpetrators might have been troubled psychologically or not when the motives are so corked. "A court psychologist reported that the Nuremberg defendants' personalities "are not unique or insane ... they could be duplicated in any country of the world today (212)." Most of those who survived camp stated that only a few guards were sadist and could be considered prominently troubled persons. Collective sadism has been produced by the environment which demands ecological elucidation. However, it should be accepted openly

that lack of dependable psychological data creates a hinderance in studying the characters and personalities of most of the perpetrators profoundly.

Previous studies do not permit convincing answers. Whole corps of perpetrators are not treated by the studies, only specific subgroups are treated. However, most focus on three common topographies of the lives of perpetrators. They live normal life with their families and rejoicing life's rites. Mann mentioned Yet de Mildt's view who believes that determination lusters through this diversity: by principle, they were not killers but their circumstances and opportunities made them the ones. Instead of comparing their profiles closely with the ideological combatants. Their background profiles elucidate that they were common citizens having sophisticated and calculated nature regarding their private lives. The main word that pops up in the mind is opportunism and not idealism.

Mann also mentioned Proctor's interpretation of medical practice in supervision of Third Reich correspondingly. Before Nazi's regime, the natural object for German medical science was race. There was a strong scientific bond between Nazi backing of racial biomedical science and medical science. Professionally, Nazism was appealing for them. Hence, institutions that are professional in nature and subcultures might attract acquitted masses towards them and eventually towards genocide. "This sociological view of ideology sees it less as an abstract, fixed doctrine than as the drawing of conclusions from one's own cumulative experience – blurring the simple distinction between the ordinary person and the real Nazi" (215). Scholars have observed change in genocidal institutions over the passage of time. The initiators employed people whose mindsets were tough to perform these tasks. They recruited people with strong will, old fighters, hard, ice-cold and consistent people. Those tangled previously in the assistance of ferocious practices were later operating the institutions. Mann sought to answer four questions in this study: Were the perpetrators all Nazis? Were they indulged in Nazism earlier? Were they highly committed Nazis? Have they faced any marginality on social level, redundancy or trauma?

Unduly Nazis had been strained from the army, police and civil sectors. Between the labor and capital, economic segment laid outside the main conflict regions. Acute nationalism and intense statism had been singled out by these backgrounds and so produced Nazis formerly. "Conversely, in all four respects the perpetrators might not be unusual but

broadly representative of ordinary Germans” (219). Extreme methodological exertion is elucidated strongly by the women in this sort of research. Some of them had formerly followed up on them, few must possess firm Nazi opinions and few appear confined in Nazism or genocide before war. However, women were guarded by German patriarchy and marginalization caused by it no matter what their predispositions might have been. Therefore, some of the perpetrators appeared to have had difficult and complicate lives that can develop extreme belligerence, agitation or condemning for individual misery.

*Crimes of the Wehrmacht: A Re-evaluation*, a study by Alex J. Kay and David Stahel elucidates that ten million out of eighteen million men who were the part of Wehrmacht were arrayed at a time or another during the Second World War in the fight against the Soviet Union. The question what creates a felonious undertaking is important to define in order to comprehend the widespread complicity in Nazi crimes amongst the German militaries. In the Soviet Union, the absolute viciousness of the German manner of war and work has dominated numerous activities that would be precisely be categorized as criminal acts. This article, however, scrutinizes the agenda presented on the eastern front by the formal and ecological factors; in a digression on serious war delinquencies, the contact between perpetrators and spectators, and the part played by the bystanders in decriminalizing assassination and additional mayhems; lastly, in soldier’s activities, the status of ideology, radical notions and National Socialist views. The authors examined Christian Hartmann’s argument in 1941 and 1942 with his work of five German dissections on the eastern front. The conclusion of the debate was that the largest part of the troops was installed in the east because felonious behavior was not the feature of the front-line units. It was mainly a feature of rear-area sanctuary constructions. The writer even thinks if the Wehrmacht can be viewed as a criminal party of the National Socialist command by any mean.

The argument brings us to a main emphasis and debate of this study unheeded in the contemporary literature as aforesated, the actions that would otherwise be considered criminal acts have been dominated by the absolute viciousness of the German manner of war and occupation in the Soviet Union. A less explicit breach of the laws of confrontation would be instituted frequently through such crimes. It portrays less overt connection



between the prey's miseries and the culprits. However, the unlawful accountability of the German soldier's contribution cannot be ameliorated by these reflections.

Sexual violence was common against Soviet women. Women were raped by the German soldiers in some engaged zones. Numerous cases were reported where the whole unit was involved in such severe acts. Corporal violence was not always involved in all sorts of sexual interactions so was intimidation. The German occupation forced uncountable Soviet women to beseech themselves for food and created frantic situations. Moreover, numerous young women worked in military brothels. Consequences were that the German soldiers considered their acts as consensual and done with the free will. Out beyond the idea of sexual violence and abuse, a question regarding the guilt of soldiers must be extended that were considered to be the necessity for military and later became a common practice during the Barbarossa campaign. If nothing of value could be sited, the procedure involved countless acts of malevolent annihilation, as well. The weight of perpetrator's culpability was frequently circumvented because of the death rate and the suffering amongst the Soviet noncombatants. Neither it was the envisioned outcome of their acts, nor something that German soldiers persisted to observe. Forced labour also prevailed because of the Wehrmacht.

While providing alternative medium for soldiers to partake meanderingly in the war of extinction, submissive reception of the massacre amid the militaries gave validity to the homicide. Kay and Stahel stated Christian Hartmann's conclusion asserting that the number of those who projected their uneasiness regarding the Holocaust was smaller than the group that was involved staunchly in the execution of Jews. "The largely internalised nationalism and militarism of the vast majority of the soldiers established a fundamental loyalty to the state that was more deep-rooted than the frequently superficial political opinions (119)". Contrary to that, these basic principles were profoundly grounded and ambiguous concepts that the soldiers possess of National ideology along with sustained mindsets that were so clear as to be barely interrogated or mused.

The study, *Challenging the Perpetrators' Narrative: A Critical Reading of the Photo Album 'Resettlement of the Jews from Hungary'* by Ulrike Koppermann (Koppermann) is an examination of the album 'Resettlement of the Jews from Hungary'

that highlights the perspective of the perpetrator. The photographic and descriptive structure of genocide has been focused as a process which is lucid. Three aspects have been analyzed through the close reading of the album. Primarily, the author compared the historical events of the genocide with the representation in the album. Then, he disclosed how the graphic creation of the Jewish expatriates advocates a supposed validation and perceptiveness behind homicide. Furthermore, multifaceted links between cinematography and ferocity have been analyzed.

Producing a photo album is like the graphic representation of an event. In this way, enslavement of numerous people and massacre of thousands have been represented through the photo album. Normally, photo albums are created to preserve personally reminiscent and unforgettable moments. However, the chosen topic of the album is imperiled to a homogenizing social consensus. Furthermore, albums are of an enormous worth for their photographers. It captures a moment and converts the moment into a memory. It is a recollection that will be reminisced in the future. Primarily, unequal dichotomy is present between the ones being photographed and the photographer. Historic context plays an essential role to understand the extent to which audience notices ferocity in the photographs. Furthermore, it depicts the objectification of the people in front of the camera. A photo album is open to interpretation and a complicated mean to do so. The connection between sign and signifier is different and it produces another level for the interpretation of meaning.

Much has been researched in this field since the beginning of the perpetrator analysis. However, no one has underpinned Fatima Bhutto's *The Runaways* and Awais Khan's *In the Company of Strangers* with perpetrator analysis. Perpetrator studies is relatively a new field and it needs to be explored in the Pakistani region, as well. Although, much has been discovered in this field, yet no one has particularly focused on micro level analysis. The researcher has underpinned these texts with the aforementioned theory to analyze them on micro level.

Since 2018, few studies have been conducted on Fatima Bhutto's novel *The Runaways*. However, the text has not been analyzed through perpetrator's perspective.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter deals with the methodology and theoretical frameworks used by the researcher in the study. The theoretical framework used for this study has been conscripted to scrutinize and infer the data debated in the subsequent chapters to sketch down the reasons behind the act of perpetration. These factors ultimately leave individuals indulged in serious crimes and the significance of studying the perpetrator and the act of perpetration along with the victim. The researcher has conducted a textual analysis of the texts mentioned above to trace the factors responsible for the act of perpetration. The researcher has underpinned *The Runaways* by Fatima Bhutto and *In the Company of Strangers* by Awais Khan with the concept of moral responsibility by Dana Kay Nelkin and Michael Mann's concept of ideological killer under the umbrella term of Perpetrators' analysis.

This qualitative research uses an evocative and investigative methodology, and perpetrator analysis is used to analyze the texts.

### **3.1 Research Methodology**

The researcher has adopted Textual Analysis by Catherine Belsey as a fundamental approach to analyzing the selected literary texts in this research. Textual analysis is a robust method to choose, study, and interpret specific textual instances, dialogues, and interactional situations within literary works. Belsey emphasizes that "text" encompasses various art forms such as poetry, drama, novels, and films, each embedded with concealed cultural and ideological conventions.

Belsey builds upon the works of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams, who expanded the concept of culture to encompass an entire mode of life within a specific

cultural and historical context. This perspective prompts the researcher to approach the analysis thoroughly, recognizing that a text does not contain all possible readings and can be subject to multiple interpretations.

Belsey holds that “any serious textual analysis depends on a grasp of how meaning works. Meaning is not at the disposal of the individual, and not, whatever stout common sense any indicate, a matter of intention, an isolatable ‘idea’, fully formed prior to its inscription. We learn to mean from outside, from a language that always pre-exists us” (163). According to Belsey, the meaning of a text is not solely at the disposal of the individual or the author's intention. Rather, meaning is constructed through language, which pre-exists the individual. Words gain significance only when understandable to others, suggesting that post-structuralists reject the notion of a single, fixed meaning for a text.

Belsey claims that “Meaning, then, subsists in the relations between people, inscribed in sounds or images. It has its own materiality: meaning intervenes in the world, defining our understanding of values, requiring us to obey rules and, indeed, calling us to arms. But because it never appears in itself, as pure intelligibility, as idea, but is always inscribed in the signifier, in the sound or the image, meaning is never fixed, single or final (163). Belsey emphasizes that meaning resides in the relations between people, inscribed in sounds or images, and has its materiality that intervenes in the world, defining values and shaping our understanding. However, meaning is not static; it is continuously inscribed in the signifier, whether in sound or image and remains open to multiple interpretations. “The signifier, Jacques Derrida insists, supplants any imagined idea, takes its place. What we have is always the signifier, never what it signifies” (163).

Belsey further records that “there is no such thing as ‘pure’ reading. Interpretation always involves extra-textual knowledge, some of it being general cultural knowledge, and some of it being derived from secondary sources” (163). Belsey highlights that interpretation in textual analysis involves drawing from extra-textual knowledge, including general cultural knowledge and information derived from secondary sources. This necessitates considering the cultural and social context in which the text was produced to avoid subjective biases in the analysis.

Given these perspectives, the present study strives to reveal multiple conceivable meanings and concealed ideologies within the selected literary texts. It aims to challenge conventional assumptions and discover novel features that have not been previously exposed. This study seeks to enrich the understanding of the multifaceted nature of perpetration and its portrayal in contemporary Pakistani fiction through a rigorous and comprehensive textual analysis.

### **3.2 Theoretical Framework**

The introductory section of the *Journal of Perpetrator Research 1.1 (2017)* claims that the journal's primary focus is to seek answers to basic questions like how do we define a perpetrator? What made them a perpetrator, what are the reasons behind their perpetration, and how can we create awareness to stop such manifestations? The authors also talked about the standpoints through which perpetration can be approached. “Macro (top-level architects), meso (mid-level organizers), and micro (low-level killers) (Susanne C. Knittel, C and Critchell 11).” The macro level talks about higher political and decision-making authorities. The Meso level comprises political interceders and managerial leaders, interior agencies, and military bosses under the heel of the macro level. Lastly, the lowermost group, the micro level, comprises individuals who convolve themselves in this barbaric practice, directly or indirectly. It also acmes the significance of pondering about perpetrators along with the prey. “Furthermore, most educators agree that presenting the perpetrators as somehow apart from society or even as monsters or psychopaths obscures the social, political, historical, and cultural mechanisms that have enabled their crimes a perpetrator studies can offer new perspectives (17-18)”. The reason to consider the perpetrators is that through them, we can create awareness in society and create a barricade against the reoccurrence of these incidents. Perpetrators can also help analyze the acts of perpetration. It is commonly believed that only the victim is essential. However, recent studies in this field have shown the importance of analyzing the action of perpetration and the perpetrator.

Since the beginning of the study, perpetrators’ research has been conducted about the mass murderers and groups that committed perpetration. Less has been talked about

individuals who convolve themselves into perpetration for any reason, whether personal, political, or psychological. The third level, the micro level, needs to be explored more. Personal reasons can enable us to explore the grounds and factors contributing to perpetration in an enhanced way. Furthermore, it will also highlight the myths and stereotypes attached to some areas of the world. We cannot justify an act of perpetration. Still, we can shun certain stereotypes and phobias attached to these perpetrators, whom we call psychopaths or monsters.

Furthermore, we need to analyze the reasons behind the perpetrations of the perpetrators. Perpetrators are the product of their circumstances; they are not innately antagonists. Considering the causes of perpetration at the macro and meso levels, we must first examine the reasons behind the micro level. These reasons will help us trace the other individuals who are the perpetrators. If we look closely at it, we can understand that if political, psychological, or social reasons are behind the perpetration, then we cannot label individuals as perpetrators but all who forced them to indulge themselves in these activities.

### **3.3 Michael Mann's Concept of Ideological Killers**

There are multiple typologies based on perpetrators' nature or conduct, which perpetuate. The first theory utilized by the researcher is of Michael Mann's ideological killers. Michael Mann's concept of ideological killers delves into the profound influence of ideologies on human behavior, particularly in the context of perpetration and violence. According to Mann, ideologies are fundamental in shaping how individuals perceive and make sense of the world. They offer a framework of shared values, customs, and norms, allowing people to be part of collective identity and social practices.

Mann argues that humans are inherently drawn to ideologies as they provide a sense of meaning and purpose, filling the gaps in our understanding of complex phenomena. Mann holds, "Powerful ideologies provide a bridge between reason, morality and emotion. They "make sense" to their initiates but they also require a leap of faith and an emotional commitment. There must be some plausibility, since an ideology would not spread otherwise, but the perception that it makes sense tugs at us morally and emotionally as well as scientifically (6)." In times of crises or vulnerabilities, individuals become particularly

susceptible to the power of ideological movements. Mann highlights that established ideologies may no longer be effective in such circumstances, making room for new and unverified theories proposed by ideologists. These ideologies act as powerful forces, persuading individuals to take extreme actions in the name of self-defense, righteousness, or ethnic purity. Perpetrators driven by ideological motives may believe in the necessity of cleansing or the moral superiority of their actions, thus justifying their violent acts.

Mann identifies nine different causes of perpetration among ideological killers. These range from those who self-righteously justify killings as self-defense to bigoted individuals who condone the mistreatment of disliked minorities when feeling threatened. Perpetrators can vary in motivations, from ideological and bureaucratic to bigoted and disciplined approaches. Cloudier ideologies inspire bigoted perpetrators even more. “We all know bigoted people who in very different contexts might be led to condone mistreatment of disliked minorities – especially if feeling threatened by them” (28).

It is essential to recognize that ideological killers do not manifest as autonomous entities emancipated from their moral compass. Instead, their actions crystallize from their chosen ideologies' foundational beliefs and values. Social pressure often intensifies hatred and intensity, fortifying the grip of archaic ideological constructs and fostering an environment conducive to ethnic cleansing. Mann emphasizes that ideologies surpass mere experience and science, encompassing non-testable elements that command moral and emotional allegiance from their followers. Echoing Mann's viewpoint, we discern that an ideology, in its essence, “surpasses experience and science alike, and so contains nontestable elements” (30). According to him, some people call it culture, and he calls it ideology. To him, both are synonymous at times. Although, he tries to circumvent it as it is an ambiguous and diverse term. "Ethnic conflict is very ideological" (30).

Mann ponders that “Ideologies are carried by communications networks in which some possess greater resources of knowledge and persuasion than others” (30). Ideological powers are disseminated through various channels, including social power, language, and religion. Throughout history, dominant groups have controlled official speeches and religious sermons, limiting access to knowledge and communication. Syncretic religions have absorbed diverse local beliefs, resulting in a loose pantheon of gods at the official

level. When examining historical examples, such as the barbarian invasion of the Roman Empire and European colonization, Mann's concept of ideological killers helps shed light on the complex interplay between power dynamics, individual identity modification, and ideological dominance. For instance, European settlers' ideology of supremacy and civilizing the uncivilized nation rationalized their means of establishing control, ultimately leading to genocidal elements in their actions.

In conclusion, Michael Mann's concept of ideological killers provides valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of perpetration driven by ideological motivations. Understanding the profound influence of ideologies on human behavior and social dynamics is crucial for comprehending the complexities of contemporary Pakistani fiction and the perpetration depicted within it.

### **3.3 Moral Responsibility by Dana Kay Nelkin**

Dana Kay Nelkin's concept of moral responsibility provides a comprehensive and nuanced perspective on agency and accountability within human actions. Nelkin proposes a mutually reinforcing view of freedom and responsibility, delving into the intricacies of attributability and accountability in moral contexts. This theoretical framework is a solid foundation for research, particularly in analyzing characters' moral landscapes in literature.

According to Nelkin, moral responsibility goes beyond the mere causation of actions. It involves an individual's capacity to comprehend the moral significance of their choices and make well-informed decisions. This emphasis on an agent's mental conditions, such as beliefs, preferences, and understanding of the consequences of their actions, allows for a deep exploration of characters' decision-making processes in literary works. By studying their psychological and moral landscapes, we can gain valuable insights into the complexities of their ethical choices.

Nelkin also emphasizes the importance of accountability and the attribution of praise or blame within moral responsibility. Characters in literature often grapple with moral dilemmas that question their ethical obligations and the consequences of their



decisions. “The idea is that people are not responsible for their actions when they lack either the capacity to grasp reasons for acting (or not acting, as the case may be) or the capacity to translate those reasons into action (or omission) (445).” Using Nelkin's perspective, researchers can delve into the complexities of characters' moral responsibilities, examining how their intentions, actions, and outcomes are judged morally.

Furthermore, Nelkin highlights that true moral responsibility requires the capacity to act with valid reasons and the ability to act on those reasons. Holding individuals responsible for actions they cannot change would be unjust. Unconscious lapses pose a challenge to concepts of moral responsibility. Still, Nelkin's framework allows for considering nuanced situations where an individual may be aware of the danger of an omission yet lack the agency to prevent it.

As presented in her article with Samuel C. Rickless, *Moral Responsibility for Unwitting Omissions: A New Tracing View*, Nelkin's concept of moral responsibility challenges traditional views by introducing the idea of "unwitting omissions." This perspective asserts that individuals can be morally responsible for not preventing harm, even if they did not actively exercise their agency at the time. The key factor lies in recognizing the potential danger and having previous opportunities to act responsibly. This new tracing view expands our understanding of moral responsibility, considering deliberate actions and the awareness and chances for intervention that precede them (Nelkin and Rickless).

When applied to literary analysis, Nelkin's theoretical framework facilitates a comprehensive examination of moral responsibility within the selected texts. By studying characters' moral agency, the role of external factors, and the attribution of praise or blame, researchers can elucidate the ethical underpinnings of their actions and the moral dilemmas they face. The interdisciplinary approach of combining philosophical ethics with literary analysis enriches the interpretation of the texts. It offers a deeper understanding of the human experience and the moral dimensions inherent in literature.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

This chapter deals with the analysis of the selected text. The researcher has conducted textual research on *The Runaways* by Fatima Bhutto and *In the Company of Strangers* by Awais Khan. In the present study, the selected texts have been underpinned with the concept of moral responsibility by Dana Kay Nelkin and Michael Mann's concept of ideological killer under the umbrella term of Perpetrators' analysis.

#### **4.1 Deeds Draped in Robes of Ideologies**

Islamic ideologies and values have a considerable impact on Pakistani society. Incredibly when fulfilling religious norms, ideologies are preferred even more. People can go to any lengths to protect their religious values. Since the beginning, people have moulded these ideologies according to their beliefs. Whenever they want to preserve something from going against their needs, the first thing they do is modify the set ideologies. Awais Khan, *In the Company of Strangers*, has portrayed a true religious leader who uses innocent people for their purpose. He has justly depicted a society where the religious leaders have used a person's instincts to take revenge, so he ends up blaring himself up into ashes.

Khan skillfully takes his readers on a roller coaster ride from the slums and the manors of Lahore with full enthusiasm, depicting an abundance of details on every page. He has shown a world full of parties and gossip of the upper strata of society to peek out the violence already there in numerous forms. The struggle of an ordinary man who is fed up with his problems and struggles is tutored beyond his capacity to take vengeance until he can no longer brush off his instincts of taking revenge for his brother and family. He paints Lahore with his words and shows all the holes and concealed faults, from male domination to religious-based acumen. These faults threaten society and tear apart

numerous lives, just as they have been a threat to Mona and Ali in the Company of Strangers. Khan opens the door to an ambience of Pakistani society and touches the unscathed roots.

The novel opens with a prologue showing a typical slum area, and people are seen as busy with their routine work. Ismail, a character from the story, is seen observing his surroundings. He seems content with the fact that the chowk is jam-packed, and he can affect several people. He seems to be struggling with his beliefs when he recalls his leader's words to remind him of the glory he will bring to his family. "Don't presume anything. Don't allow overconfidence to swamp you! The words rang clear in his head. Everything is God's will. Wasn't this what he had been learning for years now? Let this be a lesson for the murderers, those traitors who have ravaged the country, uprooted families, destroyed legacies. Let this be a solid punch in the CIA's gut" (11). For a brief moment, Ismail thinks of the consequences, but the set ideologies in his mind are so strong that he pushes everything else away and starts thinking of the glorified image in his mind.

The extract pictures a character who is made to believe that everything is God's will. This belief echoes an ideological adherence, denoting their religious convictions that influence the character's activities and viewpoints. According to Mann, ideological killers are navigated by their unwavering allegiance to a specific ideology, which can manifest in their moral decision-making and actions. The character's firm belief is a driving force behind his actions. The leader's yearning for a "solid punch in the CIA's gut" insinuates an assertive stance against perceived opponents. This statement illustrates the impact of his ideology on his followers and their reaction to external forces. Ismail manifests the attributes of an ideological killer. His compliance with the embodied beliefs regarding God's will and devotion to a specific stance on the country's challenges navigate his actions and understanding of moral responsibility. The character's mindset echoes the intricate interplay between personal ideology, moral responsibility, and their role within society, as suggested by Mann.

In the case of Ismail, who perceived his ideologies from his religious leader from Awais Khan's novel *In the Company of Strangers*, his theology that 'everything is God's will' mirrors an ideological commitment. This approach provides Ismail with a framework

through which he interprets and responds to the world around him. It gives him purpose, moral guidance, and emotional attachment. The quote from Ismail's leader accentuates Ismail's conviction and emotional response to what he perceives as the destructive actions of murderers and traitors.

We can notice that Ismail's leader's ideology "makes sense" to Ismail when we align his belief and emotional commitment with Mann's perspective on powerful ideologies. It provides him a moral and emotional anchor in comprehending the events and challenges in his society. Ismail's perception of the ideology's plausibility and emotional connection to it further validates Mann's argument that ideologies need both reason and emotion to be influential. In this context, Ismail's compliance with the ideology of God's will not only shapes his worldview but also impacts his actions and sense of moral responsibility. It demonstrates the impact of ideology on individuals' conduct and their understanding of right and wrong.

According to Mann, "Powerful ideologies provide a bridge between reason, morality and emotion. They "make sense" to their initiates but they also require a leap of faith and an emotional commitment. There must be some plausibility, since an ideology would not spread otherwise, but the perception that it makes sense tugs at us morally and emotionally as well as scientifically (1890-1945)." Ideologies represent belief systems held by individuals or social groups. When ideologies are powerful and well-resourced, they can exert significant influence over individuals, compelling them to pursue and uphold these ideological frameworks. An example illustrating this concept can be seen in the character of Ismail. Ismail's adherence to his leader's words exemplifies his commitment to an ideology even when it may not make sense to others. These words serve as a powerful bridge, connecting his reasoning, moral values, and emotions. Additionally, Ismail's belief that his violent actions would bring glory to his family and tribe further reinforces the plausibility and appeal of the ideology he embraces.

"He was grateful to step out sooner than planned; it gave him more time to revel in the glory he was bringing his family – his entire village" (10). Ismail expresses gratitude for stepping out sooner than intended, indicating they are immersed in some activity or endeavor. The character's stimulation for stepping out is to bring recognition to the family

and the entire village. This motive indicates a solid commitment to a larger group, aligning with Mann's ideological killer concept.

According to Mann, ideological killers are individuals driven by a persistent commitment to a specific ideology. They are inspired by the passion to support and nurture the values and goals associated with their ideological beliefs. In this case, the character's pursuit of glory for their family and village implies aligning profoundly with their retained ideology.

Ismail's actions and perspectives mirror the interplay between personal ideology, moral responsibility, and their role within society. By desiring to bring glory to their family and village, they exhibit loyalty to their ideological convictions and a sense of responsibility towards their community. Ismail's actions and motivations are driven by his adherence to an ideology centered around family and communal honor. He is emotionally and morally invested in fulfilling his perceived duty and responsibilities, declared by his ideological leader.

“Everything is God’s will” (11). Mann argues that ideologies build a connection between reason, morality, and emotion. These ideologies are comprehensible for those who initiate them and require an emotional obligation. Ideologies, including religious ones, offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the world, shaping individuals' behavior and decision-making power.

In Ismail's case, his leader's statement offers a profound religious conviction and a stern belief in predestination. By attributing everything to God's will, Ismail acknowledges his understanding that events unfold according to a divine plan. This belief in the omnipotence of God exploits Ismail's worldview and reaction to events and challenges. Hence, Ismail's assertion aligns with the characteristics of an ideological killer described by Mann. Ismail's adherence to the ideology of God's will shapes his philosophy, moral decision-making, and emotional reactions. His staunch allegiance to this belief system makes him an ideological actor within the context of the novel.

Additionally, Mann underlines the plausibility and emotional tug that ideologies exercise on individuals. Ismail's observations symbolize the sense of moral duty that his religious doctrine evokes. He perceives his dedication to this belief as a duty, controlling

his actions and responses to the world around him. By applying Mann's theory to the abovementioned words, we can comprehend the powerful influence of religious ideology on Ismail's attitude and behavior. His belief in God's will furnishes him with a sense of purpose and controls his moral decision-making and how he navigates challenges and events.

His belief makes him look so gratified that he feels adrenaline rushing through his veins. He thinks he will be able to face God and be rewarded for his sacrifice. The leading cause, nevertheless, is exposed in the following few lines, "Let this be a solid punch in the CIA's gut" (11). Mann claims that powerful ideologies produce emotional commitment from their followers. For Ismail, his leader's words echo his emotional investment in the fight against the CIA and his desire for vengeance. Using the phrase "solid punch," the leader expresses a vigorous emotional response and a call for forceful action against their enemies.

The leader's message demonstrates the ideological alignment and emphasizes the interplay between the personal ideology and moral responsibility of Ismail and his leader. They see the CIA as an external force threatening their beliefs, values, and, by extension, their religious identity. These words demonstrate their commitment to protecting their ideological convictions, in this case, against perceived threats from the CIA. Moreover, the text suggests that the leaders in the novel are using the war for their political agendas, conforming to their set ideologies. This example aligns with Mann's stance that those in power can manipulate and exploit ideologies for political purposes. By connecting the leader's words and Ismail's motivations to Mann's theory, we can see the complex interplay between personal ideologies, political manipulation, and individuals' emotional commitment to their beliefs. The leader's statement reflects his emotional response to external forces, while Ismail's actions underscore how ideologies can be co-opted for political gain.

"It will be painless for you, jihadi, but the pain of those kaafirs, those nonbelievers, will be unimaginable. Remember, they are not humans; they do not feel. They do not love. You shall be rewarded for this noble deed, my boy, you will go to heaven. Kill those kaafirs!" (12). Ismail's statement mirrors a contorted interpretation of religious ideology.

He views those he considers "kaafirs" (nonbelievers) as less than human, emotionless, and incapable of feeling love. This dehumanization of others, coupled with the guarantee of a prize in heaven, is a feature often associated with extremist ideologies. By connecting Ismail's words to Mann's theory, we can see how this extremist ideology shapes Ismail's perception of the world and justifies his fierce acts. Ismail's belief in the moral righteousness of killing nonbelievers is driven by the emotional allegiance to his ideological convictions. Moreover, this statement strengthens the concept of ideological killers defined by Mann. Ismail's adherence to an extremist ideology deforms his moral compass, clouding the boundaries between right and wrong. His intense emotional investment in the ideology coaxes his decision to engage in violent acts.

“In war we routinely obey an order to kill, even if we bear the victim no hate” (26). According to Mann, an ideology works better when people believe in it and are willing to risk their lives for it, even if they do not hate the victim. For them, chasing an ideology is far more important than their lives. In the above-stated instance, religion is again working as an ideology. Mann asserts that ideologies are most effective when individuals wholeheartedly believe in them and readily risk their lives for their cause. Ismail's words demonstrate this element of ideological adherence. Despite not personally despising the victims, Ismail is driven by his extremist ideology, which degrades nonbelievers and justifies violence against them. Ismail's words display his confidence in the righteousness of his cause. He senses himself as a committed soldier who follows orders and acknowledges that killing nonbelievers is dignified and will be rewarded in heaven. This echoes Mann's assertion that individuals can execute violence based on ideological belief, even if they do not harbor personal hatred towards the victims. The association between Mann's statement and Ismail's words lies in their shared emphasis on the strength of ideology to encourage individuals to engage in violent acts. Ismail's ideological commitment overrides personal feelings or lack of hatred towards the victims, aligning with Mann's argument that ideology can supersede individual emotions when carrying out acts of violence.

‘Kill those kaafirs!’ Ismail's call to kill nonbelievers showcases his adherence to an extremist ideology that overrides any personal feelings of hatred towards the victims. He sees it as his duty to eliminate those he perceives as threatening to his ideology, irrespective

of personal animosity. Ismail's words also highlight the emotional commitment that Mann associates with ideological killers. Ismail's conviction that killing nonbelievers is noble stems from his strong emotional attachment to his extremist ideology. He believes that carrying out these acts will lead to reward and affirmation of his beliefs in the afterlife.

Applying Mann's theory of ideological killers to Ismail's words reveals the dangerous potential of ideologies to mobilize individuals towards violence, even without personal animosity. Ismail's statement demonstrates how deeply ingrained beliefs can prompt individuals to dehumanize and target others based on their ideological differences. "Religious extremism is responsible for creating division on religious grounds and is responsible for violence against followers of other religions" (229). Irshad's words further highlight the influence of religious extremism as an ideological force. It suggests that religious extremism can direct individuals to a division based on religious grounds and provoke violence against disciples of other religions. This notion aligns with Mann's concept, underscoring the possible risks and destructive outcomes of ideologies fostering extremism and intolerance. In the case of Ismail, his involvement may reflect the influence of religious extremism as an ideological driver. His actions and beliefs may be shaped by an extremist ideology that justifies violence against those who adhere to different religious beliefs. Ismail's character illustrates how individuals, under the sway of ideological killers, may engage in acts of violence and discrimination based on their extremist convictions.

By connecting Irshad's quote to Mann's conception and the character of Ismail, we gain a deeper understanding of the detrimental effects of ideological extremism and its potential to divide societies and instigate violence. It highlights the importance of critically examining and challenging extremist ideologies to promote harmony, understanding, and coexistence among diverse religious communities.

"Coward! These were the workings of Shaitan, the Satan. Their Leader had warned him about this. Shaitan will tempt him; try to deter him from the virtuous path to that of sin and cowardice" (13). Mann argues that powerful ideologies create a sense of moral and emotional commitment among their adherents. Ismail's words reflect his deep ideological conviction, as he attributes his hesitation or perceived weakness to the influence of Shaitan, or Satan, who represents temptation and the deviation from the righteous path dictated by



his extremist ideology. Ismail's leader labeling them as a coward indicates the strong moral imperative imposed by his ideology, which has now become Ismail's ideology. In Mann's theory, ideologies provide a sense of purpose and establish moral boundaries and expectations. As predicted by his leader, Ismail's self-criticism and fear of succumbing to sin and cowardice highlight the emotional and moral stakes involved in adhering to his extremist beliefs. By connecting Ismail's words with Mann's theory of ideological killers, we see the complex interplay between ideology, morality, and emotions. Ismail's conviction that his actions are virtuous and align with his ideology motivates him to overcome doubts or fears, attributing them to external temptations rather than inherent weakness.

In light of the preceding discussion, it becomes evident that Michael Mann's concept of ideological killers finds applicability within the context of perpetrators in the global south. The typologies set forth by the theorists from the global north bear semblance to the act of perpetration and the perpetrator's psyche. Mann designates these individuals as ideological killers who traverse the bounds of their ideologies to such an extent that they embark upon acts of perpetration in their relentless pursuit of these dogmas. These principles become integral to their existence, compelling them to exhibit unwavering commitment, even to sacrifice their own lives. Within the realm of religious dominions, these individuals are most susceptible, gravitating towards the tenets propagated by stringent religious factions. Such adherence to religious ideologies is driven by the yearning to attain a comprehensive comprehension of the world, one that proffers an unassailable rationale for every deed committed, thereby reinforcing their unwavering resolve. Through the amalgamation of ideologies and objectives, they find solace and unity, cementing their indomitable dedication to their cause.

The provided ideology further adds to this procedure. People start to see the world abstractly when they opt for a belief system. They see the world through notions and groups, developing an inflexible and rough attitude yet so powerful. It aids them in viewing the other not as an individual but as an abstract group.

## **4.2 The Causative Nexus of Childhood Trauma and the Act of Perpetration**

Psychological reasons and childhood trauma can play a considerable role in leading individuals toward perpetration. We can examine how these elements contribute to acts of perpetration by drawing upon Michael Mann's concept of ideological killers.

Psychological factors, including personality traits, cognitive tendencies, and emotional dysregulation, can affect an individual's exposure to perpetration. For example, individuals predisposed to aggression, egocentricity, or antisocial tendencies may be more likely to engage in toxic behaviors. These psychological aspects can distort their perception of right and wrong, damage empathy, and tarnish their ability to evaluate the outcomes of their actions. Such individuals may rationalize their harmful behavior based on distorted beliefs or skewed moral reasoning.

Physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or witnessing violence are childhood traumas that can have lasting psychological and emotional effects on individuals. Trauma can disrupt healthy, vigorous growth, deface interpersonal relationships, and shape maladaptive coping mechanisms. Individuals with notable childhood trauma may display higher aggression, impulsivity, and difficulty regulating emotions. These psychological products of trauma can expand the risk of committing perpetration as a means of coping, seeking power or control, or attempting to reenact past traumatic experiences.

When psychological reasons and childhood trauma intersect with ideological influences, as suggested by Michael Mann in the concept of ideological killers, the risk of perpetration can be further intensified. Ideological beliefs can manipulate and control individuals' vulnerabilities, offering a sense of purpose, identity, and belonging. They can furnish a deformed framework through which individuals justify their harmful actions, finding ideological explanations for brutality and intimidation. By incorporating psychological perspectives, trauma-informed approaches, and the insights provided by theoretical frameworks like Mann's concept of ideological killers, we can better

comprehend the multilayered nature of perpetration and work toward nurturing empathy, healing, and ethical decision-making.

“Not so long ago, he had done the same... rested his head on his mother’s shoulder as his father came back from a hard day’s work, smelling of sunshine and well-earned sweat. Not so long ago, he had been innocent too, oblivious to everything happening around him, running alongside the ditches with his siblings, relishing the potent possibility of falling into the black muck. So filthy, and yet so exciting.

Until they had bombed his village.

Killed his entire family while he brought back fried fish for dinner. Everything lost in a second” (13).

In the context of Mann's concept of ideological killers and the psychological trauma behind perpetration, the extract from the novel *In the Company of Strangers* describes the childhood experiences of Mir Rabiullah. It sheds light on the result of trauma in his life and probable facets contributing to perpetration. Mir Rabiullah's recollection of his past life highlights the stark contrast between his idyllic childhood and the traumatic event that smashed his world. Mann's concept of ideological killers proposes that powerful ideologies can provide a bridge between reason, morality, and emotion. Mir Rabiullah's experience of living a fairytale life, enveloped by his parents and family, reminisces the sense of normalcy and the strong emotional relationships he once had. However, the bomb blast that destroyed his village severely affected Mir Rabiullah's psyche. This traumatic occasion can be seen as a catalyst for psychological trauma, aligning with the understanding that individuals who have encountered significant trauma may be more exposed to perpetration. The sudden loss of his whole family while he innocently brought back fried fish for dinner symbolizes the traumatic nature of the event and the profound turmoil it caused in his life.

Psychological trauma resulting from experiences like witnessing violence and losing loved ones can significantly affect an individual's emotional well-being and worldview. It can cause psychological distress, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and contribute to developing maladaptive coping mechanisms and emotional dysregulation. Mir Rabiullah's reminiscence of his innocent past and the abrupt loss of everything he held dear highlights his deep emotional wounds and psychological scars.

When trauma and ideology intersect, as discussed in Mann's concept, it can further shape an individual's reaction to such experiences. Ideological beliefs can exploit and manipulate the vulnerabilities created by trauma and offer a framework through which individuals like Mir Rabiullah may rationalize their actions or seek consolation in extremist ideologies.

By analyzing Mir Rabiullah's narrative through the lens of Mann's concept of ideological killers and the psychological trauma behind perpetration, we gain insight into the intricate interplay between personal experiences, trauma, ideology, and the potential motivations that can drive individuals toward perpetration. It stresses the significance of understanding and addressing the psychological and emotional needs of individuals who have experienced trauma to mitigate the risk of extremist ideologies that can exploit an individual's worldview.

Aligning with the psychological trauma discussed earlier, Mir Rabiullah's traumatic experience of witnessing his loved ones wrapped in blood and the subsequent absence of justice from the state has deep psychological implications. Mann's concept implies that individuals who have experienced significant trauma can be weak in front of ideological manipulation and seek avenues for retribution or justice. Mir Rabiullah's retaliation can be understood as an attempt to revive a sense of agency and reclaim power in the face of his unresolved trauma. “Young people embrace militancy due to multiple factors. These factors could be local as well as global in nature. Significant factors fueling militancy and extremism in Pakistan include spill over from Afghanistan, resentment to War on Terror, poor law and order situation, justice denied or delayed, short cut culture, lack of education, poverty (lack of food, shelter), corruption and nepotism, absence of nation building, broken family bonds, breakdown of civic facilities, external actors – both state and non state, religious seminaries and sectarianism, obscurantist ideologies, and feudal culture” (234). Irshad's words underline diverse factors that fuel hostility and extremism, furnishing a wider socio-political context for Mir Rabiullah's radicalization. The spill-over effects from Afghanistan, resentment towards the War on Terror, deficient law and order situation, illiteracy, corruption, poverty, and obscurantist ideologies are among the factors cited. These factors mirror external powers, systemic defeats, and social dynamics, providing fertile ground to harvest extremist ideologies.

Mir Rabiullah's belligerent behavior and involvement with a group involved in suicide bombing can be seen as an outcome of the intersection of personal trauma and the larger socio-political factors defined by Irshad. Mann's concept highlights the role of assertive ideologies that provide a bridge between reason, morality, and emotion. Mir Rabiullah's traumatic experience, blended with the allure of extremist ideologies that offer a sense of purpose, belonging, and retribution, aligns with this notion. The excerpt from the novel and Irshad's words exhibit how personal trauma, external facets, and ideological manipulation can expand an individual's radicalization and involvement in extremist activities. Mir Rabiullah's journey from being a victim to becoming a leader of the extremist group emphasizes the complex interplay between personal experiences, external influences, and ideological motivations debated by Mann's concept.

The extract from the novel, 'Good. I want you to flush everything out of your system so that your devotion to the cause is complete' (10) exemplifies the manipulative tactics employed by Mir Rabiullah's leader to ensure his unwavering commitment to the extremist cause. Mann's concept of ideological killers, childhood trauma, and psychological reasons shed light on the leader's efforts to exploit Mir's vulnerabilities and keep him bound to the group. Mann's concept highlights how powerful ideologies provide a bridge between reason, morality, and emotion. Mir's leader knows the significance of ensuring full adherence to the extremist cause, and to accomplish this, he uses psychological manipulation. By encouraging Mir to "flush everything out of your system," the leader seeks to obliterate any suspicions or disputes within Mir's mind and solidify his devotion to the cause. This psychological tactic aligns with Mann's view that ideological killers may require a leap of faith and emotional commitment, making the reason morally and emotionally sensible.

In the context of childhood trauma, this can be analyzed as the leader manipulating Mir on emotional grounds. Having experienced significant trauma, Mir may seek solace, belonging, and confirmation. The leader controls this element of Mir's psychology by furnishing him with material rewards and emotional support, assuring that Mir's devotion to the cause remains unchanged. The lines from the novel illustrate how Mir Rabiullah's leader employs psychological manipulation and exploitation of Mir's vulnerabilities to

solidify his commitment to the extremist cause. The leader ensures that Mir's devotion remains unwavering by offering comfort, emotional support, and material rewards.

“I don’t have words to condemn these terrorists, but I assure you, my son, that my organisation will bear all expenses that are incurred during the course of your brother’s treatment. He will be treated privately” (121). Mir Rabiullah manipulates and exploits Ali's vulnerable situation to further his extremist agenda. Mir benefits from Ali's challenging situation when his brother gets injured in the bomb blast and traps him in his ideology. Ali, facing monetary issues and incapable of affording the best treatment for his brother, proves to be an easy prey to Mir's notion. Mir uses Ali's vulnerability to earn Ali's trust and loyalty. Mir guarantees Ali that his organization will bear all the expenditures of his brother's treatment and that it will be done privately. Mir seeks to build a sense of indebtedness in Ali towards him and his organization by doing so. He pretends to be pious and religiously devoted, aligning with Mann's concept of powerful ideologies that bridge reason, morality, and emotion. His portrayal of himself as a deeply devout and religious man who does everything for God further strengthens the emotional commitment he seeks from Ali. This emotional manipulation plays on Ali's faith and religious beliefs, making him more inclined to trust and follow Mir's lead.

Accepting the proposal of financial assistance and support for his brother's treatment makes Ali emotionally indebted to Mir. This incident marks the start of their relationship, where Ali starts believing in Mir's cause and finding himself inclined to do anything for him. In this way, the quote illustrates how Mir Rabiullah uses emotional exploitation, psychological manipulation, and assurances of aid to entrap Ali in his extremist ideology. This aligns with Mann's concept of ideological killers, highlighting the power of ideologies in shaping individuals' actions and decisions through emotional and moral appeals.

‘I swear to God, Ali, I didn’t know the man would blow up the whole place. I simply thought he wanted to get rid of Elahi’ (185). These lines demonstrate how Mir Rabiullah uses manipulation and psychological tactics to control and trap Ali. Mir's assertion is a cunning attempt to justify his activities and alienate himself from the damaging act. He swears he was oblivious to the man's intentions to blow up the whole place, and his only

motive was to get rid of Elahi. By making this declaration, Mir represents himself as clear and not involved in improper or detrimental activities. This aligns with Mann's concept of ideological killers, as they often use emotional appeals and manipulation to explain their steps and separate themselves from the brutality they perpetrate. Mir's intent behind justifying himself to Ali is to preserve Ali's trust and belief in him. Ali is probably Mir's next prey for an extremist mission, and Mir wants to ensure that Ali stays under his influence and command. By making Ali believe in his integrity, Mir aims to keep him engaged in the extremist cause and inclined to carry out whatever task Mir has designed for him.

Subsequently, in the text, Mir reveals his true colors to Ali, completely trapping him in his trap of manipulation. He corners Ali, making sure that Ali has no other options or means of escape. This psychological entrapment is a common tactic ideological killers use to control their followers. By removing any perceived alternatives, Mir increases his hold on Ali and compels him to comply with his extremist agenda. These lines depict Mir's psychological power over Ali and how he exploits Ali's vulnerability and trust to advance his violent cause. It also highlights the psychological trauma that individuals like Mir may have experienced, leading them to become perpetrators of violence and manipulate others into their ideology. Overall, the lines exemplify the intricate interplay of psychological trauma and manipulation in the context of ideological killers, as depicted through Mir's actions and interactions with Ali.

“The Mir’s grin widened, the wrinkles around his eyes standing out in sharp relief. ‘Live with myself? My boy, how can you live with yourself? How can you not feel the exhilaration that comes with the deed you’ve performed? Has God deserted you so completely? ‘You call killing dozens of people God’s work?’” (187). This extract indicates the psychological state and self-made spiritual beliefs of Mir Rabiullah, the main character, and his explanation for his fierce actions. When Ali encounters Mir after discovering the outcomes of their damaging move, Mir reacts with a grin and ecstasy. “‘Infidels! The whole lot of them. Infidels! Not innocents’ (187). He implies that the action they have executed should stimulate a sensation of excitement and satisfaction as if it is part of God's plan. This aligns with Mann's concept of ideological killers, as they often emanate a sense of

meaning and righteousness from their violent stunts, perceiving them as fulfilling a higher calling or divine mandate.

However, Ali opposes Mir's view that killing dozens of people cannot be God's plan. He questions Mir's self-made holy beliefs and tries to bring reason and morality into the discussion. Ali's reaction hints at a conflict of ideologies between the two characters, with Ali sticking to a more conventional and humane rendition of religious teachings. On the other hand, Mir's beliefs have been shaped by his traumatic history and desire for retribution and anarchy. "How could the Mir tell him that his true nature was his thirst for blood, for anarchy?" (215). Here, he confirms that he wants blood and anarchy. So, the reasons behind his act of perpetration are political and personal, leading to psychological issues. Mir's stern and inflexible conduct can be attributed to the deep psychological spots left by the loss of his family in a bomb blast and the state's dormancy. These subjective traumas have fueled his thirst for revenge, directing him to embrace fierce extremist ideologies as a mechanism of seeking vengeance and causing anarchy. His actions are navigated by an amalgamation of political and personal reasons, further highlighting the complexity of his character as an ideological killer.

The words also emphasize the destructive allure of extremist ideologies for people like Mir, who find meaning and a sense of individuality in their violent acts. They consider their mission sacred, ignoring the human worth and suffering inflicted upon harmless lives. Hence, the lines from the novel display the psychological complexities and self-made religious beliefs of Mir Rabiullah, shedding light on the intertwining of psychological trauma, personal motives, and ideological fervor that drive his acts of perpetration. They depict how individuals can become ideological killers, exploited by past incidents, desire for revenge, and a sense of righteousness derived from extremist beliefs.

'I don't have a family, do I? You think I've tricked you into performing some unforgivable deed, that I didn't have the resources to have someone else do if I wanted?' He shot Ali a dirty look. 'You fool. I did it for your own benefit' (187). This quote offers insight into Mir Rabiullah's manipulative personality and his attempt to use Ali's emotional vulnerabilities. Family is essential in Pakistani culture, providing love, help, and a sense of belonging. Mir, who has lost his own family in a bomb blast, knows the dynamic value of



family and understands Ali's deep love and care for his own family. Mir utilizes this understanding to exploit Ali emotionally and retain his loyalty to their cause. Mir subtly reminds Ali of the emptiness he feels from losing his loved ones by saying he does not have a family. This act allows Mir to establish a tie with Ali, making him think their sense of loss is similar. Mir represents himself as someone who genuinely cares for Ali's family and claims to have executed the violent act for their advantage, further manipulating Ali's emotions and loyalty. Mir also sabotages Ali's belief that he was deceived into committing perpetration, asserting he had the resources to carry out the stunt if he wanted. This tactic backs the idea that Ali's acts were not forced but a voluntary contribution to their shared cause.

Showing Ali a "dirty look" indicates Mir's attempt to threaten and control Ali emotionally. He wants Ali to feel obliged to him for apparently working for the betterment of his family. Mir intends to breed loyalty and reliance in Ali, confirming he remains determined to their extremist ideology. These lines describe Mir's exploitative and cunning nature, using his understanding of the importance of family and Ali's emotional vulnerabilities to keep him intensely involved in their extremist cause. The psychological trauma of losing his family and the attraction to a shared goal drive Mir to manipulate others for his ideological goals. This description aligns with Mann's concept of ideological killers, who can use emotions and hold personal traumas to further their extremist agendas.

“He remembered how her eyes would dance, how she would come alive in the house when she cast away the burqa and came away laughing” (213). These words shed light on Mir Rabiullah's emotional connection with his mother and the lasting impact of losing her on his psyche. A mother holds a unique place in a person's life, symbolizing love, care, and selflessness. Mir's mother was a source of unconditional love and affection for him, caring for him and bringing joy into their home. Her laughter and lively presence left a profound impression on Mir's memory. However, Mir's family tragedy occurred when he was young, resulting in the loss of his mother. This traumatic event left a lasting emotional scar on him, and he finds it difficult to forget her, even after many years. The memories of his mother's vibrant and happy moments, especially when she cast away the burqa, represent a time of joy and freedom in Mir's life. Her ability to come alive and laugh in their home was a significant source of happiness for him.

Mir's emotional distress is further exacerbated by the societal pressures and toxic environment in which his mother lived. Moving on after losing a spouse can be challenging in a conservative society, and Mir's mother faced societal judgment and rejection. This added layer of trauma may have contributed to Mir's eventual alignment with extremist ideologies, seeking a sense of belonging and identity. The lines highlight how Mir's memories of his mother reflect a longing for happier times and a deep emotional attachment to her. His inability to forget her and the lasting impact of her loss showcase the psychological trauma he experienced due to her death. Without proper support and healing, Mir's grief and emotional turmoil may have contributed to his vulnerability to extremist ideologies.

Mann's concept of ideological killers emphasizes the role of psychological factors and personal traumas in shaping an individual's path toward perpetration. In Mir's case, the loss of his mother and the subsequent emotional distress are significant elements in understanding his involvement in extremist activities. His longing for the past and the emotional void created by her absence may have contributed to his search for meaning and identity within an extremist group as he seeks to fill the void left by his family's tragic demise.

In the context of the above discussion, the lines, "He remembered killing her with his bare hands, watching in wonder how the life bled out from her eyes, leaving them still and vacant. He had relished the act. 'Wretched woman, your mother. She should be living a life of chastity and silence after your father's death, but she's been exchanging letters with that postman' (213-214). These lines provide a disturbing insight into Mir Rabiullah's actions and the impact of toxic cultural norms on his psyche.

The concept of honor killings is tragically prevalent in some communities, including parts of Pakistan. In Mir Rabiullah's case, the toxic culture and fixed ideas of honor could not accept his mother moving on after his father's death. Instead of accepting her right to pursue a new life, society turned against her, nurturing a climate of hostility and violence.

As a young boy, Mir saw his mother forming a relationship with a man, which triggered his sheer agitation. Influenced by the toxic environment and his extremist leader,

Abuzar, Mir felt justified in taking extreme action against his mother. The killing of his mother, whom he should have loved and cared for, was converted into a twisted sense of honor and vengeance. Mir's enjoyment of the act and lack of guilt reflects the deeply rooted hatred and psychological disruption he faced due to the toxic culture he was immersed in. His leader, Abuzar, further fueled his hatred and solidified the ideology that led him down this violent path.

The incident showcases the psychological issues Mir grapples with, emanating from a combination of personal traumas and the influence of extremist ideologies. As cited in the lines, the void in his heart symbolizes the emotional and psychological scars left by the heinous act he committed. Mir's actions display Mann's concept of ideological killers, as he was driven by powerful ideologies that provided a bridge between reason, morality, and emotion. The toxic cultural norms and extremist beliefs he adopted served as the catalysts for his transformation into a perpetrator. The tragic story of Mir Rabiullah stresses the value of addressing psychological trauma and dismantling toxic cultural norms to stop individuals from being led astray by extremist ideologies. It emphasizes the dire need for societal transformation and support systems to steer agitated individuals away from violence and hatred.

“Mir Rabiullah had never regretted killing his mother. She was a whore whom he had caught red-handed, blushing as the postman took her hand and brought it to his lips in the alley behind their house. But then, why did he still miss her? As if there was a void inside him that ached to be filled. If only he could forget her and live his life in peace, but no, she came back to him every day, and especially when he was at his most vulnerable” (214). The aforestated passage offers profound insights into the enduring psychological repercussions of Mir's distressing history. It portrays that even though he shows no remorse for killing his mother, his emotional impact runs deep. Despite the passage of six decades, haunting memories of that fateful day continue to torment him, casting a pervasive shadow over his life. The act of taking his mother's life justified through his distorted ideology, has left him psychologically scarred. Mir's derogatory description of his mother and the compromising situation he claims to have witnessed reveal deeply ingrained toxic and misogynistic beliefs stemming from the extremist environment he was exposed to. These

beliefs underscore the complex interplay of psychological trauma and influential ideological forces that have shaped Mir's mindset and behaviors.

Moreover, the lines shed light on the internal turmoil Mir Rabiullah wrestles with. Although he outwardly lacks regret, an emotional void persists, yearning to fill the profound emptiness resulting from the traumatic event. This void serves as a constant reminder of his troubled past, reflecting the enduring psychological wounds inflicted by the violent act he committed.

Mir Rabiullah's ongoing struggle to attain peace and overcome the memory of his mother's death shows how childhood trauma and extremist ideologies can profoundly affect an individual's psyche. The persistent resurgence of these memories, particularly during vulnerable moments, highlights the deep-seated psychological challenges he confronts. Moreover, Mir's experiences align with Mann's notion of ideological killers, as his actions and emotional turmoil are intricately linked to the potent ideological convictions he absorbed. The deterioration of his psychological state further underscores the enduring impact of the trauma and ideological indoctrination, leaving lasting imprints on his mental health.

'Leave me alone, Mother,' he murmured. 'It has been sixty years. Leave me in peace (214).' These lines indicate the deep emotional disruption and psychological pain that Mir Rabiullah is still encountering after so many years. Mir's request to his deceased mother shows his unresolved anguish and the haunting impact of the traumatic incident on his psyche. The fact that Mir still senses his mother's company and talks to her even after sixty years stresses the lasting nature of psychological trauma. Mir's paranoid behavior, where he cannot grasp that his mother is no longer alive, further underscores the lasting impact of childhood trauma on an individual's mental health. "She must have been very young when he had killed her, hardly in her mid-twenties, he realised now" (214). Mir's psychological state gains added intricacy with the realization that his mother was very young when he took her life, introducing another layer of complexity to his emotions. Guilt begins to consume him as he reflects on the immorality of his past actions, deepening his remorse for the brutality he once committed. The weight of this guilt further contributes to his depression and worsens his already delicate psychological well-being. Given his current

isolation and lack of a support system, Mir becomes even more susceptible to the effects of his psychological issues. Unfortunately, societal norms, which uphold traditional notions of manhood and discourage open discussions about mental health, prevent him from addressing his problems openly. Consequently, he conceals his struggles from the world, yet he remains haunted internally by paranoia and guilt.

“Rabiullah’s mother’s face flashed before him, her bright, evergreen smile that he had so ruthlessly erased. His mother hadn’t struggled when he had choked her; she had looked at him as if she understood everything. But then, just before he had panicked and let go of her, her eyes had turned upwards and gone vacant. Forever” (214-215). Mir's emotional turmoil is intensified by the haunting flashback of his mother's face, accompanied by her enduring smile. The memory of her gazing at him with understanding, moments before her eyes lost their light forever, lingers in his mind, showcasing the depth of his remorse and regret for his past deeds. These lines eloquently depict the enduring psychological repercussions of traumatic experiences and the profound impact of guilt and shame on one's mental state. Mir's ongoing struggle to find inner peace and move beyond his past serves as a poignant reminder of the enduring scars that childhood trauma and ideological indoctrination can imprint on a person's psyche.

The preceding discussion illustrates the intricate interplay between psychological trauma and Mann's concept of ideological killers. Mir's distressing childhood encounter with a fatal bomb blast that claimed his family profoundly shaped his character, leaving him emotionally scarred and driven by a desire for revenge. Abuzar, his leader, manipulated and brainwashed him, further fueling Mir's commitment to his ideological beliefs and involvement in violent acts. Mir's actions, stemming from personal trauma and powerful ideological convictions, exemplify how psychological factors and childhood experiences significantly influence an individual's path toward perpetration.

The lines describing Mir's ongoing struggle with guilt and remorse over his mother's death serve as a testament to the enduring impact of childhood trauma on his psyche, emphasizing the lasting psychological consequences of such events. Mir's character poignantly exemplifies the intricate convergence of psychological trauma and ideological influences, resulting in a deeply conflicted and disturbed individual. This

portrayal underscores the complex relationship between individual psychology and the broader context of ideological violence.

#### **4.2.1 The Interplay of Politics and Perpetration**

Mir Rabiullah emerged as a captivating figure in the realm of perpetration, projecting himself as a philanthropist running a whole system through a charitable organization. However, political agendas were concealed beneath this altruistic facade that fueled their actions. Mir and his allies sought power and control, aspiring to govern the country based on their demands and interests. Their dramatic shift from initially seeking Western support for progress to resorting to terrorism was motivated by their aim to pressure the government and distance the West from their homeland. To achieve their objectives, they meticulously trained and indoctrinated young individuals, manipulating their minds to the extent that they were willing to sacrifice their own lives in pursuit of honor, revenge, and societal approval. These orchestrated sacrifices, led by individuals like Mir and his leader, represented a chilling political triumph for their cause, illustrating the complex interplay of politics and perpetration in their quest for dominance.

“Cowards. Playing right into the hands of the Americans. And these Pakistanis... they were no better. So used to bowing and scraping after the British, they were doing the same for the Americans now. He wanted to see them bow to the Leader like the slaves they were, only so he could land the deathblows on their necks. It had been too long since he had heard the sound of a bomb” (211). In these lines, Mir's leader sounds frustrated and contemptuous of those he sees as impotent and subservient to foreign forces, specifically the Americans. He perceives the Pakistanis as having bowed and scraped to the British in the past and now doing the same for the Americans, which he considers a sign of cowardice and lack of freedom. A thirst for rule and power over the country drives the leader's political reason. He visualizes a society where everyone submits to him as the supreme authority, and he appreciates the idea of imposing deathblows on those he senses as his opponents. Mir's unyielding allegiance to the leader's ideology makes him ready to go to extreme heights, including recruiting and exploiting young people to reach their political goals and

creating terror to pressure the government. This emphasizes the interplay of political reasons and ideological grounds behind perpetration, as people like Mir and his leader use violence and fear to maintain dominance and control over the society they foresee.

‘With the government preparing to launch an offensive and the West supporting them, how do you expect us to survive? Do you want to go back and live in starvation?’ ‘The one you wish to die will be dead in a week,’ he murmured softly. The Leader laughed, a searing merciless laugh” (212-213). These lines feature a dialogue between Mir and his leader, providing insight into their political reasons and the self-serving agenda behind their actions. The background contains the government's preparations for an offensive and the help they receive from the West. Mir expresses concerns about survival in the face of the upcoming offensive and the West's aid for the government. He talks about the issue of possible starvation if they fail to take measures. However, the leader overlooks Mir's concerns and discloses plans to annihilate someone within a week. This incident reveals that Mir and his leader are not genuinely concerned about the community or the people's interests. Rather, they carry their political agendas and personal motivations. For Mir, his traumatic history, witnessing the death of his family in a bomb blast, might have increased his passion for vengeance and retribution. On the other hand, the leader's immediate purpose is power and authority. He seeks superiority and is inclined to go to any extent to acquire it, even employing brainwashing strategies on young people to exploit them into carrying out suicide attacks.

Their manipulative tactics involve brainwashing young recruits with the idea that their sacrifices through suicide attacks will give others a new life and have meaningful implications for the community. This illustrates the interplay of political motives and ideological reasons behind perpetration. While individuals like Mir might have personal reasons, such as seeking redemption or revenge, the leaders exploit these motives for their selfish gains, like gaining community approval, achieving political success, and consolidating power. Their acts showcase a disregard for the lives of others and emphasize the shadier facets of ideological killers driven by political agendas.

“‘Kill them all.’ The Leader’s smile was savage, almost on the verge of madness. ‘Kill every last one of them, Rabiullah or so help me God, I will vanquish the country’”

(213). In these lines, the Leader's violent and manic demeanor is on full display as he gives Mir a chilling command to "kill them all." This incident further highlights the political causes behind perpetration and how Mir and his Leader are driven by their thirst for power and control. The Leader's savage smile and threat to "vanquish the country" if his orders are not followed demonstrate the extent to which they are willing to go to achieve their goals. The mention of galvanized individuals linked with community-based institutions indicates how Mir and his Leader manipulate and recruit young people to carry out their violent plans. They exploit and use their followers, presenting their actions as favoring the community when a thirst for blood and anarchy drives their true nature. "How could the Mir tell him that his true nature was his thirst for blood, for anarchy?" (215). These words further solidify that their motivations are not rooted in religion but in their desire for power and chaos. They are power-hungry people willing to do anything, including destruction and mass murder, to attain religious and political power. Their acts showcase how political reasons greatly impact their perpetration, surpassing any genuine religious instructions they might assert to follow. These lines underline the interplay of political motives and personal aims driving Mir and his Leader's fierce actions. It underscores their willingness to take drastic measures to reach their goals, displaying a darker side of ideological killers who exploit and manipulate their adherents for their greedy agenda.

"'We have nothing against the Government,' he lied. 'We only want to display a show of strength, a sense of resilience against their unfair attitude toward us. As soon as we manage to finish off the dangerous influence of these men on the government, these men who are so heavily involved with the sinister force of the West, we will enter negotiations for a progressive and peaceful Pakistan. We might not even need to kill anyone. All we need is some intel' (216). Mir continues to mask his true intentions in these lines and presents a contorted narrative to justify their violent acts. He deceptively claims that their intentions are not against the government but only to showcase power and resilience. However, the truth behind their actions indicates their power-hungry character and aim to take control of the government, enforcing their agenda. Mir's assertion that they may not even resort to killing but instead lean on gathering intelligence further reveals their manipulative and cunning tactics. They are willing to use innocent people as pawns in their political game to reach their goals. The reference to the "sinister force of the West" suggests



their perception of the West as a danger and their desire to destroy any mark it might have on the government. This excerpt stresses how political motives drive Mir and his leader's perpetration. They have meticulously planned their actions to consolidate power and gain control over the government. By masking their true intentions and using the weaknesses of their followers, they manipulate others to advance their political agenda. This underscores the interplay of political motives and personal ambitions among ideological killers as they exploit the political climate to further their interests, disregarding the lives and well-being of others.

“We want destruction. We want buildings to come down. We want terror to reign over Karachi tonight.’

‘InshAllah,’ murmured the driver. ‘We will have this city by force if she won’t come to us willingly’ (238).

In these lines, the conversation between Mir and the driver mirrors their tireless adherence to their destructive ideologies and their urge to use terror to acquire power over Karachi. Their primary goal is to create chaos and fear, eventually gaining political power and control. This extract proves the political causes behind their perpetration, as they strive to establish a system that aligns with their radical religious beliefs. Irshad’s words, “Religious extremism is responsible for creating division on religious grounds and is responsible for violence against followers of other religions (229)” further reinforces the idea that religious extremism and division based on religious basis play a substantial role in the violence perpetrated by such groups. Mir and his leader are driven by their religious ideologies, which fuel their violent acts against adherents of different religions and even their people. “Terrorist groups offer social support, and often legitimize their violent acts by viewing themselves as genuine military entities” (504). The mention of Ali being pushed into perpetration stresses the psychological exploitation and pressure of terrorist groups to recruit and manipulate people like him. These groups furnish social support and introduce themselves as fair military commodities to legitimize their moves and earn fidelity from their followers. In Ali's case, he was entrapped and manipulated into executing their violent acts, making him a victim rather than a perpetrator. Hence, the interplay of political causes, religious extremism, and psychological manipulation aligns

with Mann's concept of ideological killers. It demonstrates how such groups manipulate individuals like Ali, use terror to fulfill their political goals, and create division and brutality while chasing power. The truth behind their activities is far from the well-wisher vision they display, accentuating the complex and multifaceted nature of perpetration in the context of political and ideological motivations.

In conclusion, the aforementioned instances shed light on the link between political agendas and perpetration, particularly concerning Mann's concept of ideological killers. Mir Rabiullah and his leader exemplify individuals driven by power-hungry ideologies, employing terror and violence to achieve their political goals. Their manipulation of young individuals like Ali demonstrates how psychological trauma and coercion can lead to acts of perpetration. Ali's involvement in violent acts was not motivated by his intentions but rather by his desperate circumstances, as his family's safety was at stake, leaving him with no other apparent option to protect them. The perpetrators behind Ali's involvement were Mir and his leader, exploiting his vulnerability and coercing him into committing violent acts. Given Ali's circumstances and external pressures, blaming him solely for his actions would be unjustified.

Mir's manipulation and implantation of destructive ideologies in Ali's mind highlight the psychological strategies employed by ideological killers to control and manipulate individuals for political gain. This illustrates how political agendas can intertwine with acts of perpetration, as those in power seek to utilize violence and terror to further their objectives. In this context, the discussion also aligns with Irshad's perspective on religious extremism and division, emphasizing the role of extreme ideologies in driving violent acts against others. The combination of political causes, psychological manipulation, and ideological beliefs underscores the complex and multifaceted nature of perpetration in pursuing political power. Overall, the analysis of Mir Rabiullah's actions, Ali's coerced involvement, and the broader interplay between political agendas and perpetration underscore the importance of comprehending the factors contributing to the efforts of ideological killers. This understanding is crucial in addressing and preventing the devastating consequences of such violent ideologies on individuals and societies alike.

### 4.3 The Toll of Moral Neglect

When examining perpetrators and their actions, it becomes crucial to understand the concept of moral responsibility. Dana K. Nelkin emphasizes the significance of comprehending the motives and influences that drive individuals to commit violent acts. According to Nelkin, holding individuals accountable for their deeds while considering the underlying reasons is essential for a complete understanding of moral responsibility. In this section, the researcher explores Nelkin's concept and applies it to instances depicted in the novel "*In the Company of Strangers*." By doing so, the researcher aims to reveal how the deficiency of moral responsibility can play a decisive role in driving individuals toward perpetration. The novel provides a unique opportunity to investigate the complex interplay of human agency, empathy, and vulnerability in the context of violent acts.

The researcher carefully examines the characters' actions and investigates how societal, emotional, and environmental factors influence their choices. Understanding the nuanced motivations behind perpetration offers insights into the complexities of human behavior and the implications of moral responsibility. The exploration of the narrative allows for an analysis of how the deficiency of moral responsibility, as suggested by Nelkin, contributes to the characters' involvement in violent acts. This approach aims to expand the understanding of moral agency and the underlying reasons that lead individuals down paths they might not have chosen otherwise. Ultimately, this exploration prompts us to question the nature of responsibility, accountability, and the intricate influences that can drive individuals toward perpetration.

“Ali had given into her offer after a horrid night spent listening to Hussain’s sobs” (117) . In the context of Dana K. Nelkin's concept of Moral Responsibility, these lines portray how a lack of moral responsibility can lead to perpetration. Ali, a typical news reporter, becomes entangled with Mir Rabiullah and his gang after his brother suffers a devastating injury in a bomb blast. Struggling to afford his brother's treatment, Ali becomes vulnerable and seeks help from various sources, unknowingly connecting with Mir's organization, which offers to cover all the expenses. Initially hesitant, Ali contemplates the potential consequences of affiliating with a questionable group. However, witnessing his

brother Hussain's suffering, he succumbs to the allure of their assistance. Here, we notice how external factors, such as the emotional distress of a loved one, cloud Ali's judgment and moral decision-making.

As Ali becomes indebted to Mir's organization, he finds himself involved in uncomfortable activities, yet he complies in return for their help. This illustrates how a lack of moral agency and responsibility can lead individuals to compromise their values and act against their conscience. Ali's attempt to free himself from guilt reflects his internal struggle with the consequences of his actions. He realizes that Mir is exploiting his vulnerable state for personal gain. In this scenario, Ali's moral responsibility is undermined by external pressure from his brother's suffering and dependency on Mir's assistance. These lines underscore the significance of understanding the complex interplay of moral responsibility and external influences in individuals' actions. Ali's journey highlights how the deficiency of moral responsibility can lead individuals to make choices they might not have made under different circumstances. It serves as a cautionary tale about the potential consequences of compromising one's moral principles and succumbing to external pressures, ultimately leading to involvement in perpetration.

“I’ve received word just now that your dear mother and brother have kindly joined us in one of our centres in Lahore. Hussain and Jamila, if I’m not mistaken. I remember paying for your brother’s prosthetic leg. I should learn to know a bad investment when I see one. What a waste of a good prosthetic leg” (235). Mir Rabiullah, the antagonist, seizes the opportunity to exploit Ali's vulnerable situation by offering help with his brother's prosthetic leg. Initially, this offer was a gesture of goodwill and support during a difficult time for Ali's family. However, as the story unfolds, it becomes evident that Mir harbors ulterior motives. Ali attempts to distance himself from Mir and his organization, but Mir resorts to kidnapping Ali's mother and brother, who have developed a friendly bond with him. Mir manipulates and exploits Ali's moral responsibility towards his loved ones by involving Ali's family. He threatens and blackmails Ali into compliance, using the safety and well-being of his family as leverage.

Ali's decision to yield to Mir's demands illustrates the impact of external pressure on moral decision-making. Mir's lack of moral responsibility is evident as he exploits Ali's

family's predicament to control him. This underscores the dangerous consequences of individuals like Mir, who exploit vulnerabilities and use favors to gain power and control. Moreover, Ali's situation highlights ordinary individuals' challenges when confronted with powerful and manipulative figures like Mir. The cost of a prosthetic leg exceeds a normal person's means, leaving Ali highly dependent on Mir's assistance. Mir's exploitation of this dependency leaves Ali with limited options, compelling him to comply with Mir's demands to ensure his family's safety.

These lines emphasize how a lack of moral responsibility in individuals like Mir enables them to exploit and manipulate others for their benefit. Simultaneously, it sheds light on how individuals facing difficult circumstances and limited choices might compromise their moral principles under external pressure. This intricate interplay of moral responsibility, power dynamics, and vulnerability in the context of perpetration underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of human behavior and decision-making.

“‘Let them go,’ Ali whispered.

‘You forgot the magic word.’

‘Please,’ Ali pleaded. ‘I’ll do anything.’

‘Anything?’ the Mir echoed.

‘Yes, anything!’

‘Well, then why didn’t you say so before? As it happens, I have the perfect task for you, my boy. The perfect task” (236).

In light of Dana K. Nelkin's idea of Moral Responsibility, the provided excerpt demonstrates how a lack of moral responsibility can lead to perpetration. Ali's desperation to protect his family forces him to beg Mir to release them, and in doing so, he inadvertently places himself in a helpless situation. Mir uses Ali's plea and emotionally exploits him, making him feel insulted and vulnerable. Mir exercises control and establishes his dominance over Ali by insisting that Ali say the "magic word" and forcing him to beg. In his weak state, Ali decides to do whatever Mir asks, directing him to engage in a treacherous act of perpetration - a bomb blast to help Mir's leader attain control over the government. Ali's deficiency of moral responsibility is obvious as he is ready to commit

detrimental acts to rescue his family, eventually becoming a puppet in Mir's wicked plans. The lines highlight the destructive consequences of permitting distress and lack of moral responsibility to shadow one's judgment, directing people like Ali to commit deeds they would otherwise consider morally incorrect.

“‘Do it and their misery ends,’ Mir Rabiullah had said quietly, one large hand caressing his shoulder like a father trying to knock sense into an errant son. ‘Bring glory to your country, my boy, to your family’” (237). Mir Rabiullah manipulates Ali on emotional grounds and a sense of duty towards his family and country. By representing himself as a caring and fatherly figure, Mir controls Ali's perception of him and plants a sense of obligation. Ali is emotionally powerless due to his family's dependence on Mir's help in times of need, specifically in helping Ali's brother, Hussain, with a prosthetic leg. Feeling obligated to Mir, Ali becomes susceptible to his manipulative tactics. Mir's lack of moral responsibility is apparent as he uses Ali's weaknesses and emotional coercion to push him toward perpetration. By highlighting glory and the betterment of his family and country, Mir drives Ali to execute destructive acts without considering the moral implications of his actions. This situation highlights the detrimental effect of manipulating someone's sense of responsibility and familial obligation, leading them toward perpetration without critically examining the ethical ramifications of their deeds.

“For he knew it the moment the Mir had shown him the video of his family that he'd do anything for them. Kill or get killed. He didn't care” (238) . Family is the most crucial possession a man could have. Especially when you lose your father and you are the only caretaker of your family, you are responsible for all their needs and even their safety. A man can do anything and everything when he sees his family in danger, and he knows only he can protect them from that misery. It is usual for the people in power to use a person's situation against him when they want someone to do anything for their benefit. As depicted in numerous texts, movies, and dramas, when influential people plan to overthrow the government or any party, they use the commoners to try to meet both ends. They help them with something, create a soft spot for themselves in their hearts, and later use them for their tenacities. Mir did the same to Ali. He used Ali when he was in his most vulnerable

state. All Mir had to do was show Ali a video of his family to make him accept his defeat. When Ali saw the video, he knew he could do anything for his innocent mother and brother. He knew he could even kill anyone to safeguard his family. The provided lines further demonstrate how a lack of moral responsibility can lead to perpetration.

‘The Mir will kill your family if you chicken out, you piece of shit,’ one of the men in the front spat out. ‘Remember, you get as close as you can to Bilal before you press the button. And don’t you dare blow yourself up on the lawns. We want destruction. We want buildings to come down. We want terror to reign over Karachi tonight.’

‘InshAllah,’ murmured the driver. ‘We will have this city by force if she won’t come to us willingly’ (238) . Ali is coerced and threatened by Mir's followers, instilling fear and helplessness. They use the threat against his family as leverage to ensure his compliance with their violent agenda. Reminding Ali of Mir's power over his loved ones eliminates any possibility of him backing out from the task. The followers manipulate Ali's moral responsibility towards his family, making him believe he has no choice but to carry out the destructive act. The absence of moral responsibility in Mir and his followers is evident as they resort to coercion and intimidation to force Ali into perpetrating an act of violence against his will. This instance underscores the consequences of disregarding moral responsibility and exploiting individuals' vulnerabilities to manipulate them into engaging in acts they would not have otherwise committed.

The above-stated instances shed light on the importance of understanding the causes and reasons behind perpetration before assigning moral responsibility. Dana K. Nelkin's concept emphasizes that individuals may lack the capacity to comprehend the reasons for their actions or translate them into appropriate behavior. According to Nelkin, “The idea is that people are not responsible for their actions when they lack either the capacity to grasp reasons for acting (or not acting, as the case may be) or the capacity to translate those reasons into action (or omission) (445).” It indicates that to hold people accountable and impose sanctions on them for doing something that was not supposed to be done in any other way would be unfair. Ali's situation exemplifies this notion, as he is pushed into perpetration due to external pressures and threats against his family. He finds

himself trapped in a web of coercion and manipulation, making it impossible to act otherwise. The term "perpetrator" seems inadequate to describe Ali, as he becomes an instrument of the causes and people who forced him into this dire situation. Throughout the novel, Ali's character transforms from a news reporter to a suicide bomber. Still, it is essential to recognize that perpetrators are not inherently evil or predisposed to violence. Instead, they are often products of their circumstances, driven to commit acts they would not have chosen under different circumstances. Ali's journey exemplifies the complex interplay of external factors and personal agency, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of moral responsibility in the context of perpetration.

#### **4.4 The employment of Ideologies as a Veneer to Obfuscate Criminal Pursuits in '*The Runaways*':**

In the compelling novel "*The Runaways*" by Fatima Bhutto, the characters' lives are filled with suffering and sorrow. Among the three main protagonists, Anita Rose faces immense struggles, haunted by painful events that push her toward chaos. Despite her efforts, peace remains elusive as she tolerates teasing from her school peers, adding to the tension in her life. This ordeal transforms her into a fierce individual adept at managing two personas—one private, filled with painful memories, and the other projected to the world. Hailing from a low-income family, Anita's mother, Zenobia, takes on the family's responsibility after her husband's death by working as a masseuse for a wealthy woman. The tables turn for them when Anita starts attending an American school, marking the beginning of her dual life. Amid her insecurities, Anita's sex tape goes viral, leading to socio-psychological problems that draw her into an entirely different world. She adopts a new identity, Layla, and joins the Ummah Movement.

Monty, deeply in love with Anita, strives to keep her happy despite his lack of self-confidence. He is the only son of wealthy parents, and Anita becomes his sole possession. However, when her sex tape is leaked, Monty is shattered but remains devoted to her and embarks on a quest to find her after she joins the Ummah Movement in Iraq. Meanwhile,



Sunny, another character, faces rejection due to his brown skin and religion, leaving him without friends and social life. Struggling to meet his father's high expectations, Sunny grapples with anxiety and loneliness, using various means to quell his fears. However, his life takes a different turn when he encounters his confident and charming cousin Ozair. Oz introduces him to the Ummah Movement in Iraq, offering an ideology that promises mental satisfaction and peace. For Sunny, the Ummah Movement and religion become powerful ideologies, leading him to leave everything behind and join the movement in Iraq.

In Fatima Bhutto's narrative, various factors contribute to the characters' journeys toward becoming runaways. Sunny's constant struggle for acceptance and understanding in society drives him to seek solace in the ideology offered by the Ummah Movement. The novel delves into the complexities of the characters' psychological states and the influences that lead them to adopt ideological beliefs, making *"The Runaways"* a profound exploration of the interplay between personal struggles and ideological forces that can culminate in perpetration.

“Mass movements involve power institutions in which some people, and their ideologies, are more important than others” (190). Mann's idea of ideological killers stresses the function of powerful institutions and their ideologies, where some individuals and their beliefs harbor more significance than others. “It felt like all his life Sunny had been waiting until the moment when someone would see him. When someone would know him – would meet him at the intersection of his confusion and emptiness – and, in seeing him, would lift him from his troubled self” (58). Oz, Sunny's cousin, plays a pivotal role in shaping Sunny's beliefs and directing his actions. Oz introduces Sunny to the Ummah Movement, an assertive organization with a strong ideology. Sunny, who has long desired glory and wisdom, finds consolation in Oz's distinction, meeting him at the intersection of confusion and emptiness. Oz effortlessly exploits Sunny's blank slate of mind, engraving his ideologies on him. Sunny's susceptibility and passion for recognition make him a perfect target for Oz to breed the ideology of sacrifice their religion requires. By promising Sunny a sense of purpose and the award he has always dreamed of, Oz convinces him to join the Jihadi movement. The temptation of being noticed and heard in the world resonates intensely with Sunny, leading him to follow Oz mindlessly. This blind adherence stems from Sunny's long-standing frustration and desperation, as he has always sacrificed his

wishes to meet his father's expectations. Oz benefits from this weakness, offering a path for Sunny to be remembered by the world.

“But the recognition, the reckoning, the being seen that Sunny so desperately wanted, never came” (59). The glory and reckoning Sunny promised never appear, leaving him even more disillusioned and helpless. This example highlights the insidious spirit of ideological killers, who use the susceptibilities of people like Sunny, promising them dignity and value while directing them towards a dangerous path of perpetration. Mann's remarks about assertive institutions and ideologies become clear as Oz exercises his power over Sunny, making the Ummah Movement more meaningful to him than anything else. Oz capitalizes on Sunny's desire for validation, turning him into an ideological killer by involving in the movement's destructive activities. The excerpt illustrates how ideological exploitation and the urge for recognition can direct individuals toward perpetration, ultimately stressing the devastating outcomes of being trapped in mighty ideologies prioritizing some lives and beliefs over others.

Sunny's life is deeply influenced by his father's stern expectations and the prevalent cultural norms in Asian families. Since a young age, he has been burdened with the weight of his father's aspirations, continually being forced to conform, fit in, and become someone he is not. This unrelenting stress and lack of power over his own life direct to feelings of loneliness, despair, and anxiety. “That was all Sunny ever heard at home. Be someone else. Do something else. Be better. Fit in more, try more, work hard. Don't get stuck in a dead-end job, don't marry the first lady who comes your way, don't be a slave all your life” (38). According to Mann, strong ideologies often appear within institutions where specific beliefs and people hold more value than others. In Sunny's case, the institution of family, a powerful force in Asian cultures, plays a major role in shaping his life. The focus on conforming to family expectations and societal standards dominates and limits his ability to express himself and pursue his passions and ambitions. Consequently, Sunny becomes a victim of the ideologies eternalized by the family institution, where adhering to societal expectations takes precedence over his identity and mental well-being. The pressure to conform and the fear of disappointing his family make Sunny susceptible to manipulation by those who offer him recognition and purpose. This vulnerability creates an opening for ideological recruiters like Oz to exploit and recruit him. Oz presents the Ummah Movement

as a path to glory, acceptance, and belonging—elements lacking in Sunny's life. The promise of being seen and heard deeply resonates with Sunny, propelling him towards perpetration.

“This was the moral of the story: Sulaiman Jamil had fought the karma of his life to build something new, something better for his precious child, his only boy. ‘We did all right, didn’t we?’

Sunny nodded at his pa.

‘You and me, the two of us? We did good, didn’t we?’ (45). Sunny's father, Sulaiman Jamil, consistently reinforces the ideology that they have done well and created something better for Sunny. ‘I’ve got everything I need’ (45). Although Sunny opposes the idea internally, he agrees to avoid bothering his father and being tagged a rebellious son. Sunny's father's regular reminders of the sacrifices he made for him build a sense of responsibility and indebtedness in Sunny, causing him to repress his true emotions and desires. The expectation to conform to the family's ideology and the stress of meeting his father's objectives contribute to Sunny's loneliness, anxiety, and inadequacy.

Mann's words, "Mass movements involve power institutions in which some people, and their ideologies, are more important than others," are apparent in Sunny's life. The institution of family, illustrated by Sunny's father, carries substantial control over him, exercising unnecessary expectations and restrictions that leave him feeling distressed and suffocated. The endless reinforcement of the family ideology restricts Sunny's ability to pursue his dreams, making him helpless to manipulation by others who offer him glory and acceptance, as Oz does with the Ummah Movement. Sunny's story illustrates how the conflict between family ideologies and personal desires can lead people toward ideological perpetration. His persistent struggle to navigate the expectations of his family and the desire for understanding and acceptance ultimately push him towards a destructive path. Mann's concept finds resonance in Sunny's life, depicting the detrimental outcomes of powerful ideologies within family systems and their possibility to direct individuals toward perpetration.

Sunny, a lonely and socially secluded character, is drawn to Oz's aura and charming demeanor. Oz's capability to command attention and consideration from their relatives

makes him seem a true leader and pious Muslim. Sunny, longing for glory and understanding, becomes vulnerable to Oz's ideologies as he desperately desires approval and a sense of belonging. "Sunny watched his cousin that day, how he spoke to everyone over lunch, how all the relatives were captivated by what Oz had to say" (99). Oz's intimidating personality and captivating habits contribute to the propagation of his beliefs, directing Sunny to adopt the ideologies offered by his cousin. "Oz stood at the front of the drawing room and led the men in prayers" (99). In pursuit of meaning and individuality, Sunny obeys Oz's lead and ends up entrapping himself in the Ummah Movement, where his passion for glory and approval eventually directs him toward perpetration. Mann's concept of Ideological Killers is apparent in how Oz's compelling nature and capability to sway others' minds are pivotal in shaping Sunny's course toward ideological perpetration.

"No matter how much they had, men like him and Oz would always be left out. Because they weren't white, because they were Muslim, because they were different. It was true. It made sense. All his life, Sunny never felt he belonged in Portsmouth. Ben and those guys, they never understood him" (101). Since Sunny was living in England, white supremacy bothered him. Although he had their nationality, he was different. Everything was different, from his skin color to his habits, and Sunny never felt comfortable with them. When Oz explained it to him, it made sense as he was suffering from all these issues, and it was evident. Oz took advantage of that situation to shun the ideology of white supremacy and educated him on his own. It was easy for Oz to deceive a young boy like Sunny, who was already trying to run away. This is a common practice of terrorist groups. Oz had a different impact on Sunny. He felt comfortable around him, and his words always made a difference, although Sunny's father did not like him to be around Oz. After his interaction with Oz, Sunny deleted all the numbers of the random girls with whom he used to talk to kill his time, and he started spending all his time with Oz. "Already, Sunny was happier than he had been in months. Oz lifted his grief, only he had the power to do that" (102). Sunny started feeling happy and alive. He wanted to spend all his time with Oz. Oz mattered to him, and his words provided peace to him. Oz had a kind of influence on Sunny that he was doing everything that Oz wanted. He wanted to be accepted by Oz now. No one else mattered to him, not even his father. "Sunny ignored his father. He didn't need

him, not any more” (102). Apparently, Oz was his first true best friend and cousin, and he respected him with all his heart.

“‘God’s got a plan for you, a destiny.’ Oz’s breath was warm against Sunny’s ear. ‘He’s watching you, Sunny. He sent you to me’” (113). When Sunny tells Oz about his returning depression, Oz starts preaching his ideology. The ideology he has been working on and holding on to for so long. Oz starts dragging Sunny into his plan. He explains his beliefs firmly. He tells him everything with logic and reason because he knows Sunny believes him. He traps him expertly. He makes him think that God has bigger plans for Sunny. He uses God and religion to run his campaign. For Oz, his religious ideologies were so strong that it was easier for him to trap Sunny after showing some sympathy and concern.

‘This is jihad, my brother. Islam is at stake here. It’s that mosque of yours, brainwashing you. Having you pray alongside them, thinking we all the same. Thinking that all men are brothers. They are Wajib ul Qatal,’ Oz said to his cousin. ‘We have a right to kill them’” (114). In the current scenario, Jihad has contemporary significance. It is used as a defense to acquire freedom. Ideology itself is not wrong until it is used negatively and negatively impacts others. Ozair tells him that this is Jihad to kill those who do not follow their ideology and are destined to be killed. It is like reducing the other party's power to take power into their hands. He portrays a terrorist as a protagonist and a true patriot. He considers the act of liberation a jihad and not terrorism. He forgets that killing others in the name of any power is not Jihad until it is purely for religion and no other intention is involved. They are waging war against their ideologies to spread their own. Mann holds that “In war we routinely obey an order to kill, even if we bear the victim no hate” (26). Hence, even though Sunny does not bear the victims any hate, he has to obey the orders. If the ideological power says someone is “Wajib ul Qatal” it is carved on the stone, and the followers must accept that.

“All he had known of Islam before Oz had gone off to fight in Syria was mercy. He had known Islam only for its refuge, its tolerance. It was submission, not violence. It made no distinction between sons, neither Sunni nor Shia. They were all one – all Muslims, all connected” (114-115) . The aforesaid instance shows Sunny’s beliefs and ideologies

were different before he met Oz. for him, Islam is a symbol of peace and forgiveness. He has always believed in acceptance and submission, not vehemence. He knew Islam preaches tolerance and forgiveness. This shows how Ozair changed his beliefs efficaciously and expertly. Michael Mann claims that “They accept ideologies that make some plausible sense of their world, and they actively reinterpret them” (30) . Oz did this to Sunny, and Sunny, too, accepted the ideologies that were plausible to him. Oz folded these ideologies in a wrapping of religion, and Sunny accepted them as relics.

“The British kataa’ib of the Ummah Movement would welcome him, Oz promised. He had Skyped with his brothers in the brigade and told them he was sending over a true warrior. ‘Normally tazkiyeh takes ages,’ Oz warned. ‘They don’t let just anyone fight for UM. They have to make sure you’re not a spy, that you’re not a collaborator, an infiltrator’” (133). Oz appears as a master who knows how to sell something to someone. He brainwashes Sunny first, then shows him how vital their movement is. He tells him that no one can join the movement quickly without having a significant reference. People who run the campaign do not trust outsiders, and it takes ages for people to join Ummah Movement. Oz tells Sunny he would be welcomed with open arms because he has vouched for him. In other words, he shows the preciousness of their ideologies and movement to Sunny to make him strong. So that he is confident that Sunny will not turn his back on him at the eleventh hour, he tells him that he believes in him and that Sunny is a ‘true warrior,’ and that is all Sunny wants, to be accepted, to be recognized. According to Mann, “The ideology also resonated amid commonplace virtues like loyalty, obedience, comradeship, dutifulness, honor, and patriotism” (200). Ozair hit the right ball at the right time. He shows loyalty to Sunny; in return, Sunny is obedient and more loyal to him. Sunny’s loyalty supports Oz’s ideology, and Sunny feels patriotic and stronger.

“‘You’ll be far from home,’ Oz had told him as he dropped him off at the station where his father once worked, ‘but close to jannah.’ You’ll be close to so many other men, just like you. You will be welcomed and embraced” (144). Oz utilizes a recruitment procedure that targets besieged young minds like Sunny, who suffer from personal and socio-psychological crises. Sunny's deficient social life, active socio-psychological problems, and lack of cohesion within his family make him vulnerable to Oz's extreme ideologies. Oz exploits Sunny's sentiments by guaranteeing that adopting their cause will

guide him directly to Jannah, the supreme objective of paradise in Islam. “My final stop isn’t some godforsaken Iraqi village. Hell, no. I’m going all the way to the H-O-L-Y Land, I’m flying straight on to Paradise” (274). Sunny becomes confident that martyrdom will bless him with eternal joy and a sense of meaning, surpassing any instrumental reason or rationality. The assurance of heaven becomes his only priority, and he runs away to enter the Ummah Movement, leaving behind his past and family expectations. This direction allows Sunny to suppress his worldly troubles and find a higher purpose in life. According to Mann, “When people are willing to risk or inflict death in pursuit of their values, instrumental reason may be relegated to the back burner” (26). Sunny's faith in martyrdom shows how ideological killers adopt radical ideologies to cleanse themselves and find spiritual consolation, aligning with Mann's idea that “Rightist ideology often embraced cleansing” (66). Martyrdom is Sunny’s aim now.

Fatima Bhutto's novel "The Runaways" effectively explains Mann's concept of Ideological Killers through the character of Sunny and his journey towards perpetration. The story stresses how helpless people, like Sunny, can be swayed by charismatic individuals such as his cousin Oz, who use their emotional turmoil and offer extreme ideologies to discover meaning and satisfaction. Sunny's internal efforts, lack of social life, and limited understanding from his family propel him to seek comfort in the promises of martyrdom and everlasting paradise. The novel highlights the strong influence of ideologies on individuals' activities, directing them to make extreme choices without thinking practically. Mann's insight into the interplay between ideology and perpetration is apparent as Sunny becomes involved in ideologies that he thinks will bring him glory, spiritual joy, and a sense of belonging. Ultimately, "The Runaways" sheds light on the detrimental allure of ideological killers and the outcomes of weak individuals surrendering to radical beliefs.

#### **4.5 The Intricate Web of Socio-psychological Factors in '*The Runaways*' by Bhutto**

Fatima Bhutto's novel, "The Runaways," delves into a world of agony, personal loss, violence, terrorism, death, frustration, trauma, and vengeance. Within the narrative, socioeconomic, individual, and socio-psychological issues emerge as pivotal factors leading the main characters toward terrorism and violence. The weight of frustration caused by their socioeconomic and socio-psychological struggles propels them to make life-altering choices to pursue vengeance. The novel vividly portrays how domestic and common problems can deeply disturb a person's psychology, leaving them traumatized and powerless to escape their circumstances or alter their destinies.

Amid these socio-psychological challenges, *The Runaways* unfolds several reasons that prompt the characters to leave their homes. Sunny's discomfort in England becomes unbearable, burdened by his father's high expectations and unyielding restrictions. Deprived of social and personal life, he feels suffocated whenever confronted with arguments about his future and life choices. The absence of belonging haunts him until he encounters his cousin Oz, who introduces him to the Ummah movement and persuades him to join. As Sunny departs to embrace the trend, severing ties with his father, the story unravels the profound impact of socio-psychological struggles on individual lives and the paths they ultimately choose to follow.

The words, "Sunny never had a mother, and now his pa had washed his hands clean of him, too" (139). The words deeply show the profound emotional void in Sunny's life. Growing up without a mother's love and care already robs him of the affection and understanding most people experience within their families. Emotional dilapidation of his father further amplifies his feelings of desertion. As a young boy striving for love and acceptance, Sunny's desire for his father's attention and love stays unfulfilled, leaving him frustrated and causing a massive sense of being unwanted. This socio-psychological negligence and emotional desertion are important elements in his exposure to Oz's power and interest in the Ummah movement. In this context, perpetration could be viewed as a desperate try to discover a purpose and recognition absent from Sunny's life. His determination to leave home at such a young age might be an unconscious reaction to the lack of natural emotional associations, driving him towards radicalism and brutality in search of a sense of meaning, identity, and belonging.



“Salman Jamil, Pa wrote in his last email, for so long as you are out there, I will not talk to you. For so long as you defy me, you are dead to me. Imagine the ice in a parent like that – so arctic. Wishing your kid dead over disobedient. Pa didn’t write to Sunny on his birthday. Didn’t even say thank you when he wrote to him on his” (159). The extract emphasizes the emotional turmoil within Sunny's family. Sunny's father's harsh and inflexible reaction to his son's actions creates a toxic atmosphere of rejection and abandonment. The phrase "dead to me" vividly portrays the severity of his father's emotional detachment, leaving Sunny feeling worthless and insignificant. Sunny's young age and the absence of a nurturing mother figure already make him vulnerable, and his father's cold behavior further compounds his socio-psychological struggles. Instead of guiding and understanding his son, Sunny's father employs threats and silence, depriving him of the emotional support and validation that a child needs to develop a healthy sense of self. This emotional neglect intensifies Sunny's frustration and deepens his quest for belonging and acceptance elsewhere. Consequently, perpetration may be interpreted as a reaction to the profound emotional void caused by his father's rejection, driving Sunny to seek validation and purpose in the Ummah movement and its ideologies. “When Sunny finally built up the courage to write to him, Pa made sure to treat his boy to some seriously cold silence” (190). As per Nelkin's perspective, moral responsibility involves considering the reasons behind an individual's actions. In this instance, Sunny's father's emotional detachment and refusal to communicate seem to impact Sunny's self-worth and emotional well-being. The absence of love and validation from a parent can lead to feelings of rejection and loneliness, pressing people to find solace and acceptance elsewhere. In Sunny's situation, his father's cold treatment adds to his sense of alienation and vulnerability, making him more susceptible to the ideologies and promises of belonging offered by the Ummah movement. Sunny's pursuit of recognition and understanding drives him to join the extremist group, believing that he will finally be valued there. Nelkin's concept emphasizes how Sunny's father's lack of moral responsibility fails to provide emotional support and care, influencing Sunny's path toward perpetration.

“I’m going to make a name for myself out here” (276) . “I’m going to be someone, just like Pa wanted” (276) . Nelkin's concept of Moral Responsibility can be applied to Sunny's urge to find purpose in life and be acknowledged. Sunny's socio-psychological

reasons for perpetration are deeply rooted in his father's lack of moral responsibility in his upbringing. Throughout his life, Sunny feels the burden of meeting his father's expectations and wishes for him to be a certain kind of person. He leaves home in quest of making his father proud and finding acceptance in society, which mirrors his desire to earn glory and validation for his identity. However, when he recognizes that his father's love and attention are conditional and not based on his true self, Sunny becomes disillusioned and eventually accepts this behavior as a norm. According to Nelkin's concept, individuals' actions are influenced by the social and psychological factors that shape their sense of identity and self-worth. Sunny seeks to fill the void left by his father's lack of genuine emotional support. So, his perpetration can be comprehended as a desperate attempt to find meaning and purpose. His father's lack of moral responsibility contributes to Sunny's alienation, directing him to seek recognition and belonging through extremist ideologies.

“No one writes to Sunny, no one hears any of his calls. He doesn't let it smoke him no more. He's fighting a bigger battle now, speaking another kind of language, elevating the discourse” (170). Nelkin's concept of Moral Responsibility can be applied to Sunny's perpetration, driven by socio-psychological reasons. Sunny's feelings of abandonment and loneliness contribute to his susceptibility to extremist ideologies. When he realizes nobody cares for him or hears his calls, he turns to a bigger cause, which unfortunately involves joining extremist movements like the Ummah Movement. His misplaced trust in his cousin Oz, who later betrays him, adds to his psychological distress. Sunny's desire for revenge on Oz stems from the pain and suffering he experienced due to this betrayal. “Just to show you a dusting of the pain I feel right now, I'd climb the world to find you” (250). The absence of moral responsibility from those he loves worsens his sense of alienation, helplessness, and dismay, driving him towards a distressing and violent path. Nelkin's idea emphasizes how social and psychological elements can impact an individual's actions and preferences, leading to perpetration when they feel disillusioned and alienated by the world around them.

“It's never the serpents hiding in the rose bush, never the users or the liars. They hit you in the front. Only your family, your blood, come at you from behind” (210). This extract underlines Sunny's psyche, which is deeply affected by familial disloyalty and emotional pain. Sunny's family's measures, specifically rejection of his father and Oz's

betrayal, leave him feeling deserted and unloved. This emotional trauma impacts his decision-making and forces him to find comfort in the Ummah Movement, where he discovers approval and glory. Nelkin's idea highlights that individuals can only be held morally responsible for their actions if they can change their behavior. She holds that, "The ability to do otherwise is required for responsibility when it comes to both praiseworthy and blameworthy actions" (446). In Sunny's matter, the emotional scars from his family and the circumstances stopped him from modifying the past or fixing the harm done. While fierce and intense, his acts in the Ummah Movement can be comprehended as a reaction to his search for meaning and belonging and feelings of worthlessness. "Sunny doesn't care now; he doesn't care about any of them – not Oz, not Pa. He doesn't have a family no more" (349) . Holding Sunny entirely accountable for his perpetration may not be fair or justified, given the socio-psychological complexities he faced. The novel depicts how the lack of family help and the pain of betrayal can direct people to find purpose and identity in other, usually detrimental, avenues. Sunny's story is a poignant reminder of the value of understanding the deep-seated causes behind perpetration and the significance of discussing socio-psychological problems to stop such consequences.

Another main character of the novel is Anita. Growing up in a household surrounded by poverty and deprivation, Anita experienced a stark contrast between her life and the wealthy families she encountered. Her mother's occupation as a *maalish wali*, massaging the tired bones of affluent women, further accentuated their economic disparity. "Anita's mother worked as a *maalish wali*, massaging the tired bones of rich women with her scented oils, pressing their backs with her old body, rubbing coconut oil in their hair and massaging their tense, knotted shoulders until she could barely feel her own fingers" (52-53) . From a young age, Anita witnesses the luxurious lifestyles of rich kids, playing with toys she could only dream of. This profound inequality instills in her a sense of being different and unfairly treated by society. "Groaned when the cook placed only three different bowls of lunch before him. When they were children, he had all kinds of things Anita had never seen before" (53) . Her early experiences of seeking help from others, like knocking on Osama's door for a matchbox, reinforce her feelings of insecurity and alienation. These socio-psychological challenges, stemming from poverty, social exclusion, and limited opportunities, deeply affects Anita's psychological development.

Her perception of not belonging and being treated as inferior by the wealthy families sows the seeds of anger and resentment within her. “Anita would knock, Osama would answer. Anita would ask, he would grant. Soap, salt, paper. Anita would mumble her thanks and Osama would – at most – nod. It was a routine rehearsed over years – she was a child when she had first knocked on his door” (89) .

According to Nelkin, moral responsibility requires understanding and changing one's actions. However, for Anita, her circumstances and early experiences leave her feeling trapped and unable to alter her reality. She joins the Ummah Movement to find values and acknowledgment, but her socio-psychological struggles greatly impact her decision-making. The excerpt shows how a sense of frustration and injustice from her socio-economic and socio-psychological challenges leads Anita towards perpetration.

Although she had a tough life, her problems were different. Her poor life did not bother her as much as her life at school did. She was in grade 4 when her classmates bullied her. She was more worried about sharing a bench with her class fellows than waiting outside for hours for her mother to get free. Her class fellows used to kick her heels and pull her hair. They used to taunt and abuse her. “At that time, when she was in class four, Anita had her own troubles. She didn’t have time to worry about being poor. At school, the girls sharing her bench would kick at her heels” (36) . She had no one to share her problems with. To talk about the circumstances, she was facing. After being kicked in heels, she learned to sit differently. Constantly uncomfortable and awkward. They started mocking her “Go home” (36). At Lady Girls’ English Medium College “with every set, the teacher slapped a ruler against her palm” (36). Not just the students but her teachers, too, treated her differently. They used to beat her when she forgot her tables. The above-stated instances prove that her life was different and traumatizing. Her childhood left a mark on her personality and psychology. She always felt left out, undesired, and marginalized. “Anita used to try to defend her space, pushing them back with her elbows, but when they kept pressing against her, she invariably moved forward, sitting with her bottom on the edge of the hard wooden seat” (36) . “Kutee ke bachi” Mira would whisper, her voice buried under the drone of the teacher’s sums” (36). Since a young age, Anita has faced tremendous hardships and trauma due to her challenging economic conditions and severe bullying and mistreatment at school. “No one wants you here” (37). “Filthy pig” (96). The

constant taunting, abuse, and exclusion from her classmates have left enduring wounds on her psyche, leaving her feeling unwanted, abandoned, and powerless. These incidents have a long-lasting impact on her psychologically, shaping her into a complex person characterized by stubbornness and rigidity. She feels suffocated and powerless, guiding her to hold bitterness and rage. This feeling of powerlessness drives her towards perpetration to retrieve power and maintain her value in a society that undermines her consistently. Nelkin emphasizes that moral responsibility comprises understanding and modifying one's actions. However, for Anita, the psychological trauma caused by her circumstances does not allow her to envision alternative ways to free herself from the cycle of brutality and retaliation.

“What’s a prostitute’s daughter like you doing with a fancy notebook like this?” (88). Being subjected to demeaning remarks at such a young age traumatizes Anita, forcing her to hide her feelings. The verbal abuse eternalizes a sense of nothingness and strengthens her feelings of being outcast and undesired. Bullying and mistreatment further breed feelings of alienation and seclusion in Anita, forcing her to seek solace in poetry and hide her thoughts in a safe place, her diary. However, the trauma she faces contributes to her difficult character and controls her later choices as she becomes disappointed with society and desires vengeance. Anita's perpetration cannot be attributed entirely to her personal decisions; it is influenced by the persistent injustice, leaving an eternal impact on her psychological health.

While talking to Osama, her only acquaintance in her neighborhood, she tells him “I want to go away from here, I don’t want to spend another day in this life. I don’t want to remember any of this. None of it, not even one day” (257) . Anita's statement echoes the overwhelming burden of her circumstances and her urge to disappear from her grim reality. Plagued by severe poverty, constant bullying, and mistreatment, she is trapped and exhausted by her uncomfortable environment. Her urge to vanish is a portal of her helplessness, thinking she has no power to change her situation. She collapses as the weight of her struggles becomes intolerable. “Anita bit her lip to keep the tears from falling down her face” (88-89) . Her psychological distress and internal turmoil can be observed through her trying to hide her tears while talking. Anita's desire for a different life and inability to confide in anyone about her pain poignantly demonstrates how her socio-

psychological circumstances profoundly impact her well-being. Nelkin's stance on Moral Responsibility highlights the importance of understanding how external elements impact an individual's actions and preferences. For Anita, her perpetration exemplifies her deep-rooted trauma and agitation, as her socio-economic conditions and constant injustice render her emotionally and psychologically weak.

Anita's sex tape scandal and the subsequent viral spread of the video display the deplorable circumstances she faced, directing her to run away. Her persistent insecurity and seeking her partner Monty's validation demonstrate deep-rooted psychological susceptibilities. Despite Monty's love, Anita still feels insecure, making her think that society, which had abandoned her due to her underprivileged background, would never welcome her after the scandal. The awareness of the challenges she would face as a woman and the difficulty of living an honorable life in the face of her leaked videos make her more vulnerable. "What has my name ever done for me?" (124). These unbearable situations compelled her to leave Karachi and change her identity, expecting a fresh start. Nelkin stresses that individuals facing overwhelming personal crises may lack the ability to identify reasons or handle their behavior in light of them, directing to excusable actions. In Anita's case, her hard circumstances and emotional susceptibilities make it unfair to condemn her for her extreme steps.

Adam Lankford, in *Précis of The Myth of Martyrdom: What Drives Suicide Bombers, Rampage Shooters, and Other Self-Destructive Killers*, describes some reasons behind the perpetration of the perpetrators. While talking about perpetrators, it is essential to look at the factors involved. "The suicide terrorists' personal crises included divorce and adultery scandals, unwanted pregnancies, major job problems, serious health problems, and the death of a loved one. Other suicide attackers, who could not be quantified, had reportedly been raped or sexually assaulted, addicted to heroin or other drugs, or struggling with other physical or mental health problems" (355). In addition to Nelkin's stance, Adam Lankford's statement on the reasons behind perpetration also backs the understanding of Anita's steps. Lankford's examination of different perpetrators, including those with personal problems and mental health issues, resonates with Anita's situation. The agitation she faces due to the sex tape scandal and the societal criticism she anticipated align with the personal troubles highlighted by Lankford. Anita's no control over her serious

circumstances makes it challenging to remember other reasons or transform her conduct, backing the intricacy of moral responsibility in her case. As Lankford implies, individuals' efforts, whether from personal troubles or mental health problems, can influence them towards extreme steps.

Nelkin states, "In general, when we find out that someone lacks a capacity for recognizing reasons or cannot control her behavior in light of them, we are tempted to excuse her actions" (445). Ultimately, the combination of Nelkin's concept of Moral Responsibility and Lankford's study underlines the significance of considering socio-psychological elements when studying perpetration. Anita's story demonstrates the deep influence of superficial circumstances on a person's acts, questioning the idea of moral responsibility in complicated and painful situations.

Anita, while leaving her home, was heartbroken and entirely silent. She was all alone, and nobody bothered that. "Anita looks behind her once more. No one. No one has thought to check the airport. No one has noticed she's gone" (31). She always fights her battles alone. No one helps her with anything, not even her brother. He, too, has selfish motives. When she leaves, she looks behind, searching for someone, but no one is there. No one comes to chase her and make her feel protected. Her insecurities lead her to an extreme situation. She leaves to purify herself. So that she can find a reason to live and to be a part of a new life, she chooses to be refined in the Fire of Ummah movement. After traveling for so long, she still could not find her peace. The act of leaving everything depicts her sense of alienation and agitation she feels because of the conduct and behavior of others towards her. The society she lives in makes her vulnerable due to the extreme steps she takes because of the lack of guidance and vengeance.

Layla's life has been marred by loneliness and rejection, facing the harsh consequences of her painful past when her sex tape was revealed by Oz, and Abu Khalid decided to end her life. Joining the Ummah Movement, Layla's fierce demeanor can be seen as a coping mechanism in response to her unchangeable circumstances. The narrator describes her situation in the following words: "She was all alone here. Like before, like always, she had no one" (297). Layla's life has been marred by loneliness and rejection, facing the harsh consequences of her painful past when her sex tape was revealed by Oz,

and Abu Khalid decided to end her life. Joining the Ummah Movement, Layla's fierce demeanor can be seen as a coping mechanism in response to her unchangeable circumstances. The societal intolerance towards females perceived to bring shame to their families, as evident in Layla's case and the real-life example of Qandeel Baloch reinforces the notion that even if she hadn't joined the movement, society would still have condemned her. Layla's socio-psychological conditions compelled her to take extreme measures, leaving her with little to no choice under societal pressure.

Nelkin claims that “People are responsible when they act with the ability to do the right thing for the right reasons, or a good thing for good reasons. The ability in question in turn has two components: the ability to recognize good reasons for acting and the ability to translate those reasons into decisions and actions” (444). Nelkin's perspective on moral responsibility becomes relevant when examining Layla's actions. Her traumatic experiences and psychological distress impaired her ability to make sound judgments, leading her to seek solace in the Jihadi movement to heal herself. The burdens of her past continued to haunt her in the Iraqi desert, worsening her mental instability. “The idea is that it would be unfair to blame people, and so impose sanctions on them, for performing actions when they could not do otherwise” (446). Given Layla's situation, the absence of the ability to choose otherwise suggests that blaming and putting sanctions on her would be unjust in the circumstances she has faced. When evaluating her moral responsibility, it is essential to consider the socio-psychological factors that influenced her decisions. Layla's story is a stark reminder of the intricate interplay between personal struggles, societal pressures, and extremist ideologies, driving individuals to choose with enduring and tragic consequences. Instead of solely assigning blame, understanding the underlying reasons behind their actions and addressing the root causes is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study seeks to answer the questions spellbound at the start of the research. It can be the antecedently presented argument that there are reasons behind every act of perpetration. The study concludes that political, psychological, social, and ideological reasons lead the perpetrators toward a front of perpetration. The researcher underpinned the Pakistani literary texts *The Runaways* by Fatima Bhutto and *In the Company of Strangers* with the concept of moral responsibility by Dana Kay Nelkin and Michael Mann's idea of ideological killer under the umbrella term of Perpetrators' analysis. The in-depth analysis of both texts illustrates several reasons that compel a perpetrator to commit an act of perpetration.

Through a thorough study of the selected Pakistani literary texts, "*The Runaways*" by Fatima Bhutto and "*In the Company of Strangers*" by Awais Khan, alongside the theoretical frameworks proposed by Michael Mann and Dana Key Nelkin, striking resemblances in perpetrator typologies have appeared. These results indicate the relevance and applicability of typologies set forth by the theorists in the global north to the global south context, particularly in Pakistan. Both Mann's idea of Ideological Killers and Nelkin's concept of Moral Responsibility successfully capture the psychological intricacy of perpetrators in the selected texts. Sunny's radicalization, Layla's involvement with the Ummah Movement, and Mir Rabiullah's search for power mirror the complex interplay of individual experiences, traumas, and emotional upheaval, which lead people towards acts of perpetration. This alignment with the global north theories implies that the psychological reasons of perpetrators surpass geographical boundaries.

Furthermore, the function of the societal context in driving individuals towards perpetration is apparent in selected texts and global north theories both. Socioeconomic elements, such as marginalization, societal norms, and poverty, impact the characters' acts in the novels. Anita or Layla's struggle with poverty and the impact of extremist ideologies demonstrate how social surroundings can immensely donate to fierce conduct. Moreover, the typologies and the selected fictions highlight the significance of personal reasons as a

driving force behind perpetration. Personal purposes, vengeance, and an urge for glory and recognition are shared features among perpetrators in the global north and south. This intersection emphasizes the ubiquitous essence of individual reasons and their impact on violent acts.

In conclusion, the analysis of perpetrator typologies in "*The Runaways*" and "*In the Company of Strangers*" exhibits the remarkable resemblances between Michael Mann's concept of Ideological Killers and Dana K. Nelkin's idea of Moral Responsibility. These ideas effectively capture the psychological intricacy of perpetrators, the role of personal reasons, and the consequence of the social context in directing individuals toward perpetration. As such, these theoretical frameworks exceed geographical boundaries and present useful insights into interpreting literary texts and addressing violence and extremism in diverse cultural contexts, including Pakistan.

By recognizing these resemblances, policymakers, academics, and social activists can embrace a broad strategy to fight perpetration that considers the fine interplay of psychological, social, political, and cultural aspects. Constructing a securer and more understanding society needs an appreciation of the multifaceted personality of perpetrators, stressing prevention, rehabilitation, and the pursuit of empathetic and contextually appropriate justice. Through this technique, we can work towards dismantling the image of perpetrators as totemic figures and promote a collaborative responsibility to talk about the root causes of brutality, eventually aiming for a calm and just society.

Incorporating the following recommendations into future research and policy development can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of perpetration and, in turn, create more targeted and effective approaches to prevent and address violent acts in the Pakistani context and beyond:

- It is paramount to delve deeper into the motives of criminals to devise effective measures to prevent criminal activities. Studies exploring the psychological, social, and political elements donating to criminal conduct can elucidate the underlying causes of perpetration.
- After a thorough analysis, it is suggested to conduct further qualitative and quantitative research on perpetrators in various social spheres.

Exploring the leading reasons behind perpetration in different contexts can contribute valuable understandings for devising targeted prevention and intervention techniques.

- Before highlighting specific kinds of perpetrators, it is essential to thoroughly analyze the attributes of criminals in Pakistan. This comprehensive knowledge will help identify possible perpetrators.

- While examining perpetration, simultaneously considering other connected variables, such as social pressure and impulsivity, is suggested. Understanding the contribution of each element to the decision-making procedure of executing violent acts can report targeted prevention methods.

- To effectively address and comprehend perpetration properly, it is crucial to consider both the perpetrator and the target. Avoiding the portrayal of perpetrators as distinct from society or mere psychopaths is important. Instead, adopting a holistic method that addresses socio-political, cultural, and historical mechanisms of donating to failures can offer more nuanced understandings.

- Highlight the role education plays in understanding and managing mass violence. A thorough analysis of perpetrators can furnish a new stance on the significance of education in controlling and reacting to brutal acts and mass murder, thereby promoting a reliable and sympathetic society.

- Further research should continue to investigate and extend the traits that describe perpetrators. More in-depth knowledge of these traits will contribute to devising effective prevention and intervention measures to curb fierce conduct.

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