

# Fatima's Mimicry in Aliya Husain's *Neither This Nor That*

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## Abstract

This study aims to reveal Fatima's mimicry as the prominent figure in Aliya Husain's *Neither This Nor That*. The presence of minorities often brings the assumption that they are foreign people, so they are treated discriminatively. Immigrants who live a new life in a country whose ideology, beliefs, and lifestyle of the original population are opposite to those of their home country will experience identity problems. Muslim women or Muslimah who are diaspora from India to America also share the same thing. They have to negotiate their identity, so they can live comfortably. The form of negotiation can be done by mimicry. This research is qualitative descriptive research. This research examines mimicry narratives from a diaspora novel, *Neither This Nor That* (2010). In addition, other sources such as books, journals, and the web are supporting sources. This paper uses Homi Bhabha's postcolonialism theory, especially mimicry, ambivalence, and hybrid. Ting Toney's Identity Negotiation Theory is also used to strengthen the analysis. This study reveals that the characters imitate the majority's behavior subconsciously to maintain and save their identity. In doing so, they wait for the right time and momentum to negotiate their identity so that, in the end, a hybrid identity will emerge that accommodates the old and new identities.

**Keywords:** *Diaspora, Hybrid, Mindful Mimicry, Muslimah*

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## Introduction

Immigrants from other countries often assume they are foreigners, so they are treated discriminatively. Immigrants who live in new conditions, such as the ideologies, beliefs, and lifestyles of the original inhabitants that are different from their home countries, cause identity problems. Immigrants have long grappled with identity difficulties as a community isolated from their host land (Nurhasna, 2022). A cliché problem is usually triggered by stigma and stereotypes of immigrants and natives. Moreover, if the government and its new state regulations are not accommodating to the interests of the newcomers, of course, this will encourage them to adapt and look for patterns so that they can live comfortably in the new country with their identity. The influence of society can construct identity. Knowledge and strong religious belief of different people bring various negotiations (Asiyah, 2020). There are at least two big problems that they face, namely: socio-political problems and problems in carrying out Religious Guidance. Socio-political problems are the problems they face most often. This problem stems from the unequal *background*, social and culture, race, ethnicity, and belief or religion of other minority groups that differ from the majority.



The problem consists of two equally related sides: internal and external issues. "Islamic identity exists has been a stepping stone toward assessing the degree of conflict we may expect between a "modern West" and a "Muslim Orient," between American society and the Muslims within it. It should be noted that the binary opposition of "Islam and the West" has not only framed the way immigrant Muslims' experiences have been examined in the United States but also the study of African Americans (GhaneaBassiri, 1997).

The internal problem can be in the form of the inability of the Muslim minority to unite with the culture and values of life in a place that, because of their lack of knowledge, ends the value disputes they encounter. From the external side, the socio-political problems of Muslim minorities in the West can be seen from the attitude of several Western countries when deciding on regulations that tend to discriminate against Muslims. So that American immigrants often feel extreme psychological, social, and "cultural shock" to cultures and societies that are not based on Islamic values (Janes, 2000). The political problem faced by American Muslims on the scale of nationalism is whether a Muslim can maintain his loyalty as a religious person and a citizen who is obedient to his government (Iqbal, 2011).

The problems that *Muslimah* often face are food, clothing, career, and even legal issues. Of these problems, the most frequent is how to dress, especially the hijab problem. The meaning of the hijab has also been debated by Muslim elites and feminists (Ghazal & Bartkowski, 2000). *Muslimah* regard the hijab as a symbol of solidarity and resistance to the anti-Islamic religion. Hijab is an integral part of the revolution and the anti-colonial struggle. The hijab in North America is considered a puritanization and public affirmation of the guarantee of freedom of religion and speech (Abdo, 2006). For Muslimah in America, the hijab has become a symbol of religious identity (Inger, 2011). They fight for it to be accepted and not become an identity problem anymore. A particular identity essence can be a source of pride, happiness, and self-confidence (Amarta, 2006). The hijab has become a symbol of puritanization and pride in the last two decades. For second-generation Muslim women, the hijab has become a symbol of rejection of negative definitions and propaganda by the western media after 9/11. Hijab affirms authentic Muslims and negotiates them in American society. Hijab seems to carry the message "Islam is beautiful and deal with it" (Abdo, 2006). Hijab is considered a liberator of women and shows a civilized Muslim woman. The hijab is a resistance (Haddad, 2007) to foreign values, upholding the puritanical religion and against colonialism.

The spirit of *Muslimah* fighting for their identity is in line with postcolonial studies. Islam was among the first getting benefit from postcolonial theory. The writings of Frantz Fanon and Edward Said provide a solid basis for Islamic studies' existence in post-colonialism. Their concepts contain many themes and ideas that discuss Islam. Fanon was critical of racism and colonialism and called for equality and freedom; he wrote against colonialism, paying more attention to its psychological aspects. Meanwhile, Edward Said wrote about Islam with a particular focus on the cultural aspects of colonialism "Fanon's psychologically and Said's culturally oriented writings aim at freeing the colonized people from the inside so as to enable them to feel and think independently. This "inside independence" is fully supported by Islam: the religion that has refused to be colonized by western Christianity in the past and by western secularism today. In the colonial period,



Fanon writes: "the struggle for national liberty [in the Arab World] has been accompanied by a cultural phenomenon known by the name of awakening Islam" (Fanon, 1997).

Majeed also confirmed the statement, which stated that Islam contributed to the face of colonialism. Majeed said, "Hand in hand, Islam and the national struggle were fighting against colonialism" (Majeed, 2012). From the ideological similarities and ways of thinking against colonialism, of course, in Islamic studies, there will also be ways to maintain and negotiate identities that align with what is studied in postcolonial.

Bhabha argues that mimicry is the desire to change one's identity to be recognized by others as different but not the same person. What is interesting about Bhabha's thinking is that mimicry, which is the uncontrolled behavior of the colonized, impacts the stability of colonial discourse, which often brings "false" enlightenment. "The effect of mimicry on the authority of colonial discourse is profound and disturbing. For in "normalizing" the colonial state or subject, the dream of post-Enlightenment civility alienates its own language of liberty and produces another knowledge of its norms" (Bhabha, 1984).

Mimicry is seen as a "game" to secure oneself in colonial domination - a person who mimics must always produce three things they are slippage of original identity (*slippage*), advantages over colonial/majority culture (*excess*), and differences (*difference*). "Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference" (Bhabha, 2004).

Bhabha argues that mimicry is an identity reform for the *colonized* because of mimicry. They can be recognized even though their status is *recognizable to others*. However, even if they are admitted, they are still *the other with their former identity*. Therefore, mimicry is a form of adjustment and imitation of minorities in majority domination. The phenomenon of mimicry like this is not only reflected in real-life society but is also widely reflected in diaspora literature written by diaspora Muslims. Most diaspora writers write about their life experiences or reflections on observations of life around them. Muslim women in America also voice their thoughts into imaginative works readers can feel. Diaspora discussed that Muslims came to America, so American Muslim Literature (Kahf, 2006) emerged. One of literary works that examine the Muslim diaspora are *Neither This Nor That*. The piece by Husain is about an American girl who grew up in Pennsylvania after her family immigrated to America from India. This study aims to reveal the form mimicry which is done by the prominent figure of the novel. The argument underlying this hypothesis is that the form of mimicry is also the way of negotiation. There is a discipline of mindful negotiation that intercultural academics have recently developed. Ting-Toomey (1999) stated that mindful negotiation is from the influence of *knowledge factors, motivation factors, and skill factors*. If someone wants to be successful in negotiations, he must master these three factors. Mindfulness in negotiating is also strengthened by Brach (Brach, 2008) who states that a successful negotiation can reduce negative thoughts. With the enthusiasm to succeed in identity negotiations, the behaviour of someone who mimics is a behaviour while waiting to accept his old identity in majority hegemony.



## Method

This research is a library research, which uses qualitative method. Qualitative research is a research that emphasizes descriptive data in the form of words. Creswell states that the form of data is grouped into four basic types of information: observations (ranging from non-participants to participants, interviews (from closed to open), documents (from private to public, and audio-visual materials (including photos, CDs, and VCDs) (Creswell, 2016).

The data in this research consisted of words, phrases, and sentences in Aliya Husain's novel, *Neither This Nor That*. After the data are collected, then data analysis is carried out. Analysis Data collection is finding helpful information and formulating data that comes to conclusions. In addition, Creswell also illustrates qualitative data analysis, namely: "1) Raw data (transcripts, field notes, pictures, etc.), 2) compiling and preparing data for analysis, 3) reading all data, 4) coding the data (written text). hand or computer), 5) description and theme, 6) linking theme/description, interpreting the meaning of theme/description". (Creswell, 2016). Thus, the methods used to analyze the data on Muslimah's identity negotiations in this research are: Read all the data repeatedly. The data is categorized based on the problem of *Muslimah* identity. After that, the next step is to pay attention, to identify, and reveal the forms of mimicry done by prominent character in the novel. In this step the theory of Bhabha's is applied. That is classifying the data based on the form of mimicry such as the way of thinking, the way of dressing, and the way of speaking. Therefore, it can explore the conflicts experienced by the prominent figure due to mimicry. After analyzing the form of mimicry it is explained the form of the negotiation. Both of theories applied and supported each other since the goal of negotiation is being understood, being respected, and being supported while mimicry intended to be recognized.

## Results and Discussion

Based on the research conducted, one of Bhabha's contributions in postcolonial studies is the obscurity of colonial discourse that has so far existed as an effort to resist the colonial (eastern) nation against the supremacy and hegemony of colonialism (west). Bhabha obscures the determination that the west has always been superior and mighty while the east has always been backward and inferior, so what is currently true is that the west is not always powerful, and the east is not always inferior. Bhabha paved the way for cultural relations between colonizers and colonized through the third space until the process of the relationship between the two will give birth to a new culture that is different from the two cultures that formed it.

Bhabha introduced mimicry, ambivalence, and hybrid as an alternative to resistance to colonialism discourse. Bhabha gives optimism that colonial discourse can be destroyed because this thinking is built on fragility and stagnation. Therefore, one only needs to look for the moment when the domination of the colonial discourse failed, deviated, and brought unexpected results. These moments are indicated by the anxiety of behaviour the colonizer and the uncontrolled. The disparity between the colonizer and the colonized results in the colonized's reformation as a "recognizable Other" by mimicking and adopting the colonizers' behaviours, attitudes, language, and culture (Nugroho & Rokhman, 2020).

Meanwhile, in *Neither This Nor That* novel, Fatima mimics the American Society in several cases. She has to pretend to imitate American culture and completely put aside her original identity as Muslimah from India. Fatima's behavior, based on Bhabha is a strategy to



undermine the colonial discourse itself. For Bhabha, a minority who mimics is a mockery of colonial discourse because their identity is distorted and stained by the imitation of foreigners. Mimicry that is done by Fatima is mimicking the American girl as temporary mimicry and continued by hybrid Identity.

### **The Form of Mimicry (Temporary Mimicry)**

The postcolonial concept states that mimicry is a mechanism to camouflage to protect oneself from the "supervision" of colonial discourse. Someone removes the original identity and replaces it with the majority identity even though it is not the same. The behaviour of colonial discourse bearers who tend to be narcissistic with their identity will eventually decrease because it turns out that minorities can do the same thing. On the other hand, the imperfection of imitation makes the imitation even a mockery of the colonizer's identity. In terms of being a defensive strategy, Bhabha says a mimicry person should focus on three aspects, namely slippage, excess, and difference. "Mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference" (Bhabha, 2004).

Mimicry happens in *Neither This Nor That*. It initially happens when Fatimah feels unhomey in her school. Unhomey based on Bhabha's "Bhabha defines the term 'unhomey' as a diasporic condition which 'captures something of the estranging sense'" (Mato, 2003, p. 127). There are four indicators, namely *awkward, uncanny, incoherent, and unstable*. One of the unstable things in preserving identity is Fatima at School. Fatima feels unhomey. When entering school, in general, the first activity carried out in class is the introduction of student identity. When mentioning her identity and presence, Fatima felt she was not recognized as an American girl. She felt tormented because her teacher could not *spell* her name correctly, and her friends laughed at her too. "Fatima had butterflies in her stomach. Every year, it was the same. It seemed like no one could pronounce her name correctly, a fact that would make her more and more aware that she wasn't the all-American girl that she so desperately wanted to be" (Husain, 2010). This data shows that Fatima feels unhomey. She was treated as a foreigner who has difficulty entering every level of education every time she starts school or goes up to grade. From the beginning of her schooling until the third level, her friends and teachers could not pronounce her name properly and correctly because her name was taken from the name of a daughter of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

As an American, Fatima would think of herself. "So why did everyone just assume that she just came from a foreign land? Was it difficult to pronounce their name, or was it her tan skin color, or did she just look like she didn't belong? Despite her annoyance with the inquiry, Fatima politely-yet-firmly replied, "I was born in New York, so I guess I am from New York," much to the surprise of Mrs. Nielson" (Husain, 2010). Based on this datum, Fatima feels unstable that her identity is not acknowledged yet among her friends. Therefore, she tries to be the girl that is admitted by her friends. One of the ways is by speaking English using American accent. Mastering English properly according to an American accent is very important to hide their original identity. Fatima also experienced pressure from her friends because her mother's English accent was not good. That is why she has a trick so that his father comes to every event at his school. "Fatima was very protective of her mother. She is worried that people would have difficult time to understand her mother's English because of her thick Indian accent" (Husain, 2010). Fatima was always trying hard not to get her mother out of the car when she picked her up. Short





encounters with Fatima's friends were able to hide her mother's English skills with her distinctive Indian accent. This datum shows that Fatima imitating her friends in speaking English in order to be recognized by mimicking and adopting the colonizers' language, and culture (Nugroho & Rokhman, 2020). In Tomez's theory negotiation Identity, the way Fatima doing mimicry using *knowledge verbal communication to be respected*. This skill is applied to defends her identity.

The use of the Indian language, on the one hand, becomes the identity of Indian ethnic minorities, unfortunately it becomes a problem that causes discrimination and, in postcolonial terms, is considered as *another* who gets different treatment from white people. This typical Indian style of speech can be the subject of ridicule by her friends because she is regarded as a strange person and is not the same as those who are native Americans. This uncomfortable experience prompted Fatima to study English even more enthusiastically, "They primarily teach us English. But we are also required to take another language besides English" (Husain, 2010). Hiding Indian accent in negotiation theory *using skill that is flexible adaptive skill, and verbal communication in order to be understood and supported* (Ting-Tomey, 1999, P.49).

In terms of dressing, Fatima also does mimicry. Fatima's mother liked that her daughter wore the traditional *Shalwar Khameez attire*. However, Fatima is not comfortable at school. She constantly changed into *jeans* and t-shirts like most American kids. Wearing traditional Indian clothes, Fatima feels unhomely that is feels awkward. "Every day, upon coming home, Fatima would go up to her room and change out of her jeans and shirt into the traditional *Shalwar Khameez*, the same clothes she was deathly embarrassed to have her mother be seen wearing in front of her American friends (Husain, 2010).

Fatima also does mimicry in her dress at school. She wore unobtrusive clothes with her non-Muslim friends and took off her hijab. "Fatima's mother decided to adopt the hijab and began to wear it wherever she would go. She threw out all of her short-sleeved clothing and dressed even more modestly than before. Inspired by their mother, the girls also decided to start wearing hijab. However, there was one place where the girls were not ready to wear hijab, that was at school. Although they sported a scarf everywhere else, they went, the girls did not commence wearing hijab in their most unstable surrounding" (Husain, 2010). Imitating the way American women wearing dress is the form of mimicry that Fatima did not want to be treated differently and getting bullying from her friends. It shows that she wanted to be recognized by mimicking and adopting the colonizers' culture. (Nugroho & Rokhman, 2020). Based on Tomez negotiation theory, mimicry is a way of negotiation by applying *intercultural adaptation and using skill factors as flexible adaptive skill* (Ting-Tomey, 1999).

Fatima and her mother mimicked the American dress style even though she did not fully follow their dress code because her mother always dressed modestly and never wore a *tank top*. "Men and women who dressed in risky manner were frowned open, in fact those who dressed provocatively were often assumed to have weak moral character. And although Fatima's mother did not wear a veil or hijab, at this time, she would always dress in a modest fashion. Similarly, conservatively dressed Fatima never wore tank tops or shorts, nor did her sisters. In fact, they lacked the desire to dress in these types of clothes altogether, even if this was what their fellow classmate wore" (Husain, 2010).

This data shows that Fatima's mother imitates the style of dress like the Americans. She imitates the American outfit that doesn't wear a headscarf but also doesn't wear a *tank*



*top* or wear shorts. She never wanted to wear that kind of clothes. She kept her clothes modest and modest. In this case, the imitation of the way of dressing is not entirely the same because she believes the clothes can be used as perceptions such as morals or morals. Replication of this style of dress is called mimicry. Fatima's mother did it out of gratitude. "The girl had already adapted the same values that their parents possessed despite the fact that these values strikingly contrasted." (Husain, 2010). This imitation of dressing is the form of mimicry. That is mimicking, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite (Bhabha, 1984).

The other form of mimicry is imitating culture of American people by having a close friend. Fatima seems to limit herself to being a good friend with non-Muslims. Making friends with non-Muslims has become a serious discussion among Muslims. Some Muslims believe that a Muslim's friendship with other people will, to a certain degree, affect their behavior and beliefs. The hadith narrated by Tirmidhi (2378) from Abu Hurairah, the Messenger of Allah, said, "A person will be according to the belief of his best friend, so see who he is friendly with." Despite such a Muslim belief, Fatima ignored him and became close friends with Mrs. Sheehan. "Fatima's first impression of her was that of a Southern belle lost in the liberal North, but her understanding of Mrs. Sheehan was far from over. There was clearly much more to discover about fascinating lady. enough, Mrs. Sheehan also seemed to be intrigued by Fatima, and her outspoken and opinionated style. She appeared to have taken a liking to Fatima and began to ask Fatima many questions about her heritage, religion, and family. Soon enough the two developed a rapport, and Mrs, Sheehan became not only an excellent teacher to Fatima, but also good friend" (Husain, 2010). This statements indicated that Fatima imitating her friends in interacting and having relationship with other, even having a good friend from non-Muslim. This mimicry is the form of negotiation by using the component of *skill factors that is cultural/ personal values* (Ting-Tomey, 1999).

Fatima also do the mimicry in western mindset, that is active in organization unlimited the gender males and females. Fatima, is active in the organization and often shares ideas. Sharing the ideas and having a party, even doing a dinner. Fatima's family even invited Sheehan to special dinners within the Fatima family. Even Fatima's parents were interested in asking Mrs. Sheehan for a traditional Hyderabad-style dinner. Such a social gathering was the first planned gathering in the family of Fatima Husain. "Socially meeting people like Mrs. Sheehan was a first for Fatima's family. They had never ventured out of their Desi Muslim community. In fact, they never thought that any Caucasian would even be interested in carrying on friendship with someone who was not White; an idea that was stained their memories from the times of British occupied India" (Husain, 2010).

For Bhabha, the more imitations, the more difficult it will be for oppression because the identity barrier is getting increasingly biased. However, when combined with negotiation theory, one's motivation to try again after the failure of the first negotiation certainly deserves appreciation. The realization of his disappointment at least shows that he still values his primary identity. Therefore, this study proposes strengthening the term *mindful mimicry*. To explain the condition of mimicry believed by the perpetrator for a while, as did Fatima. The main indication that can be used is the existence of "temporary" parameters such as one time...,.. not ready.., and ..someday (Asiyah, 2021). The reflection of mindful mimicry also reveals in Husain's *Neither This Nor That*. "Fatima' decided to adopt the hijab and began to wear it wherever she would go. However, there was one place where



the girls were **not ready** to wear hijab, that was at school. Although they sported a scarf everywhere else, they went, the girls did not commence wearing hijab in their most unstable surroundings" (Husain, 2010). Another indication that proves the existence of mindful mimicry is a person's change from mimicry to a hybrid identity.

### Change to Hybrid

One of the concepts that Bhabha introduced is hybrid agency behavior. Hybridity means mixing western culture with colonial culture. For colonized people, hybridity is an ordinary situation that always exists and gives the impression of stability. However, for colonial discourse, hybridity gives rise to the image that separate cultures are created explicitly through the discourse of colonialism. The colonized community felt that hybridity was natural for the colonized, but the colonizer would feel otherwise. Colonizers always needed a definition of cultural boundaries or barriers to demonstrate their superiority. Hybridity is a threat because cultural boundaries are no longer visible, so the discourse of colonialism is fading. To maintain these boundaries, the address of colonialism always produces stereotypes which are often in the form of harsh words and racism. Stereotypes are always echoed against hybridity.

One of the concepts that Bhabha introduced is hybrid agency behavior. Hybridity means mixing western culture with colonial culture. For colonized people, hybridity is an ordinary situation that always exists and gives the impression of stability. However, for colonial discourse, hybridity gives rise to the image that separate cultures are created explicitly through the discourse of colonialism. The colonized community felt that hybridity was natural for the colonized, but the colonizer would feel otherwise. Colonizers always needed a definition of cultural boundaries. The postcolonial concept used in this dissertation is the hybridity concept of Homi Bhabha. In *The book Location of the Culture*, Bhabha argues that the *subaltern* has been able to speak through the appropriations that it has done. In addition, Bhabha introduces the term hybridity, a vital term concept. The book *Key Concepts In Post-Colonial Studies* states that hybrids are the formation of new trans cultures in zones that influence each other due to colonialism. "*Creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization.*" It was further explained that hybrids underlie other efforts to emphasize cultural togetherness in the colonial and postcolonial processes in the expression of syncretism, cultural synergy, and transculturation. "... *hybridity also underlies other attempts to stress the mutuality of cultures in the colonial and postcolonial process in expressions of syncreticity, cultural synergy and transculturation*" (Ashcroft, 2007).

In postcolonial studies, hybridity is a common thing without needing to be celebrated. Hybridity is a normal part of cultural assimilation, although this concerns the stability of colonial discourse. Huddart says that hybridity results from a long journey of arduous negotiations. "*Hybridity is not simply to be celebrated, in a magical multiculturalist reinvention of tired national traditions, but is a difficult, agonistic negotiation process*" (Huddart). In contrast to postcolonial studies, which mention hybrids as an alternative form of intercultural negotiation, Ting Toomey's concept of identity negotiation does not say the specific results of identity negotiations. The output of Ting-Toomey's proposed negotiations is *being understood, being respected, and being supported*" (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

Usually, Indian women are arranged by their parents and extended family. The





matchmaking culture often occurs when attending a large family wedding party. The wedding party is a large family reunion to meet each other, exchange news, and make the brotherhood closer. "*The Wedding would also serve as a family reunion for Fatima's mother*" (Husain, 2010). Fatima could not understand what her best friend had decided. "Fatima was shocked. She wondered to herself how it was possible to go through with a marriage when one hadn't spoken to his/her perspective spouse at all. But she knew that she could not say a word about that this time" (Husain, 2010).

Fatima did not want what happened to her best friend Anam also happen to her. Education about the freedom to choose a husband has colored her mindset as an American girl to be free to determine who will be her life partner. "*you know this whole matchmaking stuff with guys from here. Do you really think that I could actually live with these FOBs? they would have to deal with total culture shock*" (Husain, 2010). Fatima wants to convince her mother that differences in customs and culture can be fatal in a household.

Fatima wanted to convince her mother that differences in customs and culture can be fatal in a household. Fatima refuses an arranged marriage while attending her brother's wedding. After a while, when Fatima entered the university level. One of the aunts who met at Aifa's wedding, Aunt Qudsia, had contacted her family twice. They intended to plan a gathering of two families. Still, Fatimah refused. Fatima thinks about whether her parents are insulting her or giving her freedom. According to what her parents say, she is between two different cultures as *Desi* must. As an American girl, she is free to determine whom she chooses. With two cultures coloring his mindset, he told his parents. "I am not going to be *Desi* or American. So, let me just exercise my Islamic right. 'I am not interested in him' Fatima Replied coldly" (Husain, 2010). From Fatima's explanation, meeting two cultures that unite and form this new culture is a hybrid in matchmaking.

On the one hand, adopting a free American culture, on the other hand, maintaining the custom of matchmaking but giving girls the freedom to make their own choices. Since then, Saleem has never been discussed in Husain's family. It could be that the suitable candidate is the second, third, fourth, fifth, or so on. Fatima disagrees with the arranged marriage tradition that occurs in her family. Fatima breaks this tradition by collecting biodata of prospective husbands if they are suitable. This is done by friends and family. Usually, the *taaruf* process is carried out one by one, but it differs from Fatima, which collects two people simultaneously. She thought hard about how she could choose the right person so that she was successful in his career and also successful in his household.

Table 1 Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
Shamsi- out of school	Talha - In school
Talha – Likes to read	Shamsi – Like eatings?
Talha – nice eyes	Shamsi – Kinda Chunky
Talha - lives at school	Shamsi – lives at home
Talha – know his family well	Shamsi – heard about his family

Considering the pros and cons of both candidates, Fatima chose Talha as her future husband. She will continue to undergo the *taaruf* process to know more and meet Talha. Her father will arrange to meet two families. So that the two are more familiar and solidify the decision to continue at the marriage level.



When her friends were married, she was still struggling to achieve her dreams, and finally, she got the opportunity to select a potential husband from the various proposals that came in. With multiple considerations of the advantages and disadvantages of each candidate, he tries to think logically and think about the future if he can live with him. Generally, the women in the novel are matched by their parents. However, Fatima tried to convince her family and parents that she needed time to consider and choose her. Fatima's parents appreciate their child's feelings. They did not want to force their will to match Fatima. Husain, Fatima's father, was very accommodating, giving Fatima the freedom to determine the chosen candidate. As a Muslim, Fatima performs *istikhara*, a prayer to ask for guidance on whether her choice is correct. After making her choice and completing *istikhara*, Fatima felt sure of her will. Then two prominent families arrange a meeting to discuss all the needs of the wedding.

She could not contain her excitement and happiness. Everyone dreams of the day the will find Mr. Right or vice versa. For Fatima the day had come; she truly believed this. She could not believe that she had just agreed to marry Muslim ABCD-American Born Confused Desi, one that fit the mold that both she and her parents were looking for (Husain, 2010). After getting a partner as her will, she plans how to celebrate his wedding following Islamic teachings. It is recommended to announce good news in the form of marriage so as not to cause slander in society.

From the data above, it appears that Fatima combines Indian Muslim customs with American-style freedom in finding a mate. This hybridity is based on Fatima's knowledge of "*intercultural adaptation*" and "*flexible, adaptive skills*," which are components of *mindfulness*. Culture *homely* getting the understanding and support of people around (*being understood and being respected*)

In traditional Indian families, the bride and groom cannot see each other during all pre-wedding events until the wedding day. Anam explained to Fatima that tonight, Amir's family would come to bring all the wedding clothes and jewelry worn during the wedding celebration. "*Well Amir's family will first come here and they will bring all my wedding clothes and jewelry*" (Husain). Fatima was again surprised by Anam's explanation. How could Anam be wearing a wedding dress and jewelry that she didn't know before, even just choosing colors? That is the tradition in Hyderabad. Then Anam asked Fatima what about *Desi*, who got married in America. Fatima explained that things in Hyderabad also happened in America, such as singing and exchanging gifts. The bride knows what she wants to wear during the wedding celebration, and more importantly, at least she has met her future husband and talked with him. This ensures that the prospective husband and wife are attracted to each other. Knowing the future husband is also the right of a Muslim woman.

After the debate, the Mehendi designer started decorating Fatima's hands and feet. Mehendi is an ancient custom and ancient art form in the Asian subcontinent, especially in India. Professional Mehendi designers personalize the designs with the theme of the wedding or the wishes of the bride and groom. At this event, the two families of the bride and groom will meet each other. The designs created are complex. His arms and legs stretched out in four different directions. The bridge is decorated with henna to beautify her hands and feet. After four hours of ordeal, Anam is now ready to wear a wedding dress for all guests over the next few hours "*he was wearing a yellow Khara –duppata, a traditional Hyderabadi bride's dress, and had the edges of the long scarf draped over her*



head " (Husain, 2010).

Furthermore, Husain said Fatima planned a wedding that combined Indian, Islamic, and American designs handled directly by American women. "All joy and commentary of the world was at fingertips. And now the preparation had to begin. The planning of a monstrously large Muslim wedding, with all the Desi trimmings, organized by a young American woman (Husain, 2010). This celebration shows that Fatima has formed a hybrid wedding party. The process of identity negotiation indicates Indian Muslim, which is her national identity, as well as describing her *roots* that are preserved with her religious identity and her new identity as an American citizen. Fatima's marriage hybridity shows that she has mastered *intercultural adaptations* and *flexible, adaptive skills*, which are components of *mindfulness*.

Fatima, chairman of the World Affair Club, proposed the celebration of Ramadan and Eid. Fatima then invited a meeting of members of the *Pakistani Student Association* and *Islamic society* to organize an event because it used sponsors from the American community. One of the organizing organizations found a sponsor who wanted alcohol to be provided during the celebration.

The Islamic Society had originally agreed, but then members of the Islamic Society found flyers that were being circulated by the Pakistani Student Association about this event. Their flyer informed, "Alcohol available for nominal charge (Husain, 2010). It is undoubtedly against Islam's teachings, which forbid them to consume the forbidden drink. However, this is a free country in America and Muslims are a minority. The pros and cons of dealing with this problem led to a long debate. Some agree, and others do not. Discussions are needed to compromise religious beliefs with existing social conditions to find a solution that satisfies all parties. "Compromising their faith in order to socially fit in was not something these students wished to do. Although they lived in America they did not want to completely assimilate into mainstream society. Instead, they want to be part of the larger montage of tradition that all came to America. The task was to become integral part of that the larger mosaic without losing their individual beauty" (Husain, 2010).

At first, compromising their beliefs to fit in socially was not something they wanted to do. Even though they lived in America, they didn't want to assimilate entirely with the natives. Instead, they wanted to be part of a giant montage of traditions that all came to America and shaped *Americanness*. "Young Muslim women living in America. American Muslims. A new culture. New Identity that these young Muslims, being born and raised in America, were the pioneers of. After all, it was a new type of social and religious identity for most people to identify. But when one looked upon this table of young women there was no doubt that this was exactly who they were. American Muslims" (Husain, 2010).

Their job is to be an integral part of that enormous mosaic without losing their faith and gaining each other's comfort. After more than an hour of discussion, the meeting finally accepted the sponsor's offer. The debate carried on for another hour. It was finally decided that the Islamic Society (IS) would openly denounce the Pakistani Student Association (PSA) flyer and its President and Vice President (VP) would have a discussion with the PSA President and VP letting them know how the IS felt about this situations (Husain, 2010).

With this incident, their identity negotiations are based on their awareness of practicing religion (*mindful identity domain*) and the need to simultaneously secure their identity (*mindful identity needs*). Finally, they decided to hold an Islamic celebration by including alcohol. Their hybridity as a result of negotiations displays a new identity that is



more tolerant and respects existing differences, but individual beliefs must be maintained. Preventing Americans from providing alcohol is not easy but not drinking and not buying it is a choice everyone can make. Therefore, the skills to negotiate with sponsors and collaborate with the community are required in political ways that do not violate religious principles. Seen that the discussion participants understand "*In-Group & Out-Group Boundary*" which is one of the *knowledge factors* negotiations *mindful*.

At different levels, "skilled and highly educated immigrants contributed positively to the social and economic development of the nation." (Ting-Toomey, 1999) By having high skills and education, Muslim women can maintain their identity and accept external identities so as to form a new identity with a hybrid concept. The negotiation outputs offered by Ting-Toomey and the concepts in postcolonial Bhabha can be combined. On the one hand, Ting-Toomey offers a formless parameter. On the other hand, Bhabha provides a form without an explicit parameter in negotiations. Ting-Toomey said that the output of negotiations is *being understood, respected, and being supported*, but the behavior of people with these parameters is not seen in cross-cultural studies. While Bhabha offers the concepts of mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity as a form of resistance to postcolonial studies, Bhabha does not care whether mimicry, ambivalence, and the hybridized agency do all of these things based on awareness, knowledge, and *skills*. For Bhabha, the increasing number of mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity phenomena shows that colonial discourse is increasingly fragile and fragmented.

### Conclusion

The identity formed from the negotiation process described in the novel is mimicry, ambivalence, and hybrid. The research shows that these postcolonial concepts can be applied in conjunction with Ting Toomey's negotiation concept. Even more profoundly, when looking at Bhabha's words that mimicry and ambivalence are a mockery of colonial discourse, it is possible that when someone has mimicry and ambivalence, they do it mindfully. Therefore, the researcher proposes strengthening the terms *mindful mimicry* and *mindful ambivalence*, which are the opposite of *mindless mimicry* and *mindless ambivalence*. It is hoped that humanities studies will pay more attention to the terminology of *mindful mimicry and mindful ambivalence* to represent people who negotiate consciously, using knowledge and abilities to have targets for mimicry, ambivalence, or hybridity.

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