

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PUBLISHERS OF
MUSLIM CHILDREN'S LITERATURE WITH
REFERENCE TO CULTURE & CHARACTER
REPRESENTATION**

**A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION & JOURNALISM
BABA SAHEB BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY
LUCKNOW**

**BABASAHEB
BHIMRAO
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**FOR THE PERTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF
THE DEGREE
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
IN MASS COMMUNICATION & JOURNALISM**

**SUPERVISOR
Prof. GOVIND PANDEY**

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby declare that the research titled "*A Comparative Study of Publishers of Muslim Children's Literature With Reference To Culture & Character Representation*" my own work is done under the guidance of Dr. Govind Pandey. It was undertaken while I was enrolled to the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) 2017-18 programme of Mass Communication & Journalism at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

The study has followed proper research design and methodology and the content contains appropriate citations. Any contribution made to the research by others, is explicitly acknowledged in the thesis.


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Researcher Name: Nafisa Khatun

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work presented in the Dissertation entitled "*A Comparative Study of Publishers of Muslim Children's Literature With Reference To Culture & Character Representation*" has been carried out under the guidance and supervision of Professor Dr. Govind Pandey, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU), Lucknow. The work presented in the Dissertation is original and not has been submitted in part or in full to any University or Institution for award of my degree, diploma, membership or similar title(s). I also undertake that the dissertation is essentially free from all kind of plagiarism.

Najia

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CHAPTER -1

INTRODUCTION & RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Everything about Islam can be learned from Quran – the holy book of Muslims. It symbolizes ‘to read’ and ‘understand’ and is written in the Arabic language. Books play an important role in disseminating information. Reading and understanding of religion for Muslims and people of different faith can be easy if the text is language-friendly (written in English or has been translated). Most Muslim literature is treated with the purpose of addressing children as its main audience. Book publishers have an important adapting role in curating, publishing and delivering relevant children books. The publishing culture in the industry has to acclimatize itself that children need to be provided with the right books rather than numerous low quality books, so these young readers grow up to be culturally confident and knowledgeable.

My experiential encounter was growing up without right children books, with whose characters or story plot, I can relate to. Reading books to gain understanding of Islamic preaching and etiquettes was not the case for me. Still it is not the accepted norm for many young minds. It is passed on orally to kids from parents or their guardians. I, of course, grew up surrounded by several children’s books that made me a passionate reader and book lover. But Muslim literature, as a reflection of lifestyle, culture, food habit, in books was absent. Further, the struggle of incorporating received Muslim manners from family, without being stereotype, was not shown in book stories. My research motivation is this experiential account that made me choose children’s book publishers and examine the books produced and how effectively contemporary Muslim literature is represented. The below quotes were constant reminders of importance of children literature and right books:

"Unknown words don't stop the child, a boring story will." (from *Children's Literature*, 6, 1977, pp 13-14) – **Isaac Bashevis Singer**

“There is no such thing as a child who hates to read; there are only children who have not found the right book.” – **Frank Serafini**

“Reading is like breathing in, writing is like breathing out.” – **Pam Allyn**

I have read only the first 'Harry Potter' book. I thought it excellent, perhaps the best thing written for older children since *The Hobbit*. I wish the books had been around when my kids were the right age for them. – **Gene Wolfe, American writer**

Charlotte Huck, long considered one of the original theorists of children's literature, said, "Children's books are books that have the child's eye at the center" (**Huck, Kiefer, Hepler, & Hickman, 2004, p. 5**)

"Keep reading. It's one of the most marvelous adventures that anyone can have." – **Lloyd Alexander**

"I am a part of everything that I have read." – **Theodore Roosevelt**

The wise man reads both books and life itself. — **Lin Yutang**

"A writer only begins a book. A reader finishes it." – **Samuel Johnson**

"Reading is a conversation. All books talk but a good book listens as well."- **MarkHaddon**

"Few Children learn to love books by themselves. Someone has to lure them into the wonderful world of written word; someone has to show them the way."-**OrvillePrescott**

Indian Publishing Scenario & the Children Segment since 1976

Describing country's print book industry through the below two major reports-

First is the "**The Survey of Indian Book Industry**," report published in **1976** by the National Council for Applied Economic Research, a think tank. It was estimated that India's publishing industry measured a Rs. 14,000 crore growth, which is 15% year over year, till 2015. Till 2015 some sort of educated guess was that India's publishing industry measured Rs. 14,000 crore growth at 15% year over year.

After along gap of 30 years, the second report "**The India Book Market: Understanding the India Book Market**" released at the Frankfurt Book Fair on October 14, 2015, provided upgraded tool to provide an overview of the industry. From then, freshly updated data-backed look at the book printing as whole industry is out in public domain but its findings have to be understood in proper segments.

Understanding the Key Statistics and Slightly Skewed Data

The report has mentioned that India is world's sixth-largest book market, and currently the second largest for books in English, after the United States. Demographic trends support the high growth rate of the industry.

The report derived its result from the BookScan data through 100 industry stakeholders going through interviewing and online surveying method. To analysis of consumers- survey of as many as 2,000 people from urban area was also conducted.

It covered a total 9,037 publishers, out which 8,017 published school and HE text books. Remaining 930 are trade publishers. It has to especially note that it presented the growth figures estimates for the entire publishing industry and not just for 'trade publishing' segment. Further the complex claim is that of English as language enjoying second rank. The data fog demanding clarity has to be understood that the analysis reveals overall trade publishing is minority within which encapsulated is tiny English trade publishing.

Nielsen forecasts, the K-12 (educational) children book market is likely to grow at a CAGR of 19.6 per cent, from INR 221.7 billion in 2014-15 to INR 541.9 billion by 2019-20. The children's book market is the fastest growing sector in the industry, accounting for around

15 per cent worth 1,200 crores of the total (3). Of this, around 60 per cent is textbook publishing, and the remainder non-textbook trade publishing, which is the focus of this research. But of this 15 per cent, it is important to understand that almost all books published for children, barring text books, is termed as children's literature

Lastly, Vikrant Mathur, Director – Book Practice, Nielsen India, has quoted FICCI November, 2015, "Print Book Market in India has a size of INR 260.6 Billion, double of Indian film industry (INR 125.3 Billion) and 6 times the size of Music, Radio and Gaming industries, all together. India rank 6th globally in Print Book Publishing and is 2nd largest English language Publishers in the World and the market comprises over 9,000 publishers and 21,000 retailers."

Trade publishing in English took off in the country when Penguin Books India was launched in 1985. Over the following two decades, professionals with industry experience set up local and independent publishing houses.

Book Publishing Landscape in India & Entry of Different Types of publishers

Exact statistics conveying children publishers and its geography is not concrete due to several industry dynamics. Relating variables- readership, literature, book genre, literature, nature of publishing house is available to grasp generic overview. Initially children book in a way was extension of syllabus-based textbook industry or NCERT dominated publishing.

Government backed Publishers: National Book Trust & Children Book Trust

Establishment in 1957: The first breakthrough was witnessed in the form of multicolored books and cartoons, with the establishment of the National Book Trust and the Children Book Trust, both in New Delhi.

The NBT with its sub unit Nehru BalPustakalay (NBP) at that point of time was a major children's books publisher handling promotion and distribution. The National Book Trust was set up Jawaharlal Nehru to make available books recognized to be good at a low cost and creating book reading climate and book buying among people.

NBT's catalogue and website cites, National Book Trust has published more than 300 originals, about 2,500 translations and 3,000 reprints under the NBP series. Their books are marketed beyond urban centres via book fairs and mobile vans.

Bringing back the focus on **Nehru BalPustakalay (NBP)**, it facilitated entry of illustrated books (table 1) in English as well as Hindi at affordable prices in early 1960s. The publications also include an exhaustive and authoritative book on 'Children's Literature in India' for documentation and referencing.

India's most popular political cartoonists, K. Shankar Pillai, founded the **Children's Book Trust** founded in 1957 till today has to its credit about 1000 titles. In the year 1961 it published two picture books and then kept on expanding its book category.

Independent Publisher 'Amar Chitra Katha' Popular Children Book Vibe in

1967: India Book House with its imprint series 'Amar Chitra Katha' raised the children publishing bar to a new commercial success. Pioneered by famous editor AnantPai and he created 400 titles around Indian epics, mythology, history, folklore, and fables. The comic series were published in 30 language has sold 80 million copies in India and outside too. Currently, the imprint and all its titles were acquired by a new venture called ACK Media.

Entry of Conglomerate Publisher in India in Mid1980: Till mid 1980s foreign publisher houses were allowed to operate through less than 50 per cent ownership with Indian partnership. So, Penguin India, emerged in 1985, by locking a partnership with the Calcutta-based media group Ananda Bazar Patrika. In the late 1990s, Scholastic started up operations in India and as established itself as one of the largest children's publishers. Large multinational firms such as HarperCollins, Random House (2005) and Hachette (2008) set up in India in the 2000s, and have all entered the children's/young adults publishing scene. Bloomsbury Publishing launched its Indian business in September 2011. Simon & Schuster, a unit of CBS Corp became the last of the "Big Six" publishers to open an Indian division in 2011.

Opening of Indigenous Independent Publisher in 1990s: Home grown independent children publishers/ing houses also proliferated. Chennai based three picture book players - Karadi Tales, Tulika Publishers and Tara Books came into the picture. Some other popular publishers included Young Zubaan, Katha, Little Latitude, Red Turtle, Pratham Books.

Subramaniam, (2013) analyzed the top 1,000 children's bestsellers in March 2012, using Neilson Bookscan numbers. He found that only one Indian title, 9 Swami and Friends, at 1935 classic, made the list of top 1,000 bestsellers at #151. In her 1998 essay, MohiniRao [6] estimated that around 50 per cent of non-textbook children's publishing up to the 1980s was made up by retellings of popular folk tales or stories from the epics. According to ManasiSubramaniam, not much has changed: "Walk into any bookstore in India and the children's section will be filled with dozens of different retellings of the Panchatantra and the Jataka". Subramaniam concludes that contemporary Indian children's content is completely excluded from bestseller lists (Pathak, 2011, p. 1)

PROFILE OF PUBLISHERS

1-Govt-backed NBT & CBT- discussed above in landscape section.

2-Independent Publishers

ACK media too discussed in above paragraphs. In parallel lines, the gap and its struggle were recognized by indigenous independent publishing houses. **With special reference to two Delhi-based independent publishers** namely **Newview Publication** and **Goodword Book**, the gap was narrowed. They became decent children book segment contributors with **do-it-yourself (DIY) activity books** and **Islamic educational fun games**.

Goodword Book Limited; Year 1996

The publishing house traces its genesis from the Islamic Centre in Delhi 1976 by the founder and Muslim scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. He noticed the non-availability of right books and quality status being incapable of propagating compelling stories from the Quran. In solution oriented step, he along with his son Saniyasnain Khan (also children author and recognized by the Limca Book of Records) established Goodword Book Limited in 1996. The publishing house mission is to create children's books on Islam, which provide a solid foundation of Islamic and moral values, through themes carefully chosen from the Quran and other Islamic sources. Goodword's Islamic books in English and other languages are also prescribed in many Islamic schools around the world. These school books are published on topics ranging from – Quran and hadith stories, Quranic wisdom and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUP).

“Tell Me About Hajj”, written by Saniyasnain Khan was released in **1999**. The title is among the very first English non-fiction Islam-themed children's book, created and published by independent children's book publisher from New Delhi, India. **‘The Story of Khadija’** won Sharjah Children's Book Award 2013 with a cash prize of AED 15,000 (Rs 200,000). The book, *The Story of Khadija (May God be pleased with her)*, is based on the life of the wife of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). It has been beautifully illustrated by noted illustrator, Gurmeet Singh and author is Saniyasnain Khan.

After short span of time, the children's Islamic publishing company, decided in **2005** to foray into Islamic games with the Quran Challenge Game. The purpose was to instill interest in exploring and learning about Islam through fun DIY activities. The other game set includes-the Junior Quran Challenge, Great Mosque, Hadith Challenge, MadinahSalat, Great Mosque and the Hajj Fun Game.

The game is designed on the verses of the Quran and directs the participant to refer to the Quran for effective learning. It contains question-answer cards, a well-illustrated playing board with pawns, and the listed rules of the game. The game series has marked its presence at international book fairs too.

Newview Publication Private Limited; Year 2009

Another independent publisher **Newview Publication Private Limited** has its own shares of contribution to the segment. Founded by the duo Kashif Ahmed and BinishKashif in **2009** is not a purely children Islamic publishing unit rather it is boutique catering educational sector demand by importing, distributing and publishing books. The Muslim children category has listed 5 books. The publishing house enjoys healthy distinction as it books for children with specified age category and also supplies Islamic educational activity book to numerous madarsa.

3-Conglomerate Simon & Schuster

In India in the year **2000** with delimiting the FDI, the publishing muscles got more strengthened, and allowed foreign publishing giants such as Scholastic, Pan Macmillan, HarperCollins, Springer and Elsevier to set up shop here. Earlier, foreign companies were not own more than a 49-percent stake in any Indian publishing company. Now India has Hachette, Random House, Simon & Schuster, Bloomsbury and Harlequin, which are fully owned entities of their parent companies.

Of all the above line mentioned publisher giants, the problem of old fashioned content and other publishing ailments undermining Muslim characters and stories in children books, was solely diagnosed by the conglomerate Simon & Schuster. Consequently, **in 2016** it founded '**Salaam Reads**' first of its kind imprint (series of book titles) dedicated for depiction of Muslim contemporary characters and life.

Statement of problem

Children often don't understand the meaning of the recited verses in Quran. Major reason is Arabic not being our mother language. Often recitation is practiced with no English or Hindi translation. Further, children are not aware of stories in Quran and Islamic teachings in their childhood because of little exposure to Islam-themed children's books in English language. Even if some grew up reading books, contemporary literature or topic in those books, allowing reader to relate with the character or narrative, traced was little. Books by indigenous publishers are mostly on topic of Eid and Ramzaan, mostly celebration oriented without Muslim literature coverage in depth. In this research, I investigate government-backed independent/conglomerate publishers and how enriching is the representation of the Muslim culture and character. I also studied the state of Muslim children literature and whether it's good enough to qualify as new age Muslim children's books catering to the contemporary requirement.

Aim of the study

Are publishers offering diversity in cultural representation in their books with progressive literature and contemporary topics? Which publishers have revolutionized the Muslim children literature and cultural representation? To understand the relevancy of Islam-themed children's books by various publishers in capturing the child's attention and awareness.

Research Objective

Q1-To study Indian Scenario of Muslim Children Book Publishing and total titles produced along with timeline, individually by the 3 types of publishers.

Q2-To establish which publisher is revolutionizing the diversity in Muslim children's book bouquet. This is done by studying the relevancy of books published in context of progressive and contemporary literature or topics covered in them.

Q3-To study how effectively publishers use social media (their official Facebook Page) for sharing communication related to their book in order to create publicity.

Research Question

Q1- What kind of publishers comprises the Muslim Children Book Publishing Landscape in India and what is the total numbers of titles published by them individually?

Q2- What is the existing state of book diversity in context of contemporary Muslim children literature or topics covered in books published by each of the publishers?

Q3- How each of the publishers has depicted overall Muslim character and culture representation in their books.

Q4- Are these Publishers using social media (their official Facebook Page) effectively and frequently for book publicity.

Limitations

Books published in English have only been used for data collection. Comparison of books is only made among publishers rather than a single publishing house. Government-backed publishers' Facebook Page has no dedicated page for single books or imprint, so, their book publicity activity is not traceable. Conducting the same was possible between the two – Goodword and Simon & Schuster Publishers – selecting award winning and debut title, respectively. Further, the study involves selection of independent Muslim publishers from the national capital only. With time constraints before me, I have not considered the Muslim character and representation through pictorial or image analysis.

Scope of Study

It will be helpful for publishing organizations-Association of Publishers in India (API), Association of Writers and Illustrators for Children (AWIC) for addressing the problems of niche children literature and producing relevant new age books.

Research Methodology

Research Type- Descriptive

Research Design- Triangulation (Qualitative + Quantitative) Comparative case study (embedded)

Universe of the study- Children Book Publisher/Publishing House

Unit of the study- Government-backed /Independent/Conglomerate Publishers and their Muslim or Islam-themed children's books, book theme, Muslim characters, narrative of Islamic teachings and prophetic traditions, Muslim culture representation in selected published books.

Data Collection- Pre Survey of catalogue and review of literature. Media archives, publishers catalogues and websites, publisher's website content, media interview or report of the said publishers/author, pre survey of review of literature on children's-Muslim kid lit-multicultural children's lit, Neilsan Report, Publishing Sector Profile FICCI Report. Regarding topics- book chapters, summary in catalogue, available reviews serve as textual analysis.

Frameworks of Study: My research on Publishers and Muslim representations in their published books is a comparative qualitative case study. The book "On the Case" by Anne Haas Dyson, Celia Genishi (2005) dealing in area of language and literacy to gain insight for research methodology.

With guidance taken, further the description of human experiences, especially muslim character and lifestyle is framed through qualitative method of critical or textual content analysis. The book Critical Content Analysis of Children's and Young Adult Literature- Reframing Perspective (2017) by K. G. Short, Holly Johnson, Janelle Mathis is used for this.

The textual data consists of analysis of book theme, Muslim character overall representation, preaching, story epistemology, and the contemporary element. The study of Muslim children's literature in books by different types of publishers is understood through frame of multiculturalism and character representation.

Related theories and concepts concerning my research is explained below through definition or short note-

Multiculturalism: The definition and perception of multiculturalism depends on the context. It can be understood as description of scattered social contingencies with contemporary nature attached (Homi K. Bhabha). In general, it is an understanding of the human diversity. The term is well researched and book is also written by scholars-

“Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader” by David Theo Goldberg

“Diversity and Multiculturalism: A Reader” by Shirley R. Steinberg

“Changing Multiculturalism” by Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg

Theoretical Background-

Textual (literary) Content Analysis/Qualitative content analysis

Galda, Ash, and Cullinan (2000) point out that with literary analysis it is about describing what authors do and whereas with content analysis it is an examination of what text is about. Textual analysis examines the actions of authors within the text, such as character development, symbolism, intertextuality, and narrative patterns, from the view of children’s literature as an object of literary criticism and analysis.

My methodological procedures included creating a multimodal transcript and carrying out descriptive analysis. The multimodal transcript provided a means to look at the book as a Muslimcultural text and to subject the text to the same sort of analysis that I would carry out by reading books. Then, coded and clustered book story data in several categories of book themes and character representation following **Grounded theory** (Martin & Gynnild, 2012)

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Very few studies are available dealing Indian origin children books with Muslim culture, Islam teaching, and contemporary representation. Children's and young adult literature as a distinct genre is a recent phenomenon in India. Traditionally, Indian children have been brought up on a vast repertoire of storytelling based on oral tales, folk tales² and mythology. Literature in print is a relatively new concept.

So gaining clarity on terms and their definitions also serves the purpose-

Children's Literature

Temple, Martinez, Yokota, and Naylor (2002) said, "Children's literature is the collection of books that are read to and by children ... from birth to about age fifteen" (p. 6). They also acknowledged that "it is surprisingly hard to define a children's book" (p. 5).

Eric Kline, 1993, stressed that children's literature are vital resource for defined as resource for introducing patterns of thought from one generation to another in term of experience and perception.

John Rowe Townsend, 1974, described it as anything that appears on the children's list by a publisher.

David Rudd, 1996, Children's Literature includes a variety of genres such fiction, non-fiction, traditional literature, drama, storybooks, picture books, poems, novels, comics, talking books, e-books, and others. Contemporary publications for children's literature mark them by their genre, age level, as well as visual, verbal, and stylistic components.

Multicultural Children's Literature

It shares similarities with Multicultural children's literature. Multicultural children's literature is about the sociocultural experiences of previously underrepresented groups. It validates these groups' experiences, including those occurring because of differences in language, race, gender, class, ethnicity, identity, and sexual orientation.

The definitions of Multicultural literature are mostly metaphorical in nature. Writers and scholars have defined it as-

Multicultural literature is defined as "literature by and about people of color" -**Botelho & Rudman, 2009**.

In the book '**Critical Multicultural Analysis of Children's Literature**' (2009) written by **Maria Jose Botelho** and **Masha Kabakow Rudman**, it is represented in several ways including-ethnicity, gender, class, religion, and geography.

Contemporary children's literature

Bookwriter **Paula S. Fass (2004)** in **Children of a New World: Society, Culture, and Globalization**' mentioned it as new phenomenon with significant features of the story or book. Focus on democratizing of global awareness was brought forward.

Muslim Children's Literature

All children literature is not necessarily Muslim children's literature. Although, great deal of similarities in character and nature exists in both of them. By simplifying both, we can conclude that muslimchildren literature resonates strongly with stroke of muslimcultures and lifestyles at global scale.

This multicultural approach of viewing Muslim lives is, as Banks and Banks (2004) assert, is a way of viewing the world and its people. Increasingly, Muslim authors are advocating for the importance of books with Muslim characters. One recent example is Sr. Naima B. Robert's article for the Guardian on the absence of Muslim characters in children's fiction. Another great development is the creation of Salaam Reads, an imprint for Muslim-themed children's books by the publishing house Simon & Schuster. While great strides have been made there is still work to be done, not only in expanding the growing genre of Muslim children's literature, but to help parents appreciate the role books can play in raising children who are proud of their Muslim identity.

The book '**Muslims in Story: Expanding Multicultural Understanding through Children's and Young Adult Literature**' written by Gauri Manglik and Sadaf Siddique. The book is author's passion to disrupt the world of children's literature and bring marginalized voices to the table. Spotlights curated titles that feature Muslim kids as heroes, Islamic contributions throughout history, inspiring Muslim leaders, and folktales from Islamic traditions. Siddique is cofounder and Chief Creative Officer at KitaabWorld. Her journalism background and work in print, documentaries and online media in India and the United States focused on innovative ideas for social change.

Scattered topics in the form of literature around the proposed research can be cited- Indian publishing, children books, Indian children book publisher, new age Muslim children book. However, study focusing India originated Muslim children books or indigenous publisher is nil. Joining the fragmented studies my exploration navigates. On a larger scale study is geographically segregated and the related variable of my study is found collaborated in them. Examples- Establishing an Islamic niche in Kazakhstan: Musylman Publishing House

and its publications by Wendell Schwabaa, Department of Anthropology, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. It narrates the journey from translations of short books to become an influential Islamic press company in Kazakhstan. Another is, Ideological Factors of Islamic Reference Books Published in Indonesia-This paper discussed the result of a research about Islamic reference books publishing in Indonesia, conducted in 2014 by employing qualitative approach. This study aimed at explaining a variety of non-business factors that encouraged the publication of Islamic reference books in Indonesia.

Some authors have conducted research on the publishing of Islamic books in Indonesia. Halid and Zubair [2] have conducted research on the Role of Publishers in Transformation of Islamic Intellectualism: Survey of Some Islamic Book Publishers in Jakarta. This research focused on the role of publishers in the transformation of Islamic intellectuals in Indonesia. Siti Maryam [3] also has been researching about the productivity of Islamic book publishing in Indonesia by looking at the listing of Islamic books in Indonesian National Bibliographic (BNI).

Radical Change (1998) by Eliza Dresang speaks of major innovations in children's literature in her book, describes literature in exciting new forms and formats, words and pictures. Another Book, "Merchants of Culture. The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century" by John Thompson discusses publishing corporations and diversifying culture. It emphasizes the need to carry out research on the social context of literature (be it a field, a market, or a publishing business), for the most part abstaining from the study of actual literary texts. **Ample of research papers are written on the book too.**

1. State of the Art in Publishing of Islamic Children's Books- Research Paper Paper
2. Muslim Publishers Look to Build Bridges, Counter Cultural Misunderstanding- article by publishersweekly
3. Salaam Reads: A Q&A With a New Publisher Imprint for Muslim Children- by Education Week
4. Research article by children's book publishing in India by Subramaniam M
5. The Muslim Publishing Industry Overview- blog

A Survey of Publishers and its Children's Literature with Muslim Content

The present survey focuses on available publishers in India and children books published by them having Islam, Muslim culture and character representation. Books were compiled through catalogues and website. The present survey section is divided into 3 parts. The first is a general survey of the books produced by government publishers. The present survey focuses on Islam or Muslim themed children books published by NBT and CBT since 1957. Thus, I begin this survey with scanning catalogues and concerned book themes. Further, Muslim literature for children is studied.

The next survey is books of Indigenous Independent Publishers. Third survey deals with books by Conglomerate Publishers. My particular focus is on the books containing Islam and Muslims as subject matter.

We can conclude that traditional literature, includes, mainly folk and fairy tales, as the mainstay of children's books. Then, genres of children's literature came, including realistic fiction, historical fiction, poetry, picture.

Children's Literature Reflecting Muslim Cultures and Islamic teachings

Resources addressing literature are children and young adult books with themes of Quran and the prophetic traditions.

My research focuses on Muslim Children literature that is faith-based, fictional, imaginative, and literary, contemporary. The primary purpose is not necessarily dissemination of information, but sharing of experiences between the author and the reader, within the context of feelings and attitudes invoked through its content, thus, sparking the readers' imagination (Northrop Frye, 1970, p. 46).

CHAPTER 3

DATA ANALYSIS

Publishers Comprising Muslim Children Book Publishing Scenario and Total Tally of Titles Published

I. Government Children Publishers and their Muslim Children Books Bouquet

Books by CBT&NBT- 'Race to Win' in 2007 English Book written by Loveleen Kacker , Illustrated by Ankur Mitra. Second was in 2007 '**Surprise Gifts**' written by Asha Nehemiah illustrated by Sujata Bansal. Next, '**A Gift From Miu**' published in 2015 and written by Santhini Govindan, Illustrated by Saurabh Pandey.

In 2015 '**Festival of Eid**' written by **Munshi Premchand**, published by NBT.

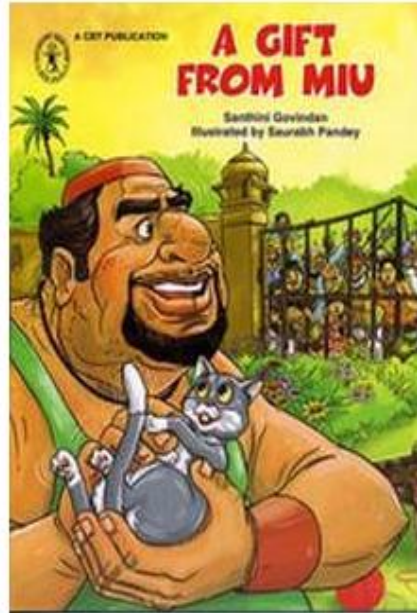
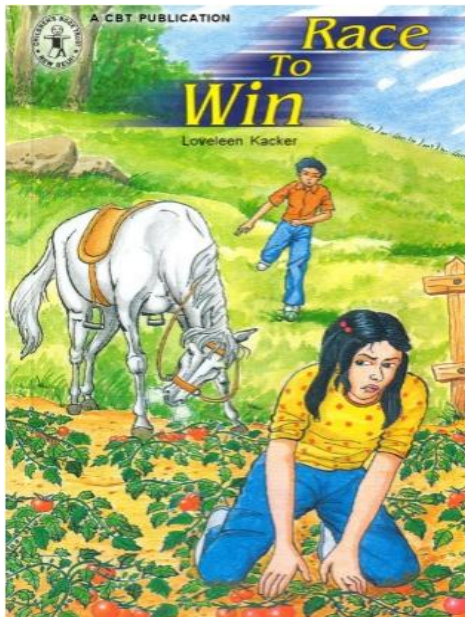
BOOKS COVER PAGES

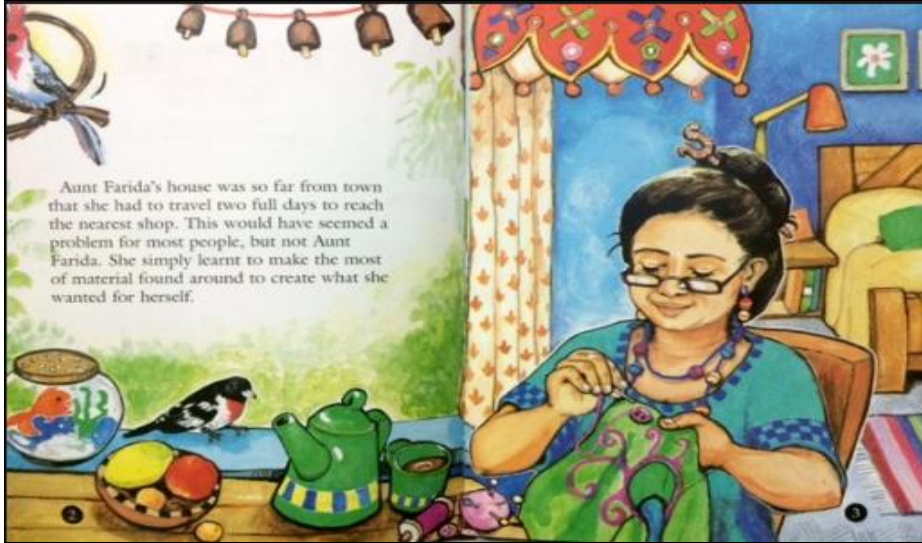
1st pic: Cover page of 'Race to Win' written by Loveleen Kacker; published by CBT

2nd pic: "A Gift From Miu" written by Santhini Govindan; published by CBT

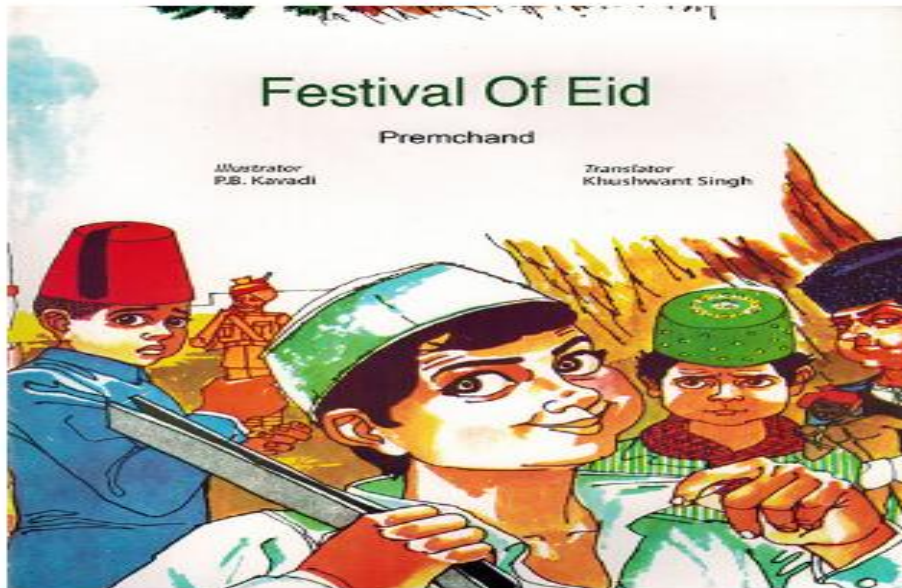
3rd pic: Cover page of 'Surprise Gifts' written by Asha Nehemiah; published by CBT

4th pic: Cover page of 'Festival of Eid' written by Munshi Premchand; published by NBT





Aunt Farida's house was so far from town that she had to travel two full days to reach the nearest shop. This would have seemed a problem for most people, but not Aunt Farida. She simply learnt to make the most of material found around to create what she wanted for herself.

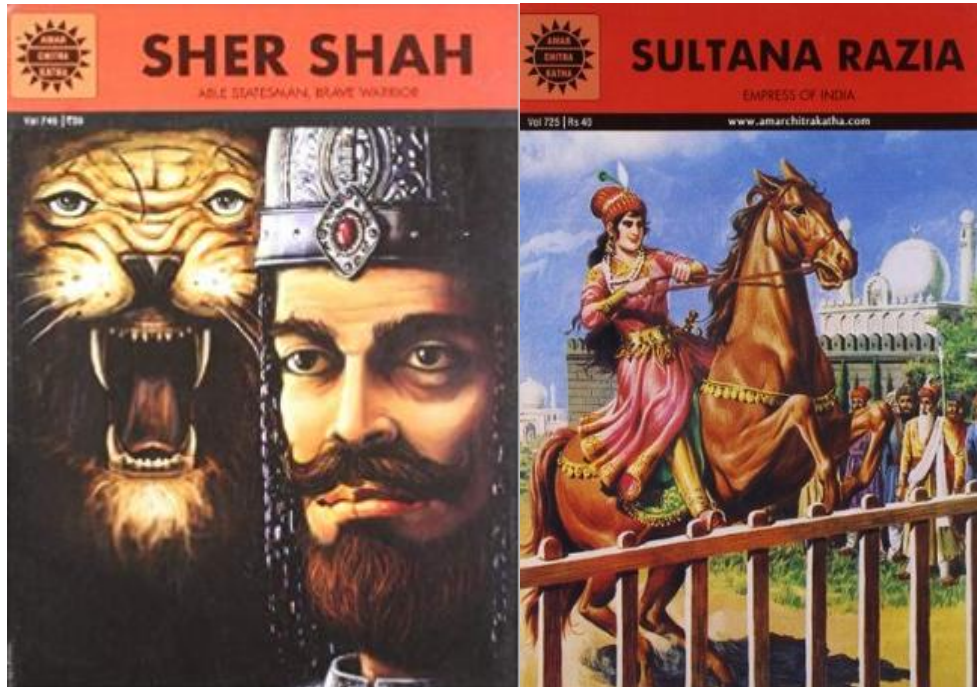


Illustrator
P.B. Kavadli

Translator
Khushwant Singh

II.Indigenous Independent Children Publishers and their Muslim Children books bouquet

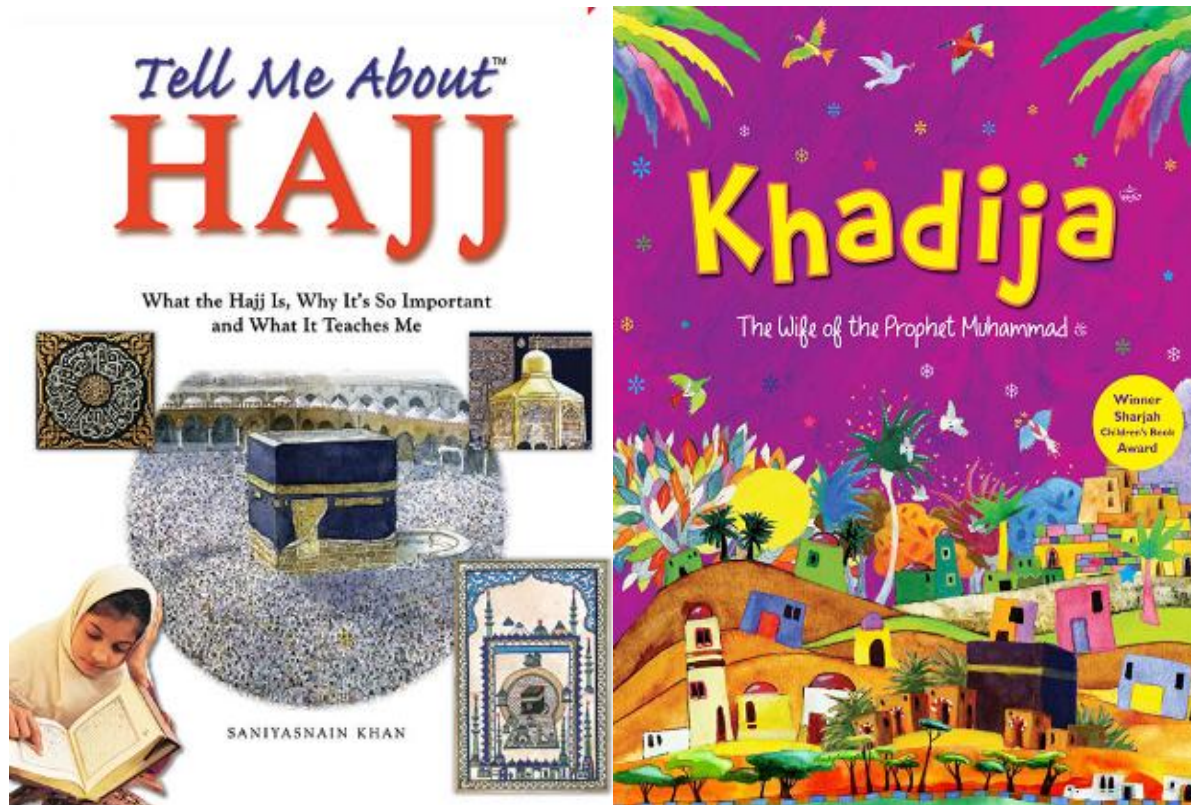
1-Books by ACK media -“Shershah” written by Dolly Rizvi and **“Sultana Razia”** in 1976 written by AnantPai, Shah Jahanwritten by CoomiChinoy in 1979, “Humayun” written byCoomiChinoy in 2012, Babar written by Toni patel in 1977, Akbar written by Toni patel 1979, Noor Jahan,written byLailaMahajan in 1977, Tipu Sultan written by SubbaRao in 1977. All were based on Muslim emperors and ruler in historical background.



Left pic: Cover page of “Shershah” written by Dolly Rizvi; Book Publisher ACK Media

Right pic: Cover page of Sultana Razia” written by AnantPai; Book Publisher ACK Media

2-Books by Goodword Limited-In its 2017 catalogue, the books are not categorized properly under different age group children. Even on it official website arbitrary categorizing is noticed making the assortment daunting. Total titles published are not quantified neither in catalogue nor website. Counting based on books listed on the website is more than 300 across all categories.



Left pic: Cover page of Goodword Book Publisher's Ist Children Book.

Rigth Pic: Cover page of Goodword Book Publisher's IstSharjah Award Children Book.

3-Newview Publication Books-Its Catalogue 2018 is properly categorized into sections along with age group of readers –**Islamic** with 8 titles ('Muslim ABC Rhymes', Muslim Rhymes Part II', 'My Dua Book', 'Tell Me About Allah', 'My Islamic Coloring Book'). Part II is an illustrated books with basic concepts of Islam teaching through rhymes. 'My Dua Book' is collection of Arabic duas with English translation. 'Tell Me About Allah' is a read aloudbook, primarily intended for children within 3-6 years age group. 'My Islamic Coloring Book' is developed for pre-school and elementary level Muslim children to introduce them to concept of Allah. It also produces teachings of the Qur'an and authentic Hadith under 'The Islamic studies series' comprising 6 books- pre- primer goes up to grade five.

According to catalogues till date it has published 13 children books narrating about Allah, Quran and Prayers. Introduced Picture and Colouring Books tried to bring children close to books through DIY activities and fostering relationship with originality, empathy and creative thinking.

III. Conglomerate Simon & Schuster Publishers and their Muslim Children books bouquet

In India in the year **2000** with delimiting the FDI, the publishing muscles got more strengthened, and allowed foreign publishing giants such as Scholastic, Pan Macmillan, HarperCollins, Springer and Elsevier to set up shop here. Earlier, foreign companies were not own more than a 49-percent stake in any Indian publishing company. Now India has Hachette, Random House, Simon & Schuster, Bloomsbury and Harlequin, which are fully owned entities of their parent companies.

Of all the above line mentioned publisher giants, the problem of old fashioned content and other publishing ailments undermining Muslim characters and stories in children books, was solely diagnosed by the conglomerate Simon & Schuster. Consequently, **in 2016** it founded '**Salaam Reads**' first of its kind imprint (series of book titles) dedicated for depiction of Muslim contemporary characters and life.

Conclusion in Tabular Form:

| GOVT BACKED PUBLISHERS | INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS | CONGLOMERATE PUBLISHER |
|---|---|---|
| Tally: 2 Names: NBT, CBT Total Books: 4 By CBT-3 By NBT-1 | Tally: 3 Names: ACK Media, Goodword Book, Newview Publication Total Books: 316 By ACK Media: 8 By Goodword Book: nearly 300 By Newview Publication: 14 | Tally: 1 Name: Simon & Schuster Total Books: 6 books in dedicated 'Salaamreads' imprint |

Existing State of Book Diversity in Context of Contemporary and Muslim Children Literature by Publishers

I. Govt backed Publishers

CBT share: 'Race to Win' is kind of adventure tale. No light is thrown on Islamic knowledge so in depth Muslim children literature is absent. It is a bit contemporary topic as it has gaming theme and children point of view has space in story. For next title, 'Aunt Farida' no concrete crux regarding Islam or Muslim is presented. Story is about a woman making handmade gifts for family members as to save time since she lives in a remote area. The story theme totally lack on Muslim as well as contemporary children literature. For title 'A Gift From Miu' no Islamic knowledge is provided in the story, which is also not written with kid as main character and theme is about caring bond of grown up man Azam with kitten. Book is a bit contemporary topic as it has happy side of being pet friendly.

NBT share: '**Festival of Eid**' touches both Muslim and contemporary children literature as the story revolves around Muslim festival Eid and sacrifice practiced to buy Eid gift. Majorly, the book plot is spun on traditional celebration of Eid festival.

Conclusion: All 4 titles have topic diversity and of them 3 have bright shade of contemporary Muslim children literature and one has light shade of Muslim children literature.

II. Independent Publishers

1-ACK Media share: refrained from publishing picture books based on religious figure or Prophets. Surely, being a comics company worried about "iconophobia," is justifiable. They produced all book on Muslim emperors and ruler in historical background.

2-Goodword Book share:

"**Tell Me About Hajj**", written by Saniyasnain Khan was launched in 1999. The title is among the very first English Non Fiction Islam themed children book, created and published by independent children book publisher from New Delhi, India. The book '**The Story of Khadija**' won Sharjah Children's Book Award 2013 and Rs 200,000 as cash prize. Another book, "**The Story of Khadija**" written by Saniyasnain Khan has depicted history-early childhood to adulthood life of the wife of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The book illustrator is Gurmeet Singh and has vibrant Muslim children literature.

Books-Eid Kareem Ameersaab! , Celebrating Eid-ul-Fitr with Ama Fatima, Aminah and Aisha's EidGifts,The Blessings of Ramadan , Eid Songs , Eid Ramadan Songs. All have strong shade of Muslim children literature but contemporary shade is not so bright.

Conclusion:Titles have diversity in topics. Majority has strong shade of Muslim children literature. However, compelling contemporary topics were not so elaborate.

2-Newview Publication: Titles ('Muslim ABC Rhymes', Muslim Rhymes Part II' , 'My Dua Book' ,Tell Me About Allah', 'My Islamic Coloring Book') and all the books under 'The Islamic studies series' are purely Muslim children literature with Islamic teachings and etiquettes.

Conclusion: titles have Muslim literature topic diversity and all are too enriched Muslim children literature lacking completely the contemporary elements.

III.Conglomerate Publisher Simon & Schuster: six titles Salam Alaikum ,Yo Soy Muslim, Mommy's Khimar, Saints and Misfits, The Gauntlet all account for diversity in topics.



Conclusion:Both Muslim and Contemporary children literature co-exist strongly. So far, comparatively, it has enriching book topic diversity as well as Muslim children's literature.

Overall Muslim Culture and Character Representation by Publishers in Their Books

I. Govt backed Publishers

CBT: 'Race to win' has a Muslim girl as protagonist. Muslim name and other character too- Sara, Fazlu, Taj-Ud-Din. However, Muslim culture is totally missing in the story plot. For, 'Surprise Gifts' has only Muslim name 'Aunt Farida' as lead protagonist for the sake of Muslim representation. Beyond this, Muslim culture or lifestyle is again missing in the book. 'A Gift From Miu' again has name sake Muslim representation with central character Azam.

NBT: 'Festival of Eid' attempts to comprehensively present the Muslim characters and culture. The narrative has Muslim lead-Hamid, his Grandmother Ameena representation and is set in Muslim backdrop. Wide range of muslim characters are represented through Hamid's friend circle-Mohsin, Mahmood, Noorey, Sammi.

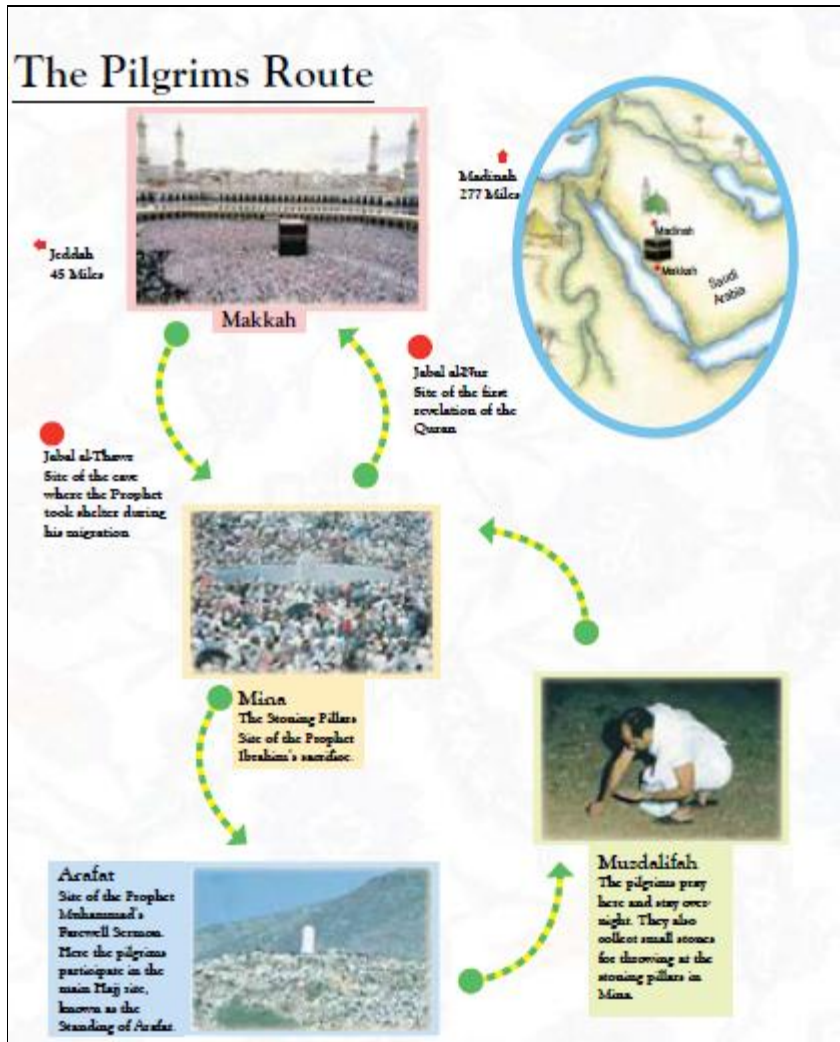


Right side pic: Eidgah mosque with celebration scene

Left side pic: Hamid flaunting the bought gift 'tong'

II. Independent Publisher

1-Goodword Book share: “Tell Me About Hajj” and “The Story of Khadija” present historical events with faith-based and non-fictional Muslim personalities purely supported on Islamic theology doctrine. Content of both books give great deal of glimpse into the Muslim culture. “Tell Me About Hajj”- has historical account of the Muslim pilgrimage Hajj and process of performing. Muslim pilgrimage culture including eating, dress and prayer rituals is depicted through diagrams, photographs, and colorful illustrations on topic- ZamZam, building the Kaaba, on the way to Mina. Sidebar columns of the book’s pages serve as Muslim multicultural representation as it narrates the story with information about the geography and lifestyle of the people of the time and the area.



The Sacred Mosque of Makkah

The Sacred Mosque of Makkah has been made larger over the years. Now the spring of Zamzam and the Safa and Marwa hills are enclosed within its walls, and there is enough space for one million pilgrims at a time. During Hajj this

magnificent structure itself seems to flourish to the ocean of pilgrims that surrounds it as far as the eye can see.

As the pilgrims of different races, speaking different languages, return to their homes, they carry with them

wonderful memories of the great men of the past—the Prophet Ibrahim (AS), the Prophet Muhammad (SA), his Companions and their wives, the great Caliphs, the respected scholars and thinkers of Islam—all who have undertaken the Hajj before them. They will always remember that great coming together, where rich and

poor, black and white, young and old, meet as equals. They go back, their faces glowing with hope and joy, for they have carried out God's command—the same command that He gave to mankind many centuries ago to go on the pilgrimage. This was so that people could not only seek pardon for their sins, but could also turn into better human beings. When they return, it is with the prayer that God may be pleased with their Hajj.



The Sacred Mosque now encompasses fully a square kilometre (about 393 acres), including the entire spring area and the area chain surrounding the compound. Although it comfortably holds around 2.5 million worshippers, during Hajj and Ramadan more than twice as many seek to enter and fill its abiding place.

"Lord, You alone are our Guardian. Forget us and leave us to our fate. You are the witness of those who forgive, O Allah, for us what is good, both in this life and in the Hereafter. Do You alone see this." (A'AW) (1:151:55)

The Supreme Act of Worship

The Prophet Muhammad (SA) calls this the *supreme act of worship*. It is a way for Muslims to return their religious ambitions and their work to Allah. Later this, the greatest act of the pilgrim, is, that he has the year become holy.

In spirit, it resembles all the other acts of worship, requiring us to remember Allah and make sacrifices for His sake. On this, we have to spend time, money and energy. But that is not just going to and from Makkah. It does have some to do with the Hajj. It is the Hajj, which is the act of worship we must concentrate on. Hajj is about standing there, knowingly, when we standing and, we cannot see Him, but during Hajj, we come here to face with Him. When pilgrims stand before the House of God, it is the standing before God Himself. That they are meant to walk around the Kaaba, like a humbly seeking a throne.

The time of unity, when the pilgrims stand on the Kaaba is a time of judgement Day. The Quran says, "When the trumpet is blown, indeed, from the stars, they will look to their Lord." (Quran 16: 16, 17: 1) And indeed, thousands and thousands of Hajj-seekers stand in front of all who are present in the centre. And after a year, when all of them are returned to the earth, they will stand and all will see the same words: "You are not to have any reward." (A'AW) (1:151:55)

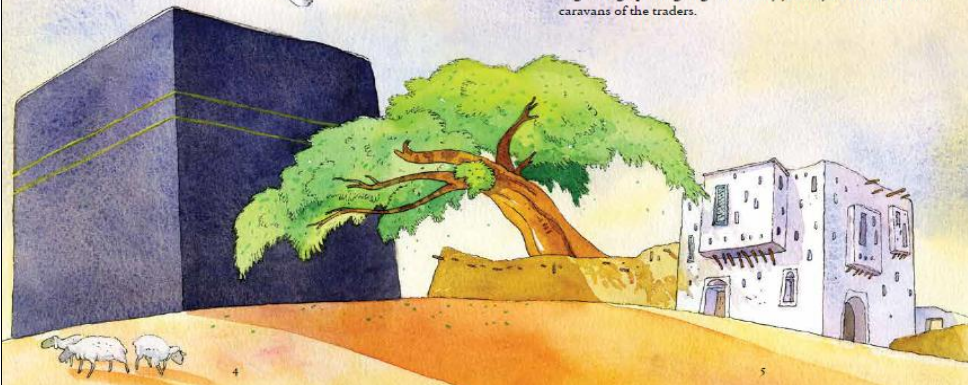
Just as the Sacred Mosque in Makkah is the holiest site in the world, that is protected through part of the pilgrimage, the same importance is to see just the physical Hajj, during Hajj, the time of judgement, has brought in which Hajj (151:55) stands out.

"Tell Me About Hajj" Page Excerpt

'The Story of Khadija' is about from childhood to marriage life history of wife of the Prophet Muhammad and attributes of her true love story. Non-fictional and Islamic personality Khadija RA is the main character of the book and represents a successful business woman with high moral values, which crushed the male dominated society stereotype 1,400 years ago.

Khadija's Early Life

Khadija was a noble lady of Makkah. She was well known all around for her good nature and wealth. Like the Prophet Muhammad (SA), she belonged to the tribe of the Quraysh. They had a common great-grandfather who was called Qusayy ibn Kilab. This is how they both were a part of the same big family.

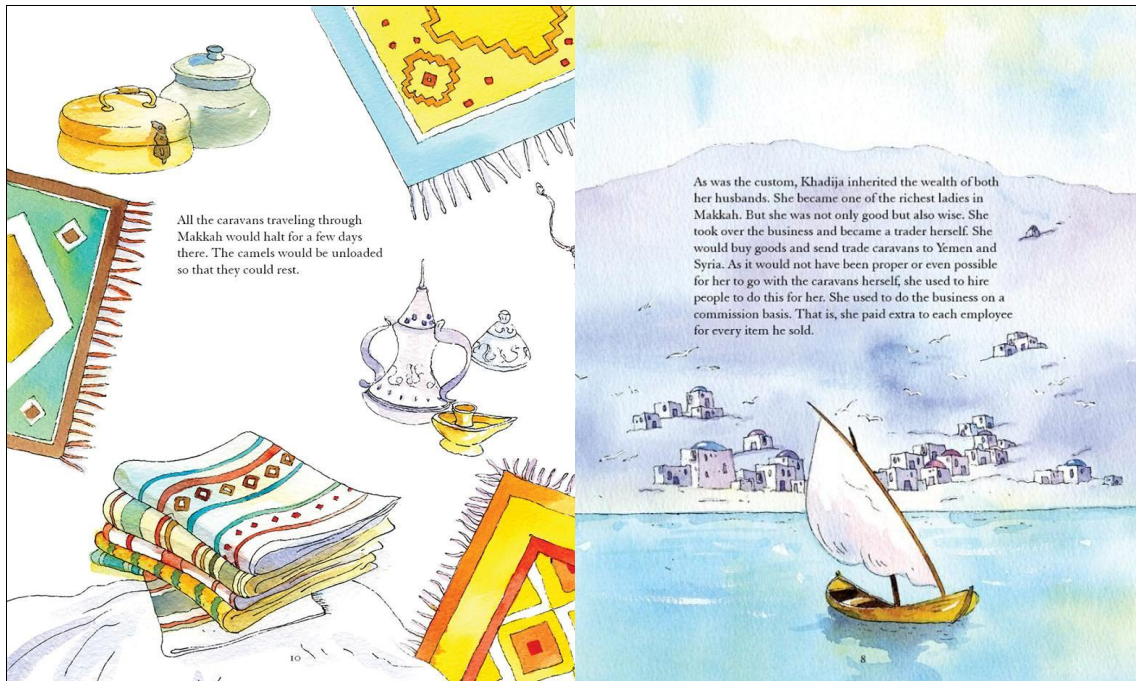


Khadija's grandfather, Asad ibn Abdul Uzza, lived in a house near the Kabah. It was in fact so close to the Sacred House that when the sun was high, the Kabah's shadow used to fall on it. For this reason the house was called "The Sister of the Sacred House." All the children of the family loved to play in the cool courtyard shaded by the Kabah.

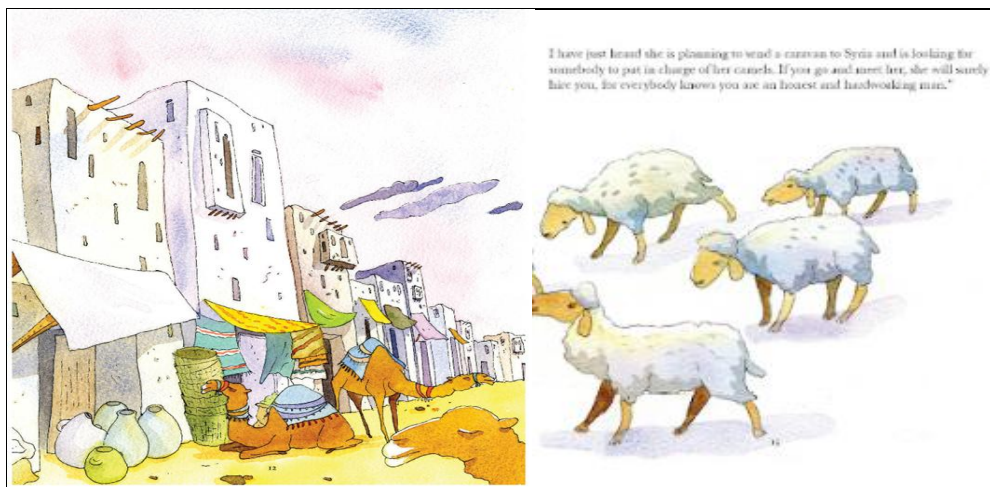
There was a huge tree in the courtyard of the house of Khadija's grandfather. All the children would climb high up on its branches and look out to see the world beyond the house walls. They dreamt of growing up and going on faraway journeys with the camel caravans of the traders.

Above picture of the story book depicts cultural with sheeps and Muslim heritage with the sacred house 'KabahShareef'. The proximity and cultural relevance of book's main protagonist Khadija RA's house is narrated in simple words and great use of picture.

Book is rich in cultural representation through pictures of ship on Arabian Sea, camel and caravan of Arabian Peninsula. Further, trade stalls with cultural artifacts-lamps, carpets, jewelry is also shown in below book's pages excerpt-



Short paragraphs throw light on her sharp business acumen side, highly regarded code of conduct and character and her marriage with Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). However, through text or word priority is given on life history of Khadija RA and her family tree.

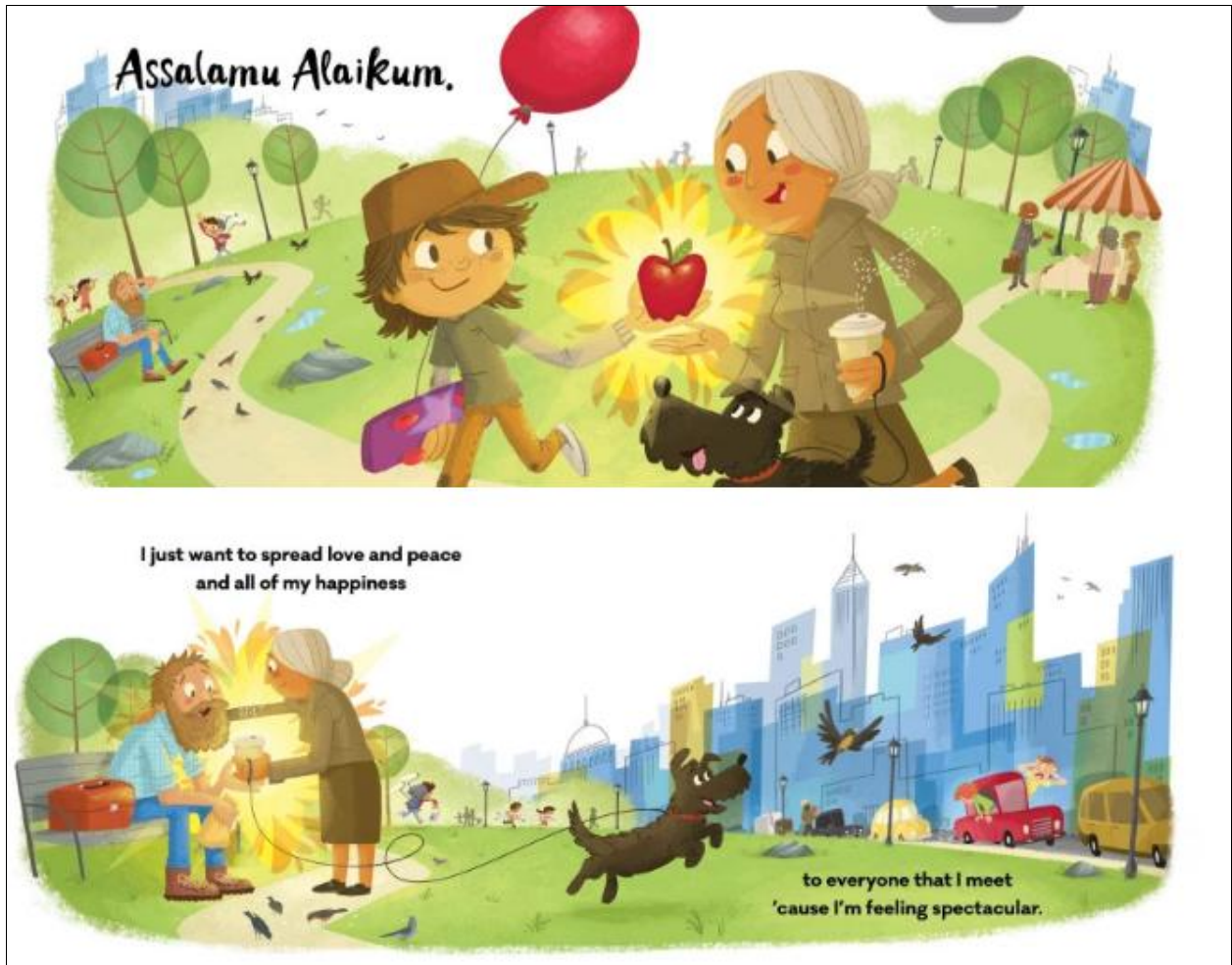


Newview Publication share: Majority of titles deals with 'Muslim' content- like Islam in basic teaching, prayer, practices, celebrations based on Islamic theology. Islamic teachings are the focus without stressing on the Muslim character and cultural representation. Mostly published are Picture and Colouring Books inspiring empathy and creative thinking in kids through DIY activities. These contain character as mere story-picture medium.



Conglomerate Simon & Schuster Share: All 5 titles have heavily contributed to Muslim character and cultural representation. All books reflect children's experiences and is relatable.

Salam Alaikum, author is Harris Jung who is also a social media sensation, who has won a talent competition. The book is lyrical adaption of his YouTube song album. It shows British Muslim artist as main character propagating "Salam Alaikum" which means "peace be upon you" and kindness in community through small gesture in the story plot.



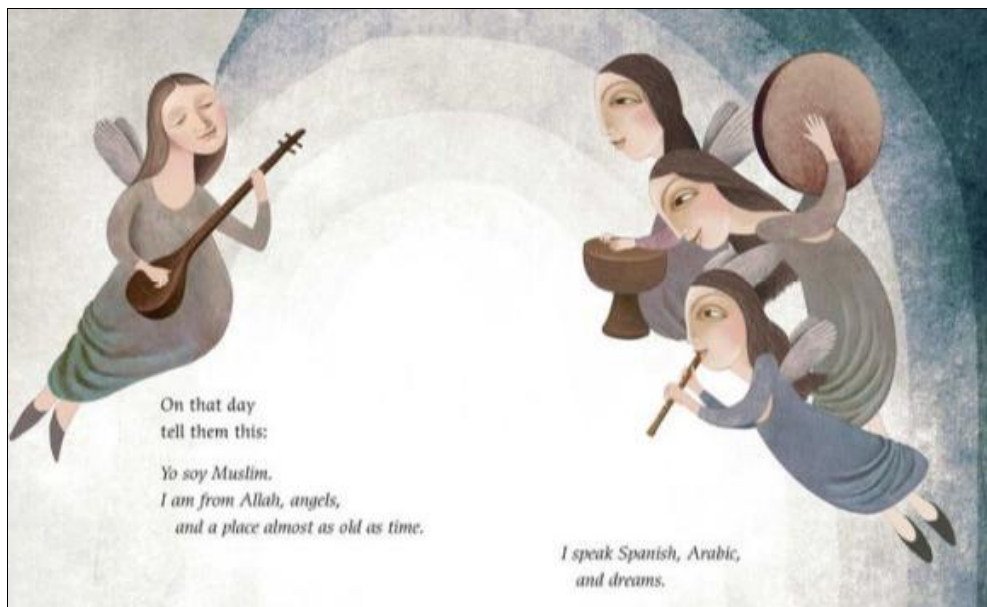
“Yo Soy Muslim,” a poetic and lyrical picture book by the poet Mark Gonzales, in the book the father inspires his daughter Sirat to be proud of her multicultural heritage while turning down the ethnicity prejudice that she might face. The message is conveyed through format of letter and written notes, in one of the poignantly lines he puts it as that she’s “an ancestor in training.” Below is shown in pictures-



No matter what they say,
know you are wondrous.
A child of crescent moons,
a builder of mosques,
a descendant of brilliance,
an ancestor in training.

Family represented in this book is both Spanish-speaking indigenous Mexican and Muslim family. The mother Soraya Hosni teaches her daughter with vigour the idea of 'Yo soy Muslim' and instills awareness with multicultural family characteristics in contemporary style. The book reader can resonate properly with anyone ever felt outsider in a community or lacked genuine affection of his/her ethnic background.





“Yo Soy Muslim” Book Excerpts

“The Gauntlet” by KarunaRiazi, is a middle-grade book, about adventure tale of 12-year-old **Bangladeshi-American** gamer Farah Mirza, whose brother Ahmad is trapped inside the supernatural game board Gauntlet. The book has broad Muslim cast of characters and the main protagonist is represented as a confident hijabigirl. The book sets the tone her descriptive writing detailing the magical game. She has shown Farah Mirza as a young independent thinker who embraces hijab all with her personal choice and is proud of the decision. This can be seen through paragraph of below picture

“On her birthday, she wanted to avoid having the kind of small talk that happens between not-really-friends. She especially didn’t want to discuss her scarf. It was a question that Farah had never heard at her old school. She hadn’t been the only hijabi in her class in Queens”

Farah knew she should go greet her guests. It was the right thing for a good Bangladeshi girl to do. But most of these kids were still strangers to her, and she was a stranger to them. On her birthday, she wanted to avoid having the kind of small talk that happens between not-really-friends. She especially didn’t want to discuss her scarf. It was a question that Farah had never heard at her old school. She hadn’t been the only hijabi in her class in Queens. There, everyone had known the proper name for it and did not try to tug at the end or ask how her hair looked underneath it or if she even had hair. Now she went to a school in downtown Manhattan, where she was the only hijabi in her class.

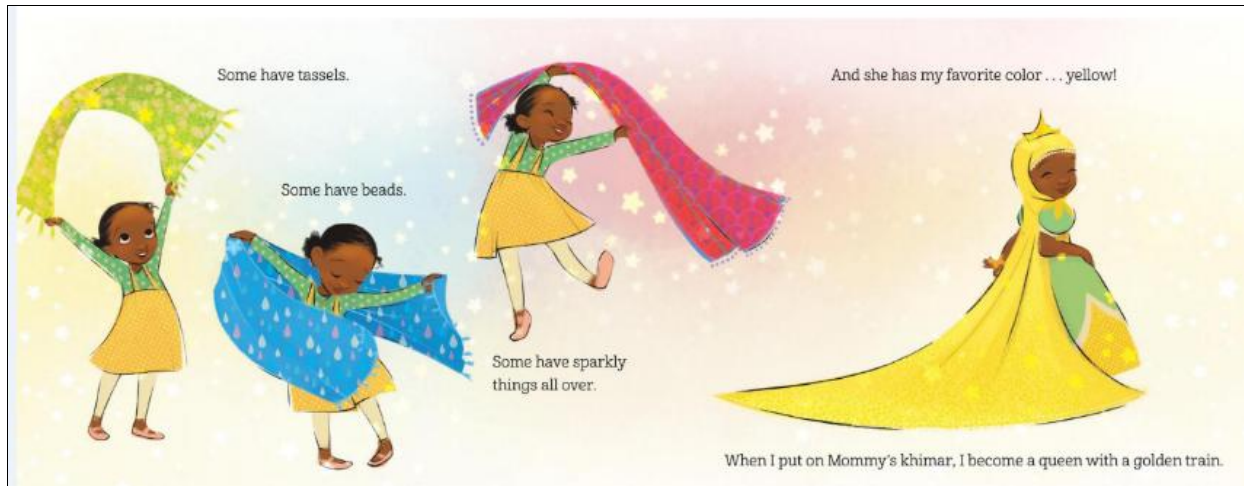
Farah wrinkled her nose at the treat. She didn’t do sweets, not even the Bangladeshi kind that the rest of her family devoured. She liked to think of herself as a bit of a rebel, at least in this small way.

“Don’t you want to try some of the snacks Ma made? Samosas or pakoras. Or do you want to talk to Essie and Alex?” Farah asked. She was always in convincing mode when it came to Ahmad. “We haven’t seen them in a while.”

Surley the book contains spin in hijabiMuslim girl presentation and has the charisma to be among the favourite books for children.

“Mommy’s Khimar” book for 4 – 8 years old kid written by JamilahThompkins-Bigelow and illustrated by Ebony Glenn.The story revolves around a little **African American Muslim girl** who likes to play dress up with her mother’s khimar (hijab). It represents multiculturalism through beautiful varieties of headscarves and the girl’s admiration in trying out khimar in different ways is shown with the help of pastel colored illustrations. Mommy’s Khimar can serve not only as a window for other cultures, but as a mirror for Muslim-American children.





Book Excerpt: "Mommy's Khimar"

Amina's Voice written by Hena Khan for children of 8 – 12 age groups, is about **Pakistani-American teenage** girl's school life and challenges faced on registering with singing reality TV show. The book depicts main character AminaKhokar as Muslim kid and her woes of discontinuing piano-playing classes on religious grounds. The story plot is built on varying degrees of contemporary topics including religious views on music, singing and different Muslim community cope with it. Her friendship equation with the girl Soojin, a **Korean immigrant**, in terms of cultural character representation is also written sensitively. Below is the book page excerpt-

"Come on, Amina. Just try it." Soojin is a little louder now.

"Girls, is that chatter about you volunteering?" Ms. Holly stares at us from the front of the classroom with her eyebrows raised.

"Ouch!" I yelp. It's Soojin's pencil in my side again.

"Is that a yes, Amina? Should I sign you up for a solo for the concert?" Ms. Holly asks. "How about one of the Motown pieces from the 1970s?"

I sink lower into my chair as everyone stares at me and stumble over my words. "Um, no, thank you. I'll just stay in the chorus," I finally manage to mutter.

Culture and faith is represented through names of the clothes she wears (shalwarkameez), the food she eats (samosas), the names of her family and friends (Mustafa, Rabiya), and details about the family's life at the vibrant Islamic Center.

"Saints and Misfits" written by S.K. Ali is a young adult book, revolving around 15-year-old **Arab-Indian-American Janna Yusuf** and her dilemma with identifying people as good or angel, bad, and combination of both 'misfit'. Janna's character is represented as hijabi photographer as well as graphic novelist with strong point opinion on hijab as symbol of empowerment –

"Plus most girls who cover their faces do it because they want to be the ones to decide who gets to see them."

"Well, when you think of it that way, it sounds kind of powerful. Like no one can sum up your identity without permission."

Maybe my face reveals something, because Dad starts right away.

"Janna, why do you have to wear that thing? You could have said, *No, I'm not wearing your burkini, Mom.*" He waves around long tongs as he speaks.

"Mom didn't get it for me. I ordered it online."

"I saw her hand it to you as we were packing the car."

"Because I'd left it on the hall table, Dad."

The book has vast range of Muslim character (Fizz, Muhammed, Sarah) representation as her family members and friends. Book depicts her self-discovery and her struggle with incorporating Islamic values in her lifestyle. Sensitive topic of people taking undue advantage of religious rank to harass a girl is emphatically discussed along with shadow of victim shaming fear.

“Well, it makes her intention good,” Mr. Ram said, getting up from his walker upon seeing Mom’s car pull up. “Why we do an action is what determines its quality. A quality action or not.”

“Well, I know why Muslims do things. Like why we pray five times a day.” I closed the book and helped Mr. Ram turn his walker to face the right way to go through the doors. “It’s to remember God more.”

Mr. Ram nodded. “Yes, Miss Janna. Because when we just do things without a why, we become husks. Easily crumpled, no fruit inside.”

Comparative Comparison: Book's Battle for Relevancy

Discussing books catering to children acquainting them with Quranic stories and Islamic culture, the evolution in terms of contemporary topics covered, the great missing link was ACK media. Reasons-all the comics are historical narration, often taught as classroom chapters, lacks completely on Muslim literature. These characters are depicted as Indian rulers within historical and educational purpose.

The breakdown of books content-Muslim literature, relevant topics, contemporary element, among publishers presenting deliberate analysis is –

| Govt backed Publishers | Independent Publishers | Conglomerate Publisher |
|--|---|--|
| <p><u>Book by NBT- 1</u> Title: Festival of Eid Basic Theme:Eid as Muslim cultural fesitival Overall Representation: maximum Muslim characters but not in depth Preaching: moral value Story Epistemology: Not Quranic Contemporary Element: Low</p> | <p><u>Books by ACK Media- 5</u> Title 1: Sultan Razia Title 2: , Noor Jahan Title 3: Humayun Title 4: Babar Title 5: Tipu Sultan Basic Theme: as indianMuslim rulers in historical context. Overall Representation: Muslimruler and their journey to the throne Preaching: historical legacy of ruler Story Epistemology: Not Quranic Contemporary Element: Low</p> | <p><u>Books by Simon & Schuster-6</u> Title 1:Yo soy Muslim Basic Theme: multicultural Muslim heritage Overall Representation: maximum Muslim characters and family Preaching: appreciating ethnic diversity and curbing prejudice Story Epistemology: contemporary storytelling technique with quran teaching in some lines and picture Contemporary Element: High Title 2: Salam Alaikum Basic Theme: offering greeting of spread peace and kindness by saying Arabic word Salam Alaikum Overall Representation: Islamic greeting etiquettes and its benefits covered in depth Preaching: moral value Story Epistemology: Quranic with contemporary storytelling technique Contemporary Element: High</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p><u>Books by CBT- 3</u></p> <p>Title 1: Race to Win, 2009 Basic Theme: adventure tale Overall Representation: 4-5 Muslim characters but Islam or Muslim culture not depicted. Preaching: Absent Contemporary Element: more than average as it is adventure tale</p> <p>Title 2 : Surprise Gifts, 2015 Basic Theme: joys of handmade gift in modern time Overall Representation: has only Muslim name 'Aunt Farida'. Islam or its culture not presented. Preaching: family bonding Story Epistemology: Not Quranic Contemporary Element: Average</p> <p>Title 3: A Gift From Miu, 2015 Basic Theme: being kind towards animal Overall Representation: Muslim lead Azam is there. Islam or its culture not presented. Preaching: Kindness toward pets Story Epistemology: Not Quranic Contemporary Element: Average</p> | <p><u>Books by Goodword Book: nearly 200</u></p> <p>Title 1: Tell Me About Hajj Basic Theme: Muslim pilgrimage and life of IstMuslim lady Overall Representation: Preaching: hajj culture and tradition; biography Story Epistemology: Quranic Contemporary Element: Low</p> <p>Title 2: The Story of Khadija Basic Theme: biography on life of IstMuslim lady Overall Representation: geographical and multiculturalism is presented. Preaching: Not strictly Islamic teaching Story Epistemology: Quranic Contemporary Element: more than average</p> <p><i>Titles counting upto 140 Epistemology are purely Quranic and its verses are purely on life of Prophets and their stories</i></p> | <p>Title 3: The Gauntlet Basic Theme: supernatural adventure tale and its setting Overall Representation: confident hijabi girl with keen interest in games, maximum Muslim characters and Bangladeshi lifestyle Preaching: sister-brother bonding, friendship. No strict Islamic teaching. Story Epistemology: Not Quranic Contemporary Element: Very High</p> <p>Title 4: Mommy's Khimar Basic Theme: girl kid admiration and amazement with khimar Overall Representation: types of khimar- a full body covering clothing Preaching: Not strictly Islamic teaching Story Epistemology: portion of narrative is Quranic, picture based storytelling Contemporary Element: Very High</p> <p>Title 5: Amina's Voice Basic Theme: Muslim girl kid dilemma with religious views on music and singing Overall Representation: difference of opinion on music/singing among Muslim families Preaching: Not strictly Islamic teaching Story Epistemology: Not Quranic Contemporary Element: High</p> |
|---|---|--|

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | <p>Books by <u>Newview Publication: 13</u> Title 1: Muslim ABC Rhymes Title 2: Muslim Rhymes Part II Title 3: My Dua Book Title 4: Tell Me About Allah Title 4: My Islamic Coloring Book</p> <p>'The Islamic studies series' - has 6 titles</p> <p>Overall Representation: Islamic teaching Preaching: Islamic teaching through DIY books Epistemology: Quranic Contemporary Element: Low</p> | <p>Title 6: Saints and Misfits Basic Theme: protagonist's journey of self-discovery and mustering courage to speak against harassment Overall Representation: Muslim characters and lifestyle Preaching: embracing Islamic teaching in true sense and developing sound moral behaviour to act on Story Epistemology: portion of narrative is inspired from teaching of the Quran Contemporary Element: Very High</p> |
|--|--|---|

Publishers & Their Facebook Page

To study and analyze how effectively both publishers employed the social media platform, Facebook, as a marketing tool, timeline activity of publishers for engaging with readers and audience was collected. The books selected were '**Salam Alaikum**' and '**Story of Khadija**' by Conglomerate Simon & Schuster and Independent Publisher Goodword Books respectively. Both publishers have their official Facebook pages-

Salaamreads of Simon & Schuster publisher; no individual page book for each books

Goodword of Goodword Book publisher; no individual page book for each books

Salaamreads' Facebook Page: It only featured one text post regarding 'Salam Alaikum'. The book was launched last year. So far the social platform depicts low buzzing media activity as it has garnered no likes or shares. Since then no follow up posts have been recorded on the page. Probably, the imprint is not even one year old, this could be the reason behind the dead presence on social media. Categories to define Facebook post and content type included- publisher, author, reader, bookseller, and reviewer.

Key events of the 'Salam Alaikum'

First Facebook post date: 8 april 2017

First Facebook post information: "On pre-sale info" (text + url link)

First Facebook post posted by: Publisher

Number of Facebook comment: 5

Share& Reply: 0

Goodword's Facebook Page: Tracing from year 2016, one text post along with pictures of book pages dated August 6 was found. It carried opening lines of chapter 1 of 'Story of Khadija' the title. The url link to purchase the book online was provided in the post.

Key events of the 'Story of Khadija'

First Facebook post date: 8 August, 2016

First Facebook post information: chapter 1 book excerpt (text + url link+ book page pictures)

First Facebook post posted by: Publisher

Number of Facebook comment: 0

Share& Reply: 52 shares

Timeline activity of Goodword Book gave interesting insight- books were represented at book fairs. At Jeddah Book Fair 2017, the author of 'Story of Khadija' is seen signing books for customers in the Facebook page post of 23 December 2017 with hash tags and pictures.

The publishing house participated and displayed the children's books and products at Paradise stand at the Karachi Book Fair held on December 11, 2017

Another trend noticed among the two event pictures posted at its Facebook page - Times Literature Festival 2017 held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi and the another Frankfurt Book Fair 2016, is that they have participated in Quran distribution programme. These activities have dominated its social media presence. At these events, the opportunity to project strongly itself as Muslim children's book publisher, was missed. Between the tenure of these events, it featured just one post with a picture "A child from Egypt reads the Arabic version of My First Quran Storybook at the Frankfurt Book Fair". No follow up in the form of post, video or pictures is available on the Facebook page marking its presence on the timeline.

Islamic lecture videos on its timeline have outnumbered the posts related to the selected book. No video on launch of its children's book is available on the page.

Overall, the social media strategy appears to be as Quran distribution or translator organization with related events all over the world. The Facebook page activity maintains a loose identity as pioneer Islamic children's publishing house. Posts on Facebook page are not frequent to keep the audience updated about published and upcoming books leading to lowered prospect of book publicity.

Conclusion & Recommendations

NBT & CBT not at driver seat: Starting from the scratch of children book publisher surface, a comparative study reveals that Islam themed book for kids was a minority publishing affair in two major Indian Government publishing organizations- CBT and NBT.

Muslim children literature and culture representation is not remarkable stimulate book love and reading in young minds. Both NBT and CBT have contributed but it is not so enriching. With just one book came from NBT and three from CBT, out of which one book probably does not fit the research criteria, the total additions are not so enriching. Further, in last decade, the gap between the right books and children as its main readers, if not has widened, then, surely it has not bridged efficiently too.

They still have not tapped into innovative book products with no latest or new edition of contemporary children books. There is still room for improvement and to establish itself as good enough contributor for publishing relevant Muslim children books.

Independent Publishers have won the spot but have to fight their stay: Of course books narrating Quranic stories and Islamic etiquettes are available but thrust is not given to creative and impactful storytelling style. High quality books on contemporary topics without being heavy on text has not truly made appearance in India, conglomerate is recent exception to it. As a result, establishing resonance with targeted children audience is missed, withering the popularity process altogether.

Stretching the struggle, with special reference to two Delhi-based independent publishers namely Newview Publication and Goodword Book are decent segment contributors. Again, the point is to be stressed that they have to still embrace innovativeness and fresh thinking in their books. Fighting all odds they have managed improvement and seem willing to refine the Muslim children books.

Battle for relevancy has to be fought by indigenous independent publishers-ACK Media and Newview Publications- former has to look for solutions beyond historical narratives and latter which is purely into Muslim children literature has to look beyond identical Muslim literature. Newview has to work hard on fresh content to enter contemporary publishing.

Goodword Books Has already established itself as a pioneer in publishing children book with Muslim literature and cultural representation. Though, it has the responsibility of filling contemporary gaps in their books.

Latest Entrant Conglomerate is least on disappointing side: Publisher Simon & Schuster has totally revolutionized book bouquet and has brought Muslim children's literature to mainstream. It has found its niche audience and took the battle winning at next level by consolidating the spot by offering new age Muslim children book.

Recommendations

My research was across publishers, so a future work, can be narrowed down to a detailed study of single book or publisher.

This could be further understood by reviewing author diversity within or across publishing houses.

This research does not include authors' voices of Muslim children's literature. So, future study on authors' perspectives is suggested to understand how they define Muslim identity.

Pictorial analysis of book's cover page and illustrations will also be helpful in understanding gender representation.

A study of advertising and marketing communication of Muslim children's literature publishers and publications related to its books will lend valuable insight.

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Urkund Analysis Result

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