

Have to Create: Animators' Choices, Challenges and Constrains in Pakistan

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Abstract



The impetus of culture, society, economy, and politics as part of the broader system has an impact on how we comprehend, interpret, and judge animation. Animators in Pakistan are faced with problems and constraints when creating animated films. Twelve in-depth interviews were conducted to investigate these obstacles and constraints. Consumerism, a Eurocentric art history curriculum, a lack of leadership, a naive beholder, the propaganda machine, and government supervision are the key issues animators are confronted with. The study recommends that three factors are critical for both the art teacher and the art student, from an academic standpoint. The first is a grasp of visual theory, the second is how visual literacy is taught and how visual perception develops through time in both children and adults, and the third is how animation, as a visual culture, makes meaning.

Keywords: Animation, Choices, Challenges, Constraints, Visual Culture

Introduction

Cinema has developed into the most effective medium for education, culture, entertainment, and propaganda. Cinema advances culture and shapes beliefs (Shah, 2011). We've been watching movies for adventure, excitement, relaxation, and humour since 1947. Films were and continue to be an integral element of daily life. Each film has a significant influence on contemporary culture, and it broadens ideas.

Animated films serve as vehicles for the transmission of linguistic stereotypes, social and political beliefs, and realities. The media is ruled by people in power and groups that set the agenda for the media. On the flip side, those who are not in power or who are not dominant are underrepresented, oppressed, and have no say over what is shown in the media (Soares, 2017).

Similarly, Walter Benjamin asserts that popular animation is a realistic, but not naturalistic portrayal of contemporary life's estrangement; "the cartoons demonstrate that even our bodies do not belong to us...what passes for civilization is essentially savagery" (Leslie, 2004, p. 83). In the early 1930s, the character of Mickey Mouse was attacked by reform movements and subsequently outlawed by various state censor boards. Not much later, the morality policy was instilled to curb the bawdy sexual comedy and violence in Disney's short films, and "the company started to adapt not just its carnivalesque subject matter, but also its animation technique" (Leslie, 2004, p. 81).

Certain signs, symbols, and icons have been employed by animated films, and in order to understand these systems, different methods, techniques, and approaches have been adopted over time, such as Benjamin's 1935/36 essay on "artwork in the age of its technological reproducibility," Heidegger's "the age of the sector photograph," Jean-Louis Baudry's "ideological factors of the basic cinematic apparatus," or Deleuze's the time-photo and the motion-photo, to name a few, but Panofsky's essay takes a critical methodological swerve in an attempt to address cinematic symbolic form directly and concentrates on the intelligibility of the images' content.

Animation embodies an ideological discourse. In fact, stories in animated films in general need to be deciphered with more care as an ideological tool rather than a simple means of storytelling. One can therefore understand the justification behind why scholars really need to readdress animation, and focus how different constituents of the film form a part of a broader syndicate that is influenced by factors of production, artistic and technological development and transmit the accurate message to the target audience

Problem Statement

Animated films have engulfed Pakistani culture in recent years. Scholars have critiqued oligopolies like Disney and Pixar since globalization began (Hine et al., 2018; Light, 2016; Saladino, 2014, Wiersma & Beth, 2000). Simultaneously, there are very few studies carried out on smaller local production firms and on other modes of animation, a lot of theoretical discussions on this subject have

been done amongst scholars and local auteurs (Yoon, 2008). Scholars have written about animation's roles and effects (Shumaila Ahmad., 2014; Hassan and Daniyal, 2013; Islam and Biswas, 2012, Sarwat Rahman, 2018, Ahmed, 2014), but none of the studies is found in reference of auteur and animators' choices, challenges. These content developers shape cultural perceptions, and values of Pakistani youngsters through animated films. Wells and Hardstaff (2008) also suggest reassessing and redefining animation through the creator's aims and context, because Pakistani animation is still considered to be in its infancy. This research addresses the gap as to how Pakistani animated films are set out to establish non-Disney material construct, reality and ideology in the society.

Inasmuch as a considerable amount of work has been done to unveil the truth through discourse analysis, it is evident that that not many resources have been invested in doing the same with realities and ideologies that are ingrained in contemporary animation through the ethnographic realm. The reason behind this is that animations are made solely within the confines of the animation realm. Animation entails more than the provision of entertainment. Subliminally, it shapes the audience's sense of self, community building, and perception of the world. The very act of drawing a line thus becomes a political act, and animation's capacity to articulate the ethos of a nation should be taken seriously. Therefore, the current paper addresses the below research question.

RQ: How are choices made in the creative processes of Pakistani animated films for the representation of social imagery, cultural symbols, and ideals?

Since the techno scientific world (from tools to communication) is intrinsically political, academics are relatively more tolerant of the decisions artists make when confronted with their individual predicaments in relation to animation creation. When talking about political attributes it refers to the power relations among sovereign nations, the hegemony of money over artistic licence and outputs, and the consolidation of economic and political power in the hands of a few. Thus, the façade of creative (cultural) neutrality and purity, at least in the broadest sense, disappears before our eyes.

Thus, it has a mythical connotation, as Paul Well (1998) defined audio-visual and animation by emphasising "how meaning is formed by the animator's distinctive jargon, which is not accessible to live-action filmmakers" (p. 11). A skilled animator must follow a similar process of inspiring his characters at the spur of the moment, but the same moment must be created repeatedly, until it is captured on the paper or computer screen (Hooks, 2000, p. 5).

While animators with a background in fine arts not only experiment with approaches and styling, they also self-consciously explore theoretical rules and ideas created within fine art and reimagine them through the law of universal metamorphism. In as much as animation tends toward action genres or farce and the 'maturation' of plot in recent Disney features, "in essence anything can turn into something else... there are no constraints' (McKee, 1999, p. 85). The animators that create these videos are constrained by the preconceived notions they portray in advertising, television, and video.

Method

In current research semi-structured interviews of experts in animation industry were conducted to explore the practices of animators while constructing animations for animated films in Pakistan. For this purpose, an interview guide (see Annexure A) was developed as suggested by Wimmer and Dominick (2011, p. 206).

Du Plooy (2009) clearly mentioned that this kind of investigation is suitable for face-to-face interactions when an interviewer puts forth the questions and records responses (p. 199). I developed a schedule for interviews (see Appendix A) to probe into and reveal the meanings into an auteur's experiences. The interview questions were used to extract rich descriptions and serve as tools to understand socio-cultural imagery-making processes.

A total of 12 semi-structured interviews (see Annexure A) of academicians, mass communication experts, culturists, animation designers, and animators were conducted. Seven interviews were conducted via Email, WhatsApp, Google Meet, and Skype, and five were taken in-person. The list is given below:

Table 4.2
Profile Metrics of Interviewees

Name	Specialization	Designation	Organization	Experience	Interview Date	Mode
Dr. Fatah Daudpota	Historian/ Culturalist	Vice Chancellor	University of Art and Culture, Jamshoro, Pakistan	More than 35 years	December 23, 2020	Email
Mr. Mazher Hussain	Designer, Animator	Director Designer, Academic	Institute of Art and Culture, Lahore.	More than 20 Years	March 14, 2021	In person
Mr. Adnan Hussain	Animation and Visual Effects	Managing Director	Radical Impact Co. Worked for Walt Disney Feature Animation and Sony Pictures Image Works	More than 20 years	June 8, 2021	Skype
Ms. Saba Saif	Instructional Designer	Director	The Citizen Foundation, Lahore.	More than 10 Years	May 24, 2021	Email
Mr. Muhammad Nazim	Film Making	Assistant Professor	Scriptwriting, Film making, and Cultural Studies	More than 10 years	June 1, 2021	Email
Mr. Asad Iqbal	Game Designer, Animator	Assistant Professor	National College of Arts, Lahore. Freelance Gaming animation	10 years working in the animation industry	June 19, 2021	In Person
Mr. Yahya Ahsan	Animator	Director	Visiting Faculty National College of Arts, Lahore.		June 24, 2021	Google Meet
Khalid Rashed	Media Critic	Assistant Professor	Superior University, Lahore	More than 15 Years Teaching in Media Studies	January 15, 2021	In Person
Mr. Talha Ali Khan Kushvaha	Culturalist	Executive Director	National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa), Islamabad.	More than 35 years	June 25, 2021	In Person
Mr. Bilal Bhatti	Character Designer	CEO/Founde r	Visiting Faculty National College of Arts, Lahore.	More than 20 Years	June 26, 2021	Google Meet
Dr. Farida Batool	Culturalist	HOD, Cultural Studies	Professor Faculty National College of Arts, Lahore.	More than 20 Years	June 27, 2021	WhatsApp
Ms. Sameeha Qadeer	Multimedia, Animation, Fine Art History	Assistant Professor	University of Management and Technology, Lahore.	More than 12 Years	22 nd June 2021	In person

Contact with the interviewees by purposive as well as snowball sampling (Marshall, 1996) was established. As a result, wide range of personal and professional experiences with the animation industry in Pakistan was collected. They were chosen for their expertise in animation, communication, and cultural studies in Pakistan and for their connection to the subject of the study, which was animation.

Most of the questions were unstructured and open. This method was chosen because it gave the interviewees the space to talk about other relevant details that they consider important and to leave room for follow-ups (David & Sutton, 2011). A theoretical guided approach made sure that the interviews were as efficient and effective as possible (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

This approach allowed me to create highly divergent interview conditions with the aid of asking professionals the distinct units of questions associated with their discipline. However, in an inductive manner, the maximum open and explorative interview questions had been modified whilst the interviewee had already mentioned misgivings before the relevant query came up or for a follow-up appeared fruitful (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The interview questions became more specific as the interview progressed; this method was used to get an insight, into the topics that these experts felt were important. It also helped me to get a precise picture of what was their thought process. Later, more specific questions were asked to make

sure interviewee didn't make assumptions about what had been said before and to make a better sense of what the experts thought (David & Sutton, 2011).

The facts have been recorded and diligently transcribed and organized. The collected records have been coded following the method of thematic evaluation, as defined via Braun and Clarke (2006), which affords a broadly used framework to perceive and analyze patterns, additionally referred to as subject matters, across a set of information gadgets. This means that I looked for principal subjects in each interview, evolved a codebook, implemented them in the texts, and searched for patterns.

Codes were formulated whilst going through the interview data, which were clustered in a group, and reduced in the process. The most signifies ones are defined inside the discussion section. After the procedure of consistent comparison among dimensions and their indicators, codes have been refined and advanced into generalized themes. I also structured the subject matters around the suitable explanation of the problem. Next, reviews on these explanations, in addition to their related conceptions were connected back to theoretical perspectives and analyzed which were driven by the studies' questions. Finally, themes would emerge through thematic evaluation of interview information.

The documentary information served to ground the research inside the context of theoretical perspectives. The regular comparative approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) guided the evaluation of the record, which are primarily based on an inductive technique geared to figuring out patterns and discovering theoretical properties in the facts. In a back and forth interaction with the information, I continuously checked and rechecked the elemental codes and ideas. I scrutinized and compared the information with facts of iconographic analysis and with codes with a view to organize thoughts and pinpoint standards that seemed to cluster together. Codes have been clustered into significant classes, and those class codes have been compared across interview transcripts. Therefore, I recognized similarities, differences, and popular patterns. If new dimensions have been suggested by interviewee, then the preceding transcripts of interviews, have been re-analyzed to determine the presence of these classes. By means of doing so, I filled in underdeveloped categories and narrowed down extra ones. The evaluation of interview information was instrumental in refining thoughts, figuring out conceptual limitations, and pinpointing the relevance of classes (Charmaz, 2003).

Findings & Discussion

The creative process is described as a series of ideas and actions that culminate in original and suitable products. (Lubart et al., 2018). Hence, twelve participants were interviewed to provide their insights regarding artistic creative process. It was found out that although Pakistani animation studios do have very talented personnel/artists and they do preliminary creative preparation and work, the fact remains that their outputs are influenced from the already established works from the West. However, 7 themes were identified from the interviews with the labels the interviewees provided to the various influxes, factors and stages of work.

Consumerism

Film-making requires two major steps which are creativity — that includes an idea to set you off, and execution/implementation, that needs a producer to finance the film. As a matter of fact, it was elucidated by K. Rasheed, personal communication, June 25, 2021, "I must point out that creativity includes identifying whether our consumers will be interested in that specific idea and that it needs to stimulate viewer. This is called consumerism and it is currently affecting the whole globe. This fact was corroborated by K. A. Talha, personal communication, June 25, 202, "consumption, I believe, is the primary concern and, I believe it will be impossible to eradicate consumerism at any place in the near future".

Additionally, "Consumerism currently has started to attract the audience through multimedia interactive approach. The phenomenon of the creation of the series of animated ads were made gave birth to digital animations in Pakistan (D. Fateh, personal communication, December 23, 2020). UNICEF launched an animated video starring 'Meena', her family, and her beloved bird, Mithu, which has captured the imaginations of adults and children across South Asia. Meena is developed by UNICEF in partnership with Bombay-based animator Ram Mohan and Hanna-Film-Cartoons Barbera's division in Manila. "Meena's popularity gained momentum in regional animation efforts on issues such as gender discrimination, female issues, job exploitation, and homelessness, as well as a

lack of access to education, sexual abuse, adolescent pregnancy, and HIV AIDS." (H. Mazhar, personal communication, March 14, 2021).

D. Fateh states that it is good to be creative and original but what viewers want need to be kept in mind. He points out, "if the animators can't survive in competition, what will they do with creativity". Showing the harsh reality, filmmakers in Pakistan often finance their own films says D. Fateh, personal communication, December 23, 2020. "The film/animation industry is regulated commercial producers or ISPR, and you have to maintain sound connections with them for your films to move ahead," he says. He lays down the facts, "as an independent filmmaker, who wants to bring creativity to their films, cannot survive. Commercialism is the only way to go". "Investors want quick returns and don't invest on the research and proper pre-production. They just want to earn money from the film as quickly as possible" (D. Fateh, personal communication, December 23, 2020).

Clearly stating as it is, (H. Adnan, personal communication, June 8, 2021), "the main choice of film/animation makers is commercial viability of the project, their icon choices, their research all depend on that viability. The Pakistani animation industry is no exception. It is borne out of advertisements and commercial films. Through this many more skilled artists came in the forefront, and we are beginning to see mature pieces reflecting the aspirations and experiences of Pakistani people. Economic factors have been significant barriers to this art form."

The film/ animation makers have learned what consumer wants to see, therefore in this case we need to educate the viewer, and develop their creative aesthetic choices in reference to the film. What the corporate sector or financiers can do is proper budgeting, focus on the completion of the project, help in strategy-contractually, and yet should not interfere in the creative choices.

Eurocentric Teaching of Art History

A lot can be inferred from art history and styles and development and can play a significant role in creating a new piece of art.

"One thing I would caution however is an often-Eurocentric teaching of Art History that is based around ideas of class and white supremacy. To truly delve into the richness of artists through, we must look popular artists, as well as those who have not been given due credit due to cultural or societal prejudices. Then can we truly build upon those that come before to enrich the quality of animated works that we create (H. Adnan, personal communication, June 8, 2021).

Further building on this, "animation at academic level needs to be oriented with industry demands and it requires a balance in theory and practice. We need more and more practitioners of animation art and craft in the industry. A gap needs to be filled because it also involves socioeconomic dynamics of our society and financial burdens that an individual need to carry" (N. Muhammad, personal communication, June 1, 2021).

"We teach visual research in art institutes but the production of The Donkey King is mix and match which shows that research is weak. In some movies the research is compromised, and everything is made to look visually appealing, without considering if it's a true representative or an idea or concept or is relatable or represents any specific area" (I. Asad, personal communication, June 19, 2021).

Discussing at root level, (K. A. Talha, personal communication, June 25, 2021) states, "We live in post-colonial era and that is one of the main reasons we still don't own ourselves, our history is conjoined, our nationality is ambiguous, and we are confused about our identity. I believe we are still uncomfortable with our eastern, Asian Art history, we are still Babu"

Need Leadership

Animation is laborious work and it requires meticulous management of time and it needs to be cost efficient. As something insignificant can interrupt the process technical aspects need to be considered, as it can affect the timeline costing millions (K. A. Talha, personal communication, June 25, 2021). Similarly, "we need to understand how, creative, technology, money and time is interrelated and so crucial for the animation workflow" (S. Saba, personal communication, May 24, 2021).

"Creative leaders perceive, resolve problem and solve challenges by seeing things that others do not. Ingenuity, critical mindset and vision with cultural understanding are all required in animation industry (A. Yahya, personal communication, June 24, 2021). Corroborating with that statement, "if you want to lead cultural design approach, you need to think, how visual literacy affects your work, environment and how to use the visual art technology with a critical mindset for collaboration and multimedia productivity" (N. Muhammad, personal communication, June 1, 2021). (S. Saba, personal

communication, May 24, 2021) agrees, 'we have good animators, art directors, all we need is good leadership in the commercial sector for animation'.

Talking about the role of women in animation process, K. A. Talha, personal communication, June 25, 2021, states, "more and more people are talking about the lack of women in the creative industries and in lead roles. Gender bias appears in two stages; first, gender in animated movies are underrepresented, misrepresented, and second we don't have many females given leadership roles".

According to Akinboye (2005), leadership is defined as leaders inspiring followers to act towards specific objectives that embody the beliefs, desires and needs, ambitions, and expectations of both leaders and followers. The financial and social well-being of society and the people within it is highly dependent on strong leadership (Burgoyne et al., 2004). An employee or manager who doesn't want to think about a problem isn't likely to come up with a creative way to solve it. Zaccaro and Banks (2001) described leadership as a leader's capacity to persuade his subordinates to work freely toward the achievement of goals.

Naïve Beholder

For ages the same hierarchical structure has been in use in the society as these directors and writers have been born in the same class system, so they have used the same ideology and portrayed the same system (I. Asad, personal communication, June 19, 2021). A. Yahya, personal communication, June 24, 2021, concurs, "they need to be self-aware, critical in their thinking in their creative endeavor. We were raised in a different era, in a world that no longer exists. The present generation can't be raised with previous trends. It does not mean that manners, ethics and positive body language doesn't not matter anymore. Questioning is normal and the way they are asked can be respectful or disrespectful. And this needs to be educated through animation".

He further explains, "there are very few companies or organizations, that hire people on the basis of what kind of human beings they are (I recently became aware of someone who said that softwares can be taught but one cannot teach one to be a good human). People are hired based on the skillset, the number of languages and softwares they have command over and the number of tasks they can complete" (A. Yahya, personal communication, June 24, 2021). Referring to the former, "it's important to have the knowledge of the montage, juxtaposition understanding, the theory of shot, grammar, which isn't so at the moment. That's why target audience perceives it very differently" (I. Asad, personal communication, June 19, 2021).

(A. Yahya, personal communication, June 24, 2021) further adds to the predicament, "sadly, all of us fall under the same category. No one is willing to share his/ her knowledge to anyone because everybody is afraid of his/ her career. This is the beginning of new era in every field and where do we stand as a nation? No one looks sincere to anyone. A sad reality"

We have been watching cartoons since time immemorial ever but we have little familiarity with animation, most probably because digital education came late and its industry has just started to take its roots. The earlier forms of animation were not practiced here in any form, but only existed in advertising industry more or less. Animation could not become a local product in form of cartoons or films until recently when local animation films for the first time in the history of the country went to cinema screens (N. Muhammad, personal communication, June 1, 2021).

Further elaborated by S. Saba, personal communication, May 24, 2021, "animation industry in Pakistan is relatively new. Animated content and game design are being produced at few of the agency setups. This is a linear progression based on the inevitable move to the digital content requirements in the advertising sector.

The contemporary generation is disconnecting with the tradition but wants to redefine the tradition. Children watching these films want to be like them just because of the instant connection with the similar sentiments of the onscreen child character (A. Yahya, personal communication, June 24, 2021).

At the root level, without trying to discriminate but most animations houses have workers who are naive...they are just passing time, and just doing jobs to make livelihoods. The actual inspiration and motivation to transfer, and training is missing. Sadly, they are not trained and no one is planning to train them anyway. Our generations' future is at stake. It has to be made sure at some level that anyone who is in teaching has to take the responsibility to craft the future animations (students) future by best possible means. No matter what the personal circumstances are...it's about the goal (A. Yahya, personal communication, June 24, 2021).

On that note N. Muhammad, personal communication, June 1, 2021 states, “we need to learn from countries that are doing well in animation industry: If the French studios work so well, it is firstly, because their artists are very well trained. Several schools are role models in the field. This is obviously the case with Gobelins in Paris, that ranks high in the best animation schools.

Propaganda Machine

The mechanism of propaganda can be found everywhere since WWII. There is propaganda in India to persuade people to make RAW the ultimate power. In the United States, there is propaganda aimed at elevating the CIA to a position of supremacy. I believe Allahyar & The Legend of Markhor is a propaganda tool to promote ISI supremacy in Pakistan (R. Khalid, personal communication, January 15, 2021).

“Allahyar’s beginning is about a dervish who sat throughout his life and unraveled the world's knots of knowledge, and to whom he imparted his wisdom to Markhor. In relation to ISI, I've been able to at least observe the media in Pakistan, and I've seen the same writ that ISI is the world's number one institution that possesses all of the world's knowledge” (R. Khalid, personal communication, January 15, 2021).

“I believe there are two concerns that are frequently discussed. One is that we discuss National Unity, that we should walk together, that we should have been together, and that there should be unity. The other is that we can succeed because we are capable. We may assume that both of these phenomena stem from our national narrative of insecurity. I think we mistakenly believe we lack this quality. We are experiencing a crisis of unity as much as a crisis of performance. (K. A. Talha, personal communication, June 25, 2021).

Government Supervision

Masterful skill can be detected in illustration and design almost entirely in artists’ works and commercial work. Inevitably, these personal explorations do start to add to the variety and interest in work done for hire and it is exciting to see the ways in which people personalize this further (H. Adnan, personal communication, June 8, 2021).

No investor will invest in the industry unless the industry is developed and there is a semblance of stability found in it. Government policies are a precondition: even in the past when industry was at its prime, films were made with the collaboration of producers, studios and cinema networks. Now, filmmaking depends hugely on banking sectors all over the world. Granting film, the status of industry endorsement came quite late but it is just a step towards this goal. I do not think it’s possible without official patronage or alternatively by some new interest of the private sector (N. Muhammad, personal communication, June 1, 2021).

The global connectivity in this new age has opened many opportunities for people in Pakistan. The animation industry has become a hub for talented independent artists and they are producing remarkable work, bringing in revenue from other countries. But they are not working in Pakistan. The field of animation as an instructive, educational and entertainment medium can be explored if students are introduced to the progress of what has been done, so they can explore what possibilities are there for them and have the possibility to become pioneers globally (S. Saba, personal communication, May 24, 2021).

Artist’s Sense of Insecurity

“In studios people are genuinely insecure and they can't be blamed because it's difficult to find one’s niche. Incompetent artist/designers/teachers are always insecure. The highlighted themes, I believe, that are evident in animi, and that every action movie in the film business is undoubtedly one that threatens you in some manner, whether it is from the outside or from within the country. I believe the most important point to emphasize is that you must overcome these challenges, although it is apparent that you are quite uneasy. This appears to be something straight out of a movie. Without a doubt, aesthetic styles are affected (K. A. Talha, personal communication, June 25, 2021).

With respect to honing animation skillset in the right environment I believe the National College of Arts is a far superior institution and in a far better position to teach filmmakers who are aware of their beliefs, context, and have the cream of the crop. I'm also available. It's a fantastic organization, in my opinion. The rest are government-run organizations. I'm not familiar with them. What type of people they are and how they operate and how they are run?. We should not leave everything to the discretion of government authorities (K. A. Talha, personal communication, June 25, 2021).

Animation is doing well globally and it seems that the genre will open up to a wider audience than that of children's. We must continue to move towards films intended for adults. We are witnessing more and more the hybrid-ization between real shooting and animation. It is also gradually finding its place in other genres such as series and documentaries. The prospects and possibilities appear very interesting to me (N. Muhammad, personal communication, June 1, 2021).

But on the contrary S. Saba, personal communication, May 24, 2021 states, "the animation should not be treated as a soft skill. This subject should be introduced at the under graduation level which can benefit students to explore the areas where its application can be beneficial at large in every sector.

"Animation films are a new opportunity not just for the industry but also for cinemas in Pakistan. Currently, animation films are made by keeping children as major audience in mind. There is no doubt that animation films are comparatively better than the live action Pakistani films for various reasons, for example production and technological requirements that can better be addressed with animation tools as compare to film production that demands physical infrastructures. However, animation has its own limitations and due to budget, technical and project duration constraints; compromises are made. In addition, the project management and human resources can be another issue" (N. Muhammad, personal communication, June 1, 2021).

"Visual literacy and storytelling are the subjects that are little emphasized in our education system. There are some intellectual concerns generated by the knowledge delivered through the textbooks. These issues together are reflected in writing, production and reception of our films. If animation films have to flourish, then they have to amalgamate with all art forms. No art form can grow in isolation" concurred by N. Muhammad, personal communication, June 1, 2021.

If an icon is viewed repeatedly, the viewer's perception is altered over the time, and in our industry unfortunately artists are not historically aware and they use same visual bank, as to what they have seen from childhood or from western sources (I. Asad, personal communication, June 19, 2021).

Unless there is financial backing from big media partners, one cannot produce big projects like feature length films. The only studio which was not backed up by good investor had their funding gathered from crowd source platform. There is a serious lack of good leadership and production management of media pipeline (S. Saba, personal communication, May 24, 2021).

She further adds, "Individual animators who gain strength by practice and support can certainly generate data driven results, showing the receptiveness of the audience to animated content. Their practices and the results can be used as a base line to cater to larger production houses. The commercial investment in any medium and the forecasted success depends a lot decisions made on basis of the research".

"For example, in Allahyar in some areas medieval icons are visible. There are various small details such as a cart which does not show a localized icon etc. (I. Asad, personal communication, June 19, 2021). To understand Markhor as an icon, we'd have to figure out who is the financier first. If the financier is our army or one of its institutions, we'll have to figure out what it means in that context. The institution has attempted to demonstrate Markhor's supremacy. The system of the world runs on capital. When it comes to making a movie, you need money. If you need money, you need a sponsor. If you take a sponsor, you will definitely follow his/her instructions" (R. Khalid, personal communication, January 15, 2021).

Inducing and encouraging collaborative environment in the field of animation right from the educational setup and the management and production aspect should be taught to imbibe project management skills in students. There should be government funds dedicated to the funding of talented artists. Festivals and competitions should be organized to officially encourage and recognize people just starting off in this field (Z. Touseef, personal communication, May 24, 2021).

Conclusion

Various concepts (of consumerism, leadership, naive beholder, propaganda machine, government supervision, artists sense of insecurity) have been explored to answer the choices made in making the films. It is observed they were made to attract the audience who are controlled by the market, which signifies that in capitalist societies everything is determined by market and consumerism. Some experts interviewed were of the opinion that some sponsors or the financiers are interested in making quick money, thus compromising creativity. Moreover, in Pakistan we find there is lack of innovative leadership. It was also emphasized that animation was a growing field worth exploring for

opportunities and avenues. As Pakistani animated films are still relatively new field, competition is hard and people are afraid of sharing their concepts, therefore new techniques, newer body of knowledge, government sponsored institutions might help in developing this field further and keep the creativity of the artist in the center stage which is consumed by the public.

Recommendations

As an art teacher I find animation a complicated way of communicating, and a medium that isn't fully comprehended right now. Factors that contribute in its comprehension is the influences generated from culture, society, economy and politics.

As a result of the technological advancement and artists' more scientific research, different types of creative expression are going to change. From an academic perspective the following three things are important for both the art teacher and an art student.

First is the understanding of visual theory and practice about how visual information is received and processed. Secondly, how visual literacy is taught and how visual perception grows over time in both children and adults, and lastly, animation, as a visual culture, should be studied as to how they make meaning of a particular subject. This will help us better appreciate and understand animation and all other artifacts from today's visual culture, as well what they mean.

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