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## Youth Friendship: Aspects Of Contemporary Exposition in Chetan Bhagat's Selected Novels

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### ABSTRACT

Chetan Bhagat is known for his explanation of reality in the contemporary Indian society. All his works speak of social issues and immorality which damage the development of the individual and the society. Chetan Bhagat, as an Indian, fictionalizes the Indian contemporary society. He writes about each part of India like its culture, its issues, and its languages and describes the life of a young generation. In all his novels, he focuses on modern urban issues, the quality of private coaching centers, student suicides, unfulfilled ambition and uncontrolled corruption. He also deals with urban cities and their problems, inter-caste marriages, the attraction of professional jobs and making career choices. He stresses the importance of reviewing the social values. The social reality as depicted in the novels of Chetan Bhagat is altogether of the society in the post globalization era. The present paper aims to show how Chetan Bhagat's novels show up the treatment of friendship and how, according to the novelist, with a clear set of values, the transformation is certain.

**Keywords:** Contemporary Issues, Unfulfilled Ambition, Corruption, Modern Culture, Social Activity, Awareness

### INTRODUCTION

“Art is a representative of reality... Art always aims at the representation of reality, i. e. of truth, and no departure from truth is permissible... Realism is thus the basis of all Art, its antithesis is not idealism, but falseism” (qtd.by Somwanshi 174). A realistic novel gives a deep pleasure because it results in better understanding of life and its problems. A realistic novel satisfies the soul of a reader. Rabindra Nath Tagore and Sarat Chandra Chatterji in Bengali, Premchand in Urdu and Hindi, Jhaver Chand Meghani in Gujarati, and Mama Warerkar and Khandekar in Marathi adopted a more or less realistic approach in their novels and short stories. Later, Mulk Raj Anand, a prolific writer and one of the leaders of social realism movement, set the pace. Coming to the modern Indian context, Chetan Bhagat is known for his explanation of reality in the modern society. The insight of social reality and change may be criticized on the point that he himself admits that his novels focus more on entertainment than on contemporary society; that he talks more about entertainment rather than social issues. But at the same time, it should not be neglect that if he talks about youth, their issues, modern culture, different cultures, love, friendship, attitude towards sex, marriage etc., directly or indirectly he shows his interest in modern society of India and its outcomes. The man is said to be a social animal. If a man is a social animal, whatever he does or thinks relates to the society. If Chetan Bhagat tries to entertain the readers, this may also be said to have a social connection because the sport is also a part of social activity.

### **CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ISSUES AMONG THE YOUNGSTERS**

Chetan Bhagat's second novel *One Night @ the Call Center* presents a realistic picture of BPO life. It deals with middle-class social structures and gender accepted behaviour in the context of social change and economic storm. Since the call centers have scattered its branches all over the world, how can India remain untouched with it? India has also become a major focus of Call Centers. Call centers have become the symbol of the growing service economy of the country. The novelist has tried to reconstruct the life conditions of the workers in the cruel work culture of the call centers. The life of BPO is not an easy as the workers have to work all night to answer the silly questions asked by the Americans who are superior and abusive as well. *One Night @ the Call Center* is a story of lost love, cultivated ambitions, and absence of family affection, pressures of patriarchal setup, and the working environment of the entire world. It also presents a horrifying picture of the fast changing aspects of the social script. Its story appears less a story and more a reality.

Shyam makes serious discussions on some serious problems of life in the contemporary society when he is with Priyanka on their first date. Shyam censure the psyche of politicians who remain indifferent to the sentiments of the public. The basic structure of life lacks virtue and religious faiths. Life is being governed and guided by consumer choice. The conversation between Shyam and Priyanka shows serious reflections on the bad and unacceptable conditions of the modern society. They talk about Vroom's article. Shyam tells Priyanka, "... 'Well, the article said all kinds of people – students, housewives, businessmen, employees and even film stars – commit suicide. But politicians never do. That tells you something...'" (Bhagat 42). The novel also raises some valid issues and concerns and it also contains some social criticism.

The relationship between Military Uncle and his son and between Priyanka and his mother are typical examples of a cultural gap. Military Uncle fails to maintain an emotional attachment to his son. It is a deep depression for him and that is why he lives in isolation. They are suffering from the problem of generational-gap and communication gap. It is essentially a suffering born out of the break-ups of relationship. It is a typical problem in modern contemporary society that there is a great gulf between the old generation and modern generation. The concept of human relationships has changed in the contemporary society. The traditional setting of society has been shocked by the modern development.

Sometimes present generation does not understand the emotional attachment to the parents and it seems to be the main cause of the failure of parents-children relationship in formal and traditional society. Today's youth, all the time, remain busy in chatting at Facebook, Whats App, Mobile and other internet social sites. They do not have even a little time to spend with their parents. This causes a communication gap. The only thing the parents need from their children is a company. The craze of the nuclear family in the modern society is spoiling the basic structure of the society.

Esha's life, her failure and frustration, her unfulfilled dreams and her loss of faith in life raise many questions before so-called civilized and cultured society. We are reaching, the climax of scientific and technological development in the twenty-first century, but we are still in the stone age of our human psychology. On the one hand, great importance has been attached to modern society, and on the other hand, there is great degradation in morality and ethics which are the fundamental tools of secured life in this world. Esha gets the cash in the form of compensation for sleeping with someone. This cash prize for moral deformity is the symbol of degradation in morality. (Singh 114-115).

The novel concentrates on youth and their problems. The problems of young people in the society are the main focus and concern of the novelist. The novel also gives the impression that the middle-class family members suffer a lot in the society. The social description is frightening with the decaying of the value system and very confusion due to lack of the clarification of values with context to the new challenges. Hence, the novel stresses the importance of reconsidering the social values.

Chetan Bhagat's third novel *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* deals with various contemporary social and political issues. Social issues like the united scream of Godhra, religion, politics, a compound of politics and religion, love, friendship, cricket etc. are the problems discussed very pictorial in the novel. The novel also expresses how caste brings barriers and how social values differ from caste to caste. The novel also deals with the issues of suffering and confusion that the novelist believes young Indians feel about religious values. It highlights the dangerous combination of religion, politics, and economics, business, and cricket that is the symbol of contemporary Indian society. I examines the lives of attachment of youth in an emerging contemporary society.

The characters of *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* are young, aspiring and lustful and have the same moral, social and religious dilemmas as many of the young Indians face today. The novel is also based on the real events of the United scream that took place in Godhra, Gujarat in 2002 when the Sabarmati train was assault and its ruin effect. The beginning is very dramatic as well as it has a sense of reality. Govind Patel portrays the realistic picture of what he has experienced in his life so far. The emotions, sentiments, views, and psychology discussed in the novel are more genuine, more real and more attractive because of their standard quality.

He sets up a sports good shop with his two friends, Ishaan and Omi. They are helped by Bittoo, Omi's maternal uncle, who is the true follower of *Hindutva*. He is under the impression of a warm Hindu leader named Parekh-ji. The first meeting between Bittoo Mama and Govind sets the idea of united bias existing for Hindus and Muslims. Their first meeting gives the glance of their different views and the reflection of United bitterness between two races conquering in an Indian contemporary society. Being a follower of *Hindutva*, Bittoo Mama has come to invite them to the meeting of Parekh-ji. Chetan Bhagat very realistically describes the scene of the combination of politics and religion at the meeting. When Govind asks Omi about the people affecting here and there, he is replied that "It is quite simple," Omi said. "The people in saffron are priests or other holy men from around the city. The people in white are the political party people..." (Bhagat 41).

Chetan Bhagat has very realistically described the incidents of Gujarat earthquake and Godhra riots. As the business of the three friends to be healthy, they book new supposition at an upcoming mall at Navrangpura on the border of Ahmedabad with lots of trust and ambition. But, their hopes are broken into pieces.

It is the day of 26<sup>th</sup> January. Govind is break in his sleep by the earthquake. The day brings the horror of disaster not only to the healthy city but also to the life of these three partners. The novelist gives a realistic picture of an earthquake, "I found it, finally. Only that the six stories that were intact a day ago had now turned into a concrete heap..." (Bhagat 107). Chetan Bhagat gives the message of love, peace and united through the sacrifice of Omi.

Govind's mother statement at the end of the novel sums up the message of the novelist. She teaches the lesson of life which is the lessons of love and victim. She says, "*Life will have many setbacks. People close to you will hurt you. But you don't break it off. You don't hurt them more. You try to heal it. It is a lesson not only you, but our country needs to learn*" (Bhagat 255-256). The depiction of Govind, Ishaan, and Omi is quite realistic because such characters are observable in our society everywhere. Three friends are the symbol of modern society. So, the novel appears to be the realistic presentation of the events and incidents occur in their lives. It seems to be the story of their struggle for lives. Govind and Ishaan succeed in their operation while Omi sacrifices his life for the great cause. He was less influenced by the behavior of his Bittoo Mama and more impressed by the temporal outlook of his friends – Ishaan and Govind.)

In his fifth novel *Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition*, Chetan Bhagat gives a social message of goodness over corruption. Chetan Bhagat's fifth novel presents the realistic picture of the contemporary society by bringing the issue of the corruption. The novel attacks the various types of corruption existed in our society and country. It depicts a corrupt social system where money can buy everything. The novelist highlights all aspects of life in India including the political, educational and social system. He focuses on the striking effects of corruption. He criticizes the dark realities of which the establishment of contemporary educational institutions. The novel speaks about the corruption in the sociopolitical and educational sectors. In this novel, social sin, political bankruptcy, malpractices, and crime appear to demonstrate the black picture of the contemporary Indian society. Chetan Bhagat, in this novel, presents an elaborate account of the records of corruptions and plays involved in the process of opening the colleges. It shows up the terrific condition of education that has become a favorite part of an economy for the investors and manipulators. *Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition* is the story of three childhood friends – Gopal Mishra, Raghav Kashyap, and Aarti Pratap Pradhan – and their ambitions.

Aarti is the privileged daughter of a senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, and her ambitions are limited to becoming a stewardess, but the two boys, from dishonor families, know their futures depend on exam success. Raghav does very well, while Gopal comes up just short: on the one hand, given that a million students took the test, his rank of 52,043 doesn't sound too bad -- but it isn't good enough to get him into the earliest college. And along with that disappointment comes another that hits him just as hard, as Aarti criticize his advances, explaining that: "I don't see you that way." She just wants to be friends – close friends, as they have been throughout childhood.

If the final outcome is unclear satisfying, with the three central characters on the 'right' path, *Revolution 2020* still leaves a bit of a bad taste, specifically because Gopal seems to have so little moral understanding, of

anything he has done. Bhagat's characters again show a shallowness that makes even the positive outcome feel almost like happens circumstance. Both the novels as a whole and Gopal as a character, feel teenage, not an adult: the worldview here is a simplistic young-teen one, as is the way relationships are handled and pain dealt with, as are the grand gestures. The way the world works is presented in a reductionist almost black-and white way, the characters -- and Bhagat -- refusing to deal with life's complexities in a meaningful way -- life the way a young teen might see it.

Of course, one reason Gopal wants to bring Raghav down is that of his Continuing love for Aarti. Their friendship flutters on and off, bu Aarti continues to want to maintain a connection to Gopal -- and eventually, as Raghav becomes busy in his own work, she is seduced by a closer relationship with Gopal. Even Gopal can see that Raghav is a good man, doing good -- and that while he has worked very hard for the college that can never change the fact that he had to make terrible compromises all along the way.

The Internet seems to be the only consolation of Gopal because it provides him the opportunity for communication with Aarti. Chetan Bhagat in his work establishes the fact that in the post information society, the patterns of education with the believable openings to global knowledge and the unlimited use of internet and social sites are leading the youth of India in the directions of corruptions, sex mania, drug addiction and other anti-social evils. In this globalized and technological world, the use of Internet and social sites has become very common among today's youth. The youth of today remain busy all the time surfing these sites. Today, the youth have started to count on the popularity of information that is available on the social media sites. No doubt that the access of internet has made the life easier and more comfortable. All information has not been just a click away. Man can perform his multiple tasks without leaving his home even his bed, without standing in the long queues and without wasting his precious time. But this has other sides too. The unlimited use of internet and social sites has created some social obstacles for human beings. The youth of today try to check various social media sites while they study. This leads to reducing their academic performance. They are using these social sites, the less they are becoming social. It has cut the youth of today from the real outer world. This has also affected the relationship between humans.

## CONCLUSION

The youth of today want to remain alone so that they can have chats on the internet. They involve themselves close inside the rooms to enjoy the surfing of various sites. This may sometimes mislead the youth and entertain their concentration from study to negative aspects of life. The themes involve the anxieties and insecurities of the rising Indian [middle class](#), including questions about career, inadequacy, love, friendship among the teenage people, marriage, family conflicts in a changing India, and the relationship of the young Indian middle class to both executives and ordinary clients whom they serve in the United States. There is an aspect of [self-help](#) in the book as the author invites readers to identify aspects of themselves and their lives that make them angered and that they would like to change.

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