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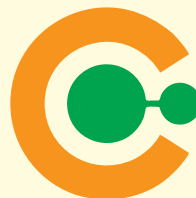
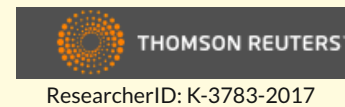
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Modernity Swings in Indian Values in Chetan Bhagat's Novels

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ABSTRACT

Modernism is characterized by a self-conscious break with the so-called traditional ways of writing both in prose fiction and in poetry. Modernism has its origin in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries specially in Europe and North America. Indian fiction in English has gone through lot of transformation from the early to Modern time fiction writers. In the recent past years India has produced a good numbers of Indian English Fiction writers, who have impressed the literary world with their art of writing. Chetan Bhagat an Indian writer through his writings has single handedly reshaped the Indian English novels. He experimented not only with the content but also with the form and style. Bhagat's characters are very modern in nature are the followers of global culture. His characters ignore the traditions and the values of past. His characters do not want to be in the prisons of customs, traditions, and cultures. The present paper shows the effect of Modernization on Indian values and how Chetan Bhagat has displayed it in his novels. Modernism started at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century and has roots in western society. Modernist art reflected the deracinated experience of life in which tradition, community, collective identity, and faith were eroding

Keywords: *Modernization, culture, custom, Tradition, Values, Westernization*

FULL PAPER

Modernism is a style of art, architecture, literature etc. that uses ideas and methods which are very different from those used in the past (The Merriam Webster Dictionary) It represents radical changes in art, architecture, photography, music, literature, and the applied arts. Modernist art reflected the deracinated experience of life in which tradition, community, collective identity, and faith were eroding. In the twentieth century the Mechanized mass slaughter of the first world war was a watershed event that fuelled Modernist distrust of reason and further sundered complacent views of the steady Moral improvement of human society and belief in progress. (New World Encyclopaedia) Literary Modernism is characterized by a self-conscious break with traditional ways of writing both in prose fiction and poetry. The traditional Modes of representation were overturned and new sensibilities of the time became the conscious desire of the writers. The horrors of the First world war broke conventions of society and questions were raised against the rationality of the human mind. Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud became the most influential thinkers of the period deeply influencing the Modernist writers.

Twenty First century in India is the age of Modernization. This twenty first century the age of science and technology has brought certain promising advantages to the urban sector of India. The Modernization has certainly and considerably benefited the urban part of developing India. It has brought better public transport facility, healthcare facility, facility of world class education at the door step, world class production houses and manufacturing units as well Because of these changes' ample opportunities for better job options or better earning opportunities and raise in high standards of living. No doubt Modernization gave many advantages to India, but at the same time it has created certain serious issues in Indian urban society specially in the living of the rising middle class.

The urban Indian society to a great extent has been impacted by Modernization people's Behaviour pattern and though process has been affected by it. It has brought westernization with it and standard of living, language, clothing, food habit of the people have been much affected by the Modernization of the society. Modern impact can be seen apparently, and a new culture has taken shape in the society. The traditional Market has been replaced by the mall culture. They gradually became brand conscious. The expensive brands in clothes and shoes branded fast food and many other items of day-to-day use have taken a tight and deep hold over the market. The party culture namely the business parties, DJ parties, kitty parties and many other celebrations have a large and profound impact of westernization on them. Because of this many antisocial evils in the society like smoking, prostitution, gambling, drinking, and various crimes are given birth. The impact of Modernization on India is so profound that India has adopted all the pros and cons of the western culture and society giving birth to a new different Indian society. The western culture

and values have been rapidly and deeply permeating in the lives of people converting the urban part of India into a literal waste Land.

Chetan Bhagat an Indian novelist who writes about especially the Indian urban area. He is seen not just an author but more as a youth icon and he has presented and targeted youth in his writings. Bhagat in his novels give a beautiful picturization of Modernized India. The novels of Chetan satirizes very beautifully how modernization has adversely affected the Indian value system. Chetan Bhagat's novel's exposes that Indian people are very much influenced by the tempting western culture and values that they are completely blinded by it. The concept of love, respect and kindness have been replaced by the various vices trying to satisfy the self. The Indian value system has been considerably broken due to Modernization and Westernization. In India people do not stick to the conventional ways of living and the western values appeal to them on a large scale. The concept of marriage as a sacred union, concept of Joint family, living for one another, respect and obedience towards the elders and indulgence into pre-marital and extramarital affairs are now on like and are given due importance in Indian society.

Chetan Bhagat in his novel *Five Point Someone* has represented wide valley even in a nuclear family. The children behaves according to the wishes of their parents. The family of Hari has different issue and there is a gap in the family. Hari's father is a short-tempered man wanting to have fear on the whole family. He always beats his wife. He has no good relations with his sons and his wife also. No TV, no music, no laughing loud. It is all for discipline." (216) His wife bears all this very silently for years. He always used to hang his belt to show his fear to the family. He always told Hari not to reply back. "If you answer you superiors back, you will be punished, severely." (216)

All the happiness values of Haris family are broken. There is no contentment. On the other hand, Hari's relationship with Neha breaks and shatters all the conventions of the Indian society. Both Hari and Neha thinks themselves as Modern an open minded thus indulging in many illegal things. This relationship is manifested with the power. Hari cannot remain away from Neha for a long time missing her and her company. He openly accepts that the name of Neha does not allow him to sleep for the nights. Hari is candid in his relation with Neha and he does not feel embarrassed to disclose his inner feelings and passions for Neha. He openly admits the fact. "That is the only thing I ever did in IIT. It is My passion, my sweat and my belief." (229)

On the other hand, family of Alok also follows the Modern way of life completely ignoring their responsibilities as parents. They belong to the businessmen family and so spend most of their time out of the country, Because of this their only son is ignored. Alok their son faces alienation since his childhood Ryan on the other hand has no bonding and affection with his parents. He does not think them to be the part of his life. He only needs them as and when he wants financial assistance. The family of professor Cherion is a very good example where Bhagat has rightly presented the entire family living under one roof but each and every member has made an

individual small and separate world of his/her own. Love, affection, care and kindness is not seen in the family. As a result of this professor's son Samir commits suicide on the other hand Neha enjoys her life and physical pleasures with Hari with whom she is serious in love. She does not accept to lead and live her life in restrictions. She breaks all the moral and social chains of the patriarchal society. She need and aspire the one with whom she can enjoy the wonders of life. We can say that she breaks all the strong values of Indian family system.

In *One Night at the Call Center* all the characters experiences the broken relationships in their families, which results a worse impact on their family as well as professional life. Vroom leaving his wife and son has an extra marital affair with his office secretary. He also has serious issues with his father. As Shyam states,

Vroom's dad was a businessman who parted from his wife two years ago. He preferred banging his secretary to being with his family, so Vroom and his mother now live without him. (21)

Another example of broken family is Radhika and her husband Anuj. Radhika who is very loyal and committed to her family is deceived by her husband Anuj. Anuj has an extra marital relationship with the 50 called Modern girl Payal. Radhika is from a very rich family but does many compromises in the traditional families of Anuj. But in return she gets disloyalty from her husband. So, she breaks her Marriage. Reena Sablok in her book *The Emergence of Indian Best seller* says, Radhika, who loved her husband values much is shocked to learn about his dark side. (51)

The next is the family of Military uncle who lives with his married son and a kid. He is very disciplined being the strict typical Military man on the other hand his son and daughter-in-law were the modern thinking people. The military man dislikes the modern attitude of his daughter-in-law as a result of which he leaves his son's house and starts working in a call center. The relationship of Priyanka with her mother has the same issues. Her mother wants to control her she does not allow her daughter to marry on her own choice. This leads to distress in the family. Esha is another example whose relation with her family is not good. She moves from Chandigarh to Delhi just to become model, ignoring her parents. She to become model and to enter in the modelling world sleeps with a designer for a high who assures her to give a night who assures her to give her a modelling contract. She loses her chastity but could not get the contract. The man ditches her by saying that she cannot get into modelling due to her short height. She is often haunted with a sense of guilt. She even cuts her veins. In the twenty first century Esha symbolizes the dark side of the new Indian modern woman pursuing her career. At the same time the compromising attitude of today's youth can also be seen.

Bhagat's the three mistakes of life portrays Ish and his family in a very bad light. Ish's family often chides him for not following his directions in day today activities. Ish never follows his father and believes in his family. Govind's family also suffers from broken relationship. His father develops extra material affair and

leaves Govind & his family. He does not look after the family in a proper way because of this Govind feels disheartened to see the fickle mindedness of his father.

Govind's & Vidya's relation in this novel is very shocking. Vidya is not interested in her studies on the other hand Govind is seen sometimes at the evening time teaching vidya. Vidya wants to enjoy her life & sex with Govind. Govind on the other hand is very she. Vidya chooses to lose her virginity even on her birthday. Govind is vidya's brother's best friend. After losing her virginity she feels very happy she says, "Wow, I am an adult now and am no longer a virgin, so cool. Thank you." (201)

This activity of her reflects her ignorance towers moral values in India. Another character from the novel also breaks the family conventions. His father is a priest & he belongs to a Brahmin family. He is not interested in religionist matters. He wants to enjoy life and takes wine, watches movies, and seems after beautiful girls.

Thus, due to Modernization & westernization, the ideal value system has broken considerably. Indian people do not adhere to the conventional ways of living. Indian people are more attracted towards the western life style. Indians are more attracted towards western culture which is not suitable to Indian civilization. It I the stark reality & today's picture that the contemporary Indian society has been degraded on social & moral values. This is very common now-a-days. Chetan Bhagat very rightly portrays these changes in his novels.

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