



A STUDY ON STATUS OF WOMEN IN CHETAN BHAGAT'S NOVELS

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ABSTRACT

In ancient India, women held a position of great importance and were treated with respect and regard. Despite the fact that society was essentially patriarchal in structure, women enjoyed the status of equality and respect. Women's honor was highly valued and upheld. She was regarded as valuable and chaste. Women possessed all the rights to education, equality, property, and religion throughout the Vedic era. Women were not excluded from social or home activities, but they were always reliant on their male family members. The Mahabharata, written by Veda Vyasa, describes how the Kauravas fell because they degraded Draupadi. The destruction of Ravana after he kidnapped and attempted to forcefully marry Sita is another theme in Valmiki's Ramayana. Nations fought each other, clans fought over women, and Helen caused the Troy War. Therefore, it might be said that a woman's honor is the honor of a country, community, and family. If someone wanted to shame someone or exact retribution, they would simply prey on a woman. The status of women in society serves as a barometer for social organization standards. Many Hindu religious texts, including the Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, and Mahabharata, mention the names of several women who were outstanding scholars, poets, and philosophers of the era. The best examples of this are the Gargi and Maitreyi. In ancient India, women enjoyed equal status with men in all spheres of life and received the same education as men.

KEY WORDS: Women, Feminism's, Society, Chetan Bhagat's, Novels.

INTRODUCTION

In the past, women had the freedom to select their life partners and were permitted to have more than one husband. They had the option to leave their husbands. Man had to demonstrate his strength and potential in order to be chosen as a life partner under the Swayamvara system. Examples of Swayam Vara-type weddings may be found in the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and epics. Seeta, Amba, Ambika, Ambalika, Draupadi, and several princesses chose their spouses in this manner, and it was later noticed in families with higher castes. There was a Sati system among the Aryans in the past. According to the hymns of the Atharva Veda and the

Rig Veda, forced child marriages did not exist. As time went on, women's status changed in every aspect of society. The majority of women's social rights were taken away during the Smriti period. Additionally, child marriages began to occur. The status of women started to decline during the Smritis period, and the Vedic ideals of equality started to fade. During this time, women's status underwent a significant shift; they were deprived of nearly all the rights associated with equal standing in social, economic, and religious contexts, and their status was reduced to that of Shudras. She simply continued to be her husband's loyal wife. Women were likewise given a very low status and denied a coveted position during the Mauryan and Brahmanical periods.

Women were viewed in the Smritis and Puranas as a type of property that may occasionally be bought, sold, or lent. This reflected the mindset of a typical patriarchal society that viewed women as personal property. The purdah system was implemented, widow remarriages were prohibited, and child marriages were outlawed since women and property are seen as one in multiple epic passages. Gradually, evil practices began to spread, repressing women. Higher-class women obtained more education, whereas average housewives only received a portion of it. While we claim that women are goddesses to be revered, in reality, we regard them as inferior beings who should only be used for household chores and to serve males. These wealthy ladies undoubtedly had some influence, but they also experienced some suffering. Men engaged in polygamy and kept concubines; it was believed that a man could maintain as many illicit relationships as he wanted, but unlike during the Vedic era, women occasionally lost their privilege to have several husbands.

Research experts have both praised and critiqued Manu's laws that control every element of human life. The insights of Manu-Smriti become avoidable while considering the condition of women. His insights on women's bodies, sex, qualities related to money and material belongings, politics, the law, social customs, and ideals are all worth evaluating. Manu promoted his ideas about both men and women, but patriarchal males only adopted those ideas that benefited them. On the other hand, Manu-Smriti also shows that men and women have a set of rules for behavior, and that if any of them broke them, harsh punishment was recommended. The laws of Smritis and Manu, however, are not unchangeable. The adaptability of the Hindu way of life is well known. These writings argued that society might not follow the rules for very long. As a result, it can be updated and rebuilt to meet societal demands. But man's greed and selfishness created these laws, which are so strict that there is no way around them. Women were viewed as less valuable than men. With the onset of Moghul rule in India, the decline in women's status took a terrible turn. The joint family system, pardha, sati, child marriage, and prohibitions on widow marriage were the main causes of the injustices women faced.

In order to exercise the marginalized status of women, the patriarchal system is crucial. India is fortunate that, despite the patriarchal system being the will of men, some kindhearted men have stepped up to help women escape this deprivation. There is a large list of notable individuals who have contributed to the welfare and advancement of women's status, including social workers and intellectuals like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Mahatma Phule, Aagarkar, and others. In addition to many other civic practices that impacted women, they took steps to end the Sati practice, the custom of child marriage, the differentiating widow's custom, the prohibition on higher caste Hindu widows' remarriage, and many other customs. Women gradually began to criticize the patriarchal society. Women's empowerment in a new literary period began. Both men and women began illustrating the plight of women and supporting independence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

By reading carefully chosen books of Chetan Bhagat examines many facets of life. In order to assess literary texts and adapted films, the student used the methodology of comparison and contrast. After that, she viewed the movies that were adapted from the four novels listed above, noting the parallels and contrasts between them. The following elements are taken into account when comparing the two media: plot, setting, character, narrative, and point of view.

This study used a descriptive, comparative, interpretative, and analytical methodology. In this regard, the primary focus of the study is whether or not the theories and methods used in Chetan Bhagat's books are disclosed in the form of motion pictures.

ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN CHETAN BHAGAT'S NOVELS

Chetan Bhagat is a well-known Indian author who wrote in English and transformed reading preferences. Since more individuals are purchasing popular works in plain language, the high elite language trend is no longer relevant. Books with simple language are accessible to anyone. He is regarded not only as a novelist but also as a youth icon. His characters are rebels against society. Because Bhagat's works are set against the backdrop of bustling urban centers, his female protagonists are free-spirited and independent, enjoying status on par with men. However, women's standing is no longer viewed through outdated lenses. She is respected, honorable, has her own voice, and has her own place. Women have a distinguished position because of their intelligence and ability. The vitality of Bhagat's female heroines reminds us of G. B. Shaw's female figures. The female protagonists who embody the liberal, independent, and urban woman are Neha in *Five Point Someone*, Esha

and Priyanka in One Night @Call Center, Ananya in 2 States, Vidya in 3 Mistakes of My Life, Aarti in Revolution 2020, and Riya in Half Girlfriend. They make their own choices regarding school, marriage, courting, and love, among other things. She now has new opportunities as a result of modernization and globalization.

Ananya in 2 States is a contemporary girl from Tamil Nadu who moved to Ahmadabad to further her studies. She makes her own decisions and lives alone. According to Chetan Bhagat, she is honest about her desires and decisions, displaying none of the feminine characteristics of uncertainty or timidity. Despite her pride in being the purest Brahmin, she requests non-vegetarian food at the hotel. After meeting in a dorm room for their studies, Ananya and Krish's acquaintance blossomed into love, and they now live together in a sort of live-in relationship.

She accepted a position at HLL at her home after earning her degree in Ahmadabad, and she makes a good living there. Another liberal girl who works the night shift in a call center is Priyanka from One Night @ the Call Center. She chooses Shyam on her own to be her male buddy, but they are unable to stay together. They continue to work at the same contact center and have a casual and uninterested relationship, even if she had sex with him in quails. Esha and Radhika, who are also employed at Connexions Call Center, are with her. They make money to support their spouse, family, or aspirations.

It's good to know that there are just as many men and women working in call centers. They work nights. Esha, who is enthusiastic and insane, displays her mental state by choosing to reside in Delhi instead of her own house in order to pursue her ambition of being a model: "Last month, I ran around like mad, chasing modeling agencies." In addition, I need to clear up the 1,000 calls from last week (Bhagat, 2005: 97). The sole child of her parents, Radhika, married Anuj and supports him by working in a call center. Since Anuj didn't live with her in-laws for work, she must manage both the family and her career because they are quite conventional. When Radhika finds out that Anuj has an adulterous affair with another female, her assumption that he loves her deeply is dashed. She exemplifies a class of women in society who strive to combine the demands of work and family simultaneously, and as a result, nothing flawless emerges.

Like Vidya from 3 Mistakes of My Life and Neha from Five Point Someone, Riya Somani is young, yet she is far more mature than them. This remarkable independence may have been a result of her sport. She plays basketball and is brave, attractive, and daring. It's bold of her to visit a boy's dormitory like Ananya. From her acceptance to St. Stephen's to her marriage to Rohan, she makes her own decisions. Without using her father's

financial assistance, she takes a private job in Patna after the divorce. It was a daring move on her part to leave India in order to pursue her ambition of becoming a singer in the United States. She once said to Madhav, "I want excitement, adventure, and travel." All of it is what Rohan promises (Bhagat, 2014: 88). This demonstrates that she married Rohan in order to fulfil her aspirations.

Riya's innocence and upbringing have been ruined by her father. Chetan Bhagat appears to portray some extraordinary yet pervasive, painful realities in this book. According to accounts, many girls are sexually exploited from an early age, and the perpetrators are frequently family members or near relatives rather than complete strangers. Nevertheless, Riya eventually achieves her goal and completes her transformation from a half-girlfriend to a bride.

Prior to a few decades ago, it was a given that a boy and a girl would have to get married in accordance with their parents' wishes. However, in the modern period, they are free to express their preferences and choose the mate they want. Girls are not excluded; they are allowed to choose and express their preferences. In the past, marrying a boy or girl chosen by their parents was the way to pay off the debt of motherhood. In *One Night @ the Call Center*, Priyanka makes her own marriage decisions, although her mother is successful in persuading her daughter to wed a settled man. For the time being, Priyanka is entertained by the marriage proposal of an NRI who works for Microsoft, but she was disappointed when the truth about his baldness surfaced and she ended the relationship. She ultimately chooses to wed her first love, Shyam. Ananya is a victim of these customs as well; she has experienced the difficulties of the pairing procedure.

Though strong, the freed women of the modern, globalized society will inevitably face extreme exploitation at the household and corporate levels. Esha Sing, a modern girl with a captivating beauty, gave up her virginity in order to pursue her dream of being a model. Esha was promised a modeling contract in exchange for spending one night with a designer. However, the individual sends money as restitution, revealing himself to be an opportunist. Her low stature served as the justification for not signing her to a contract. "I only had to sleep with him once to get a break in a major fashion show," Esha admits. I was not coerced. I decided to do it. However, I've been plagued by that terrible guilt ever since (Bhagat, 2005). She uses a sharp blade to cut her skin whenever the guilt comes back to torment her. "This pain distracts me from the actual pain," she claims. Mental agony is what true suffering. She regrets the deed and is plagued by regret. Chetan Bhagat highlights the negative aspects of the modeling industry as well as the fact that young people will stop at nothing to fulfill their dreams.

However it is also worth highlighting that other from being known for merry making, enjoying, drinking having pre-marital sex. Chetan Bhagat's female heroines are fearless, capable of handling any circumstance, and able to support their counterparts with great effectiveness. Ananya experiences such an incidence in two states. Ananya preserves family honor in a challenging social circumstance by attending Krish's cousin's wedding in Delhi. The groom's side, who were sulky because they wanted an Accent car instead of a Santro, threatened Krish's maternal uncle Rajji mama (Minti's father) during "jaimala." Rajji Mama made a valiant effort to persuade them, but to no avail. Ananya collects Minti's cousins at this point and challenges the groom, Duke, on moral grounds, saying, "Great, I make twenty-five thousand." However, could you explain me how you earned this kind of wedding? What have you done to merit receiving a car as a gift? Bhagat (2009). "You are having an arranged marriage," she challenges him. You are acquiring a girl like her for that reason. Can you ever imagine having a girlfriend like her if you had courted her.

All of the family members go mute as a result of Ananya's arguments. When the groom wakes up, the issue is handled with dignity. Ananya wins the affection of Krish's relatives. Regarding this, the Hartsock-Heckman-Harding dispute served as the foundation for feminist epistemology, which holds that women know differently rather than necessarily better. Gender understanding results from this, which is important for both men and women.

It is impossible to wrap up female characters without including second-generation women. Alok's mother bears the weight and obligations of motherhood. Alok's father is paralyzed, and his mother makes very little money while caring for two kids. When his father started seeing his secretary, his mother also took care of Vroom. Although Krish's father was present, he served no useful purpose, and his mother is not an exception. He only knew how to beat and dictate to his wife. In addition to being naturally afraid of her father, Kristin thrives under her mother's love. In 3 Mistakes of My Life, Govind Patel's mother similarly makes a living by selling her own cooked Gujrati food while her husband is away. Another regal lady who takes care of the school and haveli by herself is Durga Jha in Half Girlfriend.

GENDER ROLES

A certain group of people at a specific time and place engage in specific actions that demonstrate the existence of that culture. The people are these cultures' heirs and executors. The two genders of men and women typically make up a civilization. These two are responsible for carrying out the tasks necessary to survive. Depending on

societal needs and demands, both sexes were given certain tasks. Their gender roles are shaped by the employment they do. Gender roles have been around since the Stone Age. Women took care of the children, while men earned the money. While the role of women stayed mostly the same, the role and responsibilities of males evolved as society did. The so-called patriarchal, civilized society is responsible for this systematic exploitation. Only humans benefited from the division of labor. Women have begun to take on male-dominated vocations in modern times, but they are still unable to break free from the conventional roles they have played for generations. Needless to say, men have remained in their safe haven. Although the works changed, the roles remained the same. Different cultures have different gender roles, and in many communities, these roles tend to evolve throughout time. Economic and sociocultural reasons are the main causes of the shift in gender roles. Because men predominate in our culture, men have all the power and make all the decisions. They determine both their own and women's roles. Both desire to work regardless of family in order to meet their material demands and live a nice lifestyle, which is also crucial. Of course, there are instances in which both are effective for need. Although the society was well-built, it changed with time, although not everyone agreed with the changes. Because men are still seen as superior and home activities as inferior, they are unable to cook or care for children because they believe it will reflect poorly on their masculinity.

Little adjustments are being made in society gradually, such as allowing women to work while men take care of the home and kids. The clearest illustration of this is the author, whose wife, Anusha, works as a banker. Chetan Bhagat is a full-time writer who voluntarily looks after his twins while he is at home. According to Chetan Bhagat's essay, he ultimately decides to alter the conventional gender role patterns by basing them on an individual's availability and free time rather than roles that are allocated to them based on their gender. Gender roles encompass more than just earning money or raising children; they also include speaking, dressing, strolling, drinking, and pursuing occupations. Both Chetan Bhagat's male and female characters are free from these stereotypes since he purposefully depicts them in order to promote social change. All of the women—Neha, Priyanka, Esha, Radhika, Vidya, Ananya, Aarti, and Riya—are educated and focused on their careers. These girls are assertive, self-assured, liberal, ambitious, and strong-willed. In addition to knowing how to be self-sufficient, they also know what to do, what to accomplish, and who to marry. There aren't many instances that demonstrate how women lead in venues where males once took a stand. Such incidents occur in two states, where Ananya successfully persuades the groom's side on the dowry issue. Her handling of the situation was so exquisite that Krish's mother had to commend her as well. Readers are drawn to Ananya from the start of the book because of her attributes. She drinks with Krish, his buddy and boyfriend. She actively participates in

romance and secretly likes having sex in her dorm room without feeling guilty. Neha in Five Point, in contrast to Ananya Someone, Vidya in my life's three mistakes, Aarti in Revolution 2020, Riya in Half Girlfriend, and Priyanka in One Night @ the Call Center all openly consume wine, smoke, and engage in premarital sex. Although men have traditionally dominated the field of physical relationships, Neha and Vidya are not afraid to encourage their male partners to participate in wooing games. Not only do they possess the courage to do this, but they also possess intelligence. To save money and realize their aspirations, Priyanka, Radhika, and Esha labor in contact centers, while Ananya secures a position at a multinational corporation. Aarti chose to work as a receptionist at Ramda restaurant, and more importantly, she is Riya, who endured a lot of hardships at an early age. She also works very hard to become a vocalist abroad. Women of the second generation are not far behind either; they too carried out their responsibilities with honesty and obedience. In the absence or incapacity of their spouses, the mothers of Alok, Ryan, Govind, and Madhav all performed their duties admirably. In addition to their financial obligations, they continued to fulfill their traditional roles of providing for their families and raising children. They suffered in both ways rather than seeing a significant change in their positions. All of these items demonstrate that restrictions based on gender-assigned roles have vanished. The positions and works of the two genders have undergone a radical change.

A particular culture is demonstrated by the actions of a particular group of people at a particular period and location. The people are the executors and successors of these cultures. Men and women are usually the two genders that comprise a civilization. These two are in charge of completing the chores required for survival. Certain tasks were assigned to both sexes based on societal expectations and needs. The work they perform shapes their gender roles. Since the Stone Age, gender roles have existed. Men made the money, while women looked after the children. Men's roles and responsibilities changed as society progressed, but women's roles remained mostly unchanged. This systematic exploitation is a product of the so-called patriarchal, civilized society. When labor was divided, only humans profited. Although women have started to pursue careers that were formerly dominated by men, they are still unable to escape the traditional roles that they have played for many generations. Men have stayed in their secure haven, of course. The roles did not alter even though the works did. There are gender roles in many cultures, and in many groups, these roles change with time. The shift in gender roles is primarily due to sociocultural and economic factors. Our culture is dominated by men, thus men have all the authority and make all the choices. They decide women's roles as well as their own. In order to satisfy their monetary needs and maintain a comfortable lifestyle, which is also essential, both of them want to work regardless of family. Naturally, there are situations where both work well for the need.

Gradually, society is making small changes, like letting women work while men look after the house and children. The author, whose wife, Anusha, is a banker, is the best example of this. While at home, Chetan Bhagat, a full-time writer, voluntarily watches his twins. In the end, Chetan Bhagat chooses to change the traditional gender role patterns by basing them on a person's availability and free time rather than roles that are assigned to them based on their gender, according to his article. Gender roles include speaking, clothing, walking, drinking, and pursuing careers in addition to earning money and raising children. These clichés do not apply to Chetan Bhagat's male or female characters because he intentionally portrays them to encourage social change. The women are all educated and career-focused: Neha, Priyanka, Esha, Radhika, Vidya, Ananya, Aarti, and Riya. These girls are liberal, ambitious, self-assured, aggressive, and strong-willed. They know what to do, what to achieve, and who to marry, in addition to knowing how to be self-sufficient. There aren't many examples of women taking the lead in settings where men used to speak. Ananya is able to convince the groom's side on the dowry issue in two states where such instances take place. Krish's mother also had to praise her for the excellent way she handled the matter. Ananya's qualities captivate readers from the beginning of the book. She drinks with his friend and lover, Krish. She actively engages in romantic activities and enjoys having sex in her dorm room without feeling bad about it. Aarti in *Revolution 2020*, Riya in *Half Girlfriend*, Priyanka in *One Night @ the Call Center*, Vidya in *My Life's Three Mistakes*, and Neha in *Five Point* all openly smoke, drink alcohol, and have sex before marriage. Neha and Vidya are not hesitant to encourage their male partners to engage in wooing activities, despite the fact that men have historically had a dominant position in the realm of physical relationships. They are intelligent in addition to having the guts to take this action. They complete their schooling, choose a career, and accomplish their objectives. Radhika is shown in *One Night @ the Call Center* as the ideal daughter-in-law and a wonderful example of a contemporary woman. Anuj and his mother, who is Radhika's mother-in-law, don't give a damn about her, even though she works at night in a contact center to help her husband and save money for the future. At last, she removes all the bonds and escapes the stifling attachments. While Ananya finds a job at a multinational company, Priyanka, Radhika, and Esha work in contact centers to save money and fulfill their dreams. More significantly, Aarti is Riya, who had numerous challenges at a young age, and she decided to work as a receptionist at Ramda restaurant. She also puts a lot of effort into becoming a vocalist overseas. Second-generation women are not far behind either; they also performed their duties with integrity and compliance.

CONCLUSION

One of the English-speaking Indian authors, Chetan Bhagat, is a novelist. Given that the majority of his readers are under fifty, he is a household name among the younger generation. Being a young, popular Indian novelist, he is also well-known for his best-selling books, which have achieved the highest sales figures. He lives in the hearts of children since he is a representation of young characters throughout his literary work. The themes and subject matter of his works highlight the young Indian youth, their professional issues, and humorous elements that illustrate realities in Indian society. It's possible that he turned novels into movies because the social aspects in them evoke the natural aspects of civilization.

The most noteworthy aspect of Chetan Bhagat's writing is that, in contrast to other authors who want their readers to read their work, readers are always at the heart of it. He constantly remembers to entertain his readers while keeping them at the centre of his writing and refrains from using didacticism or moralizing. Examined feminism in a few of Chetan Bhagat's works. According to her research, Chetan Bhagat always considered love and joy by expressing comedy in his writings, in contrast to other authors who were interested in highlighting the negative aspects of human nature. His books are similar to what is referred to in movies as masala, which is a mixture of societal components. With a variety of graphical depictions and linear narratives, Chetan Bhagat's writing is straightforward, understandable, unambiguous, and remarkable. One of the fascinating aspects of his books is that he gives his characters—primarily the main protagonists, Hari, Shyam, Govind, Krish, and Madhav—the names of Lord Krishna. His straightforward writing style has drawn a lot of criticism. We can't stop his novels from selling millions of copies, though. His novels have the capacity to engage readers and consistently develop the plots in accordance with their interests. He became a best-selling novelist as a result. Most importantly, his writing is clear, fluid, and attention-grabbing. Marathi, Hindi, Tamil, and Malayalam are among the languages in which his books have been published in India. His novels are renowned for having numbers in each of their titles, such as Five Point Someone, One Night @ Call Center, and The Three Mistakes of My Life. 2020 Revolution, Two States The girl in room 105 is a half-girlfriend and an Indian girl. "Bhagat Chetan." In an interview, Chetan Bhagat explains why: As a banker and engineer, he is constantly surrounded by numbers, which are mirrored in the titles of his novels.

Chetan Bhagat has made significant contributions to the entertainment industry. His One Indian Girl is written in the first person from the perspective of the woman. Chetan Bhagat is a well-known author because of his skill at addressing contemporary concerns, his topics, and his use of language. He has the ability to write a book that makes the reader feel as though they are the characters. Additionally, he developed Revolution 2020 to address the pressing challenges facing Indian society today and offer solutions because, in his opinion, merely

talking about them is "ranting work." The issue of dissolving the culture of reading books for pleasure is resolved in Chetan Bhagat's work. Being a best-selling author and a "Youth Icon," he draws readers to his novels, particularly young people. His novels pique the interest of the children. As a result, Chetan Bhagat is a prominent figure in modern Indian English books that explore the aspirations and ambitions, love and hate, laughter and tears, joy and anguish, happiness and pains, and wishes and melancholy of the country's youth.

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