



## **SIGNIFICANCE OF IMMORALITY RATHER THAN MORALITY IN BHAGAT'S FICTION**

**V. SIVA PRASAD**

Department of English,  
Government College for Men (A),  
Kadapa-516004,  
Andhra Pradesh, **INDIA**

**C. V. VISWANADHA RAO**

Department of English,  
G. C. M. (A),  
Kadapa-516004,  
Andhra Pradesh, **INDIA**

### **ABSTRACT**

*It is a well known fact that India is an epitome of ethics and human values. Of course, it is due to the cultural heritage and age old traditions and customs. As well, the great epics of this land have also laid a strong foundation for its background. As a result, spiritual and moral way of life has been imbibed naturally by the people to lead a serene life in this hurly-burly world. To certain extent, literature has also contributed much to the development of this thought from time immemorial. The advent of globalization has brought about a drastic change in the attitudes of the people. Even the writers are influenced and carried away by its potential impact. In this aspect, Chetan Bhagat is no exception, in the sense that instead of exposing the follies and foibles of the present generation, he ironically gives much significance to the unethical and immoral practices of the youth on college and corporate campuses, adding fuel to the fire of already deteriorating values in society. The present write up makes a modest attempt to analyse some of the immoralities in the works of the author and endeavours to offer some constructive suggestions for prevention.*

**Keywords:** *Epitome of ethics, cultural heritage, great epics, moral life, serene, time immemorial, globalization, practices, unethical.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Chetan Bhagat is a popular writer in India. He was born and brought up in Delhi. After his collegiate education he got admission in I.I.T Delhi. Later, he accomplished a seat in I.i.m Ahmedabad, a reputed management school in India. Then on, he worked as an investment

**V. SIVA PRASAD**

**C. V. VISWANADHA RAO**

1P a g e



banker and in course of time, his creative talent prompted him to become a writer of sensation, especially appealing to the youth and the budding readers with his realistic sense of observation and lucidity of style.

As pen is mightier than sword, anything can be achieved within a short span of time has been proved by a host of writers in India. Bhagat has been acclaimed as the most successful and engaging writer by the modern younger generation. Most of his works reflect the prevailing heart breaking situations on college campuses irrespective of academic learning. However, it is a note worthy observation that his realistic approach does not result in reformation or rectification of the attitudes of the youth who zealously read his fiction. It rather provokes the youth to resort to unwarranted acts instead of understanding the defective element to transform their mind sets. The present paper exposes some of the unethical and immoral activities of the youth who look at them in a casual way without mulling over the serious consequences that would mar the image and hinder the smooth progress of society at large. Hence, the paper evaluates some of the unethical and insignificant immoralities dealt by the author in his works. Some of them are frustration, crime, suicide, sensuality, corruption, deception and lust rather than love which conspicuously occupy the thematic concerns of Bhagat's writing. In a way, it lends an impression of sensationalism rather than an instruction instigating readers to emulate the negative qualities that are glorified in his fiction. A researcher aptly observes, "The books written by Bhagat do not keep the reader spell bound by literary worth but they have the capacity to do so with the sheer force of sensationalism. The feel does not come out of the books of Bhagat to gradually grab the existence of its reading by transporting him out of himself but the reader, as no other option left, plunges himself into the pond of sensationalism."<sup>1</sup>

### **Dichotomy of Characterisation**

It's an ipso facto that characterization constitutes the focal point in two genres, drama and fiction. The earliest generation of Indian fiction writers in English exclusively MulkRaj Anand, RajaRao and R.K.Narayan have portrayed characters with much dexterity and chiseled them as symbols of morality and embodiment of human values in different walks of life. For instance, Murthy of RajaRao's Kanthapura, Raju of R.K.Narayan's Guide and Munno of Mulk Raj Anand's Coolie stand for essentially the realists of Indian social system. Above all, these writers have made a strenuous effort to establish a national Indian character in their works by making characters struggle for identity. Here, it is worth mentioning another observation of the researcher in his thesis, "Three early masters of the Modern Indian English Literature namely MulkRaj Anand, RajaRao and R.K.Narayan laid the foundation for the contemporary English novel in India by rejecting the Indian values and adapting English language to the Indian needs by asserting an Indian identity."<sup>2</sup>

**V. SIVA PRASAD**

**C. V. VISWANADHA RAO**

**2P a g e**



Diagonally opposite to the earlier masters of Indian fiction and due to the potential impact of globalization, Chetan Bhagat has created the characters which display the traits of Indian characters with contours of the western attitudes. Hence, his characters represent the nature of transient values which are abominable in every sense. His dramatis personae appear different from that of the earlier triumvirate's in their denial of ethical values. This is evident from his characters, the call centre executives like Radhika, Esha, Priyanka, Varun and Shyam who may belong to any nation displaying ironical disposition showcasing ultra modern aptitudes. So to say, Shyam's belittling to follow a marriage party in order to attend office, Radhika's walking out of her husband and family and the shattering of Esha's dreams to become a model resulting in her attempt to commit suicide etc.

## Immoralities

Chetan Bhagat though became popular with his widely read fiction, is not without flaws. His works do not advocate a message nor provide any solution. Virtually his heroes and heroines do not have the identity of their own. Most of the characters are driven by the instincts like sleep, sex, fear, self etc. So, they are in a way unconventional. Hence, they are dearth of literary worth rather it appears a journalistic way of expression. Wilde says, "The difference between literature and journalism is that journalism is unreadable, and literature is not read."<sup>3</sup> So, the readers read his fiction as pastime but not as literature, since they do not ensure any moral instruction or delight. He portrays characters in such a way that he infuses negative tendencies as if society is devoid of goodness. A researcher rightly points out, "A daughter is not true to her family, a friend is not loyal to his friend's family, parents cheat their children, the authority seeks opportunity to sleep with subordinates, professors are cruel to their students, and sons are wicked."<sup>4</sup>

Surprisingly, the female characters like Neha of '*Five Point Someone*', Priyanka of '*One Night @ the Call Centre*' and Vidya of '*Three Mistakes of My Life*' are sketched as specimen of loose morals. Esha of '*One Night @ the Call Centre*' stoops to the level of sleeping with a modeling agent of fashion industry for just getting a chance as a model girl. The following words reveal her immoral behavior: "Clumpy sex is better than choreographed sex. And certainly better than no sex. I said as I pulled her close, 'By the way do you have a condom?' She said, 'yes sir, we live in constant hope'..."<sup>5</sup>

On closer analysis, it is found that the writer has produced his works compatible to the taste of budding book lovers as well, a marketing strategy though they do not possess the desired literary standards. A research paper aptly remarks, "After corrupting the social setup at various places, the generation that does not oil its hair is all set to corrupt a very pious field

V. SIVA PRASAD

C. V. VISWANADHA RAO

3P a g e



that is the field of reading and learning...”<sup>6</sup> Another shocking and perturbing element in Bhagat’s fiction is his concept of suicide as an alternative to escape from the troubles and tribulations of life. In his maiden novel, Neha’s brother commits suicide and Alok attempts to end his life so as to relieve him from excruciating pressure which is unbearable. Also, Esha of *One Night @ the Call Centre* could not help herself from trying to think of committing suicide. Thereby, readers get the wrong impression and resort to end their lives as a source of solution for their deplorable life situations which is really baneful. However, it is quite common that the thought of suicide may come now and then in human life inevitably but with wisdom one may surmount the circumstances to lead a life of challenge. Psychologically, it is studied that any eventuality in life takes place due to frustration. Of course, frustration is the key factor in the present so-called civilized society. Neha shares her bed with her boy friend as she is disappointed with the incident of her brother, Sameer’s suicide. But anyhow wrong is wrong, though the author justifies it as something done in a fit of sadness. Glorification of immorality receives much significance in respect of students. Those who are brilliant to step into IIT’s shrug off their integrity and condescend to the level of stealing question papers before examinations, keeping aside ethical values. Besides, they don’t mind begging pardon from the authorities concerned, if they are caught red-handed. Apart from that, they indulge in bunking classes, abusing professors and drinking alcohol on the top of the roof of the college. It has become a common phenomenon for the students to commit this kind of criminal acts without any decency and dignity. Another striking poignant situation in Bhagat’s fiction is that the youth are enamored of wine and women. It may be the reason that his fiction is widely welcomed and read inquisitively. Consequently, the youth are of the opinion that this unethical attitude is an acceptable practice for the students who pursue higher education. As well, they try to conceal the fact of their misbehavior from their parents.

## CONCLUSION

It is clear from the above account of immoralities in Bhagat’s fiction that the writer seems to mirror the stark realities engulfing the future of modern youth. But the naked truth may abet the young generation to take it to heart as sanctified and succumb to untold miseries in their lives. An intellectual like Bhagat should have presented didactically with a word of caution to prevent the youth from treading the path of immorality to make their career glorified rather than demoralizing the upcoming and innocent youth. Holistically speaking, the author who is dare enough to disclose the bitter truth that is prevailing in and around India, is undoubtedly a writer par excellence in winning millions of hearts with his pen and power of expression.



# **PUNE RESEARCH**

**AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL IN ENGLISH**

**ISSN 2454-3454**

**VOL 4, ISSUE 2**

**UGC Approved Journal No 48520 (Arts & Humanities) ENGLISH**

## **REFERENCES**

1. Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in, Feb. 15, 2018.
2. Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in, Feb. 15, 2018.
3. Wilde: *The Critic an Artist*, BQFAO-169.
4. Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in, Feb. 15, 2018.
5. Bhagat, Chetan, *One Night @ the Call Center*, Pg-107.
6. Chaturvedi, Roopesh, Malvaiya, Heeralal, "*The New Age Best Seller and the Literary Taste of Budding Book Lovers: A Devaluation of One Night @ the Call Center*", Bhopal, Naveen Samajik Shodh, 2011, Pg-29.

**V. SIVA PRASAD**

**C. V. VISWANADHA RAO**

5P a g e

**UGC Approved Journal No 48520 (Arts & Humanities) ENGLISH**

**VOL 4, ISSUE 2**

**[www.puneresearch.com/english](http://www.puneresearch.com/english)**

**MAR – APR 2018**

**(IMPACT FACTOR 3.02) INDEXED, PEER-REVIEWED / REFEREED INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL**