



**MICROSCOPIC REPRESENTATION OF POSTMODERN SOCIETY IN CHETAN
BHAGAT'S NOVELS**

Dr. S. Yogaprakasasam,
Assistant Professor of English,
Government Arts and Science College,
Thiruthuraipoondi. Tamilnadu, India.
9786880916
yogaprinced22@gmail.com

Dr. L. Rajesh,
Associate Professor of English,
Rajah Serfoji Government Arts College,
Thanjavur, Tamilnadu. India.
9786718777
lakshmanan76@gmail.com

Submission Date:12.03.2025

Acceptance Date:24.03.2025

Introduction:

Chetan Bhagat is a prominent Indian author, columnist, and motivational speaker, widely recognized for his contributions to modern Indian literature. Born on April 22, 1974, he initially gained attention for his engaging novels that blend humour, romance and societal commentary, making them relatable to India's youth. Many of his books have been adapted into successful Bollywood movies. Bhagat has been credited with popularizing English- language novels in India by making them accessible and pleasing to young readers. Bhagat remains a significant figure in contemporary Indian modern culture, bridging the gap between literature and entertainment.

Microscopic Representation of Postmodern Society:

Chetan Bhagat, the writer of the present modern world of fiction, has shown the agony of the anxious interpersonal influences in the middle class families of contemporary Indian culture in a very faithful manner. The writer has very appropriately brought up the problem of anxious family ties in modern Indian culture and also offered the utmost remedy that can be used by anyone in order to reinstate harmony and happiness among the family members. The ultimate remedy for such complications in personal relationships in today's world of stress and challenges from every nook and corner of life is to forget and exonerate all the previous wrong doings and make a fresh start in life. The question of the high nuptial costs paid for the middle class individuals in today's Indian culture is a new fundamental problem that is echoed in his second novel *2 States*. The wedding ceremony has changed into a status representation and a showcase for prosperity in the modern world. Rich people waste their money just like they waste their water. Lavish invitations, unrestrained décor, five-star catering, high-priced clothing, jewellery, flower arrangements, and musical varieties, all included in ridiculous party packages, etc. In celebrations like these clearly reflect the filthy conscious nature of post-modern society. Spending much money in the pursuit of momentary satisfaction in the festivities of marriage ceremonies is worthless.

Millions of people in present-day India are suffering for scarcity of food, clothes and daily needed amenities but at the same time the enormous quantities of food is wasted in wedding ceremonies. Those who can afford all of these expenditures may find it satisfactory, but the middleclass people who cannot are often fascinated into such flamboyant ceremonies of social status and they undergo the boundless sufferings in such ceremonials. For spend such pointless expenses, they search for another ways and fixed with loans. Millions of rupees wasted on the one- day wedding party, but no one considers the newlyweds. In the opinion of Jindal:

With the population of 1.5 billion people, they are currently 10 million marriages being held every year. The weddings here are a family celebration which includes multiple vents spread over a period of 7 to 8 days. This involves making lot of arrangements to get that perfect fairy tale like wedding which every parents dreams to

give to their child be it a girl or boy. Also this is an era of romantic consumerism where the bride and groom want to have that Bollywood and TV serial type of wedding which is being promoted on a large scale. This had led to making arrangements by employing professional for providing goods and services related to wedding. (Jindal 119)

By describing the wedding one of the protagonist of the novel Krish's cousin Minti, the novelist Chetan Bhagat, has made a strident evaluation of the problem of unreasonable wedding expenses. While her father Rajji mama is not well-off personality, the arrangements he has made for his daughter Minti's engagement and marriage are horrifically excessive. He has taken out a loan to refuge the costs because he is incapable to pay for all of these. At the Taj Palace Hotel in Dhaula Kuan, he has planned his daughter's wedding According to Krish, In addition to Swarovski crystals, Minti donned additional valuable stones and a lehnga that was orange: "It cost twenty thousand rupees, while the wedding sari had cost thirty thousand. Ten percent of the wedding budget is bridal costumes" (2 *States* 204) In this novel, Rajji Mama is a important character that represents this reality of post-modern Indian culture and society. Raji mama is already in debt and not in a condition to arrange for any more cash for a new car. Condition of bride's side becomes to humiliating, Krish asserts that:

Mother and her two brothers folded their hands in front of Duke's parents like a landless farmer, they waited for the feudal lords to respond....Duke's Family had already announced the Accent to their Relatives. They are feeling insulted and cheated. We come back to the drama venue. Rajji mama had placed his pink turban at Duke's parents feet.

They ignored him. He offered a cheque, Duke's parents refused it. Rajji Mama called his friends for cash. No one could come up with such a large amount at such' short notice. Meanwhile, new guest were arriving at the party. With them, Rajji mama hid his stress and smiled and hugged all of them (2 *States* 210-211)

Bhagat has presented the reality of society satirically and highlight the mentality of middle class people in today's Indian society. And also the novelist objectively makes his readers to think about the old-fashioned or immaterial social customs and traditions that are already part of the modern society. Even in the post-modern era the

tenacious and persistent social problem is the system of dowry particularly Indian society. The dowry system is one of the greatest issues faced by Indian society, it was fixed to claim or provide it from the family of the bride at the time of the wedding in the form of jewellery, apparatuses, or household equipment; otherwise, and the bride would consequently suffer continuous misery for it. It frequently ensued in domestic violence, even going so far as to burn the bride alive or subject her to mental agony that drove her to commit herself. Dowry is not the only problem of Indian society, involved to it is the whole bunch of corresponding evils. Middle and lower middle income groups who are not able to fulfill the demand of dowry is oppressive, the evil system creates variety of domestic violence and consequences in the regular life. This type of enormous evils remains even after centuries, is mainly because rigorous laws alone cannot bring revolution at level of temperament of people for that mass movement needs to be initiated. The Indian constitution provides total protection against the dowry system, there is a law that calls for a minimum seven-year sentence in prison and a fine of ten thousand rupees. The penalty for dowry death is a minimum sentence of seven years in jail, with a maximum sentence of life behind bars. Despite all of these, the dowry system still exists in Indian society, albeit in a slightly modified form. The bridegroom families continue to take advantage of the bride's family by giving them pricey presents like jewellery made of gold or diamonds, automobiles, or residences, or by providing them with money to help their companies grow. The practice of dowry in either side's communities is equally the fault of the people who live there. It has been skillfully transformed from dowry demanding to dowry giving. Rich individuals lavishly shower their daughter, which is understandable at the moment, but those who are unable to do so must purchase pricey presents for the bridegroom's family. It is the dowry system in some modified form once more. Chetan Bhagat has vividly pictured the pervasive practice of dowry in modern Indian society and through the characters like Kavita and Shipra Masi in the novel *2 States*. A major portion of the stress in Krish and Ananya's lives stems from Kavita, Krish's mother, having a thirst for receiving dowry. For some of her social and traditional biases, Kavita is hesitant to accept Ananya as her daughter-in-law since she knows that by arranging for her son to marry a member of the community, she would be able to gather a sizable amount of money. The Indian social system's unique identity is its unity in diversity. At the same time, there are uncountable diversities in races, classes and communities. People

follow to the various sects religions of religious practices of their choice, namely the clothing code, eating habits, languages, dialects, and

speech patterns, as well as social norms and tradition. The entire nation- state is fixed with numerous differences and diversities are strongly portrayed by the writer. Bhagat's another novel *One Night @ the Call Centre*, also picturizes the postmodern themes like, psychological issues of youngsters, the imagination about their future life, failures and the success by the intrusion God. The novel spins around six employees working at a call centre in Gurgaon, India, who is facing with individual and professional challenges, each facing their own unique struggles and uncertainties. The narrative explores their daily existence in a call centre, where they face constant pressure and dissatisfaction with their jobs. The youth of modern society feel trapped in their repetitious insecurity of work, barren of hope and dreams for the future. The narration of the novel through exposing the youngster's anxiety and disillusionment, Bhagat satirizes critical conditions of the post-modern world. The characters in *One Night @ The Call Centre* navigate their lives in the midst of a pervasive atmosphere. The protagonist and his colleagues ridicule their job profile as truck drivers. Shyam condoles his disapproval a little bit by comparing himself with doctors performing their night duties. The protagonist Shyam narrates:

By now we had left the call center and were now on the highway. Apart from a Few trucks, she roads were empty India has a billion people, but at night Ninety-nine percent of them are fast asleep. This land then belongs to a Chosen few: truck drivers, later shift workers, doctors, hostel staff and Call center agents. We, the nocturnal, rule the roads and the country....However Priyanka bursts into sarcasm as she opines,...Hell, even that does bitch works at night (Bhagat 187)

Bhagat's novels often interlace the multiple perspectives and voices of society particularly, reflecting the fragmented realities of contemporary post-modern India. The novel *One Indian Girl*, he has presented the perceptions of a modern Indian woman struggling with societal prospects and personal desires, offering an intersectional view of identity. Through exposing the realities of society from the novel *Half Girlfriend*, he exposes the crucial of class conflict of post-modern society. The protagonist Madhav belongs to non- English and he has faced variety of issues

for survive in the college, Bhagat represents how poor English students treated by urban culture people. His works echo the fragmented, non- linear realities of postmodern life and the Characters are deal with the conflicts arising from world

influences, regional eccentricities, and individual dilemmas. Postmodernism generally analyses ostentatious conditions of society, often overarching narratives, focusing instead on localized, individual

experiences. Chetan Bhagat's novels challenge the traditional and social constructs, such as inelastic caste system in *2 States*, conservative designs of success in *Five Point Someone* and the theme of gender roles in *One Indian Girl*. By highlighting all the struggles of individuals and young generations against the larger societal norms, he evaluates the meta-narratives of traditional Indian people, patriarchy characters of society, and even globalization Bhagat's characters normally contend with their place in a rapidly changing, globalized modern India. The love across cultural divides in *2 States*, searching meaning in the struggles of commercial life in *One Night @ the Call Centre*, and also highlight the uncertainty and complexity of identity in all his novels is the hall mark of Bhagat. His stories mirror the identities of postmodern individuals.

Conclusion:

Chetan Bhagat's novels, while rooted in the realism of everyday life, resonate with postmodern themes like fragmentation, critique of meta-narratives, and celebration of popular culture. Though not as overt as in classic postmodern texts, Bhagat occasionally incorporates self-reflexive elements. For instance, he often writes in the first person, with narrators who are strikingly similar to his own public persona. This blending of author and character can be seen as a subtle nod to metafiction. This self-referentiality and acknowledgment of the blurred boundary between fiction and reality are hallmarks of postmodern literature. While Bhagat's novels can be viewed through a postmodern framework, they also attract criticism: Critics argue that his works often reduce complex social and cultural issues to overly simplistic narratives, while rooted in the realism of everyday life, resonate with postmodern themes like fragmentation, critique of meta-narratives, and celebration of popular culture.

References:

- Bhagat Chetan. *Five Point Someone*. Rupa Publications, 2004. Bhagat Chetan. *2 States*. Rupa Publications, 2009.
- Bhagat Chetan. *One Night @ the Call Centre*. Rupa Publications, 2005.
- Surendran. K. V. *New Perspectives on Indian and Western Fiction*. Akshat Publications, 2000. Williams, H.M. *Galaxy of Indian Writing in English*. Akshat Publications, 1987.
- Dharakrswari, S. "The Effect of Mindfulness Meditation On Stress Levels Among Working Men In Tamil Nadu." *JOURNAL OF SPORTS, HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION* (2025).
- Dharakrswari, S. "The Impact of a Yogic Program on Low-Density Lipoprotein Levels in Trained Handball Players of Tamil Nadu." *Journal of Sports, Health and Physical Education* (2025).
- Dharakrswari, S. "Effects Of Combined Pranayama And Meditation Practices On Self-Confidence." *Effects Of Combined Pranayama And Meditation Practices On Self-Confidence* (2025).|
- Dharakrswari, S. "Examining the Impact of Combined Yoga and Naturopathy on Triglyceride Levels in Stressed Individuals in Tamil Nadu." *JOURNAL OF SPORTS, HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION* (2025).