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A. Pavani



GLOBALIZED ELEMENTS IN SELECT WORKS OF CHETAN BHAGAT



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ABSTRACT

Chetan Bhagat, is one among the postmodernists. He is immensely influenced by the political and cultural milieu of post independent India. Cultural fragmentation, colonial and neo-colonial power structures, cultural de-generation, the materialistic off shoots of modern civilization, dying of human relationships, blending of facts and fantasy, search for love and security, diasporas are the core elements in the writings of Chethan Bhagath. He has opened the floodgates for a new movement in Postmodern Indian Writing. While the global literary dwell on the fiction of India's past, Chetan Bhagat has become India's favorite writer by embracing the present. According to him, the purpose of literature is to raise a mirror to society. Chetan Bhagat, an investment banker turned into a prolific writer and through his writings he always focused on youth, career and issues based on national development with the element of Globalization. He stresses on globalization rather than nationalization. As for India Globalization has become a buzz word after 1991 and day by day this buzzing word is getting louder. It has touched all the domains particularly global aspects of Indian life and experience. Globalization is no longer theoretical concept; it is a glaring reality, impinging upon almost every aspect of human existence. The fast growing cities and the overall urbanization that we have been witnessing across India are the direct effect of Globalization. To make this point clear and possibly encompassing, my paper approaches Bhagath's fictional works mentioned in the title in a deductive way. First it talks about the aspects of globalization and there after relates them to the works under consideration. Bhagath's fictions reflect the scene in Globalizing cities in India. In his One Night

@ the Call Center, we come across fast growing city structures like Gurgaon where now massive apartments and commercial malls are under construction, where people feel that they are moving through the maze of construction items. The BPO sector rapidly developed in urban India and could create lakhs of jobs by the mid of first decade of 21st century. Bhagath very clearly depicts this Globalized atmosphere in the above cited work.

KEY WORDS: Globalization, Liberalization, Privatization, Financial support, Call center.

INTRODUCTION :

'One Night @ The Call Centre' (on@tcc, the author likes to call it thus), after nine long years of its publication, still retains sixth position among top ten bestselling novels in India in January 2014. In this modest market, on@tcc reportedly sold more than 1,00,000 copies in the first few months after its publication, and the demand shows no sign of abating."

1. Contemporary Economic issues in one night @ the call centre :

Ever since the time India opted to go global, sweeping socio-economical, political, and technological changes have molded the all respects of Indian life. The generations before 1991 who could look around and make sense of the world are lucky to see two different times: one quite slow-moving of Socio Economic elements and the other one full of vibrantly Globalizing International activities. In India Globalization has become a buzz word after 1991 and day by day this buzzing is getting broader. It has touched all the domains of Indian life and experience. "Globalization is no longer a theoretical concept; it is a glaring reality, impinging upon almost every aspect of human existence.

If it is to be seen in the urban and rural context of India, the prior one is at the front, reaping advantages of it, at the same time facing the music of it. The fast growing cities and the overall urbanization that we have been observing with drastic changes across India are the direct effect of Globalization only. The day-to-day experience, demands of the time, challenges posed by it, personal hopes, aspirations, and dreams in urban India have almost transformed. Globalization has changed the blood and soul of all these things. This paper seeks to present how Chetan Bhagat through his fictional works cited in the title depicts the changing urban realities in India in this globalized world. His One Night @ the Call Center (ON@CC) published in 2005, revolves around a group of six call center employees working in 'Connexions Call Center, Gurgaon, Haryana. It takes place during the period of one night. The six persons: Shayam, Vroom, Esha, Priyanka, Radhika, and Military Uncle pass through a very troublesome night. Everybody is plagued with his/her own problems which they decide to settle at the end.

We come across fast growing city structures like Gurgaon (Haryana), where now massive apartments and commercial malls are under construction, where people feel that they are moving through the maze of construction items. Here there are long and broad highways, making journey easier. A number of efforts to remove infrastructural constraints in order to facilitate the process of globalization are underway. The BPO sector rapidly developed in urban India and could create lakhs of jobs by the mid of first decade of 21st century (M.G. Basava Raja 1015). Due to this reason many number of job opportunities have been provided to the unemployed youth.

This BPO industry makes itself felt in Bhagat's Gurgaon. Here, in this work, there is a BPO, 'Connexions Call Centre', people travel all the way from their homes in Delhi over to Gurgaon, because it offers jobs to them. Here from the calls of the customers in America are answered, and the ball is kept

rolling in America and down here in India. Virtually the economy of two countries seems to have integrated at a point. Gurgaon keeps awake 24/7. It is a picture of a reality that almost all the Metropolitans and the cities on the way to follow in the footsteps, keep up like wise. The mushrooming of such institutions resulted due to Liberalisation, Privatisation, and Globalisation (LPG). This LPG brought a lot of change in the standard of living of a common man to a business tycoon. Metropolitans and the potential urban zones are the places where Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as advocated by international community is being attracted, and provided the proper global atmosphere. Globalization has increased the pace of movement of people, goods and the economy across the national lines. Bhagat very comfortably depicts this atmosphere in the *One Night @ the Call Center* by showcasing all these elements with very transparently. Therein we see people moving about quite frequently. The six people working in N@CC are picked up by a call center's car every night from their respective homes in Delhi, and are dropped at their work place at Gurgaon, and vice-versa when their duty hours are over in morning. This commuting consumes near about five hours of their daily life which shows a stress full life of a common man in cities in the craze of corporate culture. It also makes us understand the busy life of people not considering their personal lives under the veil of modern life. We can witness it through the character the Manager of the call centre, Bakshi, who is almost dying to be promoted to work at Boston. The young generation shown in both the fictions possesses a sense of competition, at the same time it is quite ambitious and wants to do everything that is possible to climb up the career ladder as higher as possible. In N@CC the protagonist, Shyam Mehra, named in office as Sam Marcy, as it sounded to be a globally suited name, earlier worked in an ad agency but due to low payment he left the agency, and joined this call centre. This character shows us the crave for financial stability the Now Sam aspires to become a team leader from being merely an agent, so that he could prove himself as having guts and also become worthy to marry Priyanka. Shyam is a fine web designer. For the main bay of his company that dealt with the computer related problems of the US based customers he designs a trouble-shooting web site. Vroom an ambitious youth, is also a trouble-shooter. In an effort to save the endangered job positions of the call center employees due to slack in computer and software industry, Vroom subtly strikes upon an idea, that he could scare the US based customers into calling them.

Only that the customers were to be told that their PCs were hit by some virus, spread by evil forces, and only the experts of this company could save them out of this. Thus he buys time from the company authorities, and succeeds in saving the call centre from closing down. By the end both Shyam and Vroom decide to start their own web designing firm. Growing awareness of technology and the use of it have definitely exposed India to a new environment. This change has come about due to strong wish of youths to participate in the technological revolution that is going on all around the world. Both the fictions of Bhagat show techno-friendly youths, participating in the development, use and the spread of it. All the people working at the call center in his fiction handle the calls and computers easily. Through certain episodes, Bhagat has underlined a palpable difference between the young and the old generation where the young generation in comparison with the old one is technologically more participative. Vroom and Shyam develop a trouble-shooting web site that could be helpful for their company. They tell so to their manager but the manager being an opportunist presents the said web site in his own name, however by the end he is taken care of, as the new generation is sharper than the old one.

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