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MALE CHAUVINISM AND OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN IN CHETAN BHAGAT'S *THE 3 MISTAKES OF MY LIFE*

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ABSTRACT

"Men need to see Women as People, not Objects"

Chetan Bhagat, India's most admired writer. The New York Times called Chetan Bhagat, 'the biggest selling English language novelist India's history'. His third novel *The 3 Mistakes Of My Life*, deals about the male-aspirations and male-bonding of Govind Patel, Ishaan, Omi and Ali, a twelve year old boy. The whole novel is a glorification of Young men by a male writer. What about Women in this novel? Did Chetan Bhagat think women do not have any aspirations like men? Vidya, an eighteen year old female lead, is presented as a love object throughout the novel. Bhagat gave immense physical description of the female character in sensual strain. Whenever she appears on the scene the readers are allowed to visualize her physical image by the vivid descriptions of the author. Love and Romance is well packed in the fiction to entertain the readers rather than educating them. The present research article aims at the aspects of male chauvinism and objectification of women by the male author.

KEY WORDS:

Male Chauvinism, Objectification

THE VOICE OF THE YOUTH

Chetan Bhagat readers are worldwide. Time magazine named him as one amongst '100 Most Influential People in the World's'. *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*, a story about Business, Cricket and Religion. He dedicates this novel to India. The worldwide readers who read this novel will think Indian men are highly spirited, Business minded and expert Cricketer. On the other hand what they will think about Indian Women? Certainly, the portrayal of Vidya, made the readers to think Indian women are always preoccupied with Fertility and Sexuality. It clearly exhibits disaster for Indian Women in Bhagat's world. It is a big drive to Feminism. Chetan Bhagat himself claimed that his novels are sexy and trendy. He represents himself as "The Voice of the Youth" in newspaper columns.

OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN

In his novel he describes women as if a cinematographer of Bollywood movie who captures a heroine from the toe to forehead. In this novel he described Vidya's brown eyes, eye liner, thin arm in Kameez sleeve (it was so fair you could see three veins running across), her fingers seemed long as they were so thin with glittery silver-white nailpolish only on the outer edge of the nails. Govind noticed Vidya in a new purple and white bandhini salwar kameez. Her hair smelt a little bit of Dettol soap and well. I think Bhagat is marketing dettol soap. Every girl has a wonderful smell right after a bath. Her room has typical girlie look- extra clean, extra cute, extra pink with stuffed toys and the posters of Hrithik Roshan and Aamir Khan in Dil Chahta Hai.

Chetan Bhagat shamelessly describes the dress code of the female lead. This can be seen in the following lines "Vidya was dressed in white chikan salwar kameez, bandhini orange and red dupatta had tiny brass bells at the end. They made a sound when she moved her hand. Her lips shone and I couldn't help staring at them. It's lip gloss. Her upper lip had a near invisible mole on the right. Vidya took the book in her hand. Her red nail polish was the same color as the atoms on the cover. When Govind is bedridden he observes Vidya looked impeccable in her maroon and orange salwar kameez with matching mirror work dupatta" (45). This is the way a tutor can look at his own friend's sister who is below eighteen years old?

MALE CHAUVINISM

The fiction is a strong output of male chauvinism by neglecting women in the social role. The male characters like Govind, Omi, Ishaan and Ali, a budding Cricketer are representative of Gujarat. It is agreeable "Gujarat is a place of intelligent people". They are sincere, honest and hard working. Bhagat portrays the steady transition of young Gujarati boys to a businessman. An instance business is running in their vein. When they achieve a profit in The Team India Cricket Shop, Ish plans to buy a TV, but they are so conservative and considered investing amount on TV is dead asset. Bhagat elevates these three boys in all perspectives. While presenting male characters he talks about their dreams and actions but in women he describes only their physical description. The author describes the dress code and make up of Vidya including her Salwar name. Why can't he describe the dress code of male characters I do not know why Bhagat didn't describe which color trouser and shirts wear by the boys According to him it may not engage readers. He present Vidya as an object to make the readers engaged and not feel bored.

WESTERNIZATION OUTLOOK

Chetan Bhagat encourages Pre-Marital sex. He deliberately presents this notion in all of his life. He breaks the conventional and traditional women and brings forth a woman, who voluntarily involve in pre-marital sex. Bhagat's female leads are representative of ultra Modernism. His male-chauvinism knows no bounds. His female leads running behind a man and provoking them to have sex. Is this acceptable? Definitely, No! Women running behind a man, happens only in Bhagat's fictional world and commercial movie. Bhagat's novels are out and out fully commercial that's why he is called to be a script writer for Bollywood movies. The 3 Mistakes of My Life is a fiction it's not about Chetan Bhagat's life. You like his novels if you are a big fan of commercial movies of Bollywood.

I quote, in chapter 14, "A 'very good friend' is a dangerous category in Indian girls. From here you can either make fast progress. Or, if you play it wrong, you go down to the lowest category invented

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by Indian women ever- rakhi brother". The novel celebrates friendship of Indian boys, on the other hand it misleads a friendship between a boy and girl. It clearly exhibits when Vidya kissed Govind and said 'Thanks for the gift, the gift of true friendship'. True-close friendship , another hyphenated tag. It meant progress. Govind saved Vidya's number as 'Supplier Vidyant'. These kinds of ideas will deprave the minds of readers to understand the real essence of a friendship between man and woman. Ninety percent of his readers are Engineers and they were sexually deprived by Bhagat's wrong portrayal of man and woman.

SENSITIZING THE READER

In chapter 16, sex scene is expressed by Govind and Vidya it might be vulgar but the readers who read Bhagat's last two novels Five Point Someone and One Night @ the Call center and they won't feel it is vulgar because they both are sexy and trendy novels. Author Chetan Bhagat carefully written that topic to not been a vulgar. It is vulgar to the new reader. Govind celebrates Vidya's eighteenth birthday in candle flames with background songs, the lyrics seemed tailor-made for them

"No matter what they tell us
No matter what they do
No matter what they teach us
What we believe is true

She kissed Govind like she never had before. A voice inside stopped Govind but the music continues

I can't deny what I believe
I can't be what I'm not
I know this love's forever
That's all that matters now (199)

Vidya had sex with Govind on her 18th birthday, while her brother fully involved in watching cricket in downstairs. She tells happily "I'm no more virgin, I am an adult, so cool. Thank God" after having Sex without a trace of guilt or shame. She is not from Bangkok or Thailand. She is a middle class Ahmedabad girl. India is a country known for its traditional values. I do not know how Bhagat's Eighteen year old female lead feels so happy after having sex? It's not a novel. You have a question, Then? It's a film script for a commercial movie. Bhagat's justice seen in the honest confession of Govind, who repents and claims himself as a pervert for having sex with his own friend's sister. The uniqueness in Bhagat novel is Men repenting after having sex but Women feels happy without guilt. Again, the author celebrates his male characters by putting down the female ones. In between, there's a love story thrown in between Govind and Ishan's sister, only to have Omi's golden lines like, 'You can't hit on your friend's sister, that's an unwritten rule' .

MALE ASPIRATIONS

There, Ali is offered a contract on the condition that he become an Australian national. Ali asks 'Does that mean I cannot play for India?! Then I don't want it!' and walk away. Govind's cell gets an SMS by Vidya stating that she got her periods and not to worry. The cell was with her brother and he read it. The break up between Ish and Govind happens. One knows Chetan's a big fan of Bollywood. First of all, Bollywood itself is moving far away from logic so Chetan Bhagat's 'The 3 Mistakes Of My Life' jumped in

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a bit late here.

SUMMING UP

In *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*, Chetan Bhagat sacrificed female virtues for his male chauvinistic ways of writing. Most of his readers are young and they are sexually deprived by his open treatment of sex. Especially in *Epilogue*, Bhagat himself notices Vidya wearing green lehanga. This act clearly exhibits Chetan Bhagat perspectives on Indian Women. Fourth Mistake in this novel is "treatment of women as sexual objects" and he uses them as an object to entertain his readers.

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