

Effect of Globalization in Chetan Bhagat's Selected Novels

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Abstract

The effect of globalisation is seen in all fields, and literature is no exception. Its effect is reflected in Indian literature. With the introduction of the new economic policy in 1991, globalisation became a reality in India and gained momentum thereafter. Due to globalisation, the intermingling of cultures, traditions, and conventions is rapidly taking place. The present paper tries to examine the effect of globalisation in Chetan Bhagat's selected novels. He observes the changes in the social, economic, cultural, and lifestyles of Indian people. He tries to show how India is becoming modernised by adapting western thinking and lifestyles. He highlights corruption in the education system, politics, business, and in government offices.

Keywords: globalisation, effected, literature, issues, changes, and lifestyle.

Introduction

The term globalisation is the most known and widely used in the sphere of social, economic, and cultural aspects. In the contemporary world. It is self-explanatory, and it can be perceived as a process of change from aboriginal things to international levels. It is a continuous process for understanding the realities of economies, regional societies, and cultures through universal networks of exchange. It is an exchange of different aspects like information technology, skills, services, goods, knowledge, etc. Nowadays, the influence of globalisation is seen in all fields of life. All types of communication and information are easily accessible, fast, and moreover, less expensive because of the advanced use of technology. As a result, globalisation has had a great effect all over the world. It has turned the world into a global village. The exchange of thoughts and ideas has caused a drastic change in the thinking, behaviour, living standards, and lifestyles of people worldwide. Every nation is completely grasped by this change. This change is seen even in India. "Globalisation has been identified with the policy reforms of 1991 in India (Tanveer Malik). With the introduction of the New Economic Policy in 1991, globalisation began in India and gained momentum thereafter. Most of the economic activities are connected with social, cultural, and political aspects. Though India is a land of multicultural, multicaste, and multilingual states, it is deeply rooted in tradition, customs, and conventions. These traditions and conventions are gradually affected by globalisation. As literature holds a mirror to life, it is a reflection of the changes in society.

Literature and society always go together. Globalisation has had an impact on literature. Globalisation has transformed India into a modernised version of western culture and lifestyle. After globalisation, Indian English literature dealt with issues like multilingualism, multiculturalism, immigration, loss of identity, hybridization, loss of national or regional identity, etc. The writers like Arvind Adiga, Kiran Desai, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Chetan Bhagat, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, etc. are some of the notable novelists in Indian literature reflecting the effects of globalisation.

Effects of globalisation

The present paper focuses on the effect of globalisation in the selected novels of Chetan Bhagat. He tries to show how India is becoming modernised. As Donald Greenless points out, "Chetan Bhagat may not be the another VikramSeth , Salman Rushdie, or Arundhati Roy but he has authentic claims to being one of the voices of a generation of middle-class Indian youth facing the choices and frustrations that come with the prospect of growing wealth". LPG stands for liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation are ruling the world and India is no exception to it. These aspects have entered every sphere of life, so too in Indian English literature. Globalisation has brought the world closer together, creating a global image. In the process of globalisation, one can see the intermingling of cultural traditions and conventions, which led to the marketing of cultural icons like 'Domino's Pizza', 'McDonald's Burger', 'Yipee Noodles', 'Pasta', 'Hakka Noodles', 'Sezwan Rice', etc. The younger generation is attracted to these food franchises, and it is a prestige to enjoy their eateries. Our conventional food habits have taken a backseat. These names have captured the metropolitan cities. Even in beauty and domestic products, Chinese, American, and English brands are more popular than local brands. The celebrations like Rose Day, Friendship Day, Father's Day, Mother's Day, and Valentine's Day are the effects of globalisation. Now the Indian government has implemented NEP based on the American system of education. Every change in society is welcomed, and though globalisation has some opportunities and benefits and has brought the world closer, it has also immensely affected the conventions, cultures, and traditions of the society. This has brought about a revolutionary change in Indian culture and ethnicity. This change is reflected in Indian English literature.

Effects of globalisation in Chetan Bhagat's novels

The novels of Chetan Bhagat reflect the changes in social, economic, and cultural aspects of Indian society. This change is gradually distancing Indian people from age-old traditions and conventions and paving the way for a westernised concept of living. All the novels of Chetan Bhagat show this new philosophy of westernised Indian people. They reflect the protagonist's search for love, social stability, equality, and peace in life. In their journey of life, they have to face conflicts with themselves, society, and family, overcome the challenges along the way, and establish themselves in a society by their sheer talent. Middle-class Indian youth facing the choices and frustrations that come with the prospect of growing wealth, he projects the effect of globalisation on Indian way of life thinking and on mind too: India now is completely changed. The uniqueness of our traditional cultures is affected by globalisation.

His first novel, "Five Point Someone: What Not to Do at IIT"(2004), is the story of the journey of three friends and their struggle to get admission into the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. Hari, Ryan, and Alok opposed the oppression of the exam system and the methods of "continuous mugging, testing, and assignments; where is the time to try out new ideas? (Five Point Someone, 25) it shows the coercive and rigid atmosphere of academic competition. Further, Alok asks, "Where is the room for original thoughts?" as the present education system is killing the creativity of students. This novel exposes the darker side of higher education institutions like IITs and the problems faced by younger generations, and it also comments strongly on the mechanical lifestyle adopted by Indians in the globalised world. These are the current realities of education: how material and ideological forces collide as a

result of globalisation, paving the way for the formation of the middle class. Moreover, the parents expectations of the children are too high, disallowing them to pursue their passion. So they become frustrated, and life for them in IIT is tedious due to academic work. This pressure of academic work and expectations of parents makes them take wrong decisions in life. Further, the novel deals with the themes of the material world, insecurities, career and marriage problems, family problems, etc. of the rising younger generation. In his second novel “One Night @ Call Centre”, he deals with the modernised city life and massive changes in Gurgaon. Massive construction of growing apartments, malls, and offices creates chaos in the minds of citizens. The IT sector is rapidly developing in urban cities and creating employment opportunities for youth in the 21st century. The change in atmosphere and its effect are clearly pictured in this novel. The novel satirises Indian culture, and how Americans are using the talent of Indians for their benefit. It criticises our government and shows the reality of America, as Vroom reflects thus, ‘Our government doesn't realise this , but Americans are using us’. (One Night @ the Call Centre, 121). The novel portrays six employees working at call centres in Gurgaon. Shyam Mehra, the protagonist and narrator, tells a story of lost love, lack of family relations, frustration, etc. India is a land of technocrats and a busy hub for the IT sector. Call centres are major hubs in metropolitan cities. They symbolise the growing service sector and economy of the country. The novel depicts the oppressive work culture of workers trying to search for the meaning of their lives. It is a novel dealing with dissatisfied ambitions, lost love, family pressure, a lack of family affection, and the working culture of a globalised office. The culture gap is seen in the relationship between the military uncle and his son and between Priyanka and her mother. Their relationships lack good communication and understanding. It is relevant that the generation gap between children and their parents leads to a split in families. Indian parents hold strongly to and believe in tradition, and Orthodox modern-day youths are becoming independent in thinking and busy due to work culture and the constant environment of WhatsApp, Facebook, the Internet, Twitter, and other social sites. Isha is a modern Indian girl brought up in a traditional atmosphere, she is a perfect representation of many youngsters today. She becomes the victim of a boss who wants her to be a model. The corrupt society entangles her. The actual reality of society is alarming. The ethical and moral values are losing their meaning in human life. The new modern outlook towards life shatters and bewilders our hope for a better ethical society.

The third novel of Chetan Bhagat is “The Three Mistakes of My Life , A Story about business, cricket, and religion”, published in (2008). It deals with social, cultural, political, and religious problems in modern India. The problems like marital infidelity, premarital sex, and inconsistency in relations are focused as a result of globalisation. The characters of the novels are lost in a maze in the world of fantasy created by West. They are tempted to adopt western culture and a modern way of living. Youths like Vidya and Govinda, are living far from family restrictions and bondages, become victims of capitalistic ideology. In this era of capitalism and globalisation, non-Western characters are more of a failure in comparison to western characters. The novelist further depicts the American dream of many Indian youth. It is a desire of most rural and middle-class youths in India. In the world of Novis Kapadia, “the Indian youth is in the trap of Western capitalistic hegemony. He remarks that thus every year hundreds and

thousands of people flee to the West in an attempt to secure a bright future. To a level of materialistic definition, they are successful to achieve. However, the point is that none of these people can ever come back to their roots. Their position in society changes like that of leaves scattered by the wind”(57). This novel tries to connect the lessons of different cultures and religions with the uniqueness of India, and as India is a multilingual state, people follow different religions and social values differ from caste to caste. The Indian youth has to deal with issues of tolerance and confusion regarding religious values, with amidst values changing many times. The characters of the three mistakes of my life are young, ambitious, passionate, and enthusiastic and have the same moral, social, and religious dilemmas as many of the young Indians face today. The novel focuses on the real incidents of communal rights that took place in Gondiya, Gujarat, in 2002. The destructive atmosphere in the Sabarmati train tears one down.

Conclusion

Globalisation has affected all fields of life, be they economic, social, cultural, political, or linguistic, and literature is no exception. Indian English literature is greatly affected by globalisation. It's predominantly seen in Indian lifestyle, value, system, thinking, and cultural aspects. India is known for its unique culture and social setup. But in this era of globalisation, the present-day youth are accepting the various facets of a globalised world and coming into conflict with their parents, families, and society. It is time for the present-day youth to be careful in accepting or rejecting anything that deviates from Indian culture. One needs to be more modern in thinking and enhance our knowledge and skills by being a part of global culture and upholding our traditions and culture. It is true that the youths are in a dilemma, as projected by Chetan Bhagat in all his novels; in them, he focused on challenges and issues like caste, system, marriage, institution, changing lifestyle, food, diet, exploitation of students, corruption in education, politics, business, etc. In his novels, he has perfectly presented the changing atmosphere of India in the era of globalisation.

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