



# Firmness of women Characters in the novels of Chetan Bhagat and Ravinder Singh

Raman Kumar

Research scholar of English in Shri J.J.T. University, Jhunjhunu.

## Abstract-

Chetan Bhagat and Ravinder Singh are known for the simplicity of language in their novels. Chetan Bhagat conveys his views in a realistic way through the novels which appeal the readers clearly. His novels are the beautiful portrayal of the lives of today's youth. His novels present every aspect of youth life like emotions, likes and dislikes, hopes and aspirations and so on. He is well known as youth icon among Indian youth. Ravinder Singh has a reputation of a writer of love stories and young lovers who emerged in the scene of writing with his autobiographical love story 'I Too Had a Love Story'.

Both the authors support feminism directly or indirectly in their novels. Chetan Bhagat's 'Half Girlfriend' presents the character of Riya as a woman firm in her decisions and fully determinant. The same is visible in Ravinder Singh's 'Your Dreams Are Mine Now' in which Rupali is a strong character who fights for the right cause without caring about her own life. This paper throws light on the firmness of women characters.

**Key words:** Firmness, feminism and determinant.

## Introduction:

Novel is one of the four forms of writings and has been gaining popularity in India. Though it was exercised by the Indian writers before independence yet in reality it got huge popularity after independence. Post modern writers like Chetan Bhagat and Ravinder Singh get the credit for this popularity of Indian novels.

Chetan Bhagat was born in 1974 and worked not only as a writer but also as a columnist, a script writer for Bollywood movies and a motivational speaker. Though he has written seven great novels yet some of them have been adopted in Bollywood movies. There are various themes in his novels like friendship, relationship, marriage, campus and hostel lives. The effect of westernization is also visible in his novels. The language of Chetan Bhagat is simple and lucid. This remained an important reason behind his success and popularity as an author.

Ravinder Singh has also marked his presence with his best seller autobiographical love story 'I Too Had a Love Story'. He has also an engineering graduate and working professional but the sudden demise of his beloved shocked him and became a writer by writing his love story. The major themes in his novels are love friendship, marriage and relationships besides themes politics corruption and cultural identity are also visible in his writings.

Both the writers have shown woman as a strong characters in their novels. Women are not confined in the four walls of the house in their novels while they are equal and even more firm in their decisions than men.

### **Firmness of woman corrector in Chetan Bhagat's Half Girlfriend-**

#### **Getting admission in college through sports quota-**

Chetan Bhagat presents this firmness in the character of Riya in his novel 'Half Girlfriend' in which Riya is a beautiful and modern girl from English speaking higher class of Delhi. She gets admission in St. Stephen's College not by paying donation but with her sports' skills. Madhav also got admission through sports' quota and saw her the first time in the sports' trial.

#### **Her determination for her aim and ambition-**

She doesn't like traditional life but has her own dreams to be a bar singer in New York. She never withdrew her ambition and succeeded to turn her dream into reality. Though she had to struggle for achieving her aim yet she remained successful.

#### **Her relationship, marriage and divorce-**

Riya is a woman of self respect. She got married with her Rakhni brother Rohan and went to London with him. She bore all the tortures of Rohan and his mother without any complain but didn't compromise with self respect. When she came to know that Rohan has extra-marital relations with another woman she took firm decision to leave him and she did accordingly.

Her firmness is clear in her college life when Madhav insisted her for having physical relations with each other but every time she denied for that. She had break-up with him but Madhav couldn't have physical relations with her against her desire. She clearly told him that she was not interested in such kind of relationships when Madhav asked her many times. Her words reveal her firmness and determination:

“Madhav please understand. I'm not comfortable with all this”.

#### **Teaching English to Madhav-**

Riya's determination is obvious in the matter of Madhav's training to learn spoken English to deliver a speech in front of Bill Gates foundation on their visit at their Dumraon Public School. She helped Madhav to learn proper pronunciation of words. They rehearsed many times to get perfection. She filled confidence and courage in Madhav that he could do that difficult task. It was sheer efforts of Riya that Madhav could impress Bill Gates and got a big amount of money as donation for the betterment of infrastructure of the school. Madhav's words reveal this as under,

“Okey, I can do this, I told myself. Just like at the rehearsals with Riya. Just imagine only she is here. I gazed at Riya, She gave me a nod and smiled. Encouraged, I continued...”

Riya Somani was determinant to help Madhav for the preparation of the speech. She wrote everything for that and Madhav rehearsed a lot to get success and finally by delivering an awesome speech Madhav impressed Bill Gates and successfully got the grant for his school.

### **Firmness of woman character in the novel 'Your Dreams are Mine Now'-**

Ravinder Singh's novel 'Your Dreams are Mine Now' is a perfect blend of various issues like student life at college campus and hostels, student-teacher relationship, friendship, love, hatred, politics, corruption and so on. Arjun and Rupali both are students in Delhi University. Rupali is from a middle class family living in Bihar. She is academically genius and due to that she got admission in Delhi University. She came in contact with Arjun who was senior to her during a problem solving. Rupali's firmness of character can be seen in the various matters in the novel.

### **Her help to Raheema for justice-**

Rupali was not a woman who could see injustice with any woman silently. She first of all tried to save Raheema from professor Mahajan who was trying to seduce her. This was enough for Rupali but she had decided to provide justice to Rahema who was helpless. She got help from Arjun and other students. Due to her efforts Mahajan was sent to jail. This shows that she couldn't see injustice with anyone without thinking about the risk to her own life. She didn't get afraid of Mahajan even when he slapped her.

### **Her support to Arjun's party-**

Rupali not only fought for Rahema but for the betterment of students' life and to eliminate the roots of corruption involved in education system. She didn't want to join politics but when other students encouraged and insisted her she joined Arjun's party and started an awareness campaign among students through which she came to know about the grievances of students. The students from North-East put their issues related to their identity that they were considered not as Indians by most of the students of other Indian states. These students are addressed as 'Chinkies' because of their different physical features. Tenzing revealed his sorrows that the history and culture of the North-east is not known to the citizens of rest of India. Before that time nobody listened to their problems. She promised them to aware all the students in those matters and in this way their party got the support of many students which disturbed Mahajan and his political god father Haneef. Mahajan was afraid that he would not be able to pursue his evil deeds if the party of Arjun and Rupali won. She exposed the prevailing corruption in educational system.

### **Her struggle to save herself-**

Professor Mahajan and his god father made a plan to remove Rupali from their way. For the execution of this plan they sent some local goons who kidnapped her from outside the hostel when she was waiting for Arjun who was about to come to meet her. The goons took her to a deserted place. She protested to save herself but they didn't leave her. She was sexually abused by them and they left her when they were in a drunkard state thinking her dead. She, then, was struggling to survive when she was rescued by the police. She was alive and struggling to survive even when she was hospitalized. She couldn't be saved because of excess injuries and bleeding her physical strength didn't support her soul yet she remained alive in the heart of Arjun.

### **The firmness of Rupali's love-**

She was firm not only in front of social evil but also in her love affair with Arjun. She visited Arjun's house with him and was impressed with everything. When Arjun had to visit Karnal for attending a marriage ceremony, she missed him very much and realized that she was in love really. They used to spend time together and discuss their future lives. Once she realized that she was in love and never withdrew from this stand.

### **Growing plant of her dreams-**

Rupali planted 'Tulsi' in the college campus. She dug the land for that and put the plant in that soil. That plant was the symbol of Rupali's dreams. She said to Arjun at that time:

"This plant is a symbol of my dreams. I want to take care of it. I want to nurture it."

Arjun recalled this incident one day after her death and went to the campus. He came near the plant dug the plant with a chunk of soil. She tied it with a piece of cloth around it. He, then, brought it to his house and planted it there as the symbol of Rupali's dreams. He used to talk with the plant as he was talking with Rupali after then.

"Won't let your dreams die. They are mine now.... They are mine now"

In this way Arjun regained the company of Rupali but in a symbolic way. Rupali's firmness in all the aspects of her life was behind her reputation as a brave lady.

### **Conclusion:**

Chetan Bhagat and Ravinder Singh present their women characters full of strength. In Bhagat's novel 'Half Girlfriend' the firm determination of the female character Riya is clearly seen from her getting admission in St. Stephen's college through sports quota. She gives no importance to the money and high status of her family but believes in her own dignity and capabilities. Her firmness in decision making and self dependence can also be seen in her getting job in Nestle when she came back to India leaving Rohan in London. She decides to be self dependent and does so.

She never allowed Madhav to have physical relationship with her though he tried to convince her many times. It was nothing else but firmness of her character.

We can see her firmness of decision when she decides to teach Madhav English language and about the preparation of speech. In this matter she was more serious than Madhav.

Madhav's success in delivering speech on the stage in front of Bill Gates was entirely the result of Riya Somani's firmness of decision. She had decided to train Madhav and did that besides she motivated Madhav through indications of thumb when he was feeling nervous on the stage. In this way she helped Madhav to overcome the biggest fear in his mind and conquer a big demon of English language.

She also fulfilled her dreams to become a singer at a bar in New York. She has vision of her ambition and dreams. When Madhav's mother told her to break relationship with Madhav she went to New York without telling anyone about that and became a bar singer there. Even after returning to India with Madhav they decided to visit New York every year so that she may pursue her activities of singing.

In this way through Riya Somani's Character Chetan Bhagat presents a strong Indian woman and favours feminism.

Ravinder Singh's woman character 'Rupali' in 'Your Dreams Are Mine Now' is also a strong character around which the whole novel revolves. Rupali remained firm in every decision of her life. She got admission in Delhi University through her genius and academic performance. She belonged to a middle class family but decided to get higher education from a reputed institution and remained successful in getting admission in Delhi University.

She fought for the right cause always firmly. She helped Raheema to get justice and saved her from the evil intentions of Professor Mahajan. The people around her made her aware that Mahajan was a very powerful and corrupt man but her firmness couldn't be shaken by these fears. She sent Mahajan behind the bars.

She became a part of student union election and ran an awareness campaign in Delhi University. During this campaign she came to know about the issue of North-east students' identity and so on. It was the image of Rupali due to which students were continuously joining both their campaign and party. Her fame made Mahajan upset and he conspired against her. She died physically but not spiritually. She remained in the hearts of Arjun and many other students who completed her dream of corruption free education system.

### **Bibliography-**

#### **Primary Sources:**

1. Bhagat, Chetan: *Half Girl Friend*, Rupa Publications. New Delhi, India Pvt. Ltd. 2014
2. Singh, Ravinder: *Your Dreams Are Mine Now*, Penguin Metro Road, New Delhi, 2011

#### **Secondary Sources:**

1. Anantrao, Panchal Dnyaneshwar, *A Critical Study of Major Themes and Issues as Reflected in the Fictional world of Chetan Bhagat*.
2. Nusaiba *Depiction of Female protagonists in the fictions of Chetan Bhagat*, *International Journal of Advanced Research*, Vol.3, Issue 6, 193-195, 2015
3. Parida, Trailokya Nath & Itishri Sarangi, *Undertone of Humour and Satire: An Analysis of Chetan Bhagat's novel Half Girlfriend*, *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary studies in Humanities (ISSN Literary explorations, ISSN 2320-6101)*, 2017
4. Parmar, Harini & Dr. Dharamvirsinh Parmar, *Your Dreams Are Mine Now- Ravinder Singh: A Book Review*, *IJRAR-International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, vol.5, Issue 4, Dec. 2018