

# Dark Side of Corporate in Chetan Bhagat's One Night @ Call Centre

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this article is to show case the corporate life style with the living ambiance in society with the perspectives of social, economical, legal, and political, and so on and so forth. The story was about six people working in a call center. The present paper focuses on the living style of people, especially in a corporate world with characters such as Vroom, Isha, Radhika, Syam, Bakshi, and Priyanka. The setting of the novel One Night @ Call Centre is a resemblance of the posh culture of the 21st century. All these characters make the readers be in a comfort zone by showing contemporary issues such as work stress, love, night shifts, friendship, In-laws restrictions, Luxurious life style, Craze for fanciful life. In a nutshell, it is a story of almost lost love, thwarted ambitions, negligence of family affection, the stress of a patriarchal setup, insight on the lifestyle of the youth of this country, and the work ambiance of a globalized office. Chetan Bhagat succeeds in representing such an advanced as well as the corporate style of life through all these characters by narrating the real-life situations among this group of people practically. The novel also stresses the love affairs as well as the increasing rate of the divorce as well as break ups in love, which are become a common issue nowadays. There are certain other aspects where the writer showcases the elements of exploitation of the educated employees in call centers in this novel of One Night @ Call Centre, which are mainly highlighted in this article with few relevant examples.*

**Keywords:** Corporate, Stress, Issues, High Standard life, True Love, Alcohol.

## Introduction

### Addiction to Fashion and Highly standard life

Chetan Bhagat narrates the craziness for the posh life in many of his novels with many of the characters. One best example of this is one of the characters is Isha, who wants to become a model, and she is completely dedicated to her goal. She feels herself to be the beautiful and deserving candidate for modeling. In achieving her ambition, she wants to do anything, including prostitution, as one of the professional directors promises her to be the model. She agrees with him and loses her sacredness. Unfortunately, the director cheats her by not giving any chance to her. From then she tries for the chance on her own by doing a call center job in Connexions call center in Haryana for her financial support. She always lives in cloud heaven by dreaming herself in the model world with high ambitions. She always builds castles in the air. For her, this call center life is completely tentative, and she is averse with the system of the call center. To give back up to her finance she does the work even under stress. She always minds about her beauty make up hair style and dressing. Vroom always used to comment on her of being that much concern about her beauty.

He says that the perfume used by Isha is Calvin Klein is spread all around the vehicle, and the hair of curly rings which were artificially done by her at the beautician was not real curls; hence, Vroom comments that they are such as telephone wires. He also says that the amount spent by the ladies at the beauty parlors is a sheer waste of time and money for no purpose.

### **Corporate Abuse**

Sam, who is the protagonist of the novel *One Night @ Call Centre*, explains how the people are treated as ‘Resources’ in the call center instead of using their names. The call center people have forgotten their names as they were called to be the resources. The Boss of the call center that is Connexions has always blamed the employees and reluctant to listen to the complaints against the computer systems, which always do not function well. He scolds all his employees un-necessarily for no reason. Unfortunately, he gets appreciations for the credits which are done by Shyam and Vroom. Being a team leader, he does not motivate and encourage his team members; instead of that, he keeps in his account all the credentials that were done by the team mates. Meanwhile, Vroom and Shyam hatch a plan to throw Bakshi out of the call center and prevent the closing of the Connexions call center, whose employees are to be downsized radically.

### **The Stress of Women in Corporate Sectors**

Chetan Bhagat succeeds in showcasing the contemporary realities of a common man in his works with lucid expressions. One of the examples for this statement is the character of Radhika in this novel. Radhika being a lady, manages herself to do a call center job that to at night shifts and works the total household works during day time. She also manages to take care of her mother in law in providing food knitting of shawls and mufflers to her. She always talks about her mother in law, which was not liked by Vroom. Vroom always gets angry with Radhika and comments her that she is over caring towards her in-laws. In his opinion, a lady with a call center job faces too many problems to manage the things apart from that she cares about her in-law’s mother, who is overburden to her. Apart from all these things, she

blindly believes her husband, who does not take care of her. He does not even take care of his parents too. Though Radhika’s is a love marriage, she is like a lady in her in law’s house as an arranged marriage daughter in law. She takes all the house hold responsibilities, including the mother in law family, with great respect. Though she used to be modern in all aspects like food, dress, and culture, she tries to mingle with the in law’s family. Here and then, she says to Isha by looking at her low waist, geans, “I do remember my teenage days with low waist geans and shirts.” At last, Radhika is disheartened by knowing her husband’s illegal relationship with his secretary and goes under depression. She could bear all the stress in the call center at home, but the cheating mentality of her husband makes her so weak, and she loses her self esteem.

He takes Military Uncles character to showcase how the relations are deteriorating day by day under the drape of posh culture. The nuclear families overtook joint families. The memories of joint families with uncles, aunts, in-laws, paternal uncles, maternal uncles, grand fathers, and grandmothers together with large houses all these became golden memories to the present generations. The arrival of a guest for one day becomes a prodigious task to the individual families as all the members of the family go out in the morning and return after the desk. So they neither have time to spend with the guest nor to feed them.

Keeping aside from the relatives, the days became that much crucial that even the parents after they become old are not allowed to be with their off spring due to their busy schedule of life. This is the reason the number of old age homes has been increased randomly. It’s ironic to state that the parents who toiled their life for their children’s growth don’t even have the liberty to be with their children in their old age. This is clearly shown by Chetan Bhagat with the character of Military Uncle, who was left alone as an orphan though he has his son, daughter in law and grand children. He lives alone by doing a job in a call center because his son’s family does not accept him to be with them.

### Elimination of True Love & Affection

Shyam, Shyam loves but has lost Priyanka, who is now planning an arranged marriage with another. Vroom loves Esha. Esha wants to be a model, Radhika is in an unhappy marriage with a demanding mother-in-law, and military uncle wants to talk to his grandson.

### Addiction to Alcohol

In the corporate sector, the present generation has been addicted to drugs, alcohol, cigar-smoking, which are become a common phenomenon and false prestige among the group of teams and do the enjoyment in groups. The Youth icon Chetan Bhagat succeeded in portraying such an addiction to bad habits in all of his novels with clear examples. In the present work *One Night @ the Call Centre*, all the friends Vroom, Shyam, and others always spend their time in cigar smoking and taking alcohol as recreation to their stressed and burdened corporate life during the office hours. Inspiration and Ray of Hope by God The amalgamation of fantasy with real-life situations made possible by the creative writer Chetan Bhagat through the novel *One Night @ the Call center*. He created the character very bewildering to say that character is none other than the God who wants to motivate and inspire the stressed people to boost them up in the form of a phone call. All the friends Vroom, Sam, Priyanka, Radhika, were stressed in work, and they are vexed with the system. To recreate their minds themselves up, all the friends decide to go and enjoy at a night club during the duty time as the systems were out of service. After enjoying for a while, they leave for office. On the way to their office, they met a life-threatening situation when their Qualis crashes into a construction site hanging over a mesh of iron construction rods. As the rods began to yield slowly,

they start to fright. They are unable to call for help as there is no mobile phone network at that place, but to everyone's surprise, Shyam's mobile phone starts ringing. The phone call is shockingly from God, who speaks in modern English.

### Conclusion

In that conversation, God on phone call motivates the group to such an extent that they get ready to face their problems with utmost determination and motivation. With that motivation and realization, they emerge from danger. God speaks to all of them and gives them suggestions to improve their life, and advises them on how to get their vehicle out of the construction site. From then, they have clear-cut goals in their minds about their careers. After the incident on returning to the call center, they carry out their plans with dexterity and full of self-confidence.

The theme of this novel involves the anxieties and insecurities of the rising Indian middle class, including the elements of career, inadequacy, marriage, family conflicts in a changing India, and the relationship of the youth in the Indian middle class.

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