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### REFLECTION OF CHANGING LIFE IN PREETI SHENOY'S NOVEL "LIFE IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT".



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#### **ABSTRACT**

*The current paper underscores the aspect reflection of changing life underlined by Preeti Shenoy. Her novels are one of the most prominent and best-selling novels in India since 2011. Her novel's prominent theme is man-woman relationship that's why she has been always called a relationship expert.*

*The present paper aims to study reflection of changing life in Preeti Shenoy's novel "Life is What you Make it".*

#### **KEY WORDS**

*Reflection of changing life, youth, role of communication in a relationship, human relationship, bipolar disorder*

## RESEARCH PAPER

It is hard to say which human life. i.e., in past, present or which will come in future is ideal. Human life is always changing as there are changes happening at every moment in nature. Of course, the life we are living in the twenty first century is different than the life which was in the previous century we frequently feel that the life at present is more complicated, and challenging. The expectations are increased and that's why we become nervous and disappointed. The novelist has taken account of every details regarding current life system in her novels.

Life is What You Make it, is based on female protagonist Ankita Sharma. She is young in her twenties, smart, career-oriented, topper in academic and having charming personality in middle-class society. She has three boyfriends Vaibhav, Abhishek and Joseph but marries with another person. Vaibhav is the friend of school time, Abhishek is in the period of college life in graduation, and Joseph is a friend in the postgraduation (M.B.A.) course period. Vaibhav and Abhishek communicate with Ankita through a letter. Abhishek has been sent a letter in his own blood to Ankita. Ankita sends forty-two pages letter to Suvi about her relationship with Abhishek.

Kavita Dubey and Meera Shrotri's express about the story in their article "The story begins as a flashback. We have seen that Ankita sends letters to Vaibhav and his reply to her letters. As the story moves, we come to know that Ankita's parents are very traditional and don't approve of her being with other guys, even if in a group, or allow her friends who are boys to call her at home. The significance of the essential life values and relationships with family and friends based on trust and love is underscored by the novelist as she suggests that these are the very anchor on which an individual can rely in times of distress. The story subtly suggests that it is the presence of these values that makes one's life truly fulfilling and satisfying". (p, 276)

Before the arrival of the Internet or computers and mobile, we wrote letters by our own hands and waited eagerly for the postman to deliver it. At that time television had only one channel. Ankita's letters to Vaibhav described all these things in college life, changing lifestyle in college period and living standards. In past if a girl wanted to talk to her boyfriend something personal there was no chance to speak at home or through home landline phone. They used to manage from outer coin box phones. Nowadays, we all are lucky enough to talk very easily. Now we carry our own mobile phones. Along with it there are many other means

of communication available everywhere, like WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc. made the whole world so closer than ever in the past.

After finishing Ankita's school days her father got a transfer to Cochin, and she studied in graduation from women college St. Agnes in Cochin. She becomes the secretary of Arts Association in her college. At inter College function Abhishek meets her. Abhishek attracts towards Ankita's beautiful personality. Sanjana introduced Ankita to Abhishek. He invites her to his home and both spend time together.

Abhishek wants to marry Ankita or at least wants a promise for marriage but Ankita doesn't want to promise anything and ignores him afterward. He become sad and requested her to remain in touch. Afterward, Abhishek left home and police searched for him.

“The police asked whether he was in an affair with someone and told that most of the cases take place because of the love affairs only. Further, they had said that suicide cases due to 'love affairs' were common. The post mortem reports concluded death by drowning with high levels of alcohol as contributing factor”. (Shenoy, 80)

When Ankita's father transferred from Cochin to Mumbai her parents found a letter in her room written in blood by Abhishek. “When Ankita came back from college her room was spotless. Her father's face was as black as storm clouds and her mother was so angry, behind reason letter that Abhishek had written to Ankita in blood was found. Ankita's father told Ankita "Is this what we sent you to college for?" her mother added. "Who is this fellow? And what is this writing in blood? Bloody mad bastard. How dare he?" her father was so angry that he was choking on his own words. He shaking rage. "And have you written back to him, her shameless hussy?" her mom berated her. "How many guys will you trap with your charms, you stupid little tramp?" Her mother almost spat out”. (Shenoy ,115 and 116)

Her Mom asked Ankita "We didn't bring you up for this. Where is this fellow? What is your relationship with him? Are you planning to get married? Ankita's Parents were both looking at her now, waiting for her to speak, how could she explain a thing like love to them? Their middle-class values, their proper Indian upbringing and everything they stood for had no place for trivialities like love and romance in the olden days. It was very difficult to express ourselves before parents especially when if there is any matter related to love affairs and parents were not ready to accept it anyway. But nowadays at least in educated families' children speak freely with their parents if they have such kind of affairs and parents also found accepting it at the end. But nowadays also it's not too easy to accept such affairs especially when it is an inter-cast or inter-religion in middle-class societies.

In India, there are many people who are suffering from bipolar disorder. Bipolar disorder is “... a serious brain disorder that causes dramatic shifts in moods, energy levels, attitudes and the ability to carry out every day takes. It is very different from the normal mood changes that everybody goes through from time to time. It develops typically in adolescence or early adulthood. Bipolar disorder can be so severely crippling that it can result in damaged relationships, poor job or academic performance, and even suicide.” (Shenoy, 206)

Ankita's father suggested to Ankita, "Look Ankita, you are fine physically. Just force yourself to go to college. You will feel better once you meet your friend and do your coursework.” (Shenoy, 128) It is a very important change in our society, today's parents give chance to their children to improve their mistakes. With proper counselling, they encourage their children to continue their education or make them understand the importance of a career. But in the past parents used to get so annoyed and were preferring to marry their children as soon as possible so that they would not face the unwanted situation in the future. In this novel, Ankita's parents give chance to go to college and make friends. If today's generation promises their parents that they would never commit such mistakes again and would focus on their career, their parents will surely forgive them and give another chance to make their future bright.

The epilogue at the end of the story traces the life of protagonist of story Ankita eighteen years later and shows her to have earned six more degrees and is still in the quest for more knowledge, happily married life and to have excelled in her talent of portraiture. Ankita tried three times suicide attempt because of unexpected situations in her life. In the present era, human beings have become more and more materialistic. College student love is generally based on physical attraction. No commitments are found in their relationships. They have only their own interests. They are dissatisfied or disappointed hence they are always in search of satisfaction and try to meet their dreams. Nowadays, one of important thing in a relationship is that it is become more and more complicated. This novel shows that when if you become fail in handling difficult and unexpected situation in relationship. Don't think of suicide in frustration. As it we have seen in the example of Ankita that who tried thrice to commit suicide because of the complex situation in her relationships.

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