

**POSTFEMINIST CULTURE: SENSIBILITIES AND
TRANSNATIONAL CONNECTIVITIES IN CHETAN
BHAGAT'S *ONE INDIAN GIRL***

THESIS

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK
IBRAHIM MALANG
2020**

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TRANSNATIONAL CONNECTIVITIES IN CHETAN
BHAGAT'S *ONE INDIAN GIRL***

THESIS

Presented to

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirement for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S.)

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2020**

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled "**Postfeminist Culture: Sensibilities and Transnational Connectivities in Chetan Bhagat's *One Indian Girl***" is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those ones that are cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is an objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, May 24, 2021

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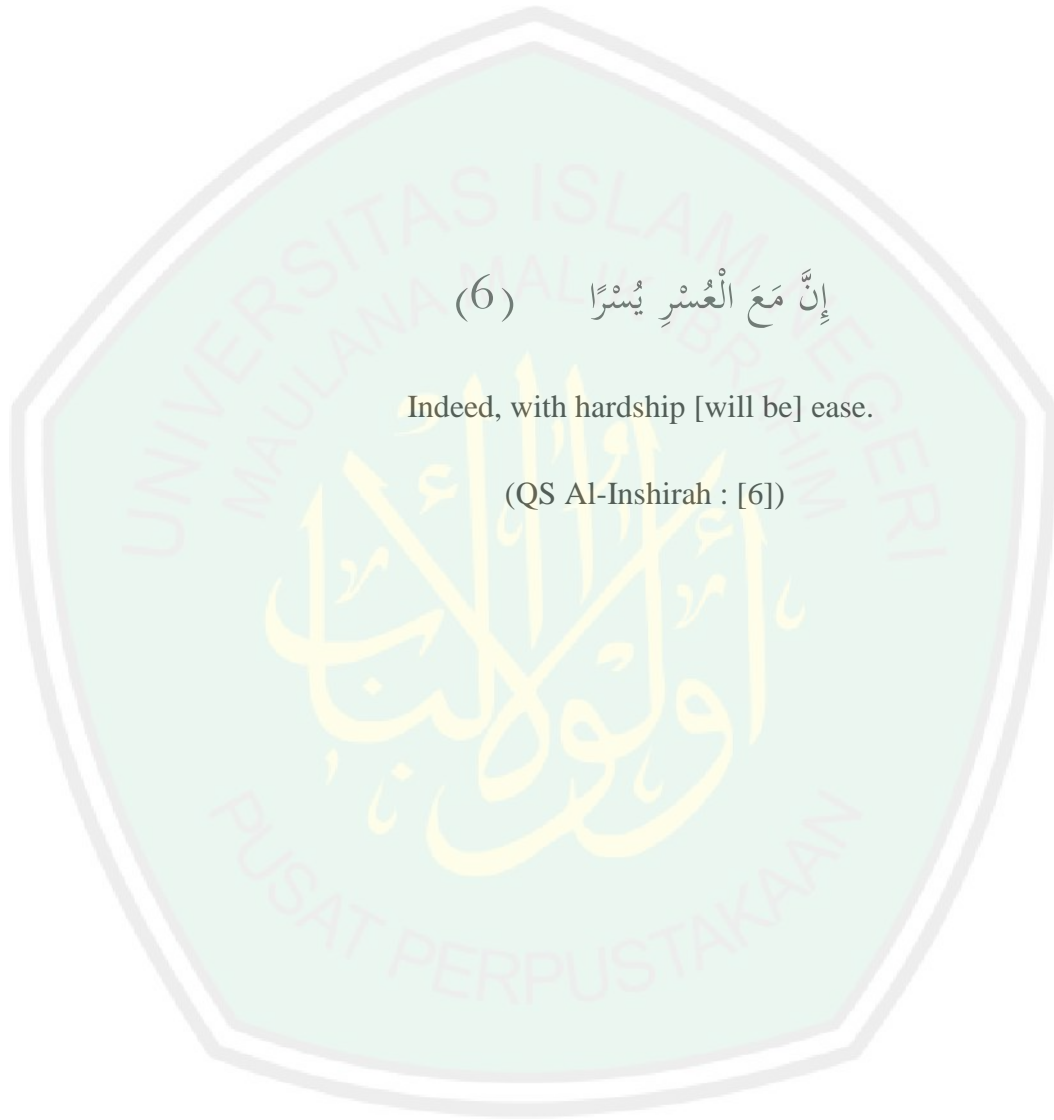


MOTTO

(6) **إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا**

Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.

(QS Al-Inshirah : [6])



DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to those
who feel lost and desperate but then choose to stand up for what they believe
and keep walking down the journey of self-discovering.



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First of all, I would like to thank Allah for giving me this wonderful life also strength and guidance in accomplishing this thesis. Secondly, salawat and salam may always be delivered to Prophet Muhammad SAW, who leads us to the light of the Quran and always teach us to spread love in this entire universe.

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Finally, as an ordinary human being, I realize that my thesis is still far from perfection. Therefore, any criticism and suggestions are most welcome. Hopefully, this study can provide insight for English literature students and open up the further academic discussion to conduct similar research.

Malang, July 2020

Vena Khumayroh



ABSTRACT

Khumayroh, Vena. 2020. *Postfeminist Culture: Sensibilities and Transnational Connectivities in Chetan Bhagat's One Indian Girl*. Minor Thesis (Skripsi) Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

Advisor : Dr. Hj. Isti'adah, M.A.

Keywords : Postfeminism, Sensibilities, Transnational.

Chick-lit novel commonly depicts women's liberation through images of 'free', 'autonomous', and 'empowered' or often associate with postfeminism. However, the images of female characters arises a debate whether women's liberation means celebrating equality or women trapped instead in a paradoxical condition of liberation. In elucidating the paradox of postfeminism, the postfeminism as sensibilities portrays the celebration of woman liberation in literary work is sat side by side with the high intensity of self-surveillance. This study aims to describe the postfeminist culture in *One Indian Girl* novel in terms of postfeminism as sensibilities proposed by Rosalind Gill (2007). This study also aims to describe how the connectivities of transnational postfeminism are presented in this novel by using the transnational postfeminism proposed by Simidele Dosekun (2015).

This study chooses the novel *One Indian Girl* by Chetan Bhagat as the object of research because this novel presents the postfeminist culture through the life of Radhika Mehta. Radhika is portrayed as a woman who has a promising career, is close to consumer culture, and there are relationship problems between the opposite sex, which being the mark of the postfeminist product. Moreover, as an Indian chick-lit, this novel contains the local cultural references and family issues that influence how postfeminist culture is derived in Radhika's life.

Postfeminism's key aspect as sensibilities is the entanglement of postfeminism with feminism, antifeminism, and neoliberalism. In doing the analysis, the classification of the postfeminist events will be based on elements of sensibility, which can be found contradictory. While from the transnational perspective, *One Indian Girl* novel is an Indian chick-lit that adds cultural references in portraying the main character's cultural background which possibly influences the postfeminist culture. From the finding and discussion, it can be concluded that there is the paradox of postfeminist culture in the novel that entangle with feminism, antifeminism, and neoliberalism. Also, there is social and cultural background influence on postfeminist culture which is derived in Radhika's life, which refers to the emergence of postfeminist culture in non-western chick-lit.

ABSTRAK

Khumayroh, Vena. 2020. *Postfeminist Culture : Sensibilities and Transnational Connectivities in Chetan Bhagat's One Indian Girl*. Skripsi Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

Pembimbing : Dr. Hj. Isti'adah, M.A.

Kata kunci : Postfeminisme, Sensibilitas, Transnasional.

Novel chick-lit umumnya menggambarkan pembebasan perempuan melalui gambaran 'bebas', 'otonom', dan 'berdaya' atau sering dikaitkan dengan posfeminisme. Namun, pencitraan karakter perempuan menimbulkan perdebatan apakah pembebasan perempuan berarti merayakan kesetaraan atau perempuan malah terjebak dalam kondisi paradoks pembebasan. Dalam menjelaskan paradoks posfeminisme, posfeminisme sebagai sensibilitas menggambarkan perayaan pembebasan perempuan dalam karya sastra bersanding dengan tingginya intensitas pengawasan diri. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan budaya posfeminisme khususnya posfeminisme sebagai sensibilitas yang dikemukakan oleh Rosalind Gill (2007). Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana konektivitas posfeminisme transnasional yang terdapat dalam novel ini dengan menggunakan pendekatan posfeminisme transnasional yang dikemukakan oleh Simidele Dosekun (2015).

Penelitian ini memilih novel *One Indian Girl* karangan Chetan Bhagat sebagai objek penelitian karena novel ini menyajikan budaya posfeminisme melalui kehidupan Radhika Mehta. Radhika digambarkan sebagai wanita yang memiliki karir yang menjanjikan, dekat dengan budaya konsumtif, dan terdapat masalah hubungan antar lawan jenis yang menjadi ciri khas produk posfeminisme. Selain itu, sebagai chick-lit India, novel ini memuat referensi budaya lokal dan masalah keluarga yang mempengaruhi bagaimana budaya posfeminisme teraplikasikan dalam kehidupan Radhika.

Aspek kunci posfeminisme sebagai sensibilitas adalah keterikatan posfeminisme dengan feminisme, antifeminisme, dan neoliberalisme. Dalam melakukan analisis, klasifikasi peristiwa posfeminisme akan didasarkan pada unsur sensibilitas yang ditemukan kontradiktif. Sedangkan dari perspektif transnasional, novel *One Indian Girl* merupakan chick-lit India yang didalamnya terdapat rujukan budaya dalam menggambarkan latar belakang budaya tokoh utama yang mungkin mempengaruhi budaya posfeminisme karakter utama. Dari hasil temuan dan pembahasan dapat disimpulkan bahwa terdapat paradoks budaya postfeminist yang berkaitan dengan feminisme, antifeminisme, dan neoliberalisme dalam novel tersebut. Selain itu, terdapat pengaruh latar sosial dan budaya terhadap budaya posfeminisme yang terbentuk dalam kehidupan Radhika, yang juga menggambarkan budaya posfeminisme dalam chick-lit yang berasal dari luar negara barat.

مستخلص البحث

حميرة، فينا. 2020. ثقافة ما بعد النسوية: الحساسيات والروابط العابرة للحدود في *One*

Indian Girl لشيتان باغات. البحث الجامعي. قسم الآداب الإنجليزية، كلية

العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية مالانج.

مشرفة : دكتورة. الحاجة. استيعادة، الماجستير.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ثقافة ما بعد النسوية، الحساسيات، العابرة للحدود.

تصوّروية مضادة الفرخعامة عن تحرير المرأة من خلال التصوير "الحر"، "الذاتي" و"المفيد" أو غالبا ما يتعلق بثقافة ما بعد النسوية. لكن تصوير شخصية المرأة يؤدي إلى المجادلة هل تحرير المرأة يعني حفلة المساواة أم هي محاصرة في حالة تحرر متناقضة. وفي شرح ما بعد النسوية المتناقضة، ما بعد النسوية كالحساسيات تصور حفلة تحرير المرأة في الأعمال الأدبية تساوي بكثرة حدة ملاحظة النفس. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى ما بعد النسوية خاصة ما بعد النسوية كالحساسيات قدمها روساليند جيل (2007). وهي تهدف أيضا إلى وصف علاقة ما بعد النسوية العابرة للحدود المقدمة في هذه الرواية باستخدام ما بعد النسوية العابرة للحدود قدمها سيمديلي دوسيكون (2015).

اختار هذا البحث رواية *One Indian Girl* لشيتان باغات كموضوع البحث لأنها تقدم ثقافة ما بعد النسوية من خلال حياة رادিকা مهتا حيث تصور كامرأة لديها مهنة جيدة، قريبة من ثقافة الاستهلاك، ولديها مشكلة العلاقة ضد الجنس التي هي من خصائص ثقافة ما بعد النسوية. إضافة إلى ذلك، لكونها مضادة الفرخ الهندية، تضمن هذه الرواية مراجع الثقافة المحلية ومشكلة العائلة التي تؤثر على تطبيق ثقافة ما بعد النسوية في حياة رادিকা.

المجال الرئيسي لما بعد النسوية كالحساسيات هو علاقة ما بعد النسوية بالنسوية، مناهضة النسوية والنيوليبرالية. وفي إجراء التحليل، تصنيف الحادثة ما بعد النسوية تتأسس على عناصر الحساسيات الموجودة المتناقضة. أما من وجهة نظر العابرة للحدود، فرواية *One Indian Girl* هي مضادة الفرخ الهندية حيث تتضمن فيها مراجع الثقافة في تأثيرها على ثقافة ما بعد النسوية للشخصية الرئيسية. واستنتاج هذا البحث هو وجود تناقض ثقافة ما بعد النسوية المتعلقة بالنسوية،

مناهضة النسوية والنيوليبرالية في الرواية. إضافة إلى ذلك، فيه تأثير خلفية الاجتماع والثقافة على ثقافة ما بعد النسوية المكونة في حياة راديكال، التي تصور ثقافة ما بعد النسوية في مضادة الفرخالتى جاءت من غير البلدان الغربية.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The celebration of ‘girl power’ and ‘empowerment’ to female characters is not only in popular media culture but also in contemporary literature. The female character is portrayed as a successful woman with a free choice on their lifestyle as in *One Indian Girl* novel. The novel shows chick-lit characteristics by portraying a professional woman who has a good career, independent, and stylish but always craves relationship stability. From the perspective of literary criticism, chick-lit can be defined as forms of women’s fiction based on material, character, audience, and narrative style (Ponzanesi, 2014). According to Chen (2012), the female characters are mostly presented to have the same nature of their choices in terms of consumer pleasure and solipsistic individualism, from feminist idealism collective action and social change.

The characterization of female character in chick-lit novel mostly is presented the postfeminist culture. In correlation with that, Whelehan (2010) illustrated the idea of postfeminism in popular culture, specifically in showing certain ‘schizophrenia’ in women who are often associated with someone who has good performance at work but on the other hand, they have a problematic relationship related to gender relation. In connection with that, popular cultural text, whether fiction, television, or film, playback these contradictions continuously and repetitive patterns (Whelehan, 2010). Radhika Mehta as *One*

Indian Girl novel's main character, shows the characteristics of a chick-lit female character as explained above.

The researcher uses *One Indian Girl* novel written in 2015 by Chetan Bhagat as the object of this study. The novel portrayed Radhika Mehta's life as the main character of the novel. She grew up in the Punjab family environment. Radhika is the second daughter of the Mehta family, which is illustrated as the typical middle-class family in India. In the novel, Radhika is projected as the nerd since she was a child because she always gets a high score for every test. After finishing college, she can work in a debt distressed bank named Goldman Sachs. In Radhika's life career, she is staying in the United States and has ever been transferred to branch company in other countries like Hongkong and the United Kingdom. Radhika is illustrated as an independent, smart, and valuable officer in her workplace. There are studies that examined this novel. Pravin Bajirao Shinde-Patil (2017) researched this novel in the linguistic field, while Ashwani Rana and Ritika Rana (2017) studied how the author portrays Indian girl. Following the success, Richa Tripathi (2017) examined the deeply rooted antifeminism in India through the novel.

Meanwhile, in this study, the researcher used postfeminist sensibility to analyze postfeminism in the novel. Also, to be more specific in the main character's cultural background influence in postfeminist culture, the researcher used the transnational postfeminism approach. The novel focuses on Radhika Mehta's life in her young adult age, which is filled with work, relationships, and family issues. As an Indian woman, Radhika has a strong Indian cultural

background, which also affects her life in some aspects, as illustrated in the novel. Chen (2013) stated that popular women's culture is an object that is suitable for criticism but not because the female character can be saved from self-debate, but rather because it can lead readers to the direction of self-reflection and further understanding of their subjectivity. The novel is considered a suitable object for this research from the aspects above.

This research's first focus is to identify the postfeminist as sensibilities portrayed in the novel. This approach puts postfeminism as the object of study and critically interrogating the ideas and discourses that comprise the 'common sense of postfeminism' (Gill, K. Kelan, & M. Scharff, 2017), which can be found as the paradox. The contradiction appeared though the notion 'girl power' and female success sat side-by-side with the intense, hostile scrutiny of women in the public eye. The remaining inequalities were presented as the outcome of natural differences and/or as women's own choices (Gill, 2017). In finding the contradiction in the novel, the researcher uses elements of sensibilities to identify the events of contradictions. Elements of sensibility which possible to be analyzed are femininity as a bodily property, focusing on individualization, choice, and empowerment, the shifting from objectification to subjectification, an emphasis on self-surveillance, monitoring, and self-discipline, the dominance of the makeover paradigm, and the resurgence idea of the nature of the sex (Gill, 2007).

Postfeminism as sensibilities considers that postfeminism has the entanglement with feminism, antifeminism idea, also neoliberalism. The entanglement between feminism and antifeminism idea refers to the contradiction

explained in previous paragraph. While the relation to neoliberalism is preferred to illustrate the possibility of whether women are the ideal subject of neoliberalism. Gill (2007) stated that further research on neoliberalism in gender relations still needs to do in the future since there is no comprehensive study of neoliberalism in gender relations. The term neoliberalism firstly uses shifting from the economy into the political field. Neoliberalism can be understood as constructing individuals as entrepreneurial ones who are always rational, calculate everything, and have self-regulation. In other words, the individual will have full responsibility for anything that happened in their life (Gill, 2007). The relation of postfeminism and neoliberalism is derived from the construed of media's popular discourse, which requires the woman to have any better aspects in life from the physical look, the relationship to the emotional quality.

The second focus of this research is that the researcher attempts to describe how postfeminism is articulated outside the world of Western since the novel is Indian chick-lit, which provides Indian cultural background. The approach is called transnational postfeminism, that is proposed by Simidele Dosekun (2015). As stated by Dosekun (2015) that transnational postfeminism gives the space for the scholar to ask questions such as if and how and where postfeminism is emergent outside the West; with what meanings and effects; addressed to which kinds of subjects; via which transnational connectivities and/or local sites; with, through and/or contrary to which other transnational and local cultural formations, and so on. Besides, Simidele continues the contribution of Butler (2013), which points out that a transnational approach to postfeminism

is also needed to recognize that the culture reaches and hails not only women in the western area but also others elsewhere.

Simidele Dosekun (2015) argued that rather than belong to western culture, postfeminism has been transnationalized. Besides, rather than thinking about adopting the concept of postfeminism from the West uncritically, to think postfeminism transnationally means seeing the terms of postfeminism in the global South as the process of making a deliberate and theoretically grounded assertion about globalization, neoliberalism, and their cultural contradictions (Dosekun, 2015). The social and cultural references in *One Indian Girl* novel will help the researcher to describe how postfeminist culture is derived in Radhika's life as Indian girl. Following that, transnational postfeminism aims to know how the postfeminism culture has emerged outside the Western and its connectivities. In other ways, postfeminism as transnational culture demands that we attend to explore how the culture is localized (Dosekun, 2015).

Combining postfeminism as sensibilities and transnational postfeminism is suitable because postfeminist sensibility is particularly useful for exploring gendered, racialized, and classed elements of neoliberalism evident in transnational postfeminism (Riley, Evans, Elliott, Rice, & Marecek, 2017). Also, in the paper, Rosalind Gill, Elisabeth K. Kelan, and Christina M. Scharff (2017) stated that the use of this formulation allows the researcher to the de-anchoring of postfeminism from a rigid view of history, highlighting postfeminism as a sensibility as the constellation of beliefs, ideas and practices that are dynamic, that travel, and that change. The previous research that articulates the postfeminist

sensibility and its connection to local values and practice are the *Shanghai Babies* by Chen Eva (2012).

As a result, the researcher considered that bringing postfeminism in terms of sensibilities and transnational postfeminism in literary criticism is valuable to do. Examining postfeminism as sensibilities in *One Indian Girl* novel are expected to depict how Radhika's lifestyle is construed by a postfeminist culture that relates to feminism, antifeminism, and neoliberalism idea. Moreover, to give the transnational postfeminism perspective in this analysis is expected to describe how postfeminist culture in the novel is influenced by the Radhika's social and cultural background as an Indian girl.

B. The Problems of the Study

1. How is postfeminism as sensibilities portrayed in *One Indian Girl* novel?
2. How are the connectivities of transnational postfeminism portrayed in the novel?

C. The Objective of the Study

1. To describe how postfeminism is portrayed in the novel.
2. To describe how the transnational postfeminism connectivities are portrayed in the novel.

D. Scope and Limitation

In doing an analysis, it is essentially needed to restrict the field of the study that would be analyzed. This study concerns with postfeminism aspects that exist in the novel. The scope of the study is in the entanglement of postfeminism with feminism, antifeminism idea, and neoliberalism. In order to identify the entanglement, the postfeminism events classified based on the elements of sensibilities proposed by Rosalind Gill (2007). They are femininity a bodily property, focusing on individualization, choice, and empowerment, the shifting from objectification to subjectification, and an emphasis on self-surveillance, monitoring, and self-discipline, the dominance of the makeover paradigm, and the resurgence idea of the nature of the sex difference. Furthermore, for the transnational postfeminist approach, the analysis examines how social and cultural background aspects of the main character influence postfeminist culture.

E. The Significance of the Study

There are two significant points of the study. They are theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this study is expected to advance the theoretical bases of literary studies, particularly those identified with postfeminism as sensibilities and transnational postfeminism aspects in literary works. Practically, this study's result is expected to have contributions to students and next researchers. This study is projected to contribute to the new finding in *One Indian Girl* novel, particularly concerning postfeminist analysis, especially postfeminism as sensibility and transnational postfeminism. Moreover, this study

is also expected to motivate the future researcher to make further literary criticism in postfeminist culture, especially in the term of sensibilities and in the transnational perspective for the non-western contemporary literary work.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Postfeminism

Postfeminism is about a conceptual shift in feminism, from debate around equality to debate focused on difference. Postfeminism expresses the intersection of feminism with postmodernism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, and so on, which represents a dynamic movement capable of challenging the framework of the patriarchal and imperialist modernists. Postfeminism thinking seeks to deconstruct the understanding of gender equality into gender differences.

2. Postfeminism as Sensibilities

Postfeminism as a distinctive sensibility sees postfeminist culture as a critical object of analysis and it shows the entanglement of postfeminism with feminism, antifeminism idea, and neoliberalism.

3. Postfeminist Culture

Postfeminist culture works in part to incorporate, assume, or naturalise aspects of feminism; crucially, it also works to commodify feminism via the figure of women as empowered consumer.

4. Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is the ideology leads individuals to be the autonomous agent that responds to their life biography.

5. Transnational Postfeminism

Transnational postfeminism is the framework of thinking on how postfeminism culture is already being transnationalized and possibly localized.

6. Connectivities

Connectivities is the relations that happen in the process of how postfeminism culture is emergent outside the Western.

G. Previous Studies

The previous study for postfeminism as sensibilities and transnational postfeminism in literary work was conducted by Chen (2012). Chen's (2012) analysis in Chinese chick-lit examined elements of postfeminism as sensibilities and how local cultural formations influence them. That paper helps the researcher identify the postfeminism as sensibility aspect in a literary work, such as how Chen examines the conversation and the main character's thought in the novel *Shanghai Babi(es)*. There is also a supporting paper that outlines postfeminism as a sensibility titled *A Critical Review Of Postfeminist Sensibility* by Sarah Riley, Adrienne Evans, Sinikka Elliott, Carla Rice, Jeanne Marecek (2017). This study helps the researcher to understand more about the elements of sensibilities to examine the object of the study.

Moreover, some papers support my argument about contemporary literary work as postfeminism text conducted by Voon (2009), Moideen (2019), and Chen (2010). For the reading of postfeminism in literary work which entangles with the transnational critique, there is Gwyne (2013). Also, there is Ponzanesi (2014) who

is specifically concerning Indian chick-lit. It helps the researcher in understanding more about the characteristics of Indian chick-lit.

For the object of this study, *One Indian Girl* novel has been analyzed by many researchers from various fields of study. Some of them are "*Indirect Speech Acts in One Indian Girl By Chetan Bhagat*" by Pravin Bajirao Shinde-Patil (2017) in the linguistic field, and "*One Indian Girl*" by Chetan Bhagat *Successful Modern Girl or a Bitter Criticism on Indian Values- A Study*" by Ashwani Rana and Ritika Rana (2017) which questioning the way the author portrait Indian girl. Then, there is Richa Tripathi's (2017) paper titled *What Women Want Is 'Equilibrium': A Discourse of Gender-Crisis in Chetan Bhagat's One Indian Girl*, which examines the deeply rooted antifeminism in India, which in the novel is presented through Radhika's family whose actively criticizing the idea of feminism.

This study differs from the previous study because this research uses the postfeminist sensibility proposed by Rosalind Gill (2007) as the lens to analyze the postfeminist culture in the novel. The use of postfeminist sensibility is expected to explain how postfeminism is entangled with feminism, antifeminism, and neoliberalism which cause postfeminist culture in this novel can be found contadictory. This study also uses the transnational postfeminism proposed by Simidele Dosekun (2015). It aims to analyze how *One Indian Girl* novel as Indian chick-lit represents that the main character's social and cultural background influence to the postfeminist culture in Radhika's life.

H. Research Method

1. Research Design

This study uses postfeminism as sensibilities in analyzing postfeminist culture in *One Indian Girl* novel. The transnational perspective is also applied in examining how the cultural references influence postfeminist culture in the novel that distinct Indian chick-lit to Anglo-American chick-lit. This study will draw the arguments of Rosalind Gill (2007) in understanding postfeminism as sensibilities and Simidele Dosekun (2015) in thinking postfeminism transnationally. The research aims to analyze the postfeminist culture in *One Indian Girl* novel.

2. Data and Data Source

The data source of this study is the novel titled *One Indian Girl* by Chetan Bhagat, an Indian author. It was published by Rupa & Co in 2016. The novel contains 280 pages. The data are in the form of words, phrases, sentences, and dialog between the characters in the novel.

3. Data Collection

There are some steps in collecting the data. First, the researcher is doing a close reading to understand the general plot and pieces of information in the novel. The second reading is trying to understand the story on a deeper level especially focusing on the postfeminist sensibility and transnational postfeminism issues represent in the novel. Then, the third highlights and makes a note for the

specific event, scene, and lines that refer to postfeminism as sensibilities and transnational postfeminism issues of the novel.

4. Data Analysis

The first step of data analysis was reviewing the collected data that was related to the topic. After getting the specific data that could be analyzed, the researcher sorted the data into groups based on the research problems. They are postfeminist sensibilities and transnational postfeminism. For postfeminism as a sensibilities problem, the researcher also categorized the data based on the elements of sensibility. For transnational postfeminism issues in the novel, the researcher highlight Radhika's social and cultural background presented in the novel. After categorizing the data, the researcher analyzed and interpreted the data. The novel's data was analyzed by using postfeminism as sensibilities by Rosalind Gill (2007) and the transnational postfeminism perspective proposed by Simidele Dosekun (2015). Finally, the last step was to conclude the analysis.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Feminism in Literary Criticism

Feminist literary criticism properly begins in the aftermath of 'second-wave' feminism. The term is usually given to the emergence of women's movements in the United States and Europe during the Civil Rights campaigns of the 1960s (Selden, Widdowson & Brooker, 2013). In that era, the critical attention of these feminists was focused on representations of women in male-authored works. The analysis commonly identified women's oppression through restricted cultural representations in male-authored works. At that time, women were depicted as sexual objects, so that women were perpetually limited and therefore limiting (Gamble, 2004). Certain themes that dominated second-wave feminism were the omnipresence of patriarchy; the inadequacy for women of existing political organization; and the celebration of women's difference as central to liberation's cultural politics.

Elaine Showalter was one of the most influential American critics of the second-wave, especially her *A Literature of Their Own* (1977). Showalter drew a literary history of women writers; produced a history that showed the configuration of their material, psychological and ideological determinants; and promoted both a feminist critique that concerned women readers and a 'gynocritics' concerned with women writers (Selden, Widdowson, & Brooker, 2013). According to Showalter (1986), there are two kinds of feminist literary

criticism. They are 1) feminist critique toward literary works and 2) feminist literary criticism, which analyzes women as writers/gynocritics. Feminist literary criticism or 'woman as reader' focuses the critique on women stereotypes in literary work, the misunderstanding toward women, and the history built by men (Showalter, 1986). Meanwhile, feminist literary gynocritics would analyze the history of women literary works, the style in writing, theme, genre, structure, creativity, women occupation, and the development of the tradition that belongs to women (Showalter, 1986).

Following second-wave feminism, third-wave feminism occurred. It is also known as feminism that responded to postcolonialism (Lewis, Reina, and Mills, 2003). Helena Cixous, Luce Irigaray, and Julia Kristeva were among the third-world feminism's vanguards (Tong, 2006). Not only responding to postcolonialism, there was also a feminist response to postmodernism. Postmodern feminism suspiciously views every feminist thought that seeks to provide a specific explanation of the causes of oppression against women or ten specific steps that women must take to achieve freedom (Tong, 2006). Postmodern feminism identifies some of the central debates and differences that traverse the period – particularly those between the Anglo-American and French movements. They properly participated in the complex, interactive domain in which contemporary 'post-modern' theories deconstruct national, ethnic, and sexual identities.

B. Postfeminism in Literary Criticism

In addition to the three waves of feminism, postfeminist thinking emerged. The term postfeminism had appeared in 1960 in France when students did a protest about gender essentialism. This demonstration is later known as French feminism. On the other hand, Faludi claimed that the 'term' postfeminism did not appear first in the 1980s, but it came earlier in the 1920s in media (Gamble, 2004). To explain the meaning of postfeminism, Ann Brooks proposed an approach toward postfeminism that is linked with postmodernism, poststructuralism, and postcolonialism (Gamble, 2004). The post here refers to the transformation process and changes that are ongoing. Postcolonialism can be seen as a sign of a critical encounter with colonialism, while postmodernism is seen as a critical meeting with modernism principles. With this analog, postfeminism is understood as a critical encounter with patriarchy or occupies a critical position in viewing the previous feminist framework, which at the same time, critically opposes patriarchal and imperialist discourses (Brooks, 2005).

Postfeminists challenge the hegemonic assumptions held by second-wave feminists, who said that patriarchy and imperialism's oppression is a universal experience of oppression (Brooks, 2005). Brooks (2005) further explained that postfeminism is about a conceptual shift in feminism, from debates around equality to debates focused on differences. Ann Brooks also maintained that postfeminism 'facilitates a broad-based, pluralistic conception of the application of feminism, and addresses the demands of marginalized, diasporic and colonized

cultures for non-hegemonic feminism capable of giving voice to local, indigenous and post-colonial feminisms' (Gamble, 2004).

Generally, postfeminist discourse is characterized as deploying what might be regarded as broadly feminist sentiments in order to justify certain behaviors or choices, but these sentiments have become severed from their political or philosophical origins (Whelehan, 2010). As stated in Whelehan (2010), the postfeminism utilized in these texts involves: the simultaneous incorporation, revision, and depoliticisation of many of the central goals of the second-wave feminism (Stacey in Dow 1996). There is some characteristics of postfeminist work: 1) Has an intertextual relationship to feminism 2) It represents through popular culture and is often nostalgic 3) Anchored in consumption and commodification 4) Deploys the rhetoric of choice and self-fashioning 6) Displays anxiety about ageing and physical decline, but also represents age as always deferred by health and beauty regimes 7) Pits pleasure against political engagement; postfeminist characters have clear views on gender, but use humour to deflect pain and seriousness (Whelehan, 2010).

Following the postfeminist culture that circulates in popular culture, then Angela McRobbie (2004, 2009) came up with the term "double entanglement" to postfeminism. It refers to how women are celebrated with powerful freedom of choice, yet on the other hand, their bodies are narrated to be the most appealing part also as desiring social subject which at the same time they are becoming the subject to a level; of scrutiny, insecurities, and hostile surveillance without any

exact historical precedent. In literary criticism, the life of the female character is being the main focus of the analysis. The literary work that usually depicts the postfeminist culture is the chick-lit genre. All postfeminist chick flicks deploy the trope of the powerful woman, yet focus on women's issues and lives by a concern with female friendship, female sexuality and, location of the drama in the spaces of consumption and leisure as well as the workplace (Whelehan, 2010). Following the term double entanglement, there is postfeminism as sensibilities that add the entanglement to neoliberalism and also transnational postfeminism that considers the social and cultural background of a woman in articulating the postfeminist culture represents in the novel.

1. Postfeminism as Sensibilities in Chick-Lit

The term "chick-lit" was inadvertently coined by novelist Cris Mazza in 1995 when co-editing a volume entitled *Chick-Lit: Postfeminist Fiction* (1995), which was followed by another co-edited volume, *Chick-Lit: No Chick Vics* (1996) (Ponzanesi, 2014). From the perspective of literary criticism, chick-lit can be defined as forms of women's fiction based on material, character, audience, and narrative style (Ponzanesi, 2014). Following that, "Simply put, a girl has activated features single women in ages two decades and three decades "navigate their faces the challenge of generations to balance the demands of the struggle with the personal relationship" (Cabot, 2003 in Ponzanesi, 2014). The big theme such as "empowerment", "choice", "self-actualization" usually dominates the chick-lit in presenting the female characters. According to Chen

(2012), the female characters of chick-lit are mostly presented with the same nature of their choices and the greatest freedom in terms of consumer pleasure and solipsistic individualism, from feminist idealism collective action and social change. To the greater extend, chick-lit as popular culture is considered to present the postfeminism culture. Whelehan (2010) illustrated the idea of postfeminism in a popular culture, specifically in showing certain 'schizophrenia' in women who are often associated with someone who has good performance at work but on the other hand, they have a problematic relationship related to gender relation. In connection with that, popular cultural texts, whether fiction, television, or film, playback these contradictions continuously and in the repetition of several patterns (Whelehan, 2010).

In relation to that, postfeminism as sensibilities is designed to analyse popular culture. Following the “double entanglement” term, Rosalind Gill proposed postfeminism using the term “sensitivity”. In this term, rather than understanding postfeminism as backlash or continuation of feminism, postfeminism is understood as a distinctive sensibility. Three points have to be underlined in understanding postfeminism as sensibilities. The first is postfeminism as sensibilities stand as a response to feminism, and it is not constructed as backlash. This approach is trying to articulate the paradox of postfeminism in current culture as a distinctive sensibility. The second is postfeminism as sensibility sees postfeminist culture as the critical object of the study. The third is that this approach was designed to be used in analyzing popular

culture. It can be called as giving attention to postfeminism as a circulating set of ideas, images, and meanings (Banet-Weiser, Gill, & Rottenberg, 2020).

The distinctive sensibility refers to postfeminism's relationship to feminism, antifeminism, and neoliberalism (Gill, 2007). The entanglement of postfeminism to those notions make the contradiction of postfeminist culture becomes the key aspect of postfeminism as sensibilities. However, the contradictions do not randomly exist in the gender articulation. However, it is the product of the entanglement of feminism and antifeminism ideas in current popular postfeminism, which spread in the contemporary media. The contradiction can be found in how postfeminism glorifies autonomy and free choosing but walks side by side with self-surveillance that produces the self-scrutiny in women because of the constructed judgment of still not doing the best thing. While the relation to neoliberalism is preferred to illustrate the possibility of whether women are the ideal subject of neoliberalism.

Feminism discourse today has a more significant portion to be debated in media rather than being outside media. It also has a bigger portion as a critical voice of activism. However, the media's uncritical feminist perspective makes the contemporary media culture distinctively postfeminist rather than pre-feminist or anti-feminist. There is the entanglement of feminism and antifeminism, which can be described as liberal feminism is the common-sense perspective in media that glorifies freedom, but at the same time, feminism is portrayed as inauthentic and not successfully articulating women's desires (Tasker and Negra, 2005).

The paradox of postfeminism can be seen in portraying a postfeminist heroine full of individual choices and freedom. However, in contrast, their freedom of choice is somehow considered problematic because it ended up being in normative notions of femininity. They freely choose to give up work taking their husband's name on marriage, which can be considered the representation of the repression return that indicates traditional femininity's pleasures refer to second-wave feminism (Hollows, 2003). In other words, the notion of freedom of choice possibly causes the lack of feminist awareness by women so that they would be pulled back into traditional femininity instead.

While for the entanglement between postfeminism and neoliberalism, there is still needed further research for the relationship of neoliberalism with gender relations, specifically to postfeminist ideas. However, there is a powerful resonance between postfeminism and neoliberalism, drawn in three levels (Gill, 2007). First, and most broadly, both postfeminism and neoliberalism appear to be structured by individualism, which reduces any outside influence like social and political stance. Secondly, it is clear that the autonomous, calculating, self-regulating subject of neoliberalism bears a strong resemblance to the active, freely choosing, self reinventing subject of postfeminism. These two parallels suggest that postfeminism is not simply a response to feminism but also a sensibility that is at least partly constituted through the pervasiveness of neoliberal ideas.

In popular culture discourse, women are asked for self-discipline and make a transformation. It happens because instead of the traditional humanist resolution of freedom without limits, neoliberal choices are under one's need to

choose according to calculations to building oneself and the present favorable agency. Also, discussing freedom as an end and not yet agreed upon, neoliberalism diverts a new type of free and rational, *homo economicus* who freely considers every transaction according to rational cost-benefit. This change in freedom's meaning is controlled by market power and cost-benefit calculations (Chen, 2013). To a much greater extent than men, women must work on and transform the self, regulate every aspect of their life, and present all their actions and decisions as freely chosen. This notion leads to the possibility that neoliberalism is gendered and women are ideal for neoliberalism.

In elucidating the entanglement between postfeminism with feminism, antifeminism idea, and neoliberalism in postfeminism as sensibility, there are elements of sensibility that are possible to be identified. Here is a further explanation about the elements of sensibilities.

a. Femininity as Bodily Property

A key theme of postfeminism as sensibilities is that the source of women's power and identity is located in their bodies. The notion of femininity as a bodily property means that the media nowadays mark femininity as the possession of a "sexy body" rather than a traditional quality like nurturing, caring, and motherhood. The consideration of women's value in sexual attractiveness is the part of what is problematized by second-wave feminism due to the patriarchal society. Following the entanglement of feminist and anti-feminist ideas in postfeminism as sensibilities, it is necessary to differentiate between second-wave

and third-wave feminism. Femininity is one of the notions that come in different understandings between the two waves.

In second-wave feminism, femininity is considered the feature of the body and practices that resembled patriarchal structure, resulting in a subordinate relation to men which are also known for patriarchal domination. Femininity requires women to be sexually submissive to male domination in terms of power relations which makes women finally working on what is called sexual attractiveness (Catharine MacKinnon, 1989; Mary Daly 1984; Marilyn Frye, 1983 in Schippers & Sap, 2012).

While in the current spread postfeminist culture, the possessing of the attractive body, which is considered as the power even as the identity, proves that the postfeminist media culture intertwined the antifeminist value with the feminist value of female freedom and autonomy in having a personal choice, such as doing face surgery (Riley, Evans, Elliott, Rice & Marecek, 2017). Following that, the obsession with having a 'nice body' will come to parallel with the high intensity of self-surveillance. As the result, self-surveillance will lead women to consume beauty products to make them feel better. It shows that women are the subject of neoliberalism for benefiting economic market by their choice to consume beauty products.

Also, a woman's physical appearance in public will be considered as the representation of a woman's life quality. How she looks is considered as the representation of her condition inside. It means the woman's look will be like a window for her interior life. For example, when a woman doesn't dress well on a

day, and she looks messy, it can be concluded that she has a problem in her life. The example is in the showbiz industry where the celebrity will still be dressed and look nice in the public eye even after divorce (Gill, 2007). It shows that the urge to have “nice looks” all the time is same as to lead women to the unfinished pressure of being looked good even if there are many burdens in their life.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the notion of femininity as a bodily property focused on the intertwined antifeminist value into the culture by spreading the significant influence of considering that body appearance is the great asset and the source of woman’s power and identity. Moreover, this notion is going parallel with the self-surveillance and high self-scrutiny on women themselves, which finally lead women into neoliberalism by consuming beauty products to achieve the certain goal of physical look under the label of female autonomy.

b. Focusing on Individualization, Choice, and Empowerment

Another central notion in understanding postfeminism as a distinctive sensibility is choice, individualization, and empowerment. The emphasis of contemporary media culture is about empowerment and taking control of any life aspect decision. Focusing on individualization, choice, and empowerment is the attempt to aside the influence of external aspects like politics or cultural values (Gill, 2007). This notion encouraged women to consider themselves as a free individual who has “choice” and being empowered while constraining their

choices towards work on the body, often through the use of consumption (Gill, 2007b in Riley, Evans, Elliott, Rice & Marecek, 2017).

The thing which has to be highlighted here is there is intermingled relation between being autonomous or being the subject of neoliberalism. The current culture, like presented in the chick-lit like *Bridget Jones's Diary* (Gill, 2007), presents that what women do while they are dating others is for their own pleasure. Even though what they do requires certain efforts like having a nice body, use makeup, buy clothes, and more. The interesting thing that has been questioned by Gill here is that if the woman does something for the not pleasing man anymore, why the goal is ended up in a similar look like having a hairless body, slim thigh, flawless skin, etc. According to Gill (2007), here, it can be seen a suturing relation between autonomous postfeminism and the neoliberal discourse in the notion of “free choice” toward women.

c. An Emphasis on Self-Surveillance, Monitoring, and Self-Discipline

Surveillance has become the mark of triumphant femininity in the past. There were so many requirements to act in a certain way, such as being mannered, having a good posture, and wearing nice wardrobes as white upper-class women (Gill, 2007). Women were always being regulated on how they present themselves. Hence, it can be said that surveillance has always been a feminist issue (Gill, 2017). As one of postfeminism as sensibilities elements, there is a shift in self-surveillance in the current postfeminist culture.

Three features mark the self-surveillance as distinctive. The first is the increase of self-surveillance intensity, which can be found in many regulations to women that also alongside the disapproval for some regulation. The regulation here means femininity is described in a certain way and how to achieve that. Anxiously, it is the pressure that relates to stress (Gill, 2007). The second is that the extensiveness of surveillance hails all life aspects and any product such as beauty, health, finances, etc. The third feature is that the psychological requirement to ‘be better’ frames the women’s obligation to transform themselves to a specific life interior to be their better versions.

The scrutiny of women has been a broader range in the current culture. The advertising and the media have been more intense in presenting self-surveillance. Gill (2017) stated in her paper:

This intensified scrutiny of women’s bodies has become routine in consumer culture in images that center on set squares, peepholes, and – perhaps most ubiquitously – the motifs of the tape measure (often around a woman’s thigh) or the magnifying glass (to scrutinize her pores).

In other words, women are emphasized to always be better and better in any aspect starting from the physical appearance to the behavior. It leads women to always evaluate themselves and question what happened to them, like “is it good or bad?” “do I need to change my diet?” “do I need to have a workout?”. According to Gill (2008), women become the neoliberal subjects. The media culture which target woman to have a high career and being the good nurturing mother at the same time, and are still obligated to be a nice friend who will always have time for hanging around is the kind of neoliberalism which led the woman to fill the requirements to be labeled as having a good life.

In addition, Alison Winch (2013) has contributed to the notion of surveillance in bringing up ‘the girlfriend gaze’. It means that even women are full of critique to other women. This kind of peer surveillance happens spontaneously by examining the appearance and the behavior toward each other, which can be said as the ‘normative cruelties’ (Ringrose and Renold, 2010). This phenomenon nowadays can be found more easily in social media (Dobson, 2015) where a friend or even a stranger in social media comment sections can easily scrutinize someone.

d. The Shifting from Objectification to Subjectification

At first, the notion sounds against the objectification of women. However, in postfeminist sensibility, rather than the end of women’s objectification, there is a shift from objectification to the repudiated subjectification through the label of “self-autonomous” upon women. As a result, this notion is difficult to criticize since it is entangled with the ‘choice’, which is the center mark of postfeminism culture. In feminism, objectification becomes the central issue in gender relations, where women are portrayed as desirable objects for men. While in postfeminism, the problematized feminism issue has been articulated through the freely chosen action. It is shown that postfeminism as sensibilities is related to antifeminism ideas in problematizing women's objectification. Women take full control and responsibility toward their bodies and any aspects of their life. As a result, anything women do is considered as their choice without any external interference.

Rather than being the object of sexual desire, women nowadays are depicted as the ones who glorify the 'desire' toward sexuality. In this way, sexual objectification can be presented not as something done to women by some men but as the freely chosen wish of active, confident, assertive female subjects (Gill, 2003). It means that the woman has the power to choose and set the situation. It can be said that women are an active subject to "choose" to be looked sexually attractive. Indeed, the novelty of the sexualization of women in popular culture is that they do not depict women as passive objects as in the past, but the woman is presented as knowing, active, and desiring sexual subjects.

At a glance, this notion does not seem to have a problem since there is a shift from women's portrait, which lacks of power to the active and confident women. In the past, objectification is the problem that occurs because of the male gaze on women's bodies. Then, in current culture, women are portrayed as active subjects who use their bodies as their source of power. It makes this notion is difficult to be criticized because it takes under the freedom of choice, which is the internal decision toward women rather than the external problem like the objectification in the past. However, in postfeminism as sensibilities, this notion will be found problematize. According to Gill (2007), this notion is not going to have a stance for being anti-parties on how women present themselves, but this notion attempt to highlight the representational shift to neoliberal subjectivities which the sexual objectification not only in the form of when men objectify women's body, but it can be represented as the freely chosen by the female.

e. The Dominance of the Makeover Paradigm

A “makeover paradigm” is reframed consumption and appearance work as empowering and pleasurable through a celebration of its transformative possibilities towards self-actualization, liberation, and a “better you” (Riley, Evans, Elliott, Rice & Marecek, 2017). This notion means that the women are lead to believe that they have flaws so that they started to follow some advice about relationships, beauty, and health, for example. This requires people to believe first that they or their life is lacking or flawed in some way, then the second is that they can change their life to be better by following the advice of relationship, design, or lifestyle experts, and practicing appropriately modified consumption habits (Gill, 2008).

Moreover, the flowery of mental positivity, which is usually called ‘positive psychology’ and ‘positive mental attitude’, is increasingly central to a postfeminist culture which is also spread by the media nowadays (Gill, 2017). Moreover, the impact of the belief on having flaws will increase the self-scrutiny (Gill, 2017). As a result, women will be lead to the neoliberalism discourse to feel better by starting to enter the gym, buying some beauty products, which all are the consuming culture. It is being dominant without implicitly done but explicitly (Gill, 2007) in many media culture to the wider range of life aspects which is presented to be fixed.

f. The Resurgence Idea of the Nature of Sex Differences

The next element is that the resurgence idea of the nature of sex differences. It means that, by time, the difference between men and women slowly

but sure come to be admitted supported by such science and any literature. It made the broader gap of the difference, which refers to the conservative idea of gender. It is the same as a reaffirmation of gender difference and biological essentialism that positioned traditional feminine concerns (Riley, Evans, Elliott, Rice & Marecek, 2017).

However, what is striking is that in the current culture, the natural difference between men and women is depicted as something inevitable yet sexy and pleasurable. The result is that we can see in many relationship advice articles, there will be some articles titled “What men like about women” and kind of the same articles. Nowadays, the new package of different sex is presented as a common thing that became the feminism concern. In other words, it comes to the era when the difference is being celebrated again. The culture has been spread through the popularity of ‘New Lad’ in 1990 (Gill, 2007), which highlighted masculinity and strengthen the difference between masculinity and femininity.

2. Transnational Postfeminism in Indian Chick-Lit

Chick-lit has become a global phenomenon that is first going so much popular from *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1996) (Ponzanesi, 2014). The literary style of chick-lit is often colloquial, humdrum, and trivial, far from poetic and without any literary aspiration. Humour is also common to be found in this genre. Also, the protagonists are usually portrayed as self-deprecating, highly ironic, and extremely witty (Ponzanesi, 2014). Western chick-lit has a significant influence on global chick-lit. There is the dominance of Anglo-American neoliberal

subjectivity and social values in global chick-lit. More than just the Western brand-name commodities and Western-defined and locally endorsed values of beauty and femininity, these global chick-lit novels also propagate the idea of a neoliberal, global sisterhood of chic, empowered, consumerist, and individualistically minded women who find freedom through consumption and progress in following Western commodities and values (Chen, 2012).

The phenomenon of global chick-lit is possible to be seen in the transnational approach since there is the dominance of western-style chick-lit. The transnational perspective especially in postfeminism can be used to distinguish between the western and non-western chick-lit representation of postfeminist culture. Hedge (2011) stated that transnational can be understood as the layering of social, political, economic, and mediated processes that exceed conventional boundaries. Then, Inderpal Grewal (2005) explains that transnational is constituted by heterogeneous and historicized connectivities through which meaning, practices, capital, commodities, and people travel. It means that connectivity is the core of transnational, which portray by many things that travel. Moreover, Simidele Dosekun (2015) summarizes the definition of transnational as the multiple culture, practices, and subjectivities that travel without excluding nation-state or region boundaries. Here, Simidele Dosekun (2015) emphasizes the term transnational in postfeminism can be defined as a critical mode of thinking across the border, which means thinking across the multiple intersections, form, site of difference at once.

Simidele Dosekun explained the empirical data from her previous study in Lagos, Nigeria. Simidele had interviews with women who have the capital to access the information and the experiences to feel “unlike other local women”. They are connected to family and friends in the Nigerian diaspora and have quite well travel experiences. Some of them have pursued further education in the West or South Africa. Hence, they take it utterly for granted that they share cosmopolitan consumer sensibilities, practices, and reference points with demographically similar women elsewhere as stated by the previous researcher that thus far it is not “post-feminism” but closely related concepts and terms such as “neoliberal feminism,” “consumer feminism” and “cosmopolitan feminism” that have tended to be deployed in transnational feminist cultural scholarship on new femininities (Parameswaran 2004, Grewal 2005). By interviewing some women who have the capital, Simidele tried to get the sense of how they feel ‘already empowered’ from their perspective by having the access and funding themselves to have stylized looks. In this case, to think postfeminism transnationally is to have a new view of postfeminism by considering the contextual or even the contradictory of how postfeminism is derived without taking one view to judge.

Transnational postfeminism focuses on postfeminism's entanglement as meaning, representation, sensibilities, practices, and commodities that may travel. Transnational postfeminism tries to point out postfeminism applied in non-western world with different capital, economics, and class. The analysis can be in the scope on how and where postfeminist culture is emergent outside the West;

with what meanings and effects; addressed to which kinds of subjects; via which transnational connectivities and/or local sites; with, through and/or contrary to which other transnational and local cultural formations, and so on (Dosekun, 2015). The histories, politics, structures, and cultural logics will have a role in how postfeminism is articulated. Moreover, the class is a key feature that plays a significant role in how postfeminism will occur. In her paper, Simidele Dosekun (2015) illustrates that the class will define the woman's capital, which would shape on how postfeminism is derived to them. In sum, understanding transnational postfeminism is to attend to how postfeminism is probably localized.

To think postfeminism transnationally means problematizing the notion global vs local, there should be a more open perspective in defining global and local since, in the era of globalization, the rigid binary between global and local must be shifted. Hence, it is necessary to identify the characteristics of the local chick-lit. Indian chick-lit inserted literary traditions such as the nature of saris and other textiles, the importance of jewelry and beautification, often in terms of skin color and grades of paleness, appearance, manners, religious rites, and traditions (Ponzanesi, 2014) which make Indian chick-lit distinct from Anglo-American chick-lit. According to Susan Kumari, it is believed that Indian chick-lit genre has been introduced to the young Indian girls by the release of the two novels: *Trust Me* by Rajashree and *Almost Single* by Advaita Kala. The chick-lit novel is rapidly being the 'favorite' proof by being the high-selling even best-selling fiction in the country. *Trust Me* was sold for 25000 copies only in the first month of publication, and *Almost Single* had more than 50,000 copies sold (Oberoi, 2017).

While Rachel (2006), in the New York Times article, articulates the chick-lit as “pandemic” and for India, there is pieces *Piece of Cake* and *Girl Alone* in India.

Giving the transnational postfeminism perspective on this analysis aims to describe how cultural and social background influences postfeminist culture portrayed in the novel. Analysis of different articulations of postfeminism sensibility around the world determines that postfeminist sensibility is “a versatile cultural discourse that can run through complex social fields, with links to cultural, economic and political relations while still being supported by its core” (Butler, 2013 in Riley, 2017). The formation of patterns and themes with cultural insights and how culture takes a role in Indian chick-lit becomes a reflection on the transnational culture critique (Ponzanesi, 2014) about how Indian comes with changing patterns from Anglo-American chick-lit. According to Chen (2012), the country with the exposure of chick-lit must be a country that has been open to the global market, so there is an immense consumer culture. In accordance with that, Chen (2012) examined the *Shanghai Baby* novel as the chick-lit phenomenon concerning the post-communist era by elucidating independent female characters living in cities far from traditional culture.

CHAPTER III

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the result that the researcher found in the novel *One Indian Girl* according to the research questions on how postfeminism as sensibilities portrayed in *One Indian Girl* novel and how are the transnational postfeminism connectivities portrayed in the novel. Further discussion will be provided below.

A. Postfeminism as Sensibilities

The finding shows that postfeminism as sensibilities in *One Indian Girl* by Chetan Bhagat can be described under the five notions according to the element of sensibilities proposed by Rosalind Gill (2007). They are femininity, a bodily property, focusing on individualization, choice, and empowerment, the shifting from objectification to subjectification, an emphasis on self-surveillance, monitoring, self-discipline, and the dominance of the makeover paradigm. Further discussion will be explained below.

1. Body as the Source of Power

The novel shows Radhika's desire to have a "good looks". Radhika tries to have certain standard of beauty like having hairless skin. The certain standard that circulates in culture makes Radhika feel that she still not attractive enough. This

phenomenon is what is called as women's self-surveillance, which is influenced by the media culture and the popular culture (Gill, 2007).

At an office party, Radhika meets her colleague's girlfriend named Amanda, who steals people's attention in the bar. Amanda is an actor in theatre also a part-time piano teacher. Since Amanda is in the entertainment industry, she has a stunning look by having gorgeous hair and bold makeup. She has the look of how media culture depicted how the women should look like. By looking at Amanda, Radhika started to compare herself and Amanda.

“I wanted to be Amanda. I do not know why. I scolded my self for thinking that way. Amanda didn't have a real job. Amanda didn't know how to make financial models. Amanda couldn't close a financial deal. Amanda didn't make 270,000 dollars a year. But, Amanda is so hot. Amanda also has men hovering around her, hoping to get her a drink....” (p.67)

In *One Indian Girl*, Radhika Mehta is illustrated as the few people that can enter the Goldman Sachs company. She is one of the Indian girls that even can enter the company. According to many people, it can be called a big achievement in career lives. It shows that she is very intelligent, smart, and has integrity. However, she still does not feel confident about her look. Throughout the novel, Radhika was narrated as an Indian girl who has dark skin, which according to her mother, is a matter because the mother thinks that fairer skin is better than darker skin. Besides, she came from a Punjabi family that primarily has a preference for fair skin. It is showed that she always feels that she got a problem with her look.

Radhika wanted to be like Amanda when it comes to attractiveness. Radhika considered that attractiveness is located in her body rather than in career achievement. Radhika's thought about Amanda's hotness that steals men's

attention inside the room is the representation of the sexualization culture, specifically in the equation of physical attractiveness with being sexy.

'That's when Debu said something, something even better than the amazing things he had said about my work and intelligence.

'You have great taste in clothes.' he said.

Oh, I love this man. He must be partially blind but I love this man.

....

'Yeah, you have nice legs'

'Oh.. so that is all you like about me?'

.....

'No, no. I like your face too. Your hair. Your eyes. Your whole personality, actually.' (p.40)

Also, in this account, Radhika shows that she is even happier to be praised for her appearance rather than her other achievements. She loves to be praised for her fashion and her legs. The compliment from Debu about Radhika's physical look gives Radhika another level of happiness. It shows that Radhika is in the sexualization of culture's 're-defining femininity and beauty as of most importance' (Coy, 2009) since she feels happy to be valued from her physical look

The desire to have an appealing body as presented by Radhika represents the current postfeminism culture in the notion of femininity as bodily property. Career achievement is not enough to define the woman since the physical look is considered to be the source of power and attractiveness (Gill, 2007) for a sexual deal. Radhika thought represents the contradiction of the sutured value between prefeminism value and postfeminism. On one side, Radhika realizes that she has been good in her career life, but she considered that the look is the matter one when it comes to attractiveness.

2. Individualization and Choice

In the novel, Radhika is presented as an independent woman who wants to decide her own life aspects and focusing on herself. As stated by Gill (2007) that free choice is the central to postfeminist discourses, which present women as autonomous agents that are no longer constrained by any qualities or power imbalances whatsoever. Also, the individual term is the central notion of postfeminism, which avoids the external influence such as political and cultural stances and focusing on the self instead. In postfeminism culture, the modernized femininity behavior points to how to please women themselves rather than to please a man, which refers to how the notion of the shifting from objectification to subjectification is wrapped in current culture.

“Maybe I can do this. This is not for Debu or tonight. This is for me. Enough for being a frumpy nerd, Radhika. Do it.” (p.33)

Once, Radhika makes a waxing appointment in order to have hairless legs. She is about to meet Debu that night. She knows that waxing will be hurtful, but she still wants to do it to feel more confident and attractive. In this account, Radhika claims her own self that what she has done on doing waxing is not for a man but for herself. This notion encouraged women to consider themselves free, “choice”, and empowered while constraining their choices towards work on the body, often through consumption (Gill, 2007 in Riley, Evans, Elliott, Rice & Marecek, 2017). The woman celebrating an assertive female sexual pleasure and a glamorous, cosmopolitan lifestyle of conspicuous consumption is the typical portrait of women in the chick-lit genre (Gill, 2007; Siegel, 2007; Whelehan, 2010), which here is similar to Radhika’s characterization.

The 'choice' as the central of postfeminism culture is difficult to be criticized since it is wrapped in women's liberation. However, what is striking is that the notion will obscure the woman's concern about being in a patriarchal substance. It refers to how actually in the end, Radhika wants to attract men's attention by showing her hairless legs. Focus on personal lifestyle choices such as appearance, personality, fashion, cooking, and marital issues with ignoring the political stance can drag the woman in the situation women's subjugation in patriarchy without realizing that it should be the problem rather than perceive the situation as the personal choice. Following that, Chen (2013) argues in relation to Bonnie J. Dow (1996) about 'lifestyling' feminism, and social practices will not be successful since the current culture of exclusive choice can occur the danger of ignoring political beliefs and action.

Radhika considers Radhika's choice to do waxing is her liberation to do everything toward her own body without realizing that she is in the neoliberalism discourse of self-regulating to consume beauty products. Consuming beauty products will only advantage the beauty industry. The various beauty product is considered the solution for women's flaws in their appearance (Gill, 2007) to apply some treatments to 'feel good' about themselves. The contradiction explained by Chen (2013) says that the notion "free" in popular women's genres will lead the woman to have the same choice of appealing body appearance, heterosexual relationship, and the same sexiness charm promoted by patriarchy and capitalism.

Postfeminism as sensibilities attempts to see the woman as subjected to neoliberalism in terms of “choice” and the invisible regulation that can be found contradictory. If women take full responsibility for their lives, why do women strive to get the same goals, such as having hairless skin? It is related to the waxing lady who said to Radhika that all women do the waxing, so it will be okay because all women out there do it.

”Aditi didi wanted to get married. I don’t.”

“You don’t”

“Not yet. Look at my life. I just finished work. It’s 8.30 at night here.”

“What kind of job is this? Making girls stay too late.”

“Can you stop criticizing every aspect of my life? I am not ready to get married or overlook any option.”

Well, I didn’t need more options. My option had messaged me thrice as he waited for me for dinner.

“So what do you want?” mom said

“Many other things. I want to do well at work. I want to be promoted this year, get a good bonus. I want to travel. Enjoy New York. Come home and visit all of you.” (p.52)

In this account, we can see how Radhika opens many choices for her life even if her mother urges her to do marriage. Whelehan (2010) summarizes that the dynamic of postfeminism in popular culture has to depict the rhetoric of choice, self-fashioning, perpetual youth, and carefree humor once too often. As in the novel, Radhika always has her own choice toward anything, such as her work, relationship, and other things she wants to do in life that somehow oppose her mother and finally create conflict between them.

Concerning that, Giddens (1991) argues that modernity left individuals to maintain themselves on what makes sense for them to live in a certain way as expressed in ‘we have become responsible for our bodies’ design. Since Radhika

lives in a big city and has a modern environment, she becomes very independent and individual. As a result, she feels that she is the one who deserves to decide what she has to do in life because she depends only on herself.

In the novel, it shows how Radhika tries to work on herself to leave behind her image of being unfashionable and a nerd. The individuals in high modernity have been surrounded by 'ontological insecurity' (Giddens, 1991) and a reflexive on self-identity as the term "project of the self" (Featherstone (1991), which is the product of and individualization (Shilling, 1993) (Gill and Scharff, 2011). In this case, Radhika tries to work on herself since she feels insecure. She wants to do something on herself to away that feeling of insecurity. Radhika's desire to have a certain image by doing this and those things represent Radhika's subjectivity as one that is strongly prevailing postfeminism culture (Gill, 2008). Whelehan (2010) uses the term 'governing the soul' (Rose, 1989) and remaking subjectivities as the expression for the current popular postfeminism in operating the power modes.

The relationship issues are also being a rhetoric problem in postfeminism popular culture. The male dominance at the same time is sutured with problematic conflict with a woman's will. As stated by Whelehan (2010): popular cultural texts, whether fictional, televisual, or film, replay these contradictions continually, and in the repetition, some interesting patterns emerge.

Debu came up behind me.

'You like your job?'

I turned to him.

'Yeah, Debu. I love it. I am good at it. It's exciting. I am learning so much. It's a great firm. I am paid well. It kills me at times with work but I love it.' (p.73)

“Leave this all banking and morning meetings. You are stressing yourself out.

‘I am fine.’

‘You are this simple Indian girl. You need to love and be loved.’” (p.78)

Radhika's problematic relationship is caused by a core problem of different desires between two couples. Debu, Radhika's boyfriend, wanted Radhika to let go of her career to be a full-mother in the future. In contrast, Radhika wanted to be both a career woman and a mother. This account shows the contradiction of female empowerment in dealing with the power relation trial confronted by Debu. Here, Debu firstly gave the compliment to Radhika for being an independent woman, but in the end, Debu asserts his male-domination desire in suggesting Radhika stay at home while he will work outside.

“It's not that easy. What kind of blatant capitalism is this?”

I looked at Debu in shock.

‘What?’ I said. ‘Seriously, blatant capitalism?’

‘You are trying to make most money.’

‘Well, yeah, but it is my job. We invest money, so we want good returns on it.

‘But why do you have to fire people?’

I rolled my eyes. (p.73)

In this account, Debu as Radhika's boyfriend started to mocking Radhika's autonomous mode of choosing to have a career in the distressed bank. Rather than giving support on what Radhika is doing in her career, Debu gave the very subjective opinion for accusing Radhika's job as something that not right without reflecting on himself, who is working in an advertisement agency. The male character's selfish character is represented not only by Debu but also by Neel Gupta. Once, Radhika had an affair with Neel Gupta, the company's partner who already has a wife and children. Both Radhika and Neel started to be close when

Radhika transferred to Hongkong. In contrast to Debu, Neel underestimates Radhika's optimism of having a family. Neel suggests that Radhika should have a good career without having a family, which in relation to that, Neel innocently stated that he never thought that Radhika has the concern of having a family.

"I said I want to have a family. Have kids. Be a good mother and look after them well. That's no thinking clearly?"

"You are star at work. What is all this mundane stuff you are talking about? Any women can do all this."

"But I can't?"

"I didn't say that."

"So?"

"I see you as someone exceptional. And special. You could be an MD, a partner."

"Yeah, I will be. I like my work too."

"But you said you want marriage, IKEA, bunch of kids, baking cookies, really?"

"Yes, I want all that too." (p.164)

The male characters in this novel represented by Debu and Neel show the repeated concern of challenging the female character's decision on the job and mothering. Rather than being supportive, the male characters are portrayed as aggressively questioning, criticizing, and belittle their female counterparts. On the other hand, the female characters are required to use their "feminine" skills to emotionally heal the male characters due to the male character's possession of a troubled past, which will lead the female characters to feel sorry and guilty. The female characters do not expect an apology but instead, offer encouragement and unconditional acceptance toward male characters' conditions and treatments.

"What is my fault? Just tell me. I will change myself."

"It's fine"

"You want me to not work? Leave my job? Just say it" (p.81)

In line with that, it also happens on Radhika's act toward Debu after they both arguing and Debu leaves Radhika. Instead of questioning what Debu has done to her, Radhika continually convinces Debu that she wanted to change herself to take him back to her. Radhika's submission in facing her problematic relationship is reflected by her thought that there is nothing wrong with being desperate in love (p. 81). It shows that women who can support postfeminism are also fragile subjects. Women's autonomy is continuously unstable, and heterosexual power relations in force solve their value accrual strategy. Most of a woman's life is ultimately built, agreed upon, and mediated through men. As the point of postfeminism sensibilities notions, the female empowerment in this novel is sutured with the patriarchal notion of femininity through the male character's toxic behavior.

"I am not. Okay, I like you, I love you. But I want my kids' mother to be at home for them."

"Maybe, I will be. If needed."

"See, you are not sure. You have this hi-fi mega-paying job."

"My job will have nothing to do with my commitment as a mother. Do you get it? (p.75)

Moreover, in the discussion about mothering, the notion of "choice" strongly emphasizes the neoliberal for autonomy and adaptability (Baker, 2009). The notion of "choice" cope with demonstrating the capacity for reinvention and self-improvement for still becoming 'good' mothers even if in difficult circumstances. This notion is paralleled with self-surveillance as the central notion of postfeminism as sensibilities. In this account, Radhika shows her consent to being a career woman and a nurturing mother at the same time in the future.

Radhika argues that her commitment as a mother would not be bothered by her work. Her desire for both things represents the postfeminist culture of gendered neoliberalism, where it is women who should adapt to the circumstance. Radhika's feeling and urge to transform herself is in line with Gill (2008), Burkett & Hamilton (2012) deploy the phrase 'as it wasn't pressure against my will, but it was a pressure for me to do the right thing', thus to the women's agency the section illuminates the nature of postfeminism's regulation on women's subjectivity and how it makes internalized responsibilities without realizing on the gender imbalance. Radhika's relationship problem and how she compromises with the male character shows that rather than the man who is obliged to transform and adapt, it is a woman whose require to have self-transformation (Gill, 2007; 2008; 2017) under the term 'choice' as the product of the individual process.

3. Self-Surveillance

The notion of self-surveillance, monitoring, and self-discipline is the most visual sensibilities in current society. The habits of self-surveillance, monitoring, self-disciplined argued by Rosalind Gill (2007) are not merely coming naturally from the self, but media has its role in spreading the culture. It produces the mark of "being better" than transpire as the central of postfeminism culture. The notion of self-surveillance, monitoring, and self-discipline comes parallel with the notion of femininity as bodily property. Due to the desire to be attractive and have good feelings, women will actuate women to do a "self-check" on what else women can do for her life.

In Radhika's case, the example of the parallel connectivities between two notions and how media has its role in increasing the self-surveillance, monitoring, and self-discipline is that the meeting between Radhika and Amanda. As stated in the novel that Amanda is Craig's girlfriend. They both meet at the office party where the officer can come along with their significant. It is illustrated in the novel that Amanda has a stunning look.

"Amanda is here," Craig said in a higher pitch. A gorgeous blonde with grey eyes entered the bar. Everyone in the group, men and women, paused their conversations to look at her. She had curly golden hair, and her make up was impeccable oxblood lipstick and smokey eyes. (p.67)

It is related to Rosalind Gill's (2008) statement that in women's magazines, femininity has always been portrayed as contingent requiring constant anxious attention, work, and vigilance, from touching up the makeup until having a great taste on wardrobe, from hiding 'unsightly' wrinkles, age spots or stains, and hosting a dinner party. Here, the researcher can infer that Amanda's appearance is presented as the ideal woman's look according to the media because she is eligible to enter the entertainment industry since she works in that industry. The media has a role in narrowing the judgment to 'female attractiveness' by displaying the 'ideal' woman. We can see many 'Amanda' in media culture like advertising, magazine, movie, etc. As a result, the depiction of women in the media may impact the personal criticism toward herself. For example, when Radhika started to compare herself to Amanda.

"I wanted to be Amanda. I do not know why. I scolded my self for thinking that way. Amanda didn't have a real job. Amanda didn't know how to make financial models. Amanda couldn't close a financial deal. Amanda didn't make 270,000 dollars a year. But, Amanda is so hot..." (p. 67)

The explanation above illustrates how the media could affect and raise the intensity of self-monitoring in women's life when it comes to the physical look. How media depict women could make other's women always feel like they have flaws in some aspects of her life. As a result, the woman will start to analyze what is the thing that they can change to have fewer flaws. Hence, self-surveillance, self-monitoring, and self-discipline will always come to pass as the raising of many media campaigns of having a better life in any aspect (Gill, 2007).

Furthermore, self-surveillance is had always been the feminism issue (Brado, 2015 in Gill, 2017). This is how postfeminism as a distinctive sensibility is the entanglement with feminism issues. Surveillance has become the mark of successful femininity in the past where there are so many requirements to act in a certain way, such as mannered, good posture, nice wardrobe as white upper-class women (Gill, 2007). Amanda is one of the representations of the white upper-class western woman's standard. This judgment to define the women's identity from the physical look is one of the problematized concerns of second-wave feminism. Here, we can see the suture mixing value of antifeminism with feminism ideas in postfeminism culture. Hence, postfeminism elements as a distinctive sensibility can be found contradictory because it is the way to make sense of women toward themselves in the current culture.

Also, it is stated by Gill (2007) that self-surveillance is the one that relates to stress. The stress upon self-surveillance is the product of neoliberalism when women must have a stunning look. In this case, Radhika realized that the beauty

standard lead her to the stress but at the same time she still do the efforts to be more attractive under the notion of free choice.

“Some problems in the world seem to exist solely for women. Like not having anything to wear. I realized I had nothing nice for tonight.” (p.27)

From this account, we can see the example of the stress which usually happens to women for yelling about have nothing to wear. Radhika realizes that she has nothing to wear to “feel attractive” from her perspective. This self-surveillance can will lead Radhika to consume some products start from beauty products until fashion to “feel attractive”. The features that mark mediated the self-surveillance (Gill, 2007) in current postfeminist culture are represented through Radhika’s thought.

There is an increase in self-surveillance upon Radhika since she thinks that she has nothing to wear. It is the same as pressure, which can produce stress; even Radhika expressed it as a problem for women. Moreover, we can see the relation of this notion to neoliberalism, in which possibly women are the subject of neoliberalism. As Radhika stated, the problems in the world seem to exist solely for women (Gill, 2007). It is related to Gill's (2007) statement that it is a woman that has been required to transform herself and work on the body.

“I looked at my self in the mirror. My wavy hair had grown and now reached my shoulders. I looked slim-the two months diet before the wedding had helped.” (p.4)

Another evidence is in this account, Radhika has been dieting for two months in order to hold her wedding. According to Negra (2009), self-maintaining weight by doing a diet and exercise is the practice of disciplinary social control.

The point is that women are kept under the surveillance of having self-transformation (Gill, 2007).

After Radhika thinking that she will not be “look nice” tonight since she feels that she does not have something nice to meet Indian friends. Then, she decides to shop in the Banana Republic to ask the sales assistant to help her choose a dress.

“She picked a navy-blue lace dress for me. It fit well, but ended mid-thigh.”

“Too short?” I said.

“Not at all. It’s summer. You look lovely.” She said. Even though she was paid to say it, it felt good. “I would wax those legs, though,” she added.

Ouch! That hurt.”Unless you like it natural,” the salesperson corrected herself, switching back to classic American political correctness. (p.27)

Here, it is shown that the salesperson implicitly scrutinizes Radhika’s body appearance for having hairy legs by bragging about doing waxing. Another theme in self-surveillance is the typical ‘girlfriend gaze’ popularized by Alison (2013). There, society's behavior is not only to compare and scrutiny themselves but also to apply the standard to other women as what has been done by the salesperson to Radhika. In accordance with that, the ‘girlfriend gaze’ works are when women police each other appearance even the behavior through homosocial gaze (Ringrose and Renold, 2010). The ‘girlfriend gaze’ can be understood as peer surveillance too.

Furthermore, peer surveillance is not only done by the close one like family or friend but possibly by a stranger. The salesperson has done what implicitly suggesting Radhika shave the hair-legs is one example of peer surveillance that comes from strangers. In other accounts, Radhika was also

spontaneously doing the 'girlfriend gaze' to Neil's wife on their first meeting when they unintentionally meet in the furniture market.

"She seemed fit too. I looked at her face. She was pretty, fair, and had high cheekbones. I would kill to look like her at forty. I noticed she has a small bust..." (p.148)

The girlfriend's gaze is like screening others' appearance and somehow ends up comparing the one she has with other features and how it happens to Radhika. She does the girlfriend's gaze to Neil's wife without any significant reason. She compares herself with Neil's wife through the physical look that Radhika considers that Neil's wife looks better than her, and in some ways, Radhika feels that she has better features than Neil's wife. The peer surveillance moment that has been explained above shows that surveillance is increasing in the current culture, especially in women, since body appearance is considered the source of identity and power (Gill, 2007) concerning femininity as bodily property.

4. Shifting from Objectification to Subjectification

Another element of sensibilities that is showed in the novel is the shifting from objectification to subjectification by portraying the Radhika as an active woman. Gill (2008) stated that a significant aspect of the shifting from objectification to sexual subjectification is that this is framed in advertising through a discourse of playfulness, freedom, and choice. Women are presented as not seeking men's approval but working to please themselves, and in so doing, it just happens in winning men's admiration.

“Your dress is lovely too.”

“Look, no tag today,” I said and turned around. Both of us laughed. I was wearing a military green lace dress I had picked up from Gap. It ended well above the knees, exposing enough leg. However, I still don’t think Debu noticed the hundred dollars I spent fixing my limbs. The dim lighting and the restaurant table covering my legs did no justice to the hour I had spent in the torture chamber. (p.34)

In this account, after meeting Indian friends in New York, Radhika started to have an interest in Debu, which slightly flirt to her first. Since that time, Radhika wanted to be more show off to steal Debu’s attention in their next meeting. So, she gets dressed and doing more waxing to feel more attractive and confident. Radhika said that she did it for herself rather than for Debu, even though it attracted Debu’s attention. In this account, Radhika seems she had a little problem with the table covering her legs from Debu’s sight. Here, we can see the shifting from objectification to subjectification as defined in postfeminism as sensibilities. Rather than being objectified by the male gaze as the passive object, the woman has its desire to be seen as an active player. As Goldman (1992) stated: a woman is not directly presented as the objectified one but rather as the active one who presents themselves upon their liberation in an objectified manner.

“Okay, I had a challenge bigger than distressed debt tonight. I had to ensure Debu made a move, so some naughtiness could happen. Of course, because I am a woman, I somehow also had to pretend to be innocent, as if I had no role to play in making anything happen. I had to steer him without him realizing he had been steered.” (p. 39)

In this account, Radhika shows that she chooses to set up the situation and expecting Debu finally would make a move. Even if Radhika wanted to act

innocent, she indirectly becomes the active agent that steer Debu in an objectified manner. Gill (2003) stated that one of the key problems with this notion is that those women are projected to be self-autonomous by freely choosing anything for their pleasure. Women in these adverts are endowed with the agency so that they can actively choose to objectify themselves. Concerning that, Radhika's concern about the sexual activities that may happen to her represents how postfeminist sensibilities can be seen as the modernized femininity. What distinct is that the notion of "choice" and "independence" is challenging their position as the object in their desired way. (Seldboy, 2020; Macaluso, 2016; Rudloff, 2016).

This notion includes the term called "the technology of sexiness" (Radner, 1993) that centering the sexual knowledge and practice. Another evidence in the novel is when Radhika and Neel Gupta are about to jog together on the beach before having dinner together. Radhika has been quite attracted to Neel, who is kind, polite, hardworking, and has an athletic body. To do jogging, Radhika wears black sports and *white gunjee*, which able others to see her skin quickly.

"Wow, you've transformed." He said. The sunglasses covered his eyes. I couldn't tell if he was staring at me. I thought he did. Maybe I wished he did." (p.134)

It is found that Radhika would be glad if Neel gives a glance at her. In other words, it means that Radhika actually works on being attractive. She intentionally chooses the *white gunjee*, which makes other people able to see her skin under the fabric. As explained by Gill (2003) in her paper that the shifting from sexual objectification into subjectification is where the woman can play with her sexual power for whatever she wants. Radhika expects Neel to be attracted to

her by showing off her skin so that it means that Radhika uses her looks as the power to achieve her expectation.

In sum, Radhika is presented as a young heterosexual girl who uses her sexual power to set up the situation to get what she wants. As the highlighted idea in postfeminism sensibilities, the novelty of contemporary sexualized representations of women in popular culture (Gill, 2007) is that they do not depict women as passive objects as in the past. The woman is rather presented as knowing, active, and desiring sexual subjects as how Radhika is portrayed in the novel.

5. The Makeover Paradigm

Analysis that focuses on the make-over paradigm means identifying assumptions that transformation of one's external appearance through clothing, makeup, or cosmetic surgery will result in changes in the psychological and emotional life of the person, such as becoming happier and more confident (Riley, Evans., Elliott, Rice, & Marecek, 2017). As the constituted notion in postfeminism sensibility, the makeover paradigm first leads the woman to feel that they always lack in something about them (Gill, 2007). It is not only about the body but also more life aspects such as relationships, work, mental health, etc.

Radhika always considered herself as the nerd and unfashionable one back then. In other words, Radhika feels that she is less attractive, so that she has to do some works on herself in order to feel more attractive. As a result, Radhika attempts to make an effort to her hair to have the style that she wants so that she

will feel more attractive. She wants to have shoulder-length hair with waves-like hair belonging to her class's associate trainee. She then makes a haircut appointment in a salon.

“I had lie to Avinash. I had a haircut appointment. After moving to New York, I had decided to leave my nerdy, unfashionable days far behind. An associate trainee in my class had gorgeous shoulder-length hair with waves, exactly how I wanted mine. She had made a booking for me at a salon on 32nd Street.” (p.27)

Going to a salon is one of the forms of transformation of external appearance. In this account, we can see the relation between the make-over paradigm with consuming culture. Moreover, the consuming culture cannot be separated from neoliberalism, targeting women. Going to the salon and having some treatment is the same as consuming the beauty product in service. Neoliberalism can be understood as shaping the individual to be self-regulating, which gives benefits to the economic market (Banet-Weiser, 2018).

In the case of bodily property, the beauty and fashion industry gets a big advantage of neoliberalism. The primary vehicle of neoliberalism is a personal choice (Banet-Weiser, 2018), which is also the main theme of the current postfeminism culture. Women are required to be self-autonomous in deciding any aspect of their lives as presented in the novel how Radhika choose to have a new style and leave her nerd image, which at the same time it will require to consume beauty product and fashion product. It is related to the Alison Winch (2015) statement that in the hypervisible landscape of popular culture, the body is recognized as the object of women’s labor, which is being the asset, her product,

her brand, which requires the transformation under the notion of freedom that will benefit the neoliberal market economy.

“I went back to my room and showered. I opened my suitcase and took out a white flowing dress with floral print. It seemed perfect for an island resort dinner. The dress had a deep neckline; I wore a bead necklace to cover it, I applied makeup and created a smoky effect around my eyes. I realized I had not dressed up to look good since my New York days with Debu. Also, I noticed the name ‘Debu’ didn’t sting much anymore. I applied perfume and translucent strawberry lip gloss. I looked at my self in the mirror one final time. If I made an effort I could look nice.” (p.135)

In this account, Radhika stated that she could look nice if she made an effort to transform herself. Her assumption is the key to how the makeover paradigm works in society. Radhika feels that she could be better and feel better after dressing and put makeup means that she feels that she has a lack of attractiveness, so that she has to find the solution. Hence, the notion of femininity of bodily property is paralleled with the notion of self-surveillance and produces the construed self-transformation.

B. Transnational Postfeminism

As the Indian chick-lit, *One Indian Girl* novel has characteristics of global chick-lit that has the additional cultural reference. The storyline is dominated by rhetoric problems and clashes in relationship and family issues. Besides the cultural references provided in the novel, the novel also portrayed Radhika’s lifestyle, which represents female subjectivity and neoliberalism as in the novel *For Matrimonial Purposes* and *The Village Bridge of Beverly Hills* by Kavita Daswani and *Goddess for Hire* by Sonia Singh that highlight the choice and consumption relation to subjectivity and identity formation (Ponzanesi, 2014).

The formation of patterns and themes with cultural insights and how culture takes a role in Indian chick-lit becomes a reflection on the transnational culture critique (Ponzanesi, 2014) about how Indian comes with changing patterns from Anglo-American chick-lit. In giving the transnational postfeminism perspective in this novel means to analyze how social and cultural background belongs to Radhika has a role in how postfeminist culture is derived in Radhika's life.

One of the aspects of transnational critique in non-western chick-lit is how the female character who pursues the urban living will adjust to the family's tradition rooted in cultural aspects. Living away from India has given Radhika limited access to traditional requirements. However, when she is back in India for holding her marriage with Brijesh Gulati, she has to back engaging in her cultural complexity since marriage is considered a sacred thing. As stated by Lakshmi (2007) that liberate Indian woman would wear Western commodities they buy with their own money and so do Radhika, but the cultural aspect of Indian: "family and community values are much more entrenched" (Chen, 2012) gives a shifting to the moment when Radhika meets her parent in law days before her marriage.

"You are going to meet the boy's side in jeans and a T-shirt? And look at your neck!

"Again you said 'boy's side'. And what's wrong with my neck?"

"There is no jewelry. Go change into salwar kameez and wear a chain from my jewelry box." (p.4)

In this account, the mother asks Radhika to change the clothes and suggest her to wear jewelry. *Salwar Kameez* is the specific clothes for Indians, becoming an expression of Indian ethnicity. Indian *Salwar* looks like a pajama drawn tightly

in at the waist with a string and is tailored in such a way that it tapers at the ankles. While the traditional *Kameez* top is a loose-fitting, knee-length tunic with long sleeves. The tunic is worn by pulling it over the head through a round neckline that has a front slit. *Kameez* is worn over the *Salwar*, and the complete outfit is commonly referred to as the *Salwar suit* in India (Kumar & Walia, 2016). *Salwar Kameez* has many variations in nowadays fashion trends. However, as stated before that *Salwar Kameez* is the important clothes that are being the representation of ethnicity.

Here is why *Salwar Kameez* and jewelry are essential to use in this situation. Research has stated that western and eastern cultures have a different definition of self. An individual's identity is derived from social groups in eastern cultures. The current research assumed that Indian women's definition of self would follow a similar pattern, and their view of themselves would be construed concerning their relationships with others (Khare, Mishra, & Parveen, 2012). As stated, the individual identity is the same as representing the group identity, so that Radhika's look in front of the Gulati family is very important to Radhika's family. Hence, to wear *Salwar Kameez* and nice jewelry is like to keep the honor of the family and to show respect to the Gulati family.

This is supported by Allen's (1985) view that the sense of belonging would dominate the individual's very existence in some cultures. The conscious evaluation of self concerning others would establish a connection with them. It would help individuals in defining their roles in society. Gulati's family can infer Radhika's self-identity from her look. Since Radhika will be their daughter in law,

it is crucial to make sure that Gulati's daughter in law has the engagement with them through the culture so that Radhika can be seen as the ideal future daughter in law.

Moreover, wearing traditional clothes and being polite is not simply to attract people but more than that. It means the women also determine their position or social status (Lindridge and Dibb, 2003) because clothing represents property and wealth to be easier to be distinct from other groups. Moreover, India has exhibited high collectivist values where an individual is influenced by a strong group identity (Banerjee, 2008). It means that the individual image goes hand in hand with the family's image. As a result, how women look and behave will be important to define their identity and their family's image. Thus, for Indians, if women wear good clothes not only for personal needs but also by the desire to improve the position of the family (Khare, Mishra, Parveen, 2012)

Indian chick-lit, which introduces local inflection styles and tastes onto postfeminist female characters as the suggested alternative relationship models and relationships with family and tradition (Ponzanesi, 2014), shows how postfeminism sensibilities are possibly localized (Dosekun, 2015). To change the clothes from jeans to *Salwar Kameez* and wear jewelry in important events illustrate that family is important for her. As in Indian culture, loyalty to the family is regarded as *dharma* or sacred duty (Lindridge and Dhillon 2005), with the need to keep the family's honor. In this account, the local cultural formation has influence Radhika's way of presenting herself in the family circle despite her

believes to be free in doing whatever she wants which is the centre of postfeminist culture.

In seeing the phenomenon using the transnational postfeminism perspective, it is possible to see postfeminism as commodities that may travel. It is related to the argument written by Simidele Dosekun (2015), which says that it is possible for postfeminism to be sold transnationally. The availability of postfeminism products outside the Western is one of the ways in how postfeminism sells transnationally.

“You haven’t done this before?” said my fifty years old, waxing lady, Catherine, politely while ripping the waxing strips off me most brutally. I am lying on my underwear. I had come to Completely Bare a funky ‘high-tech meets comfy chic’ waxing studio on 68th Street and Madison. “I have. Twice in my life. In India. Years ago.” I said. “Really, did it hurt then? “Hell, yeah, it did. Aditi didi had made me do it for a wedding in the family...” (p.32)

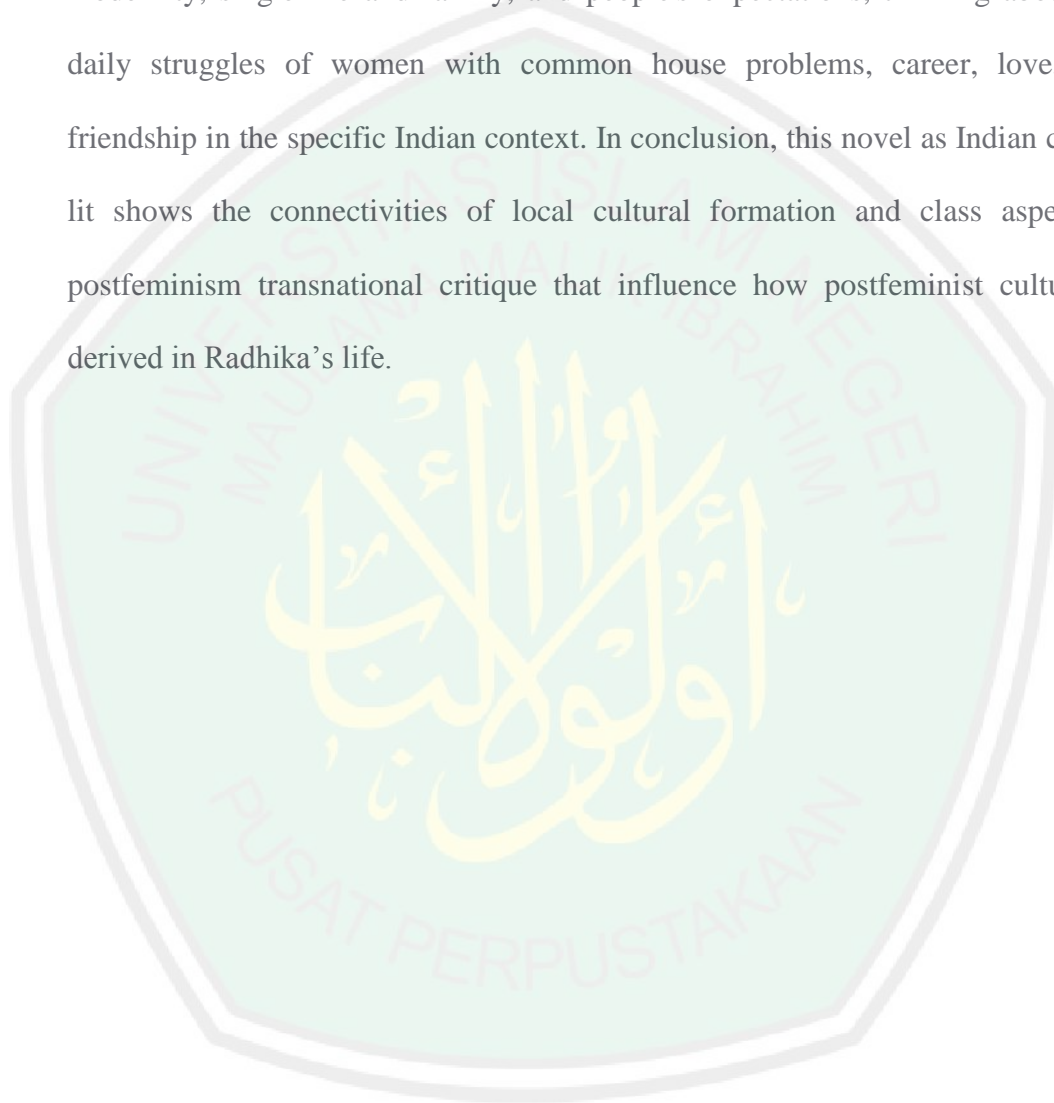
According to the novel, Radhika Mehta is doing a waxing in New York to deprive her legs' hair. However, it is not the first time Radhika did a waxing since she had been had twice before when she was still in India. She was forced to wax her legs to attend the wedding event. Aditi *didi*, Radhika's sister, is the one who did it for her. It means that women outside the Western can reach many commodities. For another example, the Brazilian wax that already exists from Mexico to Shanghai (Dosekun, 2015). It is available in New York and outside the Western, too. However, the critical point of having access to the commodity is that the Mehta family class enables Radhika and Aditi *didi* to buy the product. As stated by Dosekun (2015), capital is being the key for women to have access to postfeminist products since the culture is close to consumerism.

“...her twenty-three-years-old, who grew up in middle-class West Delhi, had cracked a job at one of the biggest investment banks in the world...”
(p.6)

Radhika and the family are a middle-class Indian family. Radhika’s father is an SBI Naraina Vihar Branch Manager, and her mother is a housewife. SBI Naraina Vihar is the State of Bank India located in Naraina, New Delhi, India. According to PayScale, the average salary for a Branch Manager, Banking at the State Bank of India in India is around 974,395 rupees or \$12,898,13 per year. According to Fernandes (2000), the new Indian middle class's distinctiveness is located in their capability and potential to give economic market advantages through consumer culture. Thus, as Salim Lakha has argued in the press, in some conceptions, the new middle class has included “rich farmers, labor elite, small business entrepreneurs, professionals, overseas workers in the Gulf region, and the salariat from diverse backgrounds (Fernandes, 2000). Moreover, to know how postfeminism sensibilities emerge outside the Western, Simidele Dosekun (2015) draws the class or the modality as one of the key aspects: “feminine subjects who have the material, discursive and imaginative capital to access and to buy into it”. As a result, the Mehta family, whose father is a professional in SBI, is included in the new middle class, which helps Mehta’s daughter to has access to postfeminist commodity.

It is shown in the novel how Radhika’s social background gives her accessibility to buy postfeminist culture commodities since she was in India. Also, her cultural background makes her adjust to family tradition and her problematic relationships with parents who have a different perspective. According to

Ponzanesi (2014), while western chick-lit often talks about consumers, high heels, and handbags, Indian chick-lit will add an emotional side to career success and independence. Also, it shows a picture of the relationship between tradition and modernity, single life and family, and people's expectations, thinking about the daily struggles of women with common house problems, career, love, and friendship in the specific Indian context. In conclusion, this novel as Indian chick-lit shows the connectivities of local cultural formation and class aspect in postfeminism transnational critique that influence how postfeminist culture is derived in Radhika's life.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter sums up the analysis of postfeminism sensibilities and postfeminism in the transnational perspective in Chetan Bhagat's *One Indian Girl* novel. The study reveals how postfeminism sensibilities are portrayed in the novel and how postfeminist culture's connectivities in the transnational perspective are portrayed in the novel. There is also a suggestion for further research on this topic, which is provided at the end of the chapter.

A. Conclusion

It has to be underlined that rather than seeing postfeminism as the stance, postfeminism as sensibilities sees postfeminism culture as the critical object of the analysis. Postfeminism as sensibilities aims to portray how postfeminist culture is a paradox in Radhika's life. Then, the transnational perspective in postfeminist sensibility is used to explain how the postfeminist culture derived in Radhika's life is interfered with by social and cultural background. In accordance with that, here, the researcher is not going to conclude that the main character is a postfeminist, but the goal of this analysis is to illustrate how postfeminism as sensibilities found contradictory and how it is derived in Radhika's life by the influence of her cultural background and her social class.

To answer the first research question, the researcher uses the elements of sensibilities in categorizing the contradictory events of the postfeminist culture portrayed in the novel. The elements of sensibilities that are found in the novel are

femininity as a bodily property, a focus on individualization, choice, and empowerment, the shifting from objectification to subjectification, an emphasis on self-surveillance, monitoring, and self-discipline, and the dominance of the makeover paradigm. In sum, Radhika is presented as the one who believes in having a choice in any aspect of her life, such as physical style, career, and relationship. However, the contradiction that can be captured is that her choice sat by the side with the self-surveillance where she often corrects herself and always wants to be more attractive. Hence, it leads her to buy beauty products from fashion until the treatment, such as go-to salon and doing waxing, which means that it is entangled with neoliberalism because, in the end, her choice would benefit the economic market.

Also, Radhika is presented as an active female character when she was in relationships. Her thought explains that she can control the situation into what she wants by showing her body part, such as legs because her body is a source of power in terms of getting man's attention. It shows the contradiction of the choice that leads a woman to intentionally objectified themselves to gain a man's attention. It shows how it is contradictory to the concerned issues of second-wave feminism on objectifying a woman's body. The contradiction that is found in postfeminist as sensibilities is created from the entanglement of postfeminist culture with feminism and antifeminism idea, and neoliberalism portrayed in the novel. Under these five notions of postfeminism as sensibilities, this approach is critically interrogating the ideas and discourses that comprise the 'common sense of postfeminism', which can be found as the paradox.

Then, to answer the second research question, the researcher uses a transnational postfeminism perspective. From the finding and discussions, it can conclude that the postfeminist culture presented in the novel is influenced by the cultural and economic background of the main character. Since Radhika is an Indian, she tries to adjust her choice to the family because Indian has a strong collective culture and puts family as a fundamental issue. Also, she is from a middle-class Indian family, and she has sound finances so that she has access to buy the commodities. This approach enables the research to reveal how this novel, with its Indian chick-lit characteristics, portrays postfeminist culture outside the Western.

B. Suggestion

Further research on postfeminism as sensibilities is still needed. As the mirroring of the society, the literary work is expected to be more comprehensive in depicting postfeminism culture and its entanglement with feminism, antifeminism idea, and neoliberalism. As a result, postfeminist analysis as sensibilities possibly can be more comprehensively discussed in literary criticism. The use of postfeminist sensibilities in analyzing postfeminism culture hopefully not only leads the reader to agree or disagree with postfeminism but rather to raise awareness and see postfeminism as a not static notion.

Moreover, the transnational postfeminism approach is still needed to be discussed more. It is the open methodology that welcomes any possibilities since it is in the realm of finding the postfeminist culture's connectivities that emerged

outside the Western. There will be no exact answer to any phenomena because it depends on many aspects such as social and cultural background. This approach is suitable for analyzing the novel from outside the Western so that there will be more various discussions from other cultural backgrounds. Further research can also focus on comparing one transnational postfeminism culture to another. Hence, bringing transnational postfeminism in literary criticism will be valuable to do more because the literary work can comprehensively portray the society condition whether the postfeminism culture is probably localized.



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CURRICULUM VITAE



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APPENDIX 1

Postfeminisme as Sensibilities		
1. Body as the Source of Power	Data	1. <i>“I wanted to be Amanda. I do not know why. I scolded my self for thinking that way. Amanda didn’t have a real job. Amanda didn’t know how to make financial models. Amanda couldn’t close a financial deal. Amanda didn’t make 270,000 dollars a year. But, Amanda is so hot. Amanda also has men hovering around her, hoping to get her a drink...”</i> (p.67)
		<i>‘That’s when Debu said something, something even better than the amazing things he had said about my work and intelligence’</i> (p.40)
	2. <i>‘You have great taste in clothes.’ he said. Oh, I love this man. He must be partially blind but I love this man.</i> (p.40)	
	Logics	1. Instead of the behavior value like caring, nurturing, or another quality, body appearance is considered as the source of power and attractiveness in defining identity(Gill, 2007)
2. It shows that Radhika is in the sexualization of culture’s ‘re-defining femininity and beauty as of most importance’ (Coy, 2009) stance since she feels happy to be valued from her physical look.		

2. Individualization and Choice	Data	
		1. <i>“May be I can do this. This is not for Debu or tonight. This is for me. Enough for being a frumpy nerd, Radhika. Do it.” (p.33)</i>
		2. <i>“Aditi didi wanted to get married. I don’t.” “You don’t” “Not yet. Look at my life. I just finished work. It’s 8.30 at night here.” “What kind of job is this? Making girls stay too late.” “Can you stop criticizing every aspects of my life? I am not ready to get married or over look at any option.” Well, I didn’t need more option. My option had message me thriced as he waited for me for dinner. “So what do you want?” mom said “Many other things. I want to do well at work. I want to be promoted this year, get a good bonus. I want to travel. Enjoy New York. Come home and visit all of you.” (p.52)</i>
		<i>Debu came up behind me. ‘You like your job?’ I turned to him. ‘Yeah, Debu. I love it. I am good at it. It’s exciting. I am learning so much. It’s a great firm. I am paid well. It kills me at times with work but I love it.’ (p.73)</i>
		<i>“Leave this all banking and morning meetings. You are stressing yourself out. ‘I am fine.’ ‘You are this simple Indian girl. You need to love and be loved.’” (p.78)</i>

		<p>3. <i>“I am not. Okay, I like you, I love you. But I want my kids’ mother to be at home for them.”</i> <i>“May be, I will be. If needed.”</i> <i>“See, you are not sure. You have this hi-fi mega-paying job.”</i> <i>“My job will have nothing to do with my commitment as a mother. Do you get it?(p.75)</i></p>
	Logics	<p>1. As stated by Rosalind Gill (2007) in her paper that the notion that all our practices are freely chosen is central to postfeminist discourses, which present women as autonomous agents no longer constrained by any qualities or power imbalances whatsoever.</p> <p>2. Whelehan (2010) summarizes that the dynamic of postfeminism in popular culture has to depict the rhetoric of choice, self-fashioning, perpetual youth, and carefree humor once too often</p> <p>3. In the discussion about mothering, the notion “choice” strongly emphasizes the neoliberal for autonomy and adaptability (Baker, 2009)</p>
3. Self-Surveillance	Data	<p>1. <i>“Some problems in the world seem to exist solely for women. Like not having anything to wear. I realized I had nothing nice for tonight.” (p.27)</i></p> <p>2. <i>“I looked at my self in the mirror. My wavy hair had grown and now reached my shoulders. I looked slim-the two months diet before the wedding had helped.” (p.4)</i></p> <p>3. <i>“She picked a navy-blue lace dress for me. It fit well, but ended mid-thigh.”</i> <i>“Too short?” I said.</i> <i>“Not at all. It’s summer. You look lovely.”</i> <i>She said. Even though she was paid to say it, it felt good. “I would wax those legs, though,” she added.</i> <i>Ouch! That hurt.”Unless you like it natural,” the salesperson corrected</i></p>

			<i>herself, switching back to classic American political correctness. (p.27)</i>
	Logics	1.	This self-surveillance which can produce the stress (Gill, 2007) will lead women to consume some products start from beauty products until fashion in order to fill the desire to “feel attractive”.
		2.	According to Negra (2009), self-maintaining on weight by doing a diet and exercise is the practice of disciplinary social control.
		3.	This kind of peer surveillance is happened spontaneously by examining the appearance and the behavior toward each other which can be said as the ‘normative cruelties’ (Ringrose and Renold, 2010).
4. Shifting from Objectification to Subjectification	Data	1.	<i>“Your dress is lovely too.” “Look, no tag today,” I said and turned around. Both of us laughed. I was wearing a military green lace dress I had picked up from Gap. It ended well above the knees, exposing enough leg. However, I still don’t think Debu noticed the hundred dollars I spent fixing my limbs. The dim lighting and the restaurant table covering my legs did no justice to the hour I had spent in the torture chamber. (p.34)</i>
		2.	<i>“Okay, I had a challenge bigger than distressed debt tonight. I had to ensure Debu made a move, so some naughtiness could happen. Of course, because I am a woman, I somehow also had to pretend to be innocent, as if I had no role to play in making anything happen. I had to steer him without him realizing he had been steered.” (p. 39)</i>
			<i>“Wow, you’ve transformed.” He said. The sunglasses covered his eyes. I couldn’t tell if he was staring at me. I thought he did. Maybe I wished he did.” (p.134)</i>

	Logics	1.	As stated by Goldman (1992): a woman is not directly presented as the objectified one but rather as the active one who presents themselves upon their liberation in an objectified manner.
		2.	Rosalind Gill (2003) stated that one of the key problems with the shift is the notion that women are pleasing themselves and are freely choosing.
5. The Makeover Paradigm	Data	1.	<i>“I had lie to Avinash. I had a haircut appointment. After moving to New York, I had decided to leave my nerdy, unfashionable days far behind. An associate trainee in my class had gorgeous shoulder-length hair with waves, exactly how I wanted mine. She had made a booking for me at a salon on 32nd Street.” (p.27)</i>
		2.	<i>“I went back to my room and showered. I opened my suitcase and took out a white flowing dress with floral print. It seemed perfect for an island resort dinner. The dress had a deep neckline; I wore a bead necklace to cover it, I applied makeup and created a smoky effect around my eyes. I realized I had not dressed up to look good since my New York days with Debu. Also, I noticed the name ‘Debu’ didn’t sting much anymore. I applied perfume and translucent strawberry lip gloss. I looked at my self in the mirror one final time. If I made an effort I could look nice.” (p.135)</i>
	Logics	1.	It is related to the Alison Winch (2015) statement that in the hypervisible landscape of popular culture the body is recognized as the object of women’s labor which is being the asset, her product, her brand, and as the gateway to freedom and empowerment in a neoliberal market economy.
		2.	As the constituted notion in postfeminism sensibility, makeover paradigm work on firstly lead the woman to feel that they are always lacking on something about them (Gill, 2007).

APPENDIX 2

Transnational Postfeminism		
No.	Data	Logics
1.	<p><i>“You haven’t done this before?” said my fifty years old, waxing lady, Chaterine, politely while ripping the waxing trips off me most brutally.</i></p> <p><i>I am lying on my underwear. I had come to Completely Bare, a funky ‘high-tech meets comfy chic’ waxing studio on 68th Street and Madison.</i></p> <p><i>“I have. Twice in my life. In India. Years ago.” I said.... (p.32)</i></p>	<p>It is related to the argument written by Simidele Dosekun (2015) which says that it is very possible to postfeminism to sells transnationally. It means that many commodities can be reached by women outside the Western.</p>
2.	<p><i>“....her twenty-three-years-old, who grew up in middle-class West Delhi, had cracked a job at one of the biggest investment banks in the world...” (p.6)</i></p>	<p>It is related to what is proposed by Simidele Dosekun that the class is key to understand how postfeminism is derived in a woman especially outside the Western (Dosekun, 2015).</p>
3.	<p><i>“You are going to meet the boy’s side in jeans and a T-shirt? And look at your neck!</i></p> <p><i>“Again you said ‘boy’s side’. And what’s wrong with my neck?”</i></p> <p><i>“There is no jewelry. Go change into salwar kameez and wear a chain from my jewelry box.” (p.4)</i></p>	<p>Thus, for Indians, if women wear good clothes not only for personal needs but also by the desire to improve the position of the family (Khare, Mishra, Parveen, 2012)</p>