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Estimates revealed that over the study period, the industries under CRS production technology had on an average allocative efficiency level of 91.5 per cent implying that the industries were 8.5 per cent inefficient respectively. In the case of VRS production technology, an average allocative efficiency of 99.1 per cent, implying that the industries were on an average 0.9 per cent inefficient. More efficiency DMU's were observed in VRS production technology compared to CRS production technology.

### Conclusion

For the entire period, technical, scale, cost and allocative efficient DMUs were more under Variable Returns to Scale (VRS) production technology than under Constant Returns to Scale (CRS) production technology. Also it is very clear that inefficiency could be due to the existence of either increasing or decreasing returns to scale.

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## MAN AND HIS ESTRANGED SELF IN UPAMANYU CHATTERJEE'S *WEIGHT LOSS*

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### Abstract

Upamanyu Chatterjee's novel *Weight Loss* can be read as a journey from rootlessness to maturity. Bhola, the protagonist of the novel undergoes existential problems and finally realizes his responsibility. The novel depicts Bhola's withdrawal from his society and his own self in quest of self-realization. Alienated from society and his own self, he feels lonely. Once love represented a harmonious life. But now it has ceased to be so for him. Life is measured according to its practical values and all life generating values. Those values are ignored or misused in the contemporary society. This is revealed in Chatterjee's novel *Weight Loss* depicting the modern society.

### Introduction

Upamanyu Chatterjee's characters are existential characters. They experience all the existential problems. His novels present a very morbid picture of society. It reflects the dull and monotonous cycle of existence. Upamanyu Chatterjee's *Weight Loss* gives a picture of morally and socially degraded man. Bhola is obsessed with sex always

seeking partners from the society including men. But he becomes a family man by marrying Kamala. Still he is in search of other sexual partners also, like Moti. It gives a negative aspect of India which nobody is aware of.

It looks like an unreal world because all decisions taken by Bhola are because of his sexual urges. He wants to be a dominant partner in his relationships. Dysfunctional families and societies are considered as main reasons for this problem. Bhola's family never gave importance to him. When the father understands him, Bhola does not have time for him.

In this novel, not only Bhola is obsessed with sex but also others from cooks to drivers, to the quack doctor Borkar. All are willing to play the game of sex. There is no value for relationship. Nobody thinks about what Nandini Lal says: "It may not be an easy read, however, for readers squeamish about violence, squalor or graphic sex. Upamanyu takes seriously the satirists role of exposing society's ills - he goes a step further and exposes body parts as well" (7). Bhola manages and maintains

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decoram as a student and as a lecturer. He even manages to arrange his marriage. Kamala's first marriage was not fruitful. After her marriage, she has to resign her job to accompany her husband. She does not enjoy marital bliss due to her husband's addiction. After drinking alcohol he would become a beast. Hence she cannot have a good relationship with her husband. Bhola is not able to forget Moti and Titli even after marrying Kamala whom Chatterjee calls 'first lovers'.

The entire novel discusses Bhola's sexual obsession. But after the marriage it is not a priority for both of them "They had gone to bed at four in the morning and Bhola had presumed that six at that hour with an unsexy unknown - for him as well as for her was not a priority" (242). Chatterjee says that "Bhola has sex with Kamala just eight times in the three years that they remained together" (242). This shows that both of them are not interested in each other. They do not lead a purposeful life. Even though he has not established a good relationship with his wife Kamala, he wants to have sex with Kamala's sister Anin.

Bhola longs for Moti. Moti comes to see him after thirteen years. Bhola "didn't sleep a wink that night. He'd gone to bed too late, he had two Nescafe's with his in-laws at the nursing home, he was expectedly tense about Kamala and then Moti's phone call out of the blue totally

knocked out of his skull any residual drowsiness" (260). Bhola looks at Moti's lips and wonders, "how many lovers he had in the intervening span of time and how many of them had been male" (266). Bhola is spiritually and morally degraded because of his obsession with sex. After the birth of his daughter also, he is not able to forget Moti. When Bhola is left alone in the late evenings or night, or when he closes his eyes out of tiredness, he remembers the time he has spent with Moti.

Bhola has spent many for years alone in the hills. He feels that he misses Kamala. Frequently he has sex with Mrs. Manchandra. Manchandra, in her husband's presence, calls him as her brother. Mrs. Manchandra is not loyal to her husband. Similarly Bhola is not loyal to his wife. He wants to satisfy his physical desires with others. There is no possibility of establishing a truthful, meaningful and purposeful relationship with his wife. This is because of his physical desires which he has developed even at an early stage. It is also because of man's egoism, enmity and rigid taste and temperament. Man-Woman relationship fails due to man's inherent weaknesses and limitations.

Love ceases to have a meaning in his life as he is after his physical needs. This is attributed either to man or woman's greed for 'possession' and 'domination'. Life is measured according to its practical values and all life generating values. Chatterjee

criticises the society which does not give importance to those values.

Due to the modern way of life and modern man's materialistic attitude, life is filled with suffering. In Chatterjee's novel love is asked to depart from human heart. The power of love neither leads to psychological ascendancy nor to the attainment of selfhood. Everyone undergoes identity crisis. Erick H. Erickson in his book *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, states that

In psychological terms, identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which the individual judges himself in the light of what he perceives to be the way in which others in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant to them: while he judges their way of judging him in the light of what he perceives himself in comparison to them and to types that have become relevant to him. This process is, luckily and necessarily, for the most part unconscious except where inner conditions and outer circumstances combine to aggravate a painful, or, elated, "identity consciousness." (22-23).

Chatterjee's novel portrays the relationship of the protagonist with the society also in a negative manner. Man is a social animal. He should lead a purposeful

life and cannot remain a spectator in the world. He should be an active agent and contribute to the development of the society through his involvement with social issues. Man's existence and attainment of essence is closely related to the social phenomenon. This involvement of man with others is fundamental for the realization of his selfhood.

G.J.V. Prasad says that *Weight Loss* "is a novel about a society where almost everybody here see on the mind of all the time, where morality or codes of acceptable behaviour are only about maintaining façades, where nobody's life is fulfilling any way". He also adds that "this is a novel about dissociation, about dysfunctional societies. On one side Bhola wants to maintain the body. On the other side he is need of his bodily appetites. This is reflected in the number of people he slept with eight-four men and four women" (95).

In this novel Upamanyu Chatterjee satirizes society by exposing its ill through the character Bhola. Even at an early age he was obsessed with his Physical Education teacher Anthony. His friend Dosto loves his driver. Bhola chases Titli and her husband Moti. On the other side he completes his education, gets his job and marries Kamala. Bhola is not afraid of society and others. But his sexual desires are not easily satisfied. He looks as if he leads a happy and comfortable life with Kamala, but he is not able to forget the other

partners involved in his life, especially Moti. Bhola is a representative of the modern materialist of the contemporary society.

Chatterjee's man who is isolated from society searches for a new order of life. This alienation demands that he seeks his own self. Thus the subjective way of life of a solitary man acquires more importance. He lives in his own world, thinking his own thoughts, seeking his own self, disappointed and depressed. The protagonist of Chatterjee's novel finds his own existence a burden. Chatterjee records the contemporary lonely man's trials, tortures and traumas. He is neither able to communicate with the world at large nor relate himself with the surroundings in a meaningful way. *Weight loss* is about the strange life of Bhola from age 11 to age 37, whose attitude to most of the people around him depends on their lust worthiness. From Bhola's experiences in the school, Chatterjee clearly portrays that he is not interested in studies. There is no place for moral values. He wants to enjoy life without realizing what he is doing. In school, Bhola doesn't want to learn and he just wants to pass the time. It is said that "Not quiet knowing how to kill time till the bell, Bhola wandered off to the changing rooms" (10). His mischievous nature comes out in his relationship with Anthony. He spends most of the time sitting under the trees. There is no improvement in the character of Bhola.

The modern man has lost his reason and his existence is mechanical; he leads an

aimless, absurd and useless life. Man has lost his peace and only the sense of fear predominates. Post-Independent Indian Society with its almost institutionalized competition, growth of scientific technologies, moral decline, spiritual degeneration and confused values plays a vital role in the predicament of Upamanyu Chatterjee's hero. Chatterjee says that, "All things must befall before they can pass" (13). For Bhola his sexual obsession changes from one person to another person as he grows up. Till his marriage Bhola's state has not improved. Throughout his life has been only after sexual partners especially Moti and Titli. After the marriage also he searches these two people. The result is frustration and inability to communicate with the members of the family.

The process of becoming is more important than being for an individual who is in quest of self-realization. After man's alienation from his society and his own self, freedom, choice, action and responsibility play an important role in the process of man's self-realization. Bhola is not truthful to others including his wife. Nandini Lal calls the novel as a 'satyr's satire.' Upamanyu Chatterjee in his conversation with Sunil Sethi says, "*Weight Loss* it meant in all its senses - as metaphor for a kind of fear of emotional commitment. He is unable to take on baggage that he feels he cannot handle - weight both physical and mental, I guess" (36).

Bhola loves Kamala and both of them have nice time talking about music class, Guruji and Francesca. He wants to have a child and he shares his wish to his wife.

He sensed more than saw the happy smile that illumined her face. 'Okay', she replied equably before disappearing into the drawing room, as though he had asked her whether she wanted butter on her toast. He could hear her humming her way to the kitchen.

He felt glad, at peace, at having blurted out his wish for progeny. He had felt like honouring and fostering a rare, noble impulse within himself. (255)

Kamala conceives. But there is no improvement feels in their relationship in the intervening months. As the days pass, he starts liking her more and more as an individual. At the same time he feels that he is responsible for Titli's future and he feels guilty because she is important to him.

Bhola is happy to take up his domestic responsibilities. He gets appointments from the gynecologist and takes Kamala to the hospital. He also makes lists of what to ask the doctor and rearranges the flat for the new corner. He also reads the past issues of Reader's Digest to know about parenthood. He comes to know that they would need another servant, for the baby. In the mean time he thinks of calling Anin

to know about Titli. But he does not make a call; "He realized that he did not really want to know where Titli was and what she was upto as long as she did not turn up at his door" (259).

Kamala is admitted in the hospital. On that day the phone rings and it is from Moti after thirteen years. Moti wants to meet him urgently. He feels:

To think of going for a run and to fix a meeting with a male lover from his past, to dawdle over a pot of tea at home while his wife was in hospital expecting a baby at any moment - were sinful and irresponsible acts, all of them. You are having my baby. The song - but he simply could not recall the singer's name just his thyroid - deficient eyes and never ending fore head - then slipped into his skull and would not go away. What the fuck did Moti want, he has asked himself irritably without pause in bed. (261)

When he saw Moti, the past memories fill Bhola's mind. He takes him to his house and feels happy to have a reunion with him. But the entire situation changes and Moti becomes angry with him:

'You are very dirty' He glared at Bhola, not liking the expression of awed, hear - amused disbelief on his face. 'First my life, then me, sometimes on the same day with the same lips.

However could the poor sod not have known" Bhola suddenly laughed. He did not mean to, he certainly did not

find the situation comic, but he felt abruptly and explosively happy to find, so unexpectedly, innocence at the heart of things. Startled, Moti fired. Bhola felt in his chest the thud of the bullet and the most searing, unimaginable pain that he had experienced in his life. (277)

Bhola said to himself, "If I get out of this above, I will be good and straight hereafter" (285). After this incident the bond between Bhola and Kamala becomes stronger. Though Kamala guesses that something must have happened to him, she does not want to know what happened to him. She was happy that he was alive.

To Bhola, the first few months of his daughter's were the best of his own life. When they need a maid to look after their child, Titli comes as the fourth maid. Bhola starts worrying and he thinks that he would fall from the state of grace that he has attained in the preceding nine months. He even thinks that "may be Kamala herself would somehow die in the hospital and he would never have to exit from the spider clasp of Titli's limbs" (346).

Bhola returns home and finds Titli. She has a red plastic bag and then notices his daughter. He enquires about the bites on the baby's forearm. She manages by saying "Heat Boils, probaly' They have been there for a couple of days" (348). Then he wants to continue his relationship with Titli. In the mean time he finds a hypodermic syringe and the red plastic robe. He unscrews the flask's top and finds a

cupful of blood. When Titli is inside the bathroom, he bolts the door from outside.

Bhola looks at his child and too she is delighted to see her father. He feels the bond and feels ashamed of himself. He holds her tight against his chest and begins to weep silently: "He wanted to die, to atone, to have his semen drained out of him by an enormous syringe, to give up his body and his life for her" (350).

After this incident, Bhola is abandoned by Kamala. The actual realization takes place after this. His entire life is changed and his lifestyle helps him to define God. He writes letters to Kamala and wants to know about her daughter. But he does not get any reply. He often thinks about his past life with his wife and daughter. The separation from his family changes him a lot. For him, "The flat felt empty, chilly and so depressing that he actually thought that he would die, that he could not possibly out live the night" (361)

In the four years Bhola lives a disciplined life. His mind, his memories and his dead life helps him to lose his weight. He finds that he could lose weight when he lives alone. One day he receives a call from Titli to inform him that Dosto was dead. He goes to Anin's house. There he sees Titli. He continues his relationship with Titli. He is not able to stop his desire for Titli. He happens to see Moti and takes pity on him. After this meeting, "Bhola felt tired and extremely sleepy. He wanted to go home and back in time and try and win back hi

old life with his wife and daughter" (410). The birth of his child and a near death experience that change Bhola into a sentimental mode. His life changes back again because he is wrongly suspected of having molested his own child. The child seems to give a second life for him. But he is keen to celebrate life after his lucky escape. He is finally left with no alternative but to take his own life. He attains the

ultimate act in his weight loss programme by giving up the body itself.

Man's life is related to his society and his own inner self. If he works in harmony with himself and society and makes the right choices and works accordingly, he may attain selfhood. Otherwise, disunited with these respective spheres, he will ruin himself and become a victim of the circumstances.

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