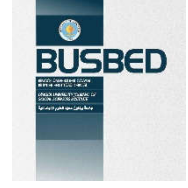


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THE CATCHER IN THE RYE: HOLDEN CAULFIELD THE VOICE OF INNOCENCE

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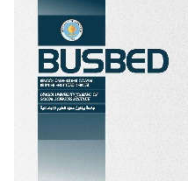
Abstract

The Catcher in the Rye is a social critique of the realities of America after World War II. The author, J.D. Salinger, addresses the psychological traumas and social changes after the war and adolescent problems. However, readers see social realities through the eyes of an adolescent, Holden Caulfield. Holden rebels against the conditions of modern life and adults' intervention in the adolescent world; his rebellion is an escape. Since adolescence has its own culture and language, the adolescent language in the novel is unique and is an uncensored adolescent expression. It is this voice of adolescence that causes a conflict between adults and adolescents. Thus, Holden is both an adolescent critique of American society in the 1950s and an adolescent response to that society. In this study, adolescent problems and what shaped their development are excavated in terms of the way adolescents and adults perceive life.

Keywords: Adolescent language, Innocence, Environment, Morality, Capitalism

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ÇAVDAR TARLASINDA ÇOCUKLAR: MASUMİYETİN SESİ HOLDEN CAULFIELD

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Öz

Çavdar Tarlasında Çocuklar, İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra Amerika'nın gerçeklerinin toplumsal eleştirisi. Yazar J.D. Salinger, savaş sonrası yaşanan psikolojik travmaları ve toplumsal değişimleri ve ergenlik sorunlarını ele alır. Ancak okuyucular sosyal gerçekleri ergen Holden Caulfield'in gözünden görürler. Holden, modern hayatın koşullarına ve yetişkinlerin ergen dünyasına müdahalesine isyan eder; onun isyanı bir kaçıştır. Ergenliğin kendine has bir kültürü ve dili olduğundan romandaki ergen dili özgündür ve sansürsüz bir ergen ifadesidir. Yetişkinler ve ergenler arasında bir çatışmaya neden olan ergenliğin bu sesidir. Bu nedenle Holden, hem 1950'lerde Amerikan toplumunun ergenlik eleştirisi, hem de bu topluma ergen tepkisini temsil eder. Bu çalışmada, ergenlerin ve yetişkinlerin hayatı algılayış biçimleri açısından ergen sorunları ve gelişimlerini nelerin şekillendirdiği ortaya çıkarılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ergen dili, Masumiyet, Çevre, Ahlak, Kapitalizm

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Catcher in the Rye is a novel by J. D. Salinger, published in 1951. It is valued nearly all over the world because the book quests the social and family affairs of the young in the years following World War II. Moreover, it narrates the realities of American society and the sexual perceptions of youth. Salinger tries to draw the attention of the public to the sexual understanding of adolescents, which constitutes a social problem in the 1950s. And also, family problems that cause the young to get lost in society are implied in the novel. Because of the obscene descriptions and language, it was not recommended by some critics to younger readers in case they would be affected unfavorably. For this reason, it was banned in schools for a certain time. In *The Catcher in the Rye*, Salinger depicts adolescent problems and their unique culture that developed differently from adult world.

Young people have their own culture and language through which they express themselves. They make their own music, clothing, eating habits, and social life because they fail to “make their mark in the world of adults” (Eckert, 2004, p. 362). They create their own world “in which they can make a mark,” and this world, “commonly referred to as “teen culture,” is a response to the opportunities and constraints of the institution that houses it” (Eckert, 2004, p. 362). Therefore, language is a critical factor in the communication of teen culture. It represents the speaker’s attitude towards the target person and culture as well as expresses a person’s characteristics and culture, besides a society’s values. The language in *The Catcher in the Rye* gives information about adolescent and adult cultures. Holden expresses youth problems through adolescent language; we see the conflict between the younger generation and the adult world from the perspective of youth. As a result, Holden's language mentions communication problems between young people and adults that cause a disconnection between their worlds.

The psychological perceptions of young people during the puberty period are critical since they behave selfishly and make illogical decisions. They perceive adults as if they do not understand them, and they impose pressure on their choices and freedom. Amid this communication problem, we see Holden’s language as the voice of adolescent culture and understanding in *The Catcher in the Rye*. His voice is innocent because he tries to protect the kids’ world in the chaotic and changing world of capitalism. The adults’ phonies and immoralities in the kids’ living environment ruin their innocence, and Holden rebels against the attempt of adults to infiltrate their ill world into the kids’ innocent world. Also, moral and capitalist values play a significant part in showing the language conflict between the adult and young worlds. So, this study brings different perspectives, such as alienation, sexuality, rebellion, escape, censorship, and adolescent problems, into the discussion to highlight the importance of adolescent language. Accordingly, this study aims to explore why Holden protests against the adult world and what makes him the innocent voice of the youth.

2. HOLDEN CAULFIELD THE VOICE OF INNOCENCE

Industrial change and the developments in technology have always been a prime force in shaping social life and daily habits. In this respect, capitalists are on top of that force as they have the wealth and opportunity to control the change. They are the hidden hands behind the force. They create their own hegemony and dominate society according to its values. In the world of the bourgeoisie, competitive capitalism puts people in a survival struggle, and this makes individuals indifferent to the realities of life. They develop selfish characteristics and perform immoral behaviors. Thus, since the city and social life depicted in *The Cather in the Rye* are shaped by capitalist values, their cruelty presents a corrupted environment for kids. Holden responds to that cruelty and performs innocent behavior by trying to remove the obscene scripts on the walls of the school and on the thumps in the museum. In this way, Salinger literalizes obscenity in all parts of social life, allowing it to be discussed for the sake of kids’ future. The places where kids socialize should be moralized accordingly. In this respect, Holden is the conscience of the kids who unconsciously follow what the outer world offers them. Because Holden tries to reshape conditions before they shape kids immorally. Viewing *The Catcher in the Rye* from this perspective does not render the book obscene, but rather a depiction of realities that contribute to the creation of an obscene society. Holden’s will to leave the capitalist life and his search for an isolated life from the phonies of capitalist values confirm his innocence and his loyalty to the traditional moralities that present accepted moral circumstances for the future of new generations. The capitalist social pressure wears Holden out, and he wants to escape from city life. However, Phoebe’s love for him overwhelms his desire to escape, and he decides to stay with his family. This confirms that Holden knows his responsibilities and stays with his sister to discharge his brotherhood responsibilities. Insecure places in the living environments of the young and obscene images in the areas where kids socialize create dirty conditions for them, which also shape their individualities. Therefore, the book itself does not bear obscenity or immorality, but rather the sexual tendencies and implications of the social places where children socialize. In this context, it can be said that the book itself is a moral critique of the obscene social way of life and that Holden is innocent in using youth language to state that teen culture is ruined by adult culture. Holden is just an eye that senses sexual implications and images with the perception of an adolescent, so he worries about the innocence of the kids mentioned in the book. Feeling alone and alienated, he tries to escape from the realities of life and wants to go somewhere away from corrupted society. However, the innocent soul of his sister

Phoebe stops him from doing that. As a result of the emotional bonds formed in social relationships, one cannot escape the realities of life.

To begin with, regarding Holden's alienation and the implied adolescent problems in the novel, there are various assumptions for the reasons behind it. Considering that adolescents have their own culture and language, they have a unique perception of life different from adults. In this respect, a certain age period may be the reason for their alienation, besides other factors such as social and environmental conditions. For instance, referring to World War II, Graham (2007) says that "[i]t left the post-war America in an atmosphere of self-doubt and fear which all lead to a materialistic, consumerist life-style in specially the middle-class," and this creates forcing conditions that cause their loneliness (p. 11). Menand (2001) relates the war with Salinger's novel as "the experience that darkened his [Salinger's] satire and put the sadness into his humor" (p. 4). This sadness is given in the novel as an adolescent problem that stems from the adults' immoral world. The immoralities of the adult world ruin adolescent living environments which are the other sources of Holden's loneliness and the cause of his escape. Therefore, Holden sometimes rejects adulthood and its social world. Similarly, puberty period problems may cause adolescent alienation. However, Holden's alienation is because of the capitalist and immoral adult world in the novel; and Chen (2009), on the adolescent problems in *The Catcher in the Rye*, says that:

Holden represents a social type of adolescents growing up in a corrupt and decadent world and serves a mirror for his peers. There is a lot in him with which the young can identify. Much of Holden's candid outlook on life, on people around him, on society is still relevant to the youth of today and contains a truth of an eternal nature. (p.146)

When adult intervention, not their help, is added to adolescent problems during their growing up, they turn their faces to their peer groups and develop their identities accordingly. In their culture, adolescents create their own arguments against the adult world. And Keniston (1965), in his book *The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society*, mentions the adolescent's response to that American society as follows:

...a response of individuals especially sensitized to reject American culture by their early development, a development which in part reflects their families' efforts to solve dilemmas built into American life; and it is in part a response to social stresses, historical losses, and collective engagements in our shared existence. (p. 391)

It can be inferred that adult culture and social life have a great impact on the development of adolescents and shape their future together with their world visions. Holden's response to adult culture was shaped for all of the reasons mentioned above. His rebelliousness becomes the voice of youth at the time, and even today. Thus, Sasani and Javidnejat (2015) see Holden as the "emblem of a teenager getting out of the control of the family and gradually facing the adversaries of the world outside" (p.p. 205-206). Holden tries to find a way to express his feelings and experiences, which alienates him from the traditional adult world of America since that adult culture could not meet and understand the adolescent Holden.

Besides the adult impact on adolescent alienation, the adolescent peer circle and the traces of childhood pose problems for individuals' development. They are trapped between childhood and the adult world; in other words, "in between the dependency-based years of their childhood and the adult world's demanding for a high degree of self-sufficiency" (Sasani & Javidnejat, 2015, p. 206). However, the answer to the question of in-betweenness, says Keniston (1965), is to learn the adult world and "its way and adapting to its requirements" (p. 395). But, Holden is alienated and neglected by his family in that he does not know how to grasp social life logically since he is under the influence of puberty. He tries to speak with someone who can understand him and guide him on his way out of social and adolescent problems. Holden is honest and ready to talk about his problems with someone. As Ian Hamilton (1988) says, there is "someone I could really talk to" in Holden, which explains why Holden, being isolated from the adult world and peer circle, finds himself in his conversations with his sister Phoebe (p. 5). Therefore, the world of children is not dirty. They have an innocent, sincere, and untouched world. In this respect, Holden and his adolescent language became the "voice of dissent" that was verified by the thousands of sold copies of the book (Kinane, 2017, p. 118). Holden's social and individual isolation reveals the "problem of communication" with his environment and adults that are not sincere in their conversations, apart from his sister Phoebe (Kinane, 2017, p. 118). His discourse with his sister consoles his perception of the adult world around him in America. In this respect, Holden Caulfield's age and characteristics constitute the focus of the study in that his relations and understanding make him an outstanding one as a critical response to capitalist society. He is a sixteen-year-old boy and the protagonist and narrator of the novel who has been expelled from Pencey Prep school for his failure in some classes. He has a strong power of reasoning; rather than being expelled, he thinks and quests the hypocrisy and ugliness of the world in an intelligent and sensitive way. He knows people around him, such as his teachers and schoolmates, very well and is aware of their attitudes. Seeing the immoralities in social life, he is anxious about the future, which the younger generation will shape. So, it is clear that he is hopeless about a moral future for the younger generation and says, "[p]eople never believe you," which also implies the reason why

individuals alienate from a society (Salinger, 1951, p. 38). Holden narrates the events and phonies in the novel in an authentic and heart-to-heart manner. Throughout the book, he innocently criticizes the young and adults in terms of their unaccepted conversations and behaviors. In other words, he feels uneasy when he repeatedly faces the phonies. However, what makes Holden an innocent boy is his interior world, in which he finds himself happy and at ease. His world is shown in his memories of his dead brother, Allie, and he phones Phoebe when he feels alone and uneasy. He shares the feelings of loneliness and emptiness with Phoebe. As Edwards (1983) states, Salinger signifies Holden's innocence when he "demonstrates repeatedly his love for his sister" (p. 45). The reason why he calls his sister maybe because of the same innocence of his sister, who has "sense and all," which makes him feel "like talking to her on the phone" (Salinger, 1951, p. 72). Spending time with Phoebe is another joy for him and relaxes him naturally. Whatever he does together with his sister, such as "I like doing what I'm doing right now. Sitting here with you, and talking about stuff" is because of his innocent love for his family, especially, his little sister (Salinger, 1951, p. 184). He feels safe and at home when he talks to Phoebe; there are no phonies and evil around. For Holden, showing true love is "something really" (Salinger, 1951, p. 184). Showing two young brothers how to find the mummies in the public museum and listening to a Scottish ditty singing "Comin' Through the Rye" make Holden "feel better" and he is not "so depressed any more" (Salinger, 1951, p. 125). It is his moral understanding that makes him innocent, and he is in need of adult affection. Another reason for why he is a moral and innocent character is that "[h]e respects those who are humble, loyal, and kind," and these are his sister Phoebe, the two young brothers, Scottish ditty, and the little boy in the movie theatre (Edwards, 1983, p. 45). His admiration for his father and other family members demonstrates his morality and innocence. The most significant issue related to his innocence and morality is that "he wants to be a responsible member of society, to guide and protect those who younger than he" (Edwards, 1983, p. 45).

In the communication problems of Holden, it is obvious that he feels alone and neglected. He is alone since there are only "about three people" in his address book (Salinger, 1951, p. 147). He feels neglected because "[n]obody kept answering" what he said (Salinger, 1951, p. 69). He thinks that nobody minds youths and what they say, thus "[p]eople never give [their] message to anybody" (Salinger, 1951, p. 161). He is both physically and spiritually alone; his answer to Jane's question about who he is with at night is "[m]e, myself and I" (Salinger, 1951, p. 163). As a result, adolescents feel unable to express themselves to adults because they are alienated and ignored even when they discuss reality. This makes them feel unskilled and unable to make their mark. Holden is the voice of youth who feels unable and unskilled, and he, as Kinane (2017) acknowledges, "speaks to the realities of social and personal isolation, and to the loneliness of the individual lost within society" (p. 130). Further, Kinane (2017) claims that "[b]y forcing the reader to view the world through Holden's eyes, Salinger's text becomes a platform for each individual to acknowledge the threat of social isolation, and the loss of the individual entity within a society that, as a whole, concerns itself with the collective" (p. 131). And this increases the importance of adult help to enable adolescents to fit into the adult world smoothly and cope with puberty problems.

The death of his brother, Allie, devastates him, as he was thirteen when he lost his brother. This loss is connected with "Holden's attempt to preserve childhood innocence" (Priest, 2016, p. 216). With the social and industrial changes occurring together with his development, there is a change around Holden. So, he wants everything to stay right where it is. His struggle to preserve childlike innocence is because he "idealized" it and the "honesty of childhood" in his "inner world where he attempts to preserve them like exhibits in the museum" (Priest, 2016, p. 216). He slowly begins to be aware of the change and phonies in his adolescence and fears the change because "he believes it will destroy the goodness and purity within him" (Priest, 2016, p. 216). He is in trouble with what to idealize: the innocent values of childhood or the values of the adult world. He is alone in this dilemma; he is at school and unable to reach any adult help. "The absence of his family" is a critical need for Holden and the adolescents like him in this period (Priest, 2016, p. 219). What Holden then does is to find confrontation in his small sister, Phoebe. As a result, he wishes to "be the catcher in the rye and all," expressing his opposition to the changing world and adult control over his life (Salinger, 1951, p. 186). He wants "a world where nothing changes, where everything is simple, understandable, and infinite" since he fears "the unpredictable changes of the world" (Chen, 2009, p. 144).

Moreover, Holden's interactions with his social and physical environment put him in a tangle of problems. His protest to the changing world is an escape in a way, since he is alone and alienated, and he is lost:

Relationships, intimacy, and sexuality are the problems Holden faces relating to his alienation. Both physical and emotional relationships offer Holden the opportunity to break out of his isolated shell. They also represent what he fears most about the adult world: complexity, unpredictability, conflict and change. (Chen, 2009, p. 145)

He needs adult and family "contact, care, and love" to be able to cope with his problems (Chen, 2009, p. 145). In this respect, Holden is alone and neglected by his family as well as his adult circle. The institutions of education, its system, and the bourgeois understanding of sending children to expensive private schools cut the

communication of adolescents with their families and the adult world, particularly during the puberty period. Consequently, adults' indifference to adolescents creates adolescent and communication problems.

Speaking of the outer world, New York is Holden's social, cultural, and financial environment that shapes his attitudes and worldview. However, New York "for Holden is a bizarre, seductive yet threatening place and Holden's journey through it has some of the qualities of a fairy tale," says Benjamin Priest, and quotes that:

... an adolescent must leave the security of childhood, which is represented by getting lost in the dangerous forest; learn to face up to his violent tendencies and anxieties, symbolized by encounters with wild animals or dragons; get to know himself, which is implied in meeting strange figures and experiences. (Bettelheim, 1976: qtd in Priest 2016, p. 211)

In this respect, the city, as a dangerous forest, is the place "where (Holden) was born" and grew up (Salinger, 1951, p. 1). It is a critical condition for Holden because it shaped his beliefs and attitudes. His family is absent when he is alone in the city, and the school is run with financial interests. As a result, there is a neglected adolescent student peer group that acts according to their thoughts and desires. And this makes readers witness an immoral adolescent generation that has its own culture and language. And, as Priest (2016) claims, readers see the city "through Holden's eyes as a city of strangers and perverts" where "Holden loses himself" and he "cannot solve the riddle of where the ducks in Central Park go to in wintertime" (p. 211). Holden is in "despair and defeat" and this makes him an "ill" character (Priest, 2016, p. 211). Priest tries to clarify that Holden is the ugly duckling who tries to find himself and his identity as an adolescent, showing psychological indications of temporary adolescence. It is acceptable to say that adolescents perform problematic behaviors during this period. And, to elude this period, family and peer help are vitally necessary. Yet, this image was created by the adult world and capitalist values. The youth and their culture are innocent. Adolescents should get help from the adult environment, such as their families, schools, and teachers. Holdens are alone, neglected, and sensitive during the adolescence period. And, Salinger carries this culture and language of adolescents to each reader in an uncensored and realistic way to show that adolescents have a voice in their own culture and also have problems that should be solved by the adult world.

Holden's rebellion against the adult world is not only a critique of phony people but also a rebellion against capitalist values and consumption culture. He rejects capitalism and "the consumerist life-style," a "situation in which the school principal would spend much time talking with the rich parents about their children's progresses and would ignore those of the lower social class" (Sasani & Javidnejat, 2015, p. 207). As a result, he wants to live in an environment that fits into his innocent world.

Holden's escape and alienation also shaped his decisions about job preference. Normally, people make decisions about what kinds of jobs they will choose, but the social environment forces him to change his preferences; he wants spiritual peace rather than making plans for his job in the future. Therefore, he does not "care what kind of job" he will occupy, but he cares not to be known by anyone (Salinger, 1951, p. 213). He wants to flee from the place where he was born and its environment to another one where nobody knows him and he does not know anyone. His parents, together with his social and physical environment, city, and school life, are the main points in his life that force him to feel in such a way. For instance, Holden mentions his school and says: "Pencey was full of crooks. Quite a few guys came from these very wealthy families, but it was full of crooks anyway. The more expensive a school is, the more crooks it has--I'm not kidding." (Salinger, 1952, p. 4). Salinger implies here that capitalist values are immoral, and that the system has conquered educational institutions, where it sows its seeds into future generations. It aims to grow consumers who will replace the current adult sphere. When Holden goes to see Mr. Spencer, he advises him that "life is a game," however, Holden explains it with inner monologues that "[i]f you get on the side where all the hot-shots are, then it's a game, all right--I'll admit that. But if you get on the other side, where there aren't any hot-shots, then what's a game about it? Nothing. No game." (Salinger, 1951, p. 9). Holden addresses the wealthy crooks in the school with "hot-shots" where Salinger addresses the presence of financial titans in schools (Salinger, 1951, p. 9). As an adolescent, Holden feels some concern for his future since he knows that his future is controlled by wealthy crooks (Salinger, 1951, p. 15). Holden is aware of his toing and froing about his concern for the future since he admits that he is in the adolescence phase: "I'll be all right. I'm just going through a phase right now. Everybody goes through phases and all, don't they?" (Salinger, 1951, p. 16). At this point, he behaves honestly and accepts what is wrong with him. Thus, he struggles with the adolescent phase and the adult world. However, the communication problem between adolescents and adults is that adults want to hear the answers from younger people that content them. For instance, Holden honestly confesses that "I'm the most terrific liar you ever saw in your life" because he lies to Spencer that he "had to go to the gym to get" his equipment, even though he does not keep it there (Salinger, 1951, p. 17). He lies to Spencer since this is the thing that he, as an adult, wanted to hear from Holden. Adolescents develop such attitudes to escape adult control over their lives and decisions, which is the reason behind the ill-communication between them and adults.

For the reasons mentioned above, conflict develops between adolescents and adults. Eckert (1988) explains this situation in a nutshell as follows:

As they develop socially, adolescents may move out of their neighborhood networks into networks that may have quite a different socioeconomic character. Thus, one would expect that where individuals' emerging social identities conflict with those of their parents' or neighborhood peers' socioeconomic identities, their patterns of variation will adjust accordingly. (p. 185)

Their language and speech patterns change independently, and when "individual adolescent identity conflicts with parents' socioeconomic class," they create an "independent social identity" (Eckert, 1988, p. 185). They do this at school when they separate from their nuclear families. So, during this separation and isolation, adolescents develop new identities and attitudes that can be called "adolescent society" and "adolescent culture" (Eckert, 1988, p. 187). Hikmet Asutay (2001) asserts that the language of the youth is the youth's own literature, which is the written product of the sub-culture that creates the youth's own world (p. 1). Asutay (2001) sees youth's sub-culture as having an explainable meaning as a reaction "against society, education and training systems that are no longer inadequate" since "orientation criteria are set by family, school, education and training systems" (p. 2). Youth have a sub-cultural system since youth are "classified, limited and segmented within the whole society in terms of monetary, education and training" and this indicates that they have their own signs such as youth clothing, music, literature, and lifestyle (Asutay, 2001, p. 2). Asutay (2001) explains the reasons why *The Catcher in the Rye* is read and loved worldwide by connecting it with the language of the book, and he implies that it uses adolescent slang language and culture (p. 5). In other words, adolescents find themselves and their own voices in this and similar books. *The Catcher in the Rye*, thus, is a novel that interprets adolescent problems and the uncensored voice of adolescent culture. Holden begs the adults not to ruin their innocent world with their immorality and indifference. He asks for adult help and guidance to cope with puberty problems rather than moving into the phony and immoral environment of adults. He rejects this move, and he speaks the natural language of young culture innocently.

Adolescence has a great relationship with industrial capitalism since it imposes adult culture on the adolescent world and shapes their characteristics. They are "segregated from the adult world" and left alone with their age peers in institutions like schools (Eckert, 2004, p. 362). They "are systematically denied adult roles" since they are "virtually isolated from the adult sphere" in the way adults send them to the institutions of education (Eckert, 2004, p. 362). Consequently, they constitute their own world, which is the nucleus of the next adult society. The problem that arises right in this period is that, in the world of adults, adolescents:

...aren't allowed to save the world. Instead, they are expected to participate in a special world that adults create for them – a kind of a practice world. In the midst of this practice world, when they manage to create something for themselves, adults trivialize it. And when they reject this practice world and insist on acting in the adult world, adults may feel threatened. (Eckert, 2004, p. 362)

Therefore, institutions of education are significant in the identity development of children and adolescents since "adults provide norms, sanctions and rewards for behavior" forcing them to take the shape of adults (Eckert, 2004, p. 364). Rather than imposing their ideals on children, adults should help them so that they can build and develop the right identities. So, treatment foster family is a life-saving system to care for children, which can be called "the catchers in the rye," as implied by Salinger (McGuinness & Dyer, 2007, p. 145). The foster family system can save thousands of neglected and isolated children.

In *The Ideals of Holden Caulfield*, George Held (1966) says that Holden is "actually a moral boy" (p. 296). In his article, *Censorship in the Schools: What's Moral about "The Catcher in the Rye?"*, June Edwards (1983) discusses Holden's attitude towards sexuality to confirm his innocence and concludes that: "When a girl tells him to stop, he says, he stops. He never wants to hurt or offend." (p. 41). It is clear that Holden's attitudes prove his innocence and make him a moral individual in society who seeks the moral reality of society. And, *The Catcher in the Rye* explains what forces individuals to behave badly. Carol and Richard Ohmann (1976) analyze reviews and criticisms of *The Catcher in the Rye* in their study *Reviewers, Critics, and The Catcher in the Rye* and conclude that the novel depicts the competitive consumerist American society and its social relations. Catcher "does mirror a competitive, acquisitive society" and "is precisely revealing of social relationships in midcentury America, and motives that sustained them, and rationalizations that masked them." (Carol & Richard Ohmann, 1976, p. 19). Briefly, it can be said that Salinger criticizes capitalism and consumerism, which create immoral conditions and environments that transform younger generations into immoral individuals. Holden, in fact, responds to social norms and mirrors the effects they have on children and adolescents. Attempting to define an adolescent's reaction to the modern social life of 1950s America as unacceptable is, in a sense, blaming an adolescent's psychological fluctuation of growing up while defending the modern social transformation. Because Holden rebels against "an immoral world, the inhumanity of the world, the adult world, the predicament of modern life, the human condition, the facts of life, evil" (Carol & Richard Ohmann, 1976, p. 29). They also mention the historical stage and social problems of the time that we see from the eye of Holden as follows: "The Catcher in the Rye is among other things a serious critical mimesis of bourgeois life in the Eastern United States, ca. 1950-of snobbery, privilege, class

injury, culture as badge of superiority, sexual exploitation, education subordinated to status, warped social feeling, competitiveness, stunted human possibility, the list could go on.” (Carol & Richard Ohmann, 1976, p. 35). This historical reality makes Holden innocent since it is not Holden who is immoral but the social realities that force him into such a world. Holden is just a boy who speaks the realities of adolescent culture.

While rebelling against the outer world, Holden also honestly accepts his own reality and criticizes himself. He mirrors himself from the viewpoint of adults and judges his behaviors as being “childish,” for instance, playing “snowballs” is “childish” to him (Salinger, 1951, p. 37). He also takes one with him into the bus, but the driver wants him to throw it out, even though he says to him that he “wasn’t going to chuck it at anybody” (Salinger, 1951, p. 38). Since it is childish behavior, the driver does not believe him, and in this way, adolescents turn into terrific liars, and this spoils their interactions with adults. Because of his ideals of an innocent and unchanged moral world, he feels “lonesome” even when he is with his schoolmates (Salinger, 1951, p. 51). He is unable to interact with his peers, and he is also disconnected with the adult world. They are not “allowed” to have drinks in the adult world, which can be said to be a ban to protect adolescents in America. This makes him feel alone and depressed, and he wants to do the things that adults are allowed to do. However, he does not have the “verification” of his age to order alcoholic drinks (Salinger, 1951, p. 75). Being treated as an adolescent depresses him, so he says “you can’t even think” when depressed (Salinger, 1951, p. 99). Holden feels “better” when a neglected kid by his parents is singing “[i]f a body catch a body coming through the rye” (Salinger, 1951, p. 125).

Holden experiences a capitalist life at school and in New York City, and thus finds peace in an unchanged moral world. He consoles himself by protecting and preserving an innocent and untouched future for kids. His dialogue with his small sister Phoebe and the innocent world of kids make him feel better. As a result, it is not entirely his fault that he uses bad language; capitalists intervene in school culture, and negligent parents cause the rise of such an adolescent culture to produce unfavorable results for adults, leaving Holden alone, neglected, and innocent. That is why he is the voice of an adolescent culture who speaks their language

3. CONCLUSION

Holden is a responsible sixteen-year-old boy who is aware of phony people around him. After being expelled from the school, he intends to escape from modern society, which presents a meaningless life for him. He judges life and people according to his moral understanding but reacts as an adolescent, which makes him an outcast character in the adult world of time. However, he is a victim of the adult and capitalist world. His love for children and his struggle to protect them from the corrupted adult world show his innocence and compassion. He is a character who knows his responsibilities; he searches for a better life for himself and his generation.

Through Holden's eye, *The Catcher in the Rye* criticizes sexuality as an embodiment of adolescent understanding. Thus, the obscenity described in the novel does not make it obscene; rather, it is the modern social way of life that constitutes an obscene environment for younger generations. Moreover, he uses adolescent language and acts according to adolescent culture. In this way, he becomes the voice of the adolescent world. The language he uses makes the book obscene, though this obscenity is a reality of American social life. Adults also get the book banned to hide this fact from children.

The Catcher in the Rye is a social critique of the change that happened after the financial boom of WW II. It discusses the innocence of adolescents and the ruin in their world that they face at such a young age when they believe the truth. But, capitalist values and the adult world harm their innocence and beliefs, which spoils their innocent understanding of life. In this respect, Holden’s belief in the truth changes into his rebellion against the cruelty and hypocrisy of adults who pursue their desires. However, he fails in his struggle because he cannot change the adult world and preserve moral environments for children. He can only become the voice of the adolescent world by bringing adolescent problems to the masses with an uncensored language.

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