



Portrayal of Values, Beliefs and Issues in Chetan Bhagat's 'Five Point Someone'

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ABSTRACT

Chetan Bhagat has merged both highbrow and lowbrow genres into one, which is now approved as best-seller genre of the Indian English literature. He has endowed the genre with healthy humour and sanguine approach to life. Like R. K. Narayan, he does not create Malgudi village and pick up the characters from here. He chooses the personnel from the real-life metropolis. His novels go around the lives of the youth. He exactly depicts their real-life pictures and entertains all class and cadre of people. Bhagat writes about the youth and specifically for the youth. The aim of this paper is to discuss portrayal of values and beliefs in Chetan Bhagat's 'Five Point Someone'.

KEYWORDS : Conflict, Obsolete, Portrayal, Dilemma, Psychology, Ideology, Attitudes, Perspectives

Chetan Bhagat is such a name today among the contemporary writers who has made a significant and permanent place in the hearts of the million youth. He is a prolific writer who keeps an eye on each and every aspect of the society and notes down the challenges confronted by the youth today. His writings are full of facts and when he writes readers get attached to it as if it is their own story. His popularity predominantly lies on the fact that he initiated the culture of campus novels which dates back to the Americans. The popularity of Chetan Bhagat's first debut writing 'Five Point Someone' revives the fashion of reading among youth. English Literature has witnessed a new era of writing dominated by campus-based novels. Highly elite institutes like IITs, IIMs, became the central features of these novels. Chetan Bhagat's works mainly focus on youth and college students and their life which involves love affairs, drug addiction, fear of exams, boring classes etc. His popularity also lies in the fact that he always writes in simple English and assures the youth that he understands and stands with them during all the up and downs to which they are going through.

Chetan Bhagat is born in Delhi and he is an emerging author in Indian English Literature. Bhagat seems to be an innovative architect in Literature. He finds a ready market for the Indian English Literature. Chetan Bhagat's novels mostly deal with the Indian youth/educated youth of the twentieth century. Seen more as the voice of a creation than just an author, he is making India read like never before. He writes mostly about India as an Indian. He writes about each facet of India like its culture, its problems, and its language and depicts the life of young generation. The

traditional Indian society is in a state of metamorphosis. The old practices and ethnicity have not

given way to new and hence creates conflict in the life of the characters in the works of Chetan Bhagat. He exhibits uncurbed spirits of the young people of his nation and he depicts it with the help of the characters in his novels. His approach is youth calling that calls up only youths and also helps to apprehend their innovative vision for the upliftment of the social evil in the society and to have a glorious world. The incredible success of Chetan Bhagat as a novelist is a miracle of rare apparatus. The credit goes to his management skills, mushrooming of thousands of new private engineering colleges necessitating his mastery over simple past tense, his validation of immoral instinctive human acts in garb of new age realism. His five novels "Five Point Someone", "The Three Mistakes of My Life" and "One Night @ the Call Centre", "Two States of my Marriage Life" and "Revolution 2020" have adventure, romance, background music, expert comments on social, political and education systems. This writing style is now predictable as one of the important innovations taking place in the field of novel writing. Chetan Bhagat has been defining the literary taste of burgeoning book lovers since the publication of his first novel "Five Point Someone" in the year 2004. In the same light, the first novel of the author deals with dilemma of today's engineering students in India who get into the country's top University, only to rebel against the stultifying atmosphere of academic

competition. The novelist has, clearly portrayed ragging, hostel life, work pressure from the higher authority, increasing suicide cases, a great criticism on education system in India following internationally landed IIT system that has stifled students resourcefulness by forcing them to value grades more than anything else; uninspiring teaching and numerous assignments adding to their woes, while still making time to enjoy one's youth.

The novel very realistically describes the present scenario while revealing the fact that in India young people had begun to have far more options than their parents, but their choices remain circumscribed by traditional education system, and overbearingly high expectations. In his first novel, Five Point Someone, his replicas Ryan, Alok and Hari fight against the patriarchal education system run by the old and obsolete rules made by the century old educationists. These potent minds of the old used to believe in wisdom of the world come through self sacrament; the more one penances oneself, the wiser or more intelligent one becomes. The education system of IIT Delhi depicted in his book is adhered to the same patriarchal norms and codes of education. The students are so much congested with assignments, class tests, surprise quizzes and majors exams that they forget what the real meaning of the life is. Their hostel rooms appear to be like prison-cells wherein they are fascinated and their only crime is that they chose to carry IIT tag. Chetan Bhagat believes that the youth are the future of the country. No mind can ever do wonders unless it thinks unconventional. No one has the right to blemish the future of a boy who

is not interested in learning the names of rivers and technical know-how's. The writer adds further if an obstacle is put on the initiative of the student he cannot innovate. There is a phenomenon in every youth but we kill it in his childhood by disgusting his self.

In the article called *Indian Institute of Idiots* Chetan Bhagat expresses his opinion about the education system in the following way, 'The education system's second problem is the course content itself. What do we teach in school and college? And how much do you use it in daily life, later? Ask yourself, has the world changed in the last twenty years? If yes, has our course content changed at the same pace? Has it even changed at all? Who are the people changing our course materials? Do they have real-life corporate exposure? ... We are sticking to the course, testing endlessly how well the student has revised his lessons. We treat lessons as rules to be adhered to, and the better you conform, the more likely you are to score. I hated it personally and I am sure millions do too, but they have no choice. Innovation, imagination and creativity, crucial for the country, as well as more likely to bring the best out of any student, have no place in our education system. In fact, we actually ensure we kill this spirit in the child as fast as possible. Because innovation by definition means challenging the existing way and that is just not something good Indian kids who respect elders do. The cycle perpetuates itself and we continue to create a second-rate society of followers rather than change-embracing leaders.' (Chetan Bhagat, 2012, *What Young India Wants*, Rupa publications New Delhi, p.121-122).

The similar opinion is also expressed in his articles published in 'The Times Of India' now published as 'What Young India Wants'. In the article called 'Sparks' he says, 'life is one of those races in nursery school, where you have to run with a marble in a spoon kept in your mouth. If the marble falls, there is no point coming first.... 'It's okay, bunk a few classes, goof up a few interviews, fall in love. We are people, not programmed devices.' (Chetan Bhagat, 2012, *What Young India Wants*, Rupa publications New Delhi., p.105). But this book (*Five Point Someone*) also comments on atrocious nature of parental aspirations. No one is ready to consider the personal problems of the students- what they need what they like and what dream for.

Chetan Bhagat, through this novel alarmed the teacher fraternity to leave the traditional textbook

theories and confront the challenges posed by the creative students. Every student is bestowed with unique talent and GPA should not be the only parameter to confirm their intelligence. One who is a five pointer in college may rise to a higher level in his career and leave an example for the sufferers. The trio discards the patriarchal system of education though suffered a lot both from the hands of teachers and classmates. The students are advised to swallow the subjects in order to get good grades. They detested the teaching method, and cry for the change. Chetan Bhagat put emphasis on the modern style of teaching which is observational teaching and hints at the incorporation of 'learning by doing' methods. This method can relieve the students from rotting. The observation method let the students to think in a natural way. This technique enables the students to observe thoroughly and find out solution in the objects. If they find a problem in reaching a logical conclusion, they are supposed to discuss the same with teachers and friends. In this way, a learner can satisfy his query. Chetan Bhagat through this novel clearly exposes the sterile dogmatism of the reputed technical institutes. He asserts that the highly qualified professor even does not allow the change. Bhagat believes that one should be the listener to one's soul which always shows the right path. A man always emerges as victorious who listens to his inner voice. This philosophy is well followed by the three friends in the

novel. Although, they suffered a lot in the beginning and were under-performers but unlike others, they are the free thinkers, passionate for life, love creative ideas, symbol of liberty and love practical life. All these qualities lend them big success at the last and their project was approved.

To conclude, the novel is really a great inspiration for the learners as well as for the teachers to adopt a new technique which will suit the psyche of the new generation. The time has come when the professional institutes has to shun the traditional style of learning. This will stave the students growing ability and creativity. The institutes must develop the technical skills; enhance the potentiality of the student, and apply the practicality of the knowledge. Teacher should take the students outside the boundaries of the text and motivate for self-learning.

Conclusion

It is because of globalization in each and every domain youth-culture has also considerably changed. They changed their styles, interests, attitudes, perspectives, language, habits, and attraction to high speed and effective communication technology like Ryan's scooter. In a foreseeable race Internet has become a powerful weapon to get any in sequence with some clicks on the mouse anytime. As Knowledge is ever growing and never ending youth is ready to struggle a lot to be fit in the situation. We found the creamy-layer youth selected by Chetan Bhagat. The youth from Indian remote places have no much awareness of all these transformations. They are yet fighting incessantly for their limited needs with inadequate means. Illiteracy rate is very high in remote places where youth are far from prime education still. Situation of youth in tribal areas of India is worse than that, as they have been living in primordial stage, really a jungle life. Again he has not dealt with all the gender issues. Issues like woman's security in home and at workplaces have been emphasized along with their socio-economical, psychological and sexual abuse. So, we may say that, Chetan Bhagat has succeeded to raise the roof nothing but the Metropolitan youth culture of India and some of their issues.

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