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A Study of Values, Beliefs, and Issues in Chetan Bhagat’s novel ‘Five Point Someone’

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Abstract

Chetan Bhagat has successfully amalgamated elements of both highbrow and lowbrow genres, resulting in the emergence of a distinct literary category that has gained recognition as a valid and popular form of Indian English literature. He has infused the genre with his buoyant sense of humour and optimistic perspective on life. Contrary to R. K. Narayan’s approach of inventing Malgudi and extracting his characters from it, he does not employ a similar technique. He selectively chooses each employee from the urban area. The central characters in the author’s literary works typically exhibit the characteristics of adolescence. The artist captivates individuals from various social backgrounds by accurately depicting their true essence through his drawings. Chetan Bhagat’s primary demographic comprises individuals in their youth, so his narratives frequently revolve around this age group. The objective of this scholarly article is to critically examine the portrayal of moral and ethical values in Chetan Bhagat’s novel, “Five Point Someone.”

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

Introduction:

Chetan Bhagat has emerged as a prominent figure in contemporary literature, gaining immense popularity and establishing a lasting connection with a vast audience of young individuals. The individual in question has a high level of productivity in their writing endeavours, diligently observing and documenting many facets of society. Specifically, they focus on the issues that the younger generation currently faces. The author's works are replete with factual information, engendering a sense of personal connection among readers, who become emotionally invested in the narrative as if it were their own. The primary basis for his success is his role in pioneering the genre of campus novels, which traces its origins to American literature. The publication of Chetan Bhagat's inaugural work, "Five Point Someone," has sparked a resurgence in the inclination towards reading among the younger generation. The field of English literature has experienced a recent shift in literary trends, with a notable prevalence of novels set within the context of university campuses. Prominent academic institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) emerged as focal points within these literary works. Chetan Bhagat's literary works predominantly centre around the experiences of young individuals and college students, delving into many aspects of their lives, such as romantic relationships, substance abuse, anxiety surrounding examinations, and the monotony of academic lectures. One of the reasons for his widespread appeal is his consistent use of straightforward language, which resonates with young people and conveys his understanding and support for the challenges they experience.

Chetan Bhagat was born in Delhi and is recognised as a promising author in the field of Indian English literature. Bhagat demonstrates a propensity for innovation within the field of literature as an architect. There is a significant demand for Indian English literature on the market. Chetan Bhagat's literary works predominantly revolve around the Indian youth, particularly those who have received higher education, during the twentieth century. Regarded as a prominent figure in the realm of literary production, rather than only an author, he has succeeded in fostering a newfound enthusiasm for reading in India. The author mostly focuses on India from the perspective of an Indian individual. The author extensively covers several aspects of India, including its culture, societal challenges, and language, while also providing a portrayal of the lives of the younger generation. Traditional Indian society is undergoing a process of transformation. The persistence of traditional customs and cultural heritage has not yielded to modernity, resulting in conflicts experienced by the characters depicted in the literary works of Chetan Bhagat. The author portrays the unrestrained enthusiasm and energy commonly found among the youth of his country through the depiction of characters in his literary works. The individual's methodology is centered around engaging with the younger generation, specifically targeting youngsters, in order to capture their forward-thinking perspectives. This strategy aims to address societal issues prevalent in society and contribute to the creation of a more prosperous and harmonious global community. The remarkable achievement of Chetan Bhagat as a novelist can be considered an extraordinary phenomenon. The credit can be attributed to his adept

management abilities, which have become increasingly important due to the proliferation of numerous private engineering colleges. Additionally, his proficiency in the use of the simple past tense has become necessary in this context. Furthermore, he has justified morally questionable human behaviors by presenting them as a form of contemporary reality. The author has written five novels, including "Five Point Someone," "The Three Mistakes of My Life," "One Night at the Call Centre," "Two States of My Marriage Life," and "Revolution 2020." These works encompass elements of adventure, romance, background music, and expert commentary on social, political, and educational systems. The current writing style is seen as a significant development within the realm of novel writing. Chetan Bhagat has significantly influenced the literary preferences of emerging book enthusiasts since the release of his debut novel "Five Point Someone" in 2004. In a similar vein, the initial literary work of the author explores the predicament faced by contemporary engineering students in India who earn admission to the nation's premier university, only to resist the stifling environment of academic rivalry. The novelist adeptly depicts various aspects of university life, including the practice of ragging, the challenges of living in hostels, and the demanding work pressure imposed by higher authorities, the alarming rise in suicide cases, and a scathing critique of the education system in India. The author particularly highlights the negative impact of the internationally acclaimed IIT system, which suppresses students' creativity and independence by prioritizing grades above all else. Additionally, the novel provides a realistic portrayal of the current situation in India, shedding light on the phenomenon wherein young individuals have increasingly more opportunities than their predecessors. However, their choices continue to be limited by the old educational system and the burden of exceedingly high expectations. In his debut novel, *Five Point Someone*, the characters Ryan, Alok, and Hari engage in a struggle against the patriarchal educational system, which is governed by antiquated standards established by long-standing education professionals. The intellectuals of antiquity held the belief that worldly wisdom could be attained through personal acts of self-sacrifice. According to this perspective, the greater the extent to which an individual engages in penance, the greater their level of wisdom or intelligence would be. The book portrays the education system of IIT Delhi as being aligned with patriarchal norms and educational regulations. The students are overwhelmed by a heavy workload consisting of homework, class tests, surprise quizzes, and major exams, to the extent that they lose sight of the true essence of life. The accommodations provided in their hostel resemble prison cells, in which they find themselves captivated, despite their sole offence being their affiliation with the prestigious IIT institution. Chetan Bhagat asserts that the younger generation constitutes the prospective leaders of the nation. The achievement of remarkable feats is contingent upon the adoption of unconventional thinking by the human intellect. The future prospects of a young individual who lacks the desire to acquire knowledge about rivers and technical expertise should not be compromised by anyone. The author suggests that when a student's initiative is hindered by a barrier, their ability to innovate is compromised. There exists a phenomenon inside the developmental stages of every young individual that unfortunately tends to be suppressed during their childhood due to societal influences that negatively impact their self-perception. In the

article titled “Indian Institute of Idiots,” Chetan Bhagat articulates his perspective on the education system, specifically addressing the issue of course material. What subjects are often included in the curriculum of schools and colleges? To what extent do you use it in your daily life? One should reflect on whether the globe has undergone any transformations throughout the past two decades. If affirmative, has the substance of our course undergone a corresponding rate of change? Has it undergone any changes? Who are the individuals responsible for modifying our educational resources? Does the programme provide students with practical experience in the corporate world? The user did not provide any text to rewrite. We are adhering to the curriculum and continuously assessing the students’ level of comprehension through extensive testing of their revised classes. Lessons are commonly regarded as guidelines that should be strictly followed, and the degree to which one adheres to these guidelines is positively correlated with their likelihood of achieving a higher grade. “Personally, I held a strong aversion towards it, and it is quite probable that millions of individuals share the same sentiment. However, it is important to acknowledge that their options are limited in this matter. The absence of innovation, imagination, and originality within our education system is detrimental to the nation and hinders the optimal development of students. In reality, there is a deliberate effort to suppress and extinguish this innate disposition in children at the earliest opportunity. Innovation, by its very nature, involves questioning and challenging established norms and practices. This inclination towards innovation may not align with the cultural values of Indian children, who typically hold a strong reverence for their elders. The perpetuation of this cycle results in the formation of a society characterized by individuals who conform and follow rather than exhibit leadership qualities that embrace change.” (Chetan Bhagat, 2012, *What Young India Wants*, Rupa publications New Delhi., p.121-122).

The author’s viewpoint is similarly conveyed in his writings that were originally published in ‘The Times of India’ and are currently available as ‘What Young India Wants’. In the aforementioned essay titled ‘Sparks’, “the author asserts that life can be likened to a race commonly observed in nursery school settings, when participants are required to traverse a designated course while delicately balancing a marble atop a spoon held within their mouths. The statement suggests that once the marble falls, achieving first place becomes irrelevant. It is acceptable to occasionally skip lectures, make mistakes in interviews, and have romantic relationships. As individuals, we possess inherent human qualities and characteristics, distinguishing us from artificially designed and controlled technologies.” (Chetan Bhagat, 2012, *What Young India Wants*, Rupa publications New Delhi., p.105). However, the novel “Five Point Someone” also provides commentary on the detrimental nature of parental goals. There appears to be a lack of willingness to acknowledge and address the individual challenges faced by students, including their needs, preferences, and aspirations. In this work, Chetan Bhagat effectively raises awareness among educators about the necessity of departing from conventional textbook theories and instead addressing the unique issues presented by kids with creative inclinations. Each student possesses a distinct set of talents, and it is inadequate to rely solely on their GPA as a measure of their intellectual abilities. Individuals who achieve a perfect score of

five in college have the potential to advance to higher levels in their professional careers, thereby serving as role models for those who face challenges or difficulties. The group rejects the patriarchal structure of the educational system, despite enduring significant challenges from both professors and peers. The students are encouraged to thoroughly comprehend and master the subjects in order to achieve high academic performance. The students expressed strong aversion towards the current teaching methodology and fervently advocated for its reform. Chetan Bhagat highlights the significance of contemporary teaching approaches, particularly observational teaching, and suggests the integration of experiential learning methods. This approach has the potential to alleviate the phenomenon of student stagnation. The observation method facilitates the pupils' ability to engage in naturalistic thinking. This methodology allows students to engage in comprehensive observation and problem-solving with regard to many items. In the event that individuals have difficulties arriving at a logical conclusion, it is expected that they engage in discussions with their teachers and peers to address the issue. By employing this approach, a student can effectively address their inquiry. In this work, Chetan Bhagat effectively highlights the inherent rigidity and lack of creativity prevalent in esteemed technical institutions. The author posits that the professor, who possesses a high level of expertise, does not permit any alterations. Bhagat asserts that individuals should assume the role of attentive listeners to their own souls, as the soul consistently guides them towards the correct course of action. The one who consistently heeds their inner voice invariably emerges triumphant. The trio of companions in the literary work abide by the aforementioned philosophical principles. Despite facing significant challenges and initially exhibiting subpar performance, this particular group stands out from others due to their inclination towards independent thinking, fervour for life, affinity for innovative concepts, embodiment of freedom, and appreciation for pragmatic approaches to life. All of these attributes contributed to their significant success in the end, resulting in the approval of their project. In conclusion, the novel serves as a valuable source of inspiration for both learners and educators, encouraging the adoption of innovative techniques that align with the mindset of the current generation. The present moment necessitates that professional institutes abandon the conventional approach to education. This will hinder the students' developing skills and originality. In order to effectively prepare students for their future careers, educational institutions should prioritise the development of technical skills, the enhancement of students' potential, and the practical application of information. Teachers should guide pupils beyond the confines of the prescribed curriculum and encourage them to engage in self-directed learning.

Conclusion

The significant transformation of young culture can be attributed to the pervasive influence of globalization across all domains. The individuals underwent modifications in their styles, interests, attitudes, viewpoints, language, habits, and inclination towards high-speed and efficient communication technology, as exemplified by Ryan's scooter. In contemporary times, the Internet has emerged as a formidable tool for accessing vast amounts of information effortlessly with the simple act of clicking a mouse. Given the perpetual expansion and inexhaustible nature

of knowledge, the younger generation exhibits a strong willingness to exert considerable effort in order to adapt to evolving circumstances. The present study involved the identification and selection of young individuals from the creamy layer by Chetan Bhagat. The younger population residing in distant areas of India lacks sufficient knowledge and awareness regarding these various societal changes. They continue to engage in persistent conflict in pursuit of their restricted needs while possessing insufficient resources. The illiteracy rate in rural areas remains significantly high, mostly due to limited access to quality education for the youth residing in these regions. The condition of youngsters in tribal regions of India is considerably more challenging, as they are subjected to a primitive way of life resembling that of a jungle. Once again, the author has failed to address all of the gender-related concerns. The topic of women's security has received significant attention, particularly in relation to their safety within both domestic and professional environments. This encompasses various aspects, including socio-economic factors, psychological well-being, and instances of sexual assault. Chetan Bhagat can be credited with effectively capturing and portraying the contemporary urban youth culture of India, along with the various challenges and concerns they face.

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