
**A Study on the Convergence of Youth and Modernization in
Chetan Bhagat's *Five Point Someone***

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Abstract:

Among the distinctive and original topics that Chetan Bhagat explores in his fiction and nonfiction works, the lives of young people stand out. Bhagat is widely recognized as a symbol of youth in India. His works primarily address the social and economic challenges faced by the younger generation from middle-class backgrounds. Millennials in India are dealing with many issues that are affecting their schooling and careers, which is making their lives difficult. He also put forth his real-life experiences in this novel, *Five Point Someone*. The novel is set in Delhi; it is a glimpse of a modern student's life on a technical campus. Three mechanical engineering students serve as characters in this first-person narrative work, in which the narrator, Hari, stands in for the author in an indirect way. Students at IIT get in after scoring well in entrance exams, but the novel's three main characters struggle to keep up with the rigorous grading system at their university. Issues surrounding technical students' education, such as the competitive examination system, the pressure to achieve high grades, the difficulty of securing a good career, family, poverty, and so on, are attempted to be outlined in the book, *Five Point Someone*. In addition to analyzing the social effects of modernization on today's youth, this study aims to investigate the social behavior of India's youth. All young people in modern India who want the best education and employment opportunities in this globalized world find a voice in Chetan Bhagat's, *Five Point Someone*.

Keywords: Younger generation, economic challenges, grading system, modernization**Introduction:**

India's future lies in the hands of its vibrant and dynamic young population, who form a significant portion of the country's strength. According to Bhagat, the present

generation is the product of the new generation, which resulted from a mixture of globalization and modernization. Chetan opines that the barriers to communication in terms of national and international aspects are minimized on account of modernization, and the same is reflected in his works. The technological progress has led to a significant increase in the country's capital investments and has fostered a more open and interconnected global environment. Hence, the progress is evident not just in the economic sphere of the nation but also in the way of life embraced by middle-class households. Bhagat explores the social challenges experienced by young individuals in his novel by depicting three distinct types of students who have opted for the same course in the same college. In the course of the narrative's investigation of the complications of suburban life and the impact of the Industrial Revolution on this generation of young Indians, these individuals are a genuine representation of the generation as a whole.

Bhagat crafts his novels to capture the vibrant emotions of a civilization that ushers in breakthroughs in every facet of human existence. The novel, *Five Point Someone* features a cast of youthful characters from the average middle-class household in Indian society. To bring these characters to life, Bhagat paints a picture of modern India and its society as it has evolved in response to the changes brought about by modernity. The novel's three primary protagonists originate from a Hindu middle-class household that places significant importance on their traditional culture and traditions. However, these young individuals display a strong desire to enhance the international standing of their country. It is their aspiration to uphold the nation's standing on both the domestic and international fronts. Each of his literary works delves into the experiences and challenges faced by those who are in pursuit of achievement and endeavouring to establish their own position within the middle-class social milieu.

The famous Indian Institute of Technology is where *Five Point Someone* is set. The plot follows three IIT mechanical engineering students as they navigate the challenges of their academic journey. In college, the three friends—Hari, Ryan Oberoi, and Alok Gupta go on a journey together, but they face several challenges along the way. They struggle to adapt to the very different grading standards used in India's technical education system. In contrast to Ryan's shyness and mediocre grades, Hari and Alok are the centre of attention because of their extraordinary intelligence and ease with modern technological ideas. These three friends hate the grading system and struggle to obtain anything over a five on their assignments. Their academic struggles do not go away no matter how much effort they put in throughout their time at university. This first piece of work by Bhagat explores the

problems with the Indian educational system and the methods used to assess students' abilities. Two exceptionally bright individuals, Ryan and Alok, find novel approaches to old problems. Their parents and teachers have ignored their extraordinary abilities, which has left them bewildered and uncertain of who they are.

The tale ends with a conundrum that makes readers think about how to strike a balance between students' freedom and their drive to succeed academically. The innovations of the contemporary period, in which technology dominates, fascinate today's youth. A socially modern society is alluring to the younger generation of this century as they grow up. This distinguishes them from generations before. All across the nation, young people are dealing with the same social and economic problems that have long plagued the middle class.

The topics explored in Chetan Bhagat's work encompass criminality, brutality, sexuality, economic hardship, and more. In addition, he explores the educational obstacles that young people encounter when seeking admission to prestigious colleges and pursuing opportunities that align with their interests and talents. Bhagat aims to provide a comprehensive portrayal of the current youth generation through his novels, captivating readers with his compelling writing. During an interview, he expresses his opinions on the readers of his works, "What attracts the readers about my novels is not the high literature rather the simplicity of language in portraying the aspirations, mind-set and problems of the present generation youngsters.'"(The Hindu 2005:11).

The novel selected for study, *Five Point Someone*, is Chetan Bhagat's first novel, narrating the narrative of three engineering students through the perspective of Hari, Ryan, and Alok. Despite the book's humorous tone, it frequently depicts unhappy incidents within the household of the three characters who play the students' roles. The book additionally explores the importance of interpersonal connections by examining the events that unfold in the lives of the three friends, as well as the dynamics between Ravi and Neha. Ryan possesses a high intellectual capacity and demonstrates proficiency in completing college tasks. However, he struggles to achieve a grade exceeding five points. The instructors and parents fail to acknowledge his innate aptitude and originality. He often experiences frustration and dissatisfaction with the highly praised IIT grading system, which has hindered students' creativity by prioritizing marks above unique ideas. The teachers lacked inspiration and assigned tasks and assessments designed to provide them with a limited understanding of the lessons. The students began to seek solace in Prof. Veera, the esteemed professor who was always on their side.

In the novel, Chetan Bhagat portrays an accurate depiction of today's youth who willingly relinquish their objectives in favor of their older generations' (parents') inclinations. The most exemplary instance depicted in the narrative is the occurrence of Prof. Cherian's son's suicide. Due to his inability to confront his father subsequent to his failure in the entrance exams, he opts for the course of self-inflicted demise. Neha, his sister, is aware of the truth, but she conceals it from his father and eventually tells it to Ravi. In a similar vein, Alok makes an attempt to end his own life at a specific juncture, driven by feelings of depression stemming from his perception of being unable to manage his academic pursuits and his inability to graduate due to his subpar performance in the examination. Additionally, his family concerns occupy his thoughts. "That is all they talk to me about, problems and more problems" (FPS 124).

The work chosen for study serves as a revelation for parents who compel their children to pursue their own paths without recognizing the importance of their child's aspirations. Bhagat employs a straightforward approach to presenting factual information, along with an informal style of representation, which effectively elicits emotional responses from readers in a prompt manner. The tale exemplifies the detrimental impact of parental and teacher influence on children's creativity, as well as the consequential squandering of possibilities if creative skills are hindered. Ryan, Alok, and Hari exemplify the contemporary Indian youth who possess genuine ambitions for a prosperous existence but find themselves burdened by the academic demands inherent in the conventional educational framework. Hari's remarks describe their sense of self-esteem as a consequence of their frustrated life.

"Another five point something, another tattoo stamped on your worth as an individual in IIT society" (77).

In this modernized world, the novel "*Five point Someone*" serves as a reminder of the significance of education in order to elevate the generation of young people who are members of middle-class society. When it comes to education, the development of modern technology is something that cannot be overlooked because it has the potential to deliver a greater degree of eminence in the current context. As the famous author Pavan Varma asserts,

"Job opportunities have been multiplied after the reformation and modernization after the advent of information technology" (Varma, *The Great Indian* xxii).

In our country, there has been a development of competitive educational methods that leverage technical resources. These strategies are closely associated with corporate entities, aiming to facilitate the placement of young urban technocrats in prestigious

businesses offering lucrative salaries and several additional benefits. Professional domains serve as emblematic representations of a refined lifestyle prevalent among the contemporary middle-class populace, constituting the primary aspiration for the younger generation within our nation. Within the cohort of Indian students belonging to the new generation, a significant number of individuals aspiring to pursue computer technology express a preference for modernity due to its potential to enhance their contemporary lifestyles and foster their professional growth. Individuals have a preference for acquiring diverse social capital in both professional and personal domains. In the pursuit of professional and economic advancement, individuals must apply a diverse range of tailored techniques. These tactics encompass acquiring effective communication skills, acquiring proficiency in computer languages, participating in coaching sessions, and other related endeavours. The process of modernization in the country can facilitate the development of young individuals to a certain extent, enabling them to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the demands of corporate entities.

The central motif of the entire work revolves around the diverse concerns associated with India's educational framework. A major problem that today's youth are confronted with is addressed in the commencement address given by Professor Cherian, the Department Head. This further evokes strong emotions in the readers as he recounts his personal life experiences. Prior to everyone, he acknowledged his errors in underestimating the academic performance of Hari, Alok, and Ryan, resulting in their poor grade points. Neha, the daughter, conceals the truth regarding her brother's demise from him, subsequently divulging it to Hari. Upon realizing his errors, Hari exhibits remorse. "When I realized that GPAs make a good student, but not a good person...these boys have something really promising" (261).

The present study, which focuses on the novel *Five Point Someone*, excellently captures the academic environment of students on engineering campuses and reveals the influence of modernity on young individuals in the realms of education and professional pursuits. Bhagat strives to depict the ambitions of the younger generation from many perspectives and emphasizes the societal obstacles they face in their lives. In order to advance towards global modernism, the story helps readers to rise above the limitations imposed by present-day cultural standards. If modernization is perceived in a good light, it has the potential to enhance both employment prospects and overall quality of life. Bhagat articulated his perspectives on the significant subject of the limitless influence of modernization on the contemporary generation. Bhagat, being an IITian, portrays the challenges faced by engineering graduates who have been influenced by IIT in the

novel, *Five Point Someone* with a genuine autobiographical approach. The novel effectively captures the essence of the 21st-century youthful generation, with its characters serving as representatives of the contemporary Indian youth.

Chetan Bhagat employs a straightforward and casual writing style to highlight the challenges faced by Indian youngsters during the current era of modernization. Each character in the narrative has a certain purpose and conveys a clear message to the young generation of modern India. The suppression of youth in society can be attributed to various factors, including an incorrect grading system and erroneous familial ties. India is a nation that places significant emphasis on the preservation of traditional cultural values, hence imposing certain constraints on the process of modernization. Chetan Bhagat meticulously studies the lives of young individuals and comprehends their psychological state. Modernization has been found to have a favourable influence on the social lives of young individuals as it has the potential to enhance the social standing of this demographic.

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