



A Project

On

**CONCERN FOR YOUTH IN FIVE POINT
SOMEONE BY CHETAN BHAGAT**

Prepared

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PROJECT REPORT

A project on "Concern for Youth in five point someone by Chetan Bhagat" was undertaken by the final Degree students of English Honours under the monitoring and guidance of Mr. Amiya Kumar Das, H.O.D. English. The Students visited Department Seminar Library and the Central Library of the College and collected data & information by reading Valuable Journals, periodicals and also various valuable books for the preparation of the Project.



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CHAPTER-1 INTRODUCTION

Brief History of Indian Writing in English

The seed of Indian Writing in English was sown during the period of the British rule in India. Now the seed has flourished into an ever green tree, odorous flowers and ripened fruits. The fruits are being tasted not only by the native people, but they are also being enjoyed by the people outside India. It happened only after the constant caring, pruning, watering and nourishing. Gardeners like Tagore, R.K.Narayan, Raja Rao, M.K Anand, Salman Rushdie, Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Kiran Desai – to name only a few, looked after the tender plant day and night. In modern time, it is guarded and nurtured by a number of writers due to that vision and maturity are getting awards and accolades all over the world. Indian English Novel of the first generation reflects the rising nationalism and has grown with the nation's independence. The novels show concern with national and social problems. The novels of the 1960s have a private tone focusing on an individual's life and are introspective. Novels from 1980 onwards created a watershed in the history of Indian English novels as they brought in a significant change in the worldview, expression and the form.

The early novelists of 1930-40's Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao can be compared to the Four Wheels of 18th century English novelists with themes and skills. These three early masters laid the foundation of the modern English novel in India by adapting English Language to the Indian needs by asserting an Indian Identity. This assertion of identity even by adopting English language was "Declaration of Independence from English Literature" (R.Parthasarthy, 157). It was a creative appropriation of English Language. At the same time it rejected the world of the existing British English Literature as well.

Anand with *The Coolie*, *The Untouchable* and *Two Leaves and A Bud* reveals the heroic suffering, the conflict between national and local sensibility, and the human concerns for the

downtrodden under the guise of Moonu, Bakha and Gangu respectively. Anand's novels express nationalism, social concerns and Gandhian socialism. His novels are recognized as an instrument to see the contemporary history of India. His experiments with social realism and the exuberance of North Indian dialects, laid the foundation for linguistic and cultural representations in future novels.

From South India, Raja Rao recaptures the magnificent mythical imagination of Indian antiquity successfully in the three novels – *Kanthapura*, *The Serpent and the Rope* and *The Cat and Shakespeare* and most of short stories he has written. The classic foreword to *Kanthapura* has been recognized as a manifesto for the path Raja Rao had opted and preached for Indian Writing in English. Raja Rao resolved the dichotomy of foreign (English) language and methods of Indian story telling tradition through a systematic Indianization of English and a spirit and tempo of Indian life. He deviated from the traditional structure of European novel and shaped it on the lines of the epic tradition of India. He complemented Anand's effort of introducing North India to Indian English Novels by bringing in an unusual blend of South Indian – French cultural outlook and realities.

R.K. Narayan is realistic fiction writer who depicts the comic mode as equivalent to the tragic in his evocation of mediocrity in metaphorical way with *The Guide*, *Financial Expert*, *The Waiting For Mahatma* and other series of novels in an imaginary 'Malgudian' touch. He focused on the anxieties, disappointments and struggles of a generation who stood on the threshold of independence, the point where the institutions established during British Raj were still dominating and negotiating their way into independent India. The great trio of Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan had been penning down fiction in English before and after independence. However, writing fiction in English was not explored much by larger groups of authors in India during this period. In fact, for almost two decades after independence the exercise of writing a novel in English was considered against the norms of loyalty for the nation. It took more than ten years for a novel in English to receive Sahitya Akademi award. R.K. Narayan's *Guide* heralded the era of acceptance of English novels by Indian authors as an indigenous genre by winning the Sahitya Akademi award in 1960. Indian English novel also developed with the general economic growth and prosperity after temporary setbacks of war and loss of great leaders. The sustained structure of the novel form too added to the arduous nature of representing Indian life in English. Moreover

the novel being essentially a Western form imposed certain limits and also subsequently modified the Indian experience.

In spite of diversity in themes and techniques, the novelists during 1950s and 1960s have some common features like the presentation of personal narratives against the background of modern Indian, honesty, the conflict of values between the family and the individual and the awareness of social change. One can see the sensibility in different degrees in the writings of Sudhidranath Ghose's four novels *And Gazelles Leaping*, *The Cradle of the Clouds*, *The Vermilion Boat* and *Flame of the Forest*; G. V. Desani's *All About H Hatter* and Ananthanarayan's *The Silver Pilgrimage* which reminds us of *Don Quixote* of Cervantes in the struggle for self-identity. Indian writers in English in this period were concerned about character development, psychological depth and an effort to negotiate the sense of alienation in the modern world, albeit, the nature of both 'alienation' and 'modernity' were not the same for India as it was for the west.

The emergence of women novelists was a significant development of these decades. Women writers like Kamala Markandaya with *Nectar In A Sieve*, *Some Inner Fury*, *A Silence of Desire* and *A Handful of Rice*; Santh Rama Rao in *Remember The House*, while Anita Desai with *Cry The Peacock* and *The Voices In The City* have a fine eye for the urban and city life. Other women writers like Ruth Prawar Jabhwala and Nayantara Sahgal came upon the stage and shared the platform enjoyed by the well-known Indian English writers. These women writers of the first generation engaged themselves with the issues of women in conventional marriage systems, human relationships, and contemporary social and political developments from a woman's point of view along with the psychological influences of contemporary world. Dr. Bahhani Bhattacharaya and Khushwant Singh, in very different ways give us valuable insight into the pathos of economic impoverishment, mal-distribution of wealth and human degradation caused by political upheavals. The novels of these years exhibited a command over the form but lacked innovations.

Nevertheless several major Indian English novels were published during the 1960s. The conspicuous titles produced during this span of twenty years include- *The Serpent and The Rope*, *The Cat and Shakespeare*, *The Guide*, *The Man Eater of Malgudi*, *Sunlight on A Broken Column*

A Bend in The Ganges, *Storm in Chandigarh*, *A Handful of Rice*, *Nectar in A Sieve*, *Bye Bye Black Bird*, *Cry*, *The Peacock*. There was no huge spurt of creativity or production during 1970s. Economic decline, War and Emergency disturbed the nation during this time. The effect of the same was reflected through a very thin stream of creativity. This period remains as a memory lane where the writers of the next generation would visit and revisit.

The next watershed in Indian Writing in English came with the publication of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* which went on to win the Booker McConnell Prize in 1981. The publication of *Midnight's Children* in 1981 is considered to be a harbinger of renaissance in Indian Writing in English. Certain elements of postmodernism, experiments with language and grammar, focus on history, liveliness of language, innovations through magic realism and allegory, references to contemporary Hindi cinema all made a smooth entry to the world of Indian English novel with Rushdie's highly influential novel. The language, style, theme and narrative technique employed by Rushdie is entirely original and highly innovative. He initiated a trend which cared very less about the continental method of writing novels. Incredible imagination, amazing comic sense and absolute word – play are the hallmarks of Rushdie's works.

After 1980, the novel flourished incredibly in themes, use of language, style and technique. Writers like Rohinton Mistry, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Vikram Seth have set their premise of writings around various socio-political and cultural issues that emerged in post independent India and rapidly changing Indian life; the socio-political, cultural issues of a young multicultural democratic nation and their impact on communities and an individual's life. After Rushdie, the novel had been successfully worked out by the writers like Amitav Ghosh with his novels like *The Circle of Reason*, *The Shadow Lines* and *The Glass Palace*. Shashi Tharoor captured the political scenario in *The Great Indian Novel* while Rohinton Mistry focused on the scams in banks when banks in India underwent transformation and were getting nationalized and the impact of the same on Parsi community. In 1990, Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* was short listed for the Booker Prize. On the other hand Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* accompanied by never before seen marketing drive in India in 1994. The New York Times (16 December 1991) has called these new Indian writers 'Rushdie's children'. These writers incorporate vibrant, pungent and colourful style of writing. Their use of Indian words seemed to

be tingled with English language. The most noteworthy thing in their writing was the portrayal of India through the language which was a second language for them. Moreover India being a vast and diverse cultural country creates some additional problems like problems of expression. Nevertheless, Indian writers in English find the way out and showed an emerging India in their literary works. The common theme of Indianness binds them together. Along with this common theme their urban sensibility and ability to adopt the English language put them to the international credit. This generation of authors after 1980 were relieved off the burden of the consciousness of both English language and novel as a form as something that belonged to the west. These novelists use English language deftly, covering a larger canvass of emotional, political, cultural, geographical and historical issues. There is an awareness of national and international developments reflected in themes woven around the displaced, marginalized modern man and uninhibited modifications in the genre. There is gusto of creativity, vigor, hope and confidence surfacing through rich, mischievous language, light – sometimes funny, comic and humorous approach that reigns their writing.

In this way Indian writing in English has certainly expanded its scope throughout the world. The writers of Indian origin manifest India in their works with a great zeal. Their writings were often less-self conscious and more light hearted and most probably concerning with impressionistic memories of place and people of the nation. Thus, they created a sign of long distant Nationalism. In such a context of Realism on the background of urbanized setting, the arrival of Chetan Bhagat with his debut novel *Five Point Someone* in 2004 proved to be a revolutionary wave in the Indian Writing in English. A complete stranger to the literary establishment, Bhagat was an investment banker in Hong Kong. The novel, pioneering in devising a new genre of Indian Writing in English, was autobiographical in nature and portrayed the lives of three students at IIT who found it difficult to cope with the traditional education system, with scintillating humour and profound understanding. The fiction became a phenomenal success in the literary world with its sale of more than two hundred thousand copies. It dramatically changed the landscape of India's domestic publishing scenario by expanding the readership of English novels beyond the miniscule, metropolitan, highbrow elite and reached out to the unassuming, urban middle class India and, more importantly, to the youth of the nation.

The novel *Five Point Someone* was rejected by many publishers before it was accepted by Rupa Publication. It threw gauntlet to the elitist view of literature which resonated only within the charmed circle of literary establishment that was dominated by hair-splitting critics and conceited academics. Indian English fictions before Bhagat were wealthy. We have Naipauls, Seths, Kushwant Singhs and Arundhati Roys. But Chetan Bhagat has actualized something all these established authors were not able to. The common Indian has never been a zealous reader. The only digestible reading material they had were news tabloids and film magazines. Earlier Indian authors were considered too sophisticated to be understood by the common man. Earlier Indian English novels are heavy and hard on eyes and brain and usually deal with overly serious subjects. Only elite readers, scholars and academicians had the privilege to read novels. But Bhagat with *Five Point Someone*, single handedly brought forth a revolutionary change in the entire scenario. Now there comes a refreshing type of novel: comparatively short, written in easy-to-read language, about everyday life and problems of today's young people. And it has all the cool and *masala* stuff thrown in good measures- coffee shops, malls, misery, alcohol, sex, poverty and so on. Bhagat got today's mall-going, beer drinking, so called traditional- Indian-value-breaking young Indians to buy paperback novels (often pirated ones) and read them.

The amazing sale of Bhagat's novel dazed the publishing industry. Bhagat's *Five Point Someone* is a turning point of Indian English Fiction and marks the emergence of a new brand of Indian Fiction in English. Some critics, however, initially brushed off Bhagat's success as a fluke but his lasting popularity with his consequent novels like *One Night at the Call Center*, *Three Mistakes of My Life*, *Two States* and *Revolution 2020* proved them wrong. All the books have remained bestsellers since their release and four of them have inspired Bollywood films like *Hello*, *3 Idiots*, *Kai Po Che!* and *2 States*. Bhagat is now considered to be a youth icon and has been labeled as the 'Voice of New Generation' for the young, emerging urban middle class Indians.

Life and Works of Chetan Bhagat

Chetan Bhagat –a novelist, columnist, script writer and motivational speaker –was born on 22nd April, 1974 in New Delhi. Bhagat comes from a middle class Punjabi family. His father was in army and his mother was a government employee. Bhagat grew up in Delhi. Bhagat has studied

in an Army Public School, New Delhi from 1978 to 1991. His middle-class economic status led him to think of a studying Engineering which can guarantee a decent job with handsome salary. Bhagat liked science subjects and prepared for engineering entrance test. He cracked the IIT entrance test with decent rank and joined Mechanical Engineering at IIT, Delhi in 1991. However, his interest was not machine but lives of people. His interest in people led him to join IIM-A to do an MBA. He did far better in MBA than what he did in Engineering and nearly ended up at being top in the class. It was at IIM-A that he met and fell in love with his future wife Anusha Suryanaray. He converted his love life into marriage. This experience of converting their love life into marriage later provided Bhagat with the plot of his novel *2 States: The Story of My Marriage* just as his experience of student life at IIT provided him with the content of his debut novel *Five Point Someone*. After completing his course at IIM-A, he joined a Hong Kong-based investment bank called Peregrine and left India for the first time. However, the bank collapsed in the Asian crisis of 1997. After spending few jobless months in expensive Hong Kong, he ended up in Goldman Sachs, one of the leading investment banks of the world. His job in investment banking gave him a chance to see how money flows around the world. His stay in Honk Kong made him realize that India is the least concerned country for the investors in the world. He learnt to his disappointment how the East Asian countries were transforming themselves through foreign direct investment but how the Indian government, which also hankered after foreign capital, ignored the basic expectations that came with it. He felt guilty for the poor condition of India in spite of our claims for our greatness. He yearned to do something for his country and make it a better place.

Bhagat's first novel *Five Point Someone* was criticized in literary circles for its lack of literariness and its pedestrian English. But the novel became so much popular among the youth that now it is considered to be the highest selling English novel in India. The novel is set in IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) and it recounts the adventures of three mechanical engineering students who find it difficult to cope with the traditional education system that does not encourage original thinking. It compels these underperforming students to take on the draconian system through unfair means. The novel focuses on the negative aspects of Indian education system with its excessive emphasis on grades, marks, scores and placement and not on innovation and originality. The novel reveals how this system crushes students' creativity. At the same time, the novel illustrates through the story of three friends –Hari Kumar, Rayn Oberoi and Alok Gupta –

how brilliant students can waste their golden opportunities in college life if they do not think straight. This semi-autobiographical fiction was trailblazing a new genre of Indian English Writing and it admirably depicts the campus life of students who are caught in the conventional academic trap with brilliant humour and sarcasm. The novel won Indo-American Society Young Achiever's Award (2004) and The Publisher's Recognition Award (2005) and it dramatically changed India's domestic publishing scene. The huge commercial success of the book inspired Bollywood director Rajkumar Hirani to make a film on it. The film named 3 Idiots, starring Amir Khan and Kareena Kapoor became a sensational hit although it involved the author into controversy with the filmmaker over issue of the story's credit.

The very next year came *One Night at the Call Center* (2005). This second novel, which depicts the aspirations and plight of Indian call center agents with sympathy and understanding, made Bhagat one of the largest selling Indian writers in English. The novel revolves around six people, three men and three female to be precise, working in the same group in a call center. Though distinctly different in all aspects there was something which bound these folks together – their messed up lives. The story is about thwarted ambitions, lost love, absence of family affection, pressures at home and the work environment at a call centre. All their problems are resolved when God gives a call and advises them to improve their lives. However, its movie adaptation, *Hello* (2008) that parodied call centers was unable to make huge impact on the Indian audience.

With his third novel *Three Mistakes of My Life* (2008), Bhagat shifted his focus on the lives of semi-urban youth from that of metropolitan youth. He has tried to reproduce the reality of the area where entrepreneurship, religion and cricket have always coexisted and played important role in people's lives. Set in modern India, it is a story about a young man, Govind Patel, his two best friends and how he made the three biggest mistakes of his life. In late-2000, a young boy in Ahmedabad called Govind dreamt of having a business. To accommodate his friends Ish and Omi's passion, they open a cricket shop. Govind wants to make money and thinks big. Ish is all about nurturing Ali, the batsman with a rare gift. Omi knows his limited capabilities and just wants to be with his friends. However, nothing comes easy in a turbulent city. Set in the backdrop of Gujarat earthquake, Goghra massacre and the consequent communal riots in Gujarat, it is a story

of three friends and the way they face difficulties to realize their goals. They will have to face it all – religious politics, earthquakes, riots, unacceptable love and above all, their own mistakes.

After the three novels became bestsellers and ensured him a huge readership, Bhagat decided to quit his lucrative job as an executive director in Goldman Sachs, a major international investment bank, and devoted to writing as a full time vocation. In 2009, at the age of thirty-four, he retired and came home to Mumbai. He now lives there with his wife Anusha and his twin sons, Shyam and Ishaan and devotes his time to writing to make change happen in the country.

His next novel, *2 States: The Story of My Marriage* (2009), is a love story of a Punjabi boy, Krish and Tamilian girl, Ananya and their efforts to convert their love life into marriage with the consent of their parents. The story, told in a humourous way, is about the predicaments of lovers to persuade their traditional parents who do not agree with their marriage beyond their clan. It is a largely autobiographical fiction that narrates the story of Bhagat's marriage with Anusha Suryanarayan and socio-cultural barriers they faced in convincing their parents for their marriage. The stunning success of the novel inspired a movie with the same title directed by Abhishek Varman, with Arjoon Kappor and Alia Bhatt in lead roles. In 2010 Bhagat's name appeared in Time magazine's list of world's 100 Most Influential People, and The New York Times called him 'The biggest selling English language novelist in India's history.'

His last novel, *Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition* (2011) is a novel of love, betrayal and corruption. It is a story of three childhood friends i.e. Gopal, Raghav and Aarti. Three of them have their own ambitions. Gopal wants to be rich; Raghav wants to change the country and Arti wants to be the airhostess. The problem is both Gopal and Raghav love the same girl. It is a love story set against the backdrop of corruption in the education sector, which affects millions across the country. The story also hints at a possible youth revolution in the country to replace the present rotten system with a better one.

During this period, Bhagat's speech titled 'Sparks' at an educational institute became a hit on the Internet. It went viral and opened up a new career for him. He became a motivational speaker and gave more than hundred talks in various educational institutes across India and abroad. He learnt more about youth of India due to his visits to different education institutes in various cities of India.

Hypotheses:

Chetan Bhagat's novels cater multidimensional interpretations. Reading novels in this age of social networking media was perceived to be the trade of geeks and nerds and not the cup of tea of an average youth. Reading novels of earlier writers was too sophisticated to be understood by average young man because of overly serious and philosophical subject matter and traditional literary style. The proceeding writers had taken by heart that the function of good literature is to make reader uncomfortable by opening window into new worlds and by challenging readers to understand lives and belief that are different from their own. However, 'Chetan Bhagat's mass-market fiction in India performs the opposite function; it's about reaffirming what readers already know of the world. Hence friendly, conversation-driven fictions about call centers, IIT and IIM campuses aimed largely at young readers who have already experienced these things. His writing has made those youths read his novels who wouldn't normally list "Reading" among their hobbies.

His bubblegum novels have changed the landscape of Indian fiction writing and gave rise to a new generation of Indian writers. Many professionals across the country, taking inspiration from Chetan Bhagat, turned English authors, some of them even best sellers! Chetan Bhagat's novels are based on the college life, young call centers executives, entrepreneurs, love and pre-marital sex which reminded today's youth about their college life, their love stories and inspired them to write a fiction. Chetan Bhagat's novels destabilized the notion that only scholars or persons from literary background can write a novel.

While Bhagat has received incredible fame, he has been subjected to derision and poo-hooing by the elite readers and critics who pejoratively refer to what they call 'Chetan Bhagatification' of Indian English Literature. Among the elitist readers, his fictions have become the synonyms of 'catch up' and Bollywood masala movies. Bhagat's opponents are found everywhere in all sections of literati. For many of them Bhagat's books are like black-sheep of Indian Writing in English. There seems to be an undisputed disapproval of Chetan Bhagat among the high-brow Indian writers. He has been frequently accused for polluting the sanctified vocation called literature, for lowering the standards of literary writings. Though Bhagat nurtures a fine and lovable relationship with youngsters, accusations hurled against him are as great as is the number of his admirers. Lack of sophistication, flat and unimaginative characters, absence of imagery, and unliterary style are some of the most common complaints of Bhagat's novels. There is almost unwavering hostility between Indian intellectuals and the writer of five best-sellers. The former

group looks down upon Bhagat with utmost disdain, coming pretty close to label his work as 'crap'. The part of the reason behind such disapproval of Bhagat's work lies in the fact that intellectuals see Bhagat catering to popular, almost plebeian tastes.

Objectives:

1. A good writer is not the one who has won literary prizes only, but the one who has won the heart of people by connecting his stories with them. In this sense, Chetan Bhagat is a successful writer of world literature because in the market where 5000 to 7000 copies sold is enough to label a bestseller, his novels sell in the million. The proposed study aims to study Chetan Bhagat as a contemporary Indian novelist and as a game-changer of Indian English fiction writing.
2. The study aspires the close examination of Chetan Bhagat's novels by teasing out the contemporary issues interwoven in his works and Bhagat's view on the way to make the society better. It accommodates the analysis of the presented Indian society and social rituals in Chetan Bhagat's novels.
3. The study aims to evaluate Bhagat's fictions as the voice of contemporary Indian youth. It will take into account author's views entrenched in his works about the contemporary tribulations faced by the current generation and their possible solutions. It also includes the psychology, aspirations, desires, college life, love, premarital sex, exploitation at workplaces and concerns of youth portrayed in his works. It also investigates the qualities of each work that makes youth read and appreciate it.
4. One of the reasons for Bhagat's stunning success is his simple narrative techniques. The study tries to evaluate Bhagat's fiction from the point of view of narratology employed by Bhagat in his works. It will also attempt to trace if there is any design in his works by close examination of recurring themes, recurring elements, portrayal of characters, titles and observation made by him.
5. The research scrutinizes the way language of youth has found place in a literary works of Chetan Bhagat.
6. Beyond the shadow of doubt, the study aims to evaluate Chetan Bhagat as a popular fiction writer.

Methodology:

It is a library research work. Collected data from print and e-sources are evaluated and interpreted according to the research methodologies. To interpret texts and data, scholars'/ critics' interpretations are cited with the help of MLA seventh edition.

Review of Related Research:

To carry out the investigation, the related research works in the field for popular fiction have been studied. Besides research papers as mentioned in the bibliography, *Pulp: Reading Popular Fiction* by McCracken, *Popular Fiction: The Logics and Practices of a Literary Field* by Ken Gelder and *Postliberalization Indian Novels in English* by Vishwamohan are a few of many critical books reviewed for the investigations. Reading pulp fictions of the writers like J.K Rowling, Nicholas Sparks, Sidney Sheldon, Dorjoy Dutta, Amit Verma, Ravindar Singh, Amis Tripathi, etc contributed in establishing the foundation of the research.

Limitations and Scopes of the Research:

Bhagat is not a literary writer. He writes for the mass. So his novels cannot be evaluated with the parameters of classical novels. However, Bhagat has expanded the novel readership in India by writing novels about and for the youth. His novels are read and appreciated by almost all college going students in India. He has given a rise to a new generation of writers. Many writers took inspiration from him and started writing novels about their college lives. In spite of his popular status, he has some literary qualities too that can make him literary. The parameters of classic and popular keep changing across the period. For example, Shakespeare and Dickens were popular in their times. But today they are considered to be classics. This research work can prove to be a foundation stone for including Chetan Bhagat's novels in the academic world.

Organization of the Thesis:

The thesis has been divided into six chapters which are preceded by the Acknowledgments and Table of Contents. Chapter One contains the brief history of Indian writing in English, the change in the trend after the arrival of Chetan Bhagat, life and works of Bhagat, Hypotheses.

Objectives, Methodology, Review of Related Research, Limitations and Scope of Research and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two traces out the realities of contemporary Indian society as reflected in Bhagat's fiction. Chapter Three analyses Bhagat as a writer of youth. The last chapter, Chapter Four, is the Conclusion of what has been discussed in the previous chapters. The thesis ends with the Bibliography.

CHAPTER-2

REFLECTION OF SOCIETY IN CHETAN BHAGAT'S FIVE POINT SOMEONE

It is a fact that literature is a reflection of society. It replicates vices and virtues of the society. One of the functions of literature is to make the society better. Literature echoes the flaws of the society with a view to making the society realize its mistakes and make amends. It also presents ideal human characters for the society to imitate. The writer, in a literary piece, designs the human life and actions in such a way that they give certain message to the society for its betterment. As a writer is the product of his age, his writing is certainly affected by the attitudes, morale and values of the society in which he is brought up. The author uses the real life around him as his raw material, transforms it into a piece of literature with the use of his imagination and emotion and presents it before the society as a mirror with which people can look at themselves and make amends where necessary. Thus, literature has a corrective function besides being the reflection of society.

Poetry is the earliest form of literature. A clear reflection of ancient social and cultural trends can be traced in Italian, Greek, German, English or Indian epics. Say for instance, the contents of the Beowulf, the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Ramayana and Mahabharata portray the picture of earliest life and society of the countries concerned. However imagination dominates poetry. Therefore, it does not produce as faithful picture of society as drama and prose do.

Drama presents more faithful picture of society than what poetry does. The drama is partially a product of imagination and partially of real life. The plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Goethe, Aeschylus, Plautus, Seneca, Kalidas, Shaw and others are more or less manifestations of their own times and peoples, although imagination plays vital role in each of them. Drama naturally contains large amount of reality as it is a tale of action put upon the stage. Except historical dramas, most of the other dramas in every country reveal the social, political, moral and even economic life of the time and the people. Shakuntala by Kalidas or the plays of Shaw are to a large extent a mirror of the society of the ancient and modern times of India and England respectively.

Novel is the most realistic among all forms of literature, though it too uses the element of imagination. It deals chiefly with the predicaments of social, cultural, economic and political life of a country. It is bound to echo contemporary history, while other forms of literature which deal

with psychological problems are more imaginary and less real. A few of the stories and novels deal exclusively with historical themes, and such works are essentially realistic and serve as the correct picture of society. The novels of Galsworthy, Bankim Chandra, Sarat Chandra, Prem Chand, Chekov, Turginev, Maupassant are of this type. Most of the modern novels of Russia and India are realistic and they manifest the society of the times of their countries.

Indian English novelists have vividly portrayed the Indian society in their works. Say for instance, M.K. Anand has portrayed sufferings, misery and wretchedness of the poor as a result of the exploitation of the downtrodden class of the Indian society. Religious hypocrisy, feudal system, East-West encounter, superstitions, poverty, hunger and exploitation are his common themes. While Anand has portrayed social reality, R.K. Narayan is more concerned with psychological realism of the Indian society. R. K. Narayan presents the hopes and aspirations, failures and frustration, emotions and passions of ordinary human beings of the Indian society. On the other hand, Raja Rao is much concerned with the 'Metaphysical journey of man' in this world. His novels are much concerned with the intellectual and spiritual journey of human beings in the midst of economic upheaval. After 1980s, the novelists like Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Upmanyu Chatterjee, Shashi Tharoor, Rohinton Mistry, Firdaus Kanga, Raj Kamal Jha, Pankaj Mishra, Arundhati Roy, Aravind Adiga, etc. have shown considerable interest in presenting various facets of Indian life in broader perspectives. These Modern Indian English novelists are much interested in the presentation of modern man's disillusionment in the world of intellectual and spiritual void. The modern man is surrounded by multiple problems. It is too difficult for him to survive in such conditions. A large number of modern Indian English novelists are concerned with the questions of alienation, rootlessness, boredom, disillusionment and sorrow caused by 'conflicts'. All these novelists are preoccupied with modern man's struggle for survival in this world of speed and barrier. Chetan Bhagat has his own realistic world. His understanding of the time about which he wrote his portrayal of youth's predicaments, his ability to capture the imagination of the audience, his simple and unassuming language about everyday life, bringing hope into people's lives through what he wrote make him different from the earlier writers. This chapter discusses the portrayal of the contemporary Indian society in Chetan Bhagat's novels.

The characters in Bhagat's novels are the representatives of contemporary middleclass Indian youths. The predicaments of his major characters are the same as faced by today's Indian young generation. All his major characters are common young men and women of India and one can easily identify himself with his characters. The protagonist in each of his fiction is an ordinary boy whom any Indian youth can easily relate to. The friends of the protagonist are also of very common nature. The female characters in his novels are shown in virtual bondage by their respective families. Yet even the girls can be easily compared to an average Indian girl. Thus, his novels have no unusual characters and are set in a typical Indian setting. However, as the characters in his novels moved into the new millennium they find themselves at a critical point in the long and tortuous history of the human race. The day-today experience, demands of the time, challenges posed by it, personal hopes, aspirations, and dreams in urban India have almost metamorphosed. Globalization has changed the blood and soul of all these things. Unlike other novelists Chetan Bhagat, in his novels, has portrayed these changing urban realities in India in this globalized world. The old practices and customs have not given way to new and hence creates conflict in the life of the characters. The characters in his novels live in a shrinking world. It is not that they lack the intellectual or economic resources to tackle the problem. Scientific and technological ingenuity has given the youth the capacity to overcome all these challenges but what is missing is the wisdom and compassion to apply them creatively. Knowledge is expanding but wisdom languishes. The astounding communication technology which today surrounds the world hardly uses its incredible potential to spread global values and promote a more caring empathetic consciousness. A realistic novel gives a profound pleasure because it leads to better understanding of life and its predicaments. It endows with a kind of inner illumination. Reader, many a time, envisions himself in the life of a character and derives full pleasure from it. A realistic novel thus pleases his soul. Chetan Bhagat, in his 'Five Point Someone' has portrayed different aspects of contemporary Indian society. The novel reveals a particular dark area of the society. Say for instance, *Five Point Someone* attacks the Indian Education System revealing the flaws of grading system. While discussing these major issues in Indian society, Bhagat finds scope of discussing many other minor issues of Indian society.

Five Point Someone

Bhagat, IIT and IIMA graduate has revealed alarming facts about Indian education system in three of his novels. His *Five Point Someone* deals with the lives three friends Hari, Ryan and Alok at IIT and their predicaments due to their failure to cop up with the grading system. The author is more concerned about what to do after getting admission into an IIT than the admission process itself. He points out that getting into IIT is not all that difficult as is made out to be. As he puts it, "If you can lock yourself in a room with books for two years and throw away the key, you can probably make it here." (2)

Human race has leaped over the boundaries of nations and geography in the 21st century with development of internet. In this competitive era, knowledge has become the currency and those who have knowledge are successful. In the cut-throat competition of a globalized world, a student can be successful if he has diverse potentialities like technology, creativity, innovation, initiative, risk taking and adventurous spirits as these are key factors to success. Talents can be cultivated through education and culture. Education is the cradle of talented people and human resources; it is also the foundation of civilization. Chetan Bhagat through his novel *Five Point Someone* indirectly conveys a serious message in a humorous tone that it is a alarming call for the influential technical institutes to replace the traditional teaching style of "I teach; you listen" with an approach that develops students' own abilities to collect, select, filter and assimilate information; that inspires students' creativity by developing their life – long abilities; and that teaches students how to learn efficiently and actively. (Biswas)

Teachers need to help students use their knowledge in innovation. Innovation and creativity should be encouraged. 'Five Point Someone' is a light satire on our education system and urges for improvement. Chetan Bhagat has painted a realistic picture of the campus life in this novel. The novel begins with the incident of ragging on juniors by their seniors which was quite common in 90s. The demonic descriptions of the seniors and their behavior with juniors make every student recollect their experiences of being ragged. The ludicrous portrayal of the professor is typically that of a nerd. For instance the narrator writes about Prof. Dubey, "He appeared around forty years of age, with grey hair incandescent from three tablespoons of coconut oil, wore an un-tucked light blue shirt and had positioned three pens in his front pocket, along with chalks, like an array of bullets" (7) The mentality of professor is also exposed in the way Prof. Dubey shows his disgust

towards Hari when he is not able to answer to his question. He says, "See, the standard just keeps falling every year. Our admission criteria are not just strict enough." (9) Professors expect the same level of knowledge from students which they themselves have achieved after years of experience. Ryan's response to Dubey's disgusting comment is also typical of a college going stud, "Yeah, right. Busted my butt for two years for this damn place. One in hundred is not good enough for them." (9) Typically all the professors in the fiction are portrayed as arrogant. Professor Dubey's ego is hurt when Ryan challenges his statement and gives logically profound argument. The professor's egoistic self comes up with the following words, "What are you trying to do?... Are you saying that I am wrong? Watch it son. In my class, just watch it."(11) They force the students to give more importance to their subjects.

Dubey says, "My course is very important. I am sure many professors will tell you about their courses. But I care about ManPro. So don't miss class, finish your assignments and be prepared, a surprise quiz can drop from sky at any time."(11) They pressurize the students from the first day of the college by imposing on them assignments, projects, quizzes and surprise test. Students are pressurized in the name job. He says, "...respect the grading system. You get bad grades, and I assure you – you get no job, no school and no future. If you do well, the world will be your oyster. So don't slip, not even once, or there will be no oyster, just slush." (11) Professors try to dominate by terrorizing them about quiz and internal marks. They get fun by pressurizing the students in the name of test, surprise quiz, internal marks, viva and job placement. Prof Sen one day comes to a class and says, "Time for some fun. Here is a quickie quiz of multiple choice questions." (19) The stubbornness and mercilessness of professors is reflected when the physics professor gives a black looks at Alok's request for re-quiz as he couldn't perform well due to his father's ill health. Ryan is humiliated for his originality by Prof. Vohra who teaches students to design a screw-jack and asks them to replicate it. But Ryan doesn't copy, he designs the 'modified screw-jack' "in which one did not manually have to open and raise the jack. A flat tire did not mean the engine had failed, hence one could attach a motor on the traditional jack and hook it up to the car battery. If one switched on the car ignition, the motor could derive power." (117) Unlike rest of the class, he does something original. However, Prof Vohra insults him for doing something different from what he suggests. It shows how students are forced to stick to the syllabus and not allowed to do something original. Innovation, in this system, is not appreciated by teachers.

Prof. Vohra is the representative of many orthodox teachers with high ego who cannot tolerate anything different from their perception. On the first place the course content in our education system doesn't change with the pace of changing world. For example the technology has advanced a lot but the syllabus doesn't in technical education. The content taught to the students is of little use in the real life. Even the people who design the syllabus are not exposed to the need of corporate and industries.

Student's originality is crushed by the system and the teachers who are the essential part of the system. Because of Prof. Vohra's negative response, Ryan stops attending his lectures and starts copying the assignments directly from Hari's notes. This is how he gives up the designing. Had he been encouraged by Prof Vohra, he might have done many innovative projects.

Bhagat attacks the education system in the novel by showing how students sacrifice their youth days to get good grades in the exam by locking them-selves for nine hours with lectures, tutorials and labs. The next few hours of evening are spent in library or in the room as they have to prepare reports and finish assignments. Tests are additional burden on them. Hari writes, "Each subject had two minor tests, one major and three surprise quizzes; seven tests for six courses meant forty-two tests per semester, mathematically speaking." (12) Ryan's disappointment with such a system has a wide appeal in the students' community. "Damn... What a crazy week: classes, assignments, more classes, assignments and not to mention the coming-attraction quizzes. You call this a life?"(13-14) He further says, "I think this is jail. It really is. Damn jail... Working away like moronic drones until midnight. ManPro yesterday, ApMech day before, Quanto today...it never ends."(14) Chetan Bhagat has exposed the flaws like relative grading system which makes the whole academics a race. Alok says, "It's relative grading system, so if we don't study and others do, we are screwed." (18) It faithfully reflects how the whole education system has become a matter of competition rather than cooperation. Students compete with one another to score good grades and that's why they will never be cooperative. It makes the students highly ambitious and they can do anything to fulfill their ambitions. They will have few friends in the college as all their class mates are their competitors. The best examples are Venket and Prof. Cherian. Venket is a real mugger and can do anything to become the topper. He doesn't have any real friend in the campus. He has turned selfish beyond certain extent in order to achieve the position of the topper. Prof Cherian is the elder version of Venket. Prof Cherian's condition is the end of Venket's way of life. Prof. Cherian doesn't have any friend in his life though he is a successful person. He has

even lost his son, Sameer, as he has envisioned his own ambition in his son's career. Cherian is alone in his life. Even his daughter doesn't feel comfortable in sharing the secret of Sameer's suicide with him. Venket has started walking on the way of Cherian's life –competing with others in order to be the first. Students create enemies rather friends from college. Is this the lesson we want to teach the generation of India? This is the indirect question posed by Bhagat in this novel.

The novel captures the contemporary scenario of education and its intent relation with job and placement. The only purpose of study for most of the students in India is to get a job. Education has not remained more than a means to earn bread and butter. Hari says, "Boss, mugging is the price one pays to get the IIT tag. You mug, you pass and you get job." Again this is not an education system. It seems more like an examination system as the only pursuit of all the students is to cover good score in the exam. The whole idea of teaching pedagogy is exam-oriented. Ryan vomits out his disappointment in his informal debate with Hari and Alok, "Continuous mugging, testing and assignments. Where is the time to try out new ideas?" (25) At another point in the novel Ryan questions the value of the top technological institute of India i.e. IIT. He asks:

You know guys this whole IIT system is sick... Because, tell me how many great engineers or scientists have come out of IIT? ... I mean this is supposed to be the best the best college in India, the best technology institute for a country of a billion. But has IIT ever invented anything? Or made any technical contribution to India? ... Over thirty years of IITs, yet all it does is train some bright kids to work in multinationals. (34)

Ryan also compares IITs with MIT in the USA. On Hari's argument of the budget being the main cause for MIT's much better performance than that of IITs, Ryan says, "See, it is not always the money... IITs cannot do space research, but we surely can make some cheaper products? And frankly, money is just an excuse. If there is value, the industry will pay for research even at IIT."(35) The whole system of relative grading and overburdening students is wrong. It kills the best years of students. It doesn't allow the creativity and original thinking.

In this grading system, mugging seems to be the only way to get good scores. Students are judged on the bases of marks they cover in the written exams. The less weighted is given to the practical knowledge. In this system, a so-called competent student is the one who can mug up the

whole syllabus before the day of exam and can vomit out the mugged up stuff in the answer paper. Every individual is unique in his or her own way. Each has his or her own temperament, nature, tastes, likes, dislikes, insights and background. Each one is different from the rest of the world. Our current exam system tries to judge all the different types of students with the same syllabus, with the same question papers and with the expectation of the same answer. This is totally unfair. Ryan satirizes the education system when he says, "Yes sir, let us mug and cram. Otherwise, how will we become great engineers of this great country." (18)

The intelligence and competence of the students is measured on the basis of the grades they score in the exam. The education builds students' career. But the system tries to judge only the memory power of the students. What about their insights in practical matter? The current evaluation system does not have the measure to judge students' other talent like sports or music. The only measurement for evaluating student's caliber is how much they can mug up before the day of exam and how well can they present their memory power in the answer paper. Ryan is the best example of a talented guy who is wrongly evaluated because of the inadequate system. Besides being a sporty and smart, he is practically sound in the engineering. Nobody can beat him in practical knowledge which is actually useful in the real life. But he cannot mug up well like Venket. And therefore he gets below average grades while Venket gets the highest grades because he can mug up for the whole day. Venket tops the exam though he lacks the practical knowledge.

The grade of a student decides the type of treatment he receives from professors and fellow classmates. Grades form an opinion of people. In the novel, for instance, Ryan isn't treated well by professors due to his low grades. Ryan says:

Yes, that Prof. Bhatia... I gave him some ideas on how one could design a suspension bridge and he got all excited. He told me to make a scale drawing and submit it, said he would give me a special internship project. Then he asked me my name and found out my GPA. So then he calls me and says to forget about the drawing and internship. Can you believe that scum? (78)

The way recruiters look upon the candidates depends upon candidate's grades. Hari writes, "Yes, five-pointer was pretty crap. From now on, every prof would know that I was a below

average student and that would influence my grades in future courses. I know a few five pointers who were panned at campus recruitment last year." (62) Ryan's lube project that he has prepared after hundreds of hours spent in the lab is rejected by Prof. Cherian only because of Ryan's low grades displayed on the title page of the proposal. Student's competence is evaluated by the grades he scores in exam by merely mugging the syllabus books.

In the contemporary scenario, students' caliber is measured on the basis of the stream he or she chooses. The science, medical and engineering students are considered to be the elite while commerce and arts have less value in the society. The area of student's study decides the level of respect he gets from society. Science, medical and engineering students are considered to be superior to that of arts and commerce students. While Hari is unable to answer professor's questions in viva, professor calls Hari a commerce student with contempt. Hari writes, "Calling an IITian a commerce student was one of the worst insults the profs could accord to us, like a prostitute calling her client a eunuch." (56) Due to the respect and value one gets from science and engineering field, there is a mad rush for science and engineering. Large number of students opt for engineering not because they are always interested but because of its market value. Even parents force their children to pursue engineering or medical without knowing their children's interest. Sameer is forced by his father Prof. Cherian to get into IIT anyhow. Sameer is the representative of those students who are not free to pursue their interests. He is not capable enough to crack the tough IIT entrance as he is not good at physics, chemistry and maths. He is forced to pursue engineering against his interest of becoming a lawyer. His suicide note echoes the agony of those students who have committed suicide due to the pressure of their parents:

I have tried three times to get into IIT, and each time I have disappointed Dad. He cannot get over the fact that his son cannot handle physics, chemistry and maths. I cannot do it Neha, no matter how hard I try to, no matter how many years I study or how many books I read. I cannot get into IIT and I cannot bear to see Dad's eyes... He has not spoken to me for two months... What can I do? Keep trying until I die? Or simply die? (167)

It indicates an alarming fact about the number of students committing suicide in India as they cannot fulfill their parents' expectation. Sameer, Prof Cherian's son, commits suicide getting burdened by his father's pressure. As a result of it Sameer sacrificed himself for his father's

unfulfilled wish. If we peep into the modern society there are so many parents imposing their unbridled wishes on their children. Sometimes parents compel their children to fulfill those wishes which they have failed to achieve in their own life. Ultimately, children find themselves sandwiched under the pressure of those unfulfilled wishes of their parents which their parents want them to fulfill. Indirectly and unconsciously their parents are putting the burden of their wishes on their children. The parents fail to realize the tremendous pressure and futile competitiveness that they thrust upon their kids, under which most kids end up with frowny faces. Sometimes children drowned under the pressure of making their parents' dreams come true. Parents should also respect their children's wishes and ambitions. In *Five Point Someone* Prof. Cherian is typically that kind of father who wants his son to get admission in IITs despite of his wish to become lawyer. Alok's father also imposes his views on Alok irrespective of Alok's wish. Prof Cherian is the typical strict professor who wants to demonstrate his importance over students. He throws a piece of chalk at the student whom he finds talking to other in his class. When he hears whispers in the class, he bangs the duster on the table saying, "No one talks for the next sixty minutes." (140) He cannot tolerate even a whisper. He rejects Ryan's original and practical proposal on lube project only because of Ryan's lower grades. Prof Cherian who was very strict and was trying to ruin Hari's career changes his mind after knowing that the Sameer's death was not an accident but a suicide he committed because of him. After knowing that he him-self is the reason for Samir's suicide, he becomes mild and starts helping Hari and his friends to pass out like normal students even though they were suspended for a semester.

Cherian's speech in Hari's dream of convocation summarizes the moral of the novel. Cherian tells his own story that he was the brightest student with 10 GPA in his batch of IIT. He didn't have lot of friends as to maintain such high GPA he couldn't afford to have many friends. But his classmates who Cherian thought were less smart than him wanted to make the most money or go to the USA with minimum effort. They went to work with multinational and some went abroad. Some of them opened their own companies in the USA. But Cherian with his principles stayed behind. He wanted to use his education to serve the nation and not to make money. That's why he stayed back in IIT for doing his research. But the things were not smooth in IIT. So he was upset. He couldn't achieve much after ten years being in IIT. While one of his classmates with seven GPA had his own software company and his turn over had reached two hundred million dollars. Another friend was heading the toothpaste MNC, and came in BMW. Bhagat here clearly

indicates that exam result and your income has a little relevance. One's income is not much dependent upon one's degree or the GPA one scores in exam. People with less GPA can do better in the real world and people with the highest score may fail in exam of real life. The exams in the real world have different equations. The test is not pre-scheduled and the syllabus is not pre-decided. Here the result doesn't rely upon memory but upon the real competence.

Students are not free to pursue their own interest and are forced to follow what their parents think right. Parents, who themselves have failed to achieve anything valuable in life want their children to achieve. Children are the instrument to satisfy parents' ego. Cherian further speaks:

Somehow, on that day, I decided my son must get into IIT. I wanted him to carry on my family's strong intellectual tradition. Strong intellectual tradition – that is what I called it. But it was just my big ego. My son wanted to be a lawyer, hated maths. I hated him for hating maths. I pushed him just as I pushed students in my class. He failed to get in the first time and I made life hell for him. He failed a second time and I made his life an even bigger hell. Then he failed to get in the third time. And this time he killed himself. (260)

In the context of Sameer's letter that he wrote to Neha before ending his life, he says about his daughter's under-performer boy-friend i.e. Hari, "My daughter found it easier to trust Hari with the letter. She defied me, lied to me and ignored me just to meet him. Somewhere down the line, this perfect ten-GPA Professor standing in front of you had gone wrong. Really wrong." (261) This is how he realizes that score in the exam makes good student not good human being. But in current scenario, an individual is judged by her grades. If one is distinction, he is excellent. Second or third class means useless. He realizes his mistake of rejecting Ryan's proposal on lube project because of his low grades.

Thus, Chetan Bhagat, in this novel, has presented the dark side of our educational institutes. This novel illustrates how students waste their opportunities in college years if they don't think straight. Through the story of three friends, the book describes various facets of IIT life – the academics, the professors and campus life as a whole.

CHAPER-3

CONCERNS FOR YOUTH IN FIVE POINT SOMEONE

India is a country with the largest youth population in the world today. The youths of every country are its precious human resource. The liability for change, advancement and innovation lies on their shoulders. Youth can make or mar the society. The youth of the present-day generation in India can be distinguished from the previous generation by the changing social order in the modern times. The modern society of technology, globalization and internet has influenced and shaped the attitude of modern youth in India. The effect of modernization on middle class educated Indian youth is crucial in shaping their attitude. An unparalleled expansion of technology is witnessed over the last three decades, and our citizens are undergoing outstanding social and cultural transformation. This radical transformation has created mental and societal dislocations among youth. Moreover, technology has affected the way we sense about life in general and interpersonal human relations in particular. TV, mobile and the rise of internet usage in particular have played vital role in educating the present-day youth. It has taken upon itself to appeal to the destructive and disintegrative instincts, to provoke greed, unlimited self-gratification, and absence of moral restraint in its young audience. There has always been a clash between tradition and modernity and the youth have often been misunderstood by the elders. In the previous age, the older generation has managed to convey their beliefs, values, traditions, customs, worldviews and institutions to the younger members of their society. The social agencies like family, religion and teachers used to play major role in transmitting their values to the next generation. However, in this age of modernization, the intensity of these institutions' impact has stated decreasing due to new forces like internet and television.

Five Point Someone

Five Point Someone is the novel that depicts the lives of three young students of IIT – Hari, Alok and Ryan. The story is narrated by Hari Kumar, a passive onlooker and madly in love with Prof. Cherian's daughter, Neha. It is a campus novel where Bhagat has faithfully portrayed college life, its joys and difficulties through the characters of Hari, Ryan and Alok. Bhagat writes about the common middle-class youths who do not possess any special talent. Unlike other authors whose protagonists are heroic, Bhagat has made the common youth his subject matter in all of his novels. In *Five Point Someone*, the protagonist of the novel, Hari is the representative of common Indian youth studying at IIT. He is intelligent enough to get into IIT but among the community of

intelligent people, he is below average student. He considers him-self and his friends very mediocre students and "the last people on earth you want to ask about getting into IIT." (2) Hari, the hero of the novel, doesn't show any heroism at time when they were being ragged horribly at midnight on the first day of their college. Hari dreaded the viva as he says "it strikes me whenever someone looks me in the eye and asks me a question. My body freezes, sweat beads cover me brow to groin and I lose my sense of voice." (54). He makes mess while facing viva. In spite of knowing all the answers, he remains dumb. He writes, "I tried articulating, but thoughts did not cash into words." (56) When Prof Dubey chooses Hari for answering his question, he becomes dumb. His "tongue cleaves unto dental roof, body freezes, blood vessels rupture and sweat bursts out in buckets." (9) Most of Bhagat's protagonists are average-looking and feel inferior about it. Hari is a fat guy and he feels ashamed of it. He himself says, "I know I am fat and if I were a girl, I'd probably not talk to me either" (42) He is not a stud like Ryan. Bhagat's protagonists are vulnerable. Hari gets easily influenced by Ryan. He imitates Ryan in many matters. He has all the praise for Ryan's perfect body looks and dressing sense. He appreciates all Ryan's new ideas. He is so much impressed by Ryan that even he confesses that he wants to be like Ryan. On Ryan's suggestion of reducing weight, his following thoughts show his inferiority complex. "I thought about losing ten kilos. All my life people had called me Fat-Man, to the point where plumpness was a part of my identity now. Of course, I hated that part of my identity and Ryan did seem to know what he was doing, and his own body was great. Heck I thought, it was worth a try." (26) Even Alok puts his observations in his letter, "Ryan is infectious and Hari is a perfect example of this infection. If Ryan wants something, Hari gives it to him. So if Ryan does not want to study, Hari will close his books. If Ryan thinks GPAs are not important, then Hari stops caring about them. Ryan is Pied Piper." (73-74) Hari represents the complexity of today's youth. He is ordinary, fat, unattractive and dull. But he wants to be somebody else – someone cool, smart and sharp like Ryan. But deep down, he knows that it is not possible. Hari is the perfect example of millions of youths who are easily influenced by others and want to become like others. Even he himself confesses, "Even I really don't know what I wanted in life... I did not want to have a five-point GPA, and did not want to be fat and unattractive. I also did not want to get tongue-tied in damn vivas every semester. I mean, I definitely I knew what I did not want." (100) He is a like millions of directionless youths who do not have idea about their goals in life. He further says, "Ryan is always a sport. And Ryan is always thin and attractive. And Ryan is always confident and carefree. I hated Ryan. Yet at that point I realized what I really wanted – I wanted to be Ryan." (100) Ryan's attractive personality catches Hari's fancy and he imitates Ryan in all the ways. Neha even thinks

of Hari as a loser. In the letter she writes to her dead brother, she mentions that Hari is "Not very good looking or anything, nor super smart but there he was, this silly bumbler." (133) She further writes, "Right now, he is little bit of loser if you ask. For one thing, he is besotted with Ryan. 'Ryan this, Ryan that' bugs me no end sometimes." (135)

Ryan represents the stylish, sporty and carefree youth who can be rightly termed as a daredevil and spoilt brat. He is confident, blunt, agile and smart. He is the leader of his group of three. He is creative and full of new ideas, ranked 91st in the entrance test and loves engineering but hates the system. He believes that the system does not encourage original ideas, rather makes engineers who have mugged up theoretical aspects and rates students not on the basis of how they think but on the basis of their grades. He is the one who look at things in a different perspective. He comes up with innovative ideas like how to make boring classes interesting, what to gift Hari's girlfriend, how to sneak out the question paper from HOD's chamber etc.

Alok is the face of those students who study only to get a good job. He belongs to a poor family and he is in IIT only because he thinks that is the best way to earn a good paying job and get his family out of all their poverty. He wants to get good GPAs only because if he does not get them he won't get a good job and his troubles would continue. However, he is a kind of person who has never had the company of good friends but wants to have them. Alok is coward and is really worried about his grads in IIT. In Ryan's words he is a real "maggu". He opposes all Ryan's ideas of having fun.

Venkat is the representative of those students who can do well in this inadequate education system by mugging all the time. He is a perfect fit for this education system which measures the memory rather than the competence of students. He is a typical nerd "who looked like a younger version of any of the anally retentive profs in the institute. He had put enough oil in his hair to cook an entire Kumaon dinner, his forehead sported an ash-mark from his devout prayer." (93) Although he doesn't have much practical knowledge, he scores the highest grades in the class as he can mug for the whole day. He doesn't have any friends at the institution. Hari writes:

Nobody in Kumaon talked to Venkat; given a choice he wouldn't talk to himself. He had a good GPA and everything, but he was hardly a human. Venkat woke up at four in the morning to squeeze in four hours of muggings before classes. Every evening he spent three hours in the library before dinner. Then after dinner, he studied on his bed for another couple of hours until he went to sleep. Who on the earth would want to be with him? (65)

Grades are more important for him than life. He doesn't allow Alok (his group member) to go to his unconscious ill-father because his visit to his home will affect their group assignme

"Alok, this is too much. I mean, I have to study for ten hours a day to keep my GPA. The least I can expect is to count on my group partners." (91) He refuses to manage the group assignment for Alok. He says, "I have to maintain my rank. The second guy in the department is only 0.03 behind me you know. Now should I finish this group assignment or read my notes?" (91) He is the representative of nerds who have lost their humanity in the rat-race of scoring marks.

Prof Veera is the representative of the young and enthusiastic professors who can understand students' problems well. He is the face of young professors who unlike typical professors "dressed in jeans and T-shirt, which bore his US university logos." (84) He is a young professor not more than thirty in his age has recently joined the institute and teaches Fluid Mechanics. He is favourite among students. Unlike typical old generation professors, he offers chewing gum to the students. He does not give special preference to the nine-pointers while looking for the answer he has asked. In fact he scavenged at the last benchers. He says, "Okay, I am not going to ask the studious kids all the questions. I want to ask the cool dudes at the back." (84) He doesn't care much about student's grades. He encourages the below average students to participate in the class-room discussion. Ryan, who is not in the good books of other professors, gets much attention by Prof Veera because of Ryan's practical knowledge. Even Ryan, so-called brat, never misses Veera's lecture. He starts loving the subject of Fluid Mechanics as he loves Prof Veera. Here Chetan Bhagat tries to point out that the interest of the student in any subject depends a lot on the teacher. If the teacher is passionate about his subject, he can transfer the same passion in the students. The personality of the teacher also decides student's approach to the subject. Prof Veera's encouraging and concerned attitude for students creates interest in the subject. Professor Veera is a true teacher who is a teacher not by chance but by choice. He loves his subject and therefore he can create interest in the students for his subject. Through the character of Veera, Bhagat has shown the qualities of a good teacher. Hari says, "He is really different... Like he doesn't discriminate between five-pointers and nine-pointers. And he likes original thinking. Even his assignments push you to think more." (88) Prof. Veera supports Ryan for his experiments with various substance mixtures to check lubricant efficiency in a scooter engine. He even tries to get institute's permission for Ryan to the use the lab and get some grant. Prof. Veera's encouragement leads Ryan, a carefree guy, to work with sincerity. Even Hari finds it strange to see Ryan working so hard for days and nights in the lab. Ryan even denies to go for a movie in which there are six

topless scenes as he was deeply involved in the proposal for the project. Prof. Veera is the ideal image of a teacher who gets Ryan at work. He prepares an eighteen-page long proposal on lube project which is research in it-self.

Prof. Veera even helps the three when they are caught stealing question paper from Cherian's office. They are going to be dismissed from the college. Unlike Prof. Cherian who wants the three to be handed over to police, Prof. Veera saves them by suggesting an important point, "Police will mean the case will hit the papers. I mean do you really want IIT in the news for all the wrong reasons." (192) Prof Veera helps in the Disciplinary Committee. He calls them at his place before Disco and says, "Listen boys, I am trying to help you here. I think you are in a big mess but you can twist this a bit, you may save yourself some trouble." (199) He suggests to twist the story, "So, instead of saying you tried different keys, say that Neha gave the keys to you... Listen, if you say that you know Neha, and somehow she was upset with her father and gave you the keys to get even, it will get personal. The Disco committee will think you didn't actually break in." (199) This suggestion from Prof Veera helps them to get rid of expulsion. Prof. Veera stands with in their time of trouble. After they get suspended for a year, Prof Veera even tries talking to Prof. Cherian on a mercy plea. On Alok's return to the hostel after two months of bed-rest due to his suicide attempt, Prof Veera comes with the box of Kaju-burfi. Prof Veera goes to dean and gets the lube-project revised. He helps the three to re-submit the project which earlier was rejected by Cherian. He explains the benefit of working on them project, "for one, you could later explain the absence in your grade sheet. And I don't know, if they like the proposal this time, you may be allowed extra credit for this work in the next semester." (200) This is how Prof Veera guides them to pass out like normal students even though they are suspended for a year.

The novel begins in a unique way where the author takes the liberty of sharing his opinion that the book is not a guide on how to get into IIT but it cites the examples of how screwed up our college years can get if we don't think straight. The author is more concerned about what to do after getting admission into an IIT than the admission process itself. He points out that getting into IIT is not all that difficult as is made out to be. As he puts it, "If you can lock yourself in a room with books for two years and throw away the key, you can probably make it here." (2)

Five Point Someone, being a campus novel, gives the glimpses of the glaring effects of ragging which is in fact quite common in engineering colleges. The fresher students of Indian Institute of Technology including the three students Ryan Oberoi, Alok Gupta and Hari Kumar were called by the seniors up on the balcony for ragging at midnight. Baku and other senior students instructed them "Off with your clothes." (3) Such kind of embarrassing incidents in the name of ragging creates a great psychological effect on the minds of students which may increase the suicidal attempts. Ryan, good looking and a hefty man, revolts against the age old tradition of ragging and the senior – fresher discrimination. He saves Hari and Alok from the coke bottles at the very first day and they become good friends for all the four years of IIT and then.

The students in Indian education system have to sacrifice their precious youth days to get good grades. Bhagat has faithfully recorded the academic pressures on students at premier institutes like IIT. Hari, Ryan and Alok lock them-selves for nine hours with lectures, tutorials and labs. The next few hours of evening are spent in library or in the room as they have to prepare reports and finish assignments. Tests are additional burden on them. The system of relative grading put the students in a severe competition and creates divide among students. Youth's disappointment at the exam oriented teaching pedagogy is well expressed in novel. Ryan's frustration to cope with the system where mugging is the only way has a wide appeal among the student community. Bhagat has faithfully narrated how students surrender their creativity and original thinking for mugging to get grades. The whole system of relative grading and overburdening students is wrong. It kills the best years of students.

Creative students face a lot of trouble for adjusting themselves in our education system. They do not get the respect their originality deserves as students are not judged on the basis of their originality but on the basis of marks they cover in the written exams. Practical knowledge of Ryan is not appreciated by the professors in the novel. Muggers like Venket are acknowledged by teachers as in this system, a so called competent student is the one who can mug up the whole syllabus before the day of exam and can vomit out the mugged up stuff in the answer paper. The system is unfair as it judges all different individuals with the same syllabus, same question papers and with the expectation of the same answers. Ryan's dissatisfaction with the education system finds expression in his flowing satirical words, "Yes sir, let us mug and cram. Otherwise, how will we become great engineers of this great country." (18) The grades of a student decide the type of

treatment he receives from professors and fellow classmates. Grades form an opinion of people. Ryan's lube project that he has prepared after hundreds of hours spent in the lab is rejected by Prof. Cherian only because of Ryan's low grades displayed on the title page of the proposal. Student's competence is evaluated by the grades he scores in exam by merely mugging the syllabus books.

The novel accounts the hostel life and its difficulties. The food in the hostel is typically like that of jail. Hari says, "Pass the rice, I can't digest these rotis. They are like chewing gum." (126) They are offered continental food every Thursday. Actually it is just an excuse for mess-workers not to give real food. Hari writes, "The cooks made the noodles in superglue or something – they stuck to each other as one composite mass in the huge serving pan. The French fries were cold and either extremely undercooked or burnt to taste like coal. The cream of mushroom soup could have been mistaken for muddy water, only it was warmer and saltier." (127) They cannot even afford to go out for dinner as they have limited budget.

The novel is about managing academic pressure and fun. It is about friendship. Ryan, the son of rich parents gets a scooter as a gift from his parents. The way these three manage to move on a scooter which is legally meant for two is typical of a youth. Like all other young people they wonder everywhere on the scooter and let the world watch them in envy. It is a book on friendship and Bhagat describes how friends are more important than the career for youth. When Alok's receives news about his father's ill-health and is to be taken to the hospital immediately, Ryan and Hari accompany him though there was a sword of physics quiz dangling over their heads. In spite of all the pressure of studies, assignments and tests and though they have messed up in previous two tests, they draw a line between study and fun. They try to decentralize the education system. Ryan says, "I mean not like stop mugging completely or something, but like let us draw a line. We can study two-three hours a day, but other stuff, say sports, have you guys ever played squash? Or taken part in events – debates scrabble and stuff, an odd movie or something sometimes..." (40)

They start playing games like squash and chess. Apart from these games, they spend their time riding Ryan's scooter, 'feeling the fierce wind whistle through our hairs'. They watch every new movie, visited every tourist destination in Delhi, 'did everything, and went everywhere'.

However they manage three hours of study too. But this is IIT and three hours of study does not help to score respectable grades. Besides all these, there was an excitement of Gulf war between USA and Iraq. They get excited about who will win the war and keep getting updates of war. Squash, chess and the war – all ate into their studying hours. In five days before the final examination they dropped the rule of studying three hours a day. They studied hard for the last five days. Somehow Alok and Ryan manage in practical and viva. Hari cannot perform well because of his vulnerability of answering someone's question when the person looks into his eyes. Chetan Bhagat has portrayed the usual scenario in the campus and hostel at the time of exam. "Majors were when everyone studied in Kumaon, lights remained on in rooms until dawn, people rarely spoke – and then [sic] only on matters of life or death – and consumed endless cups of tea in the all-night mess." (57) He also describes post-exam scenario in the novel. "Those two week between the end of majors and the result were bliss. Even though the second semester began, no one really got into the new courses until they knew how they'd done in the first semester." (57) However the reverberation of the 'drawing-the-line' policy and the time spent after squash, chess and movies is inevitably heard at the time of result. Three of them remain to be five pointers which is considered to be below average performance. Grades divide. And it is nicely illustrated the way Alok had a quarrel with Ryan and he leaves the room after getting low grades. Unlike Ryan, Alok is a score-conscious guy and had to perform well in the exam to get rid of his poverty and it is difficult to manage studies if he lives with Ryan. This is how three best friends get separated due to the race of getting grades.

The party Ryan throws at the historical event of Alok's return to his room is typical of youth's hostel life. Only under-performing five-pointers in the hostel are invited. Hari writes:

We entered and it was dark, for Ryan had replaced the normal bulbs in the room with red ones so that a crimson hue spread over the study table, which now doubled as a bar. Ryan had laid out vodka and rum bottles, juice from roadside vendor, coke from the canteen, lemons, ice, sugar and finally, joints for the guests... That was not all. Nude women adorned the walls, posters extracted from US porn magazines, which made their way to Kumaon through ex-seniors in innocuous US university admission brochures via mail. Blondes, brunettes, red-heads, thin, voluptuous and petite, posed on Ryan's wall, uniformly wanton. (97)

They all sat down in the room where Ryan has placed cushions for each guests. They cherish cigarette after drink. In this party Ryan launches a Mice Theory in which they try to beat the unfair grading system. Though he was drunk while launching a mice theory in the party, there is some truth in it:

And this IIT system is nothing but a mice race. It is not a rat race... It is about mindlessly running a race for four years, in every class, every assignment, and every test. It is a race where profs judge you every ten steps, with a GPA stamped on you every semester. Prof who have no idea about what science and learning are about... But we can change all that... By living on our own terms. By being rates not mice, work together and beat this system. In fact my friendship will beat the system. (101)

One can have only two options – change the system or accept it if one can't change. Ryan is the face of those youth who have the courage to challenge the traditional unfair system. C2D (Cooperate to Dominate) is the way he uses to beat the system. He prepares a document for his C2D theory which included the flaws of IIT system saying, "(1) It suppresses talent and individual spirit (2) It extracts the best years of one's life from the country's brightest minds. (3) It judges you with a draconian GPA system that destroys relationships (4) The professors don't care for the students. (5) IITs have hardly contributed to the country." (107-108) According to the document, they agree on certain thing to get way out of this unfair system. They decide to share their assignments and lab experiments and divide the responsibilities of the course. If there are six subjects, each one is responsible for two subjects only. The rest will merely copy. They decide that the friendship is above GPAs and will spare time on living the life at the fullest. Typically like mindless youth, Ryan signs the paper with his blood and gets the other two to do the same.

The precarious plan of stealing the question paper from Cherian's office leads them on a cross-road of their career. After getting the key from Neha they reach to Cherian's office at mid night. After getting the paper, Ryan gets it photocopied and seals the cover properly. But Alok's stupid action of using Cherian's telephone to call his mother for asking about his Dad's health ruins the whole plan. The call outside the campus goes viva control room in the campus. A little

red bulb lights up in control room when somebody calls outside. When Alok calls his home at midnight from Cherian's office, the operator listens the conversation. He immediately gets to know that it is not Prof. Cherian but a mother who is reciting a sad tale to her son. The patrolling guards reach the office and catch them red-handed with a lit candle, melted wax, someone on professor's chair and a few strewn papers. The guard quickly backs off and shut them inside the office. They might not have caught but a plain stupidity gets them trapped. The authority calls a Disciplinary Committee for deciding the punishment for stealing question paper. Hari realizes, "Suddenly, my five-point GPA seemed wonderful to me. If only I could pass out of this place with a simple job and this could all be over. But even keeping that GPA and passing out was not going to be easy now." (189) Their craziness is punished with grade-sheet having no grades for two semesters and with a stamp of 'suspended' on it. Hari says, "I think no one will give you a job, the bloody US types take this cheating stuff pretty seriously. No admission to MBA colleges either – they will ask the same in an interview." (195) Alok realizes, "What will my parents think? What will happen to Didi?" (195) The three of them are brilliant irrespective of their grades. But they are stupid enough to risk their future for a stupid 'A' grade on their grade sheet. Three of them are best friends but none of them was able to stop each other from this madness. Cherian might have sent them to jail. The result of the whole crazy plan of Operation Pendulum is that they are suspended for the whole semester. They also get an 'F' in the Indem subject.

They have to spend one more year to get a useless degree. Alok's misery knows no bound – a paralyzed father, unmarried sister, no money, one more year to spend in IIT and even after getting degree little chance of getting a job. He has no option left. Therefore he attempts suicide by jumping from the institute roof. Anyone minimally familiar with routine happenings in India will be able to identify the tragic occurrence of student suicides linked to academic pressure as the broad horizon of reference in the novel. Additionally, within the structure of the novel, suicide is linked to the claustrophobic and oppressive nature of everyday life, which, at its best, is life-denying and, at its worst, no better than death. The pressure of family and societal expectations of academic achievement, the educational culture of rote learning, and the lack of options for expressing individual choice and creativity constitute a life-denying environment.

After getting suspended for a semester, they realize their mistake and become sincere in the final semester. They start working on Prof. Veera's lube project for eight hours a day. When the final semester begins, Hari says to Neha, "Classes, classes and more classes. Eight to six every day. Then another three hours in the library. Then another two for assignments and revisions... Never had this much of course-load before." (237) Their hard work and sincerity help them to pass out like normal students. Cherian's mind changes after knowing that the death of his son was not an accident but a suicide. He too helps them to pass out like normal students.

Cherian's speech in Hari's dream of convocation summarizes the moral of the book. Cherian tells his own story that he was the brightest student with 10 GPA in his batch of IIT. He didn't have lot of friends as to maintain such high GPA he couldn't afford to have many friends. But his classmates who Cherian thought were less smart than him wanted to make the most money or go to the USA with minimum effort. They went to work with multinational and some went abroad. Some of them opened their own companies in the USA. But Cherian with his principles stayed behind. He wanted to use his education to serve the nation and not to make money. That's why he stayed back in IIT for doing his research. But the things were not smooth in IIT. So he was upset. He couldn't achieve much after ten years being in IIT. While one of his classmates with seven GPA had his own software company and his turnover had reached two hundred million dollars. Another friend was heading the toothpaste MNC, and came in BMW. Bhagat here clearly indicates that your result of exam and your income has a little relevance. One's income is not much dependent upon one's degree or the GPA one scores in exam. People with less GPA can do better in the real world and people with the highest score may fail in exam of real life. The real world has different equations. The test is not pre-scheduled and the syllabus is not pre-decided. Here the result doesn't rely upon memory but upon the real competence. Cherian further speaks:

Somehow, on that day, I decided my son must get into IIT. I wanted him to carry on my family's strong intellectual tradition. Strong intellectual tradition – that is what I called it. But it was just my big ego. My son wanted to be a lawyer, hated maths. I hated him for hating maths. I pushed him just as I pushed students in my class. He failed to get in the first time and I made life hell for him. He failed a second time and I made his life an even bigger hell. Then he failed to get in the third time. And this time he killed himself. (260)

Students are not free to pursue their own interest and are forced to follow what their parents think right. Parents who themselves have failed to achieve anything valuable in life want their children to achieve. Children are the instrument to satisfy parents' ego. In the context of Samir's letter that he wrote to Neha before ending his life, he says about his daughter's under-performer Five point something GPA boy-friend Hari, "My daughter found it easier to trust Hari with the letter. She defied me, lied to me and ignored me just to meet him. Somewhere down the line, this perfect ten-GPA Professor standing in front of you had gone wrong. Really wrong." (261) This is how he realizes that score in the exam makes good student not good human being. But in current scenario, an individual is judged by his grades. If one is distinction, he is excellent. Second or third class means useless. He realizes his mistake of rejecting Ryan's proposal on lube project because of his low grades.

Prof Cherian seems to be Chetan Bhagat's mouth-piece when he delivers his last message to young students:

One, believe in yourself, and don't let a GPA, performance review or promotion in a job define you. There is more to life than these things – your family, your friends, your internal desires and your goals. And the grades you get in dealing with each of these areas will define you as a person. Two, Don't judge others too quickly. I thought my son was useless because he didn't get into IIT, but it is not the end of the world if you don't. All of you should be proud to have the IIT tag, but never ever judge anyone who is not from this institute – that alone can define the greatness of this institute. And lastly, don't take yourself too seriously. We professors are to be blamed even more for this. Life is too short, enjoy yourself to the fullest. One of the best parts of campus life is the friends you make. And make sure you make them for life. (262)

This message reflects Chetan Bhagat's famous speech entitled *Spark* that he delivered at one of the colleges where he was invited as a motivational speaker. The dream of Hari is the ideal condition which seems to be Chetan Bhagat's dream to build up a pressure-free education system

replacing the current exam-oriented education system. Bhagat has covered the minute details of a college life in the novel starting from the first day of ragging to the last days of placement interview. He has faithfully depicted the interview scenario in the last semester in Engineering institutes – the way they dress up in neat tie for the first time in entire four years of their studies, the nervousness mixed with excitement before their turn in the interview, the way they appear in the interview, the way they wait for the result and the way result makes some of them extremely happy and rest who are not selected makes upset. Hari and Alok make through the interview while Ryan can't. Alok's joy of getting a job reminds all the readers of the joy of their first job. He talks to his parents on the phone for two hours and reads the whole offer letter to them. The feeling of getting separated after completing education is authentically captured in Hari's words. "Last day, Alok's words resonate in, my mind. Man, how we had waited for this to get over. And finally it had. May be not in style, may be not with standing ovation or medals, but in our pajamas and eating paraths at a street-side vendor, we had made it... "Yes, it is all over!" I tried telling myself – but at one level I felt sad." (265)

Hardly few friends can stay together after leaving the college due to the job and family responsibilities. Though they vow to meet regularly, it somehow becomes very difficult to have the same life being in campus. The last words of Hari show how it is difficult to forget the campus days, "I might have passed out of IIT, but in some ways my soul is still there. Maybe in hostel corridors, or at Sasi's or at the insti roof..." (267)

They struggle till the end, but have finally made it by passing their final semester courses, by finishing lab work and by securing some sort of a job. Their carelessness is further seen when do not attend the convocation function. Four years of freaking craziness to get a degree, and when the time came to collect the degree certificate, Ryan and Hari sit in their *pajamas* eating *paranthas*. Alok says, "You fuckers! Chomping paranthas while the country got another batch of engineers." (264)

Thus, Chetan Bhagat, in this book, has presented the dark side of Indian educational institutes. This book illustrates how students waste their opportunities in college years if they don't think straight. Through the story of three friends, the book describes various facets of IIT life – the academics, the professors and campus life as a whole. In *Five Point Someone*, he has tried to

portray the condition of students studying in IITs and how their lives become miserable due to some wrong steps. Though the story is about IIT, it is not IIT specific. The story could have happen anywhere. The story appeals to every college-going student.

CHAPTER-4

CONCLUSION

Indian English novel, emerged in 1930's, has its own peculiar features. The trio of Indian English fiction, R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao presented Indianness and Indian culture on the international horizon. Their writing was vastly different from one another, but there were basic similarities too. The main focus of their fiction was small town based middle-class protagonists. They mainly dealt with western impact on Indian tradition and its consequences. Comparatively, their readers were limited and mainly English familiar reader. Alienation, east-west encounter, partition, Gandhism, Hinduism and Buddhism were the important themes of their writing. The Indianness was also reflected in their writing.

Chetan Bhagat, hailed as the best-selling and cult status author, has undisputedly established himself as one of the favourite authors in the contemporary literary horizon. He has already broken the established paradigms and is able to make his own way. The contemporary readers are closely associated to him because of his exploration of personal relationships, consciousness and concerns, the hopes and aspirations, the problems of youth and his presentation of dilemma of existence. He often comments on ethos of the post-modern society. The reader finds it easy to associate with him because he thinks his concerns are reflected in Bhagat's writings. All of his five novels challenge the established system and dominant values in the contemporary society. He, not only represents the young class, but almost all the classes of readers in the society. He is one of the most readable and popular authors in the contemporary India.

Bhagat's novels is largely youth-centric and deal with consciousness and concerns of youth. In another words, his novels don't deal with the established themes in Indian writing in English such as partitions, dislocation, and moral sensibility and so on. He has presented everything from the point of view of youth of India. In this sense, he can be treated as the spokesperson for the new generation as he has depicted the issues related to youth such as their frustration, struggle, ambitions, romance and concerns in his novel. He has provided the platform to Indian youth to read about themselves, learn to live in a social milieu which is growing faster. He used the language of the contemporary youth which is not ostensible and ungrammatical. His novel represents the contemporary society hence functions as the mirror to the world.

He has not followed the traditional literary patterns; instead, he molds it as per his will to serve his own purpose. It seems that he has caught the pulse of Indian youth and remained best-seller. His primary purpose is entertainment of his readers and occasionally delivers a moral message. Whatever may be the opinion of the critics, Chetan Bhagat has earned the status of India's leading English novelist. His novels are not based on partition or emergency, they are rather the popular fiction dealing with contemporary consciousness and concerns regarding education, employment, romance, family, religions, cricket, and corruption. His novels, at the same time, serve as a guide to the confused youth.

Chetan Bhagat's uncompromising modernity is one of the salient features of his writing. He has presented the contemporary scenario with ease bypassing the romantic past. One thing is sure, he inspired the readers to read and write. His success has inspired a lot of young Indians to write. He has proved that it is not necessary to be scholar to write, but a keen observer of life can write good stories.

There are many reasons why Bhagat remained the most readable author in the contemporary period. His novels are of low price so that common people can afford it. He targeted the young audience in the society and deals with their concerns and issues. He becomes the voice of young generation. His themes are centered around the contemporary middle-class youth. He uses the language of the young generation who are interested in SMS's and short messages. He deals with school and college life, cricket, corruption, inter-caste marriages, romance which appeals to today's youth. His narrative style is simple and can be enjoyed by the readers. His stories are fast paced like the Bollywood movies with a melodrama.

Though Chetan Bhagat is not considered as a writer of social novels, his narrative technique reveals his consciousness and concerns to the various social incongruities. In his very first novel *Five Point Someone* he expressed his concern for the depression which is resulted by pressure of grading system and the survival of young aspirants in one of the prestigious institutions in India. These prestigious institutions are hailed as the seats of learning. It is irony that these institutions proved failure in providing the required happiness and security which is essential for strong building of a nation. The characters in the novel, under tremendous pressure, commits mistake one after another. The novel presents the darker side of education system. The characters in the novel suffered a lot to cope up with the grading system patters, examination-oriented teaching

assignments and viva-voce, thus, killing the spirit of experimental learning. The characters, Hari, Ryan and Alok are the victims of socio-cultural consciousness.

The novel *Five Point Someone* is largely autobiographical in nature. Chetan Bhagat shares his own consciousness and concerns in Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi. He himself was the under performer at IIT, yet he never speaks like a loser, rather he is in mood of celebration of the freedom from his experiences at IIT. He is not writing about his own consciousness and concerns but also about the consciousness and concerns of the contemporary young generation. While choosing the characters for his purpose, he takes care of each class of readers. The narrator of the story, Hari, belongs to middle-class and can be treated as self-portrait of Chetan. Ryan Oberoi, a rebellious boy and having innovative ideas, represents a rich family. There is Alok, an awkward, bespectacled boy from poor family, who joins the IIT only to eradicate the poverty of his family and for the sake of financial stability. In this way, Bhagat gives due credit to each class from the rich to the marginalized poor class.

Hari, Ryan and Alok became friends on the very first day. Hari Kumar, the narrator of the story, never discloses his family background. His consciousness allows other characters to speak innovative, can be termed as 'angry young man'. His consciousness does not allow him to accept the established education pattern and rebels against it. He longs for love and affection since his childhood which, he thinks, his parents had denied it. His parents are intimately involved in handicraft business and they kept him in the boarding school. Ryan, in his early days, missed the love and affection of his parents which he found in his friends. He loves science very much and hates the IIT system because it does not support innovative ideas. He wanted to enjoy the golden fun years of his life. Alok, who belongs to a poor family, needs a good job to sort out his family matters. His mother was the only earning member in his family. She has not bought a new sari for her since the last five years. Half of her salary regularly went to support her husband's medical treatment. Besides, his elder sister was at marriageable age which is another cause of major worry for his family. The older she gets, people will demand more dowry. He is conscious enough of his responsibilities towards his family and he is under pressure to fulfil it. His future is important to him to support his father, mother and sister.

Hari is a passive onlooker. His consciousness is divided into his friends, his lady love and of course, grades. He dreams to be like Ryan. He belonged to a middle-class family. His father was a colonel in army. There is discipline in his house. He was brought up in that discipline which creates a kind of fear in his mind. He always fumbles speaking to senior, though he knows the answers. At the end of the course, he feels very happy because he met his best friends at IIT.

Ryan is undoubtedly the leader of the group. He is handsome, stylish, sporty and a spoiled brat. He is innovative in his ideas and hates the established system. He is of the opinion that students should be judged on the originality of their ideas and not on the basis of grades. The purpose of education should be to achieve excellence in the select field. He looks at the things with different perspective.

Alok is completely different kind of guy. His consciousness is only related to getting good grades and secures a good job to help out his family. Since from his childhood, he has not enjoyed the company of good friends. Now he has Hari and Ryan and he wanted them, at the same time he criticizes Ryan and Hari. He protests against all Ryan's ideas and later on becomes the part and parcel of it.

The novel's best moments are fueled by a towering speech by Cheria towards the end. Chetan Bhagat is of the opinion that we have to come out of traditional education system to meet new contemporary challenges and offer skill-oriented education. In technical education, students should feel free to express innovative and creative ideas. Every student has the potential which should not be judged on the scale of grades. There are plenty of examples in the world of average students reaching the pinnacle, thus setting example to others. Bhagat also comments on the approach of the professors. Professors are biased and do not allow prolific change in the system. They do not care for original thoughts and stick only to the text. There is no freedom of expression for innovating ideas. The students, such as Hari, Alok and Ryan, with low grades are considered nuts, losers, muggers and so on. But they are the true lovers of life, innovative, freedom lover and creative.

Thus, the novel *Five Points Someone* brings forward the story of three friends who rebelled against the established education system and later on accepted it. Chetan Bhagat dealt with the consciousness of the youth towards education, family, friendship and love.

Bhagat, in true sense, is a postmodern writer and presented postmodern issues in his fiction. His primary concern is to entertain his readers and at the same time he provides them food which makes them to think. Chetan Bhagat has established himself as a brand. He has not followed the established literary traditions but he has created his own style. He has provided a new direction to Indian English fiction. His novels are free from the stark philosophy. He desires to change the life of people and bring a positive change in their life, not by offering a philosophical dose, but by means of pure entertainment.

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Students participated in the Project work

The following students took part in the project work "Concern for Youth in five point someone by Chetan Bhagat"

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1	BA20-053	Sandhya rani Ghastai
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3.	BA-20-60	Ajya kumar Sahoo
4.	BA-20-134	SatyaJit Majmudar
5	BA-20-261	Pushpa Panda
6	BA-20-232	Sareeta Panaja
7	BA20-244	Bhagyashree Bihari
8	BA20-209	Samridhi Bal
9.	BA-20-119	Sunita Bannik