



## STUDENTS' CULTURE IN PRESENT EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO WITH REFERENCE OF THE NOVEL "FIVE POINT SOMEONE" BY CHETAN BHAGAT

**D. RAMSINGH PRABHU**

Assistant Professor in English  
Department of Science and Humanities  
Faculty of Engineering  
Karpagam Academy of Higher Education  
Coimbatore (TN) INDIA

### ABSTRACT

*Chetan Bhagat's novels go along with student's life in all aspects that is why he is considered as a youth icon of India. He tries to identify the area of troubles in youngster's life and tries to give a solution for those problems. At the same time, he has keenly captured the youth culture particularly student's culture in college. There are vast differences in the attitude, behavior, thought and culture towards education among 21<sup>st</sup> century students. This article aims to showcase the unique culture of this 21<sup>st</sup> century students and analyses the pros and cons of this culture.*

**Key Words:** Education, Area of Trouble, Solutions, Attitude and Students Culture.

### INTRODUCTION

Chetan Bhagat, the name has influenced almost every youngsters of India through the simple and colloquial language. He has produced a handful number of literary works and took a prominent place in Indian Writing in English quickly. He made it possible not by writing epics or heroic literary works but by fictions, which speak in the language of common man and speak about the life of common man of India. It seems that he has correctly captured the pulses of present young generation. Most importantly, he speaks about the college life of present young generation and defect system of education and evaluation. By his plot, it is obvious that he disagrees with the system of present education sector. That is why his heroes

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are speaking against the present education scenario. For instance, his novel, 'Five Point Someone' reveals the dark side of grading system and satires blindly memorizing aspects of college students in order to run behind good grade. "The Three Mistakes of My Life" is another fiction, which expose the incredibility of education. There is another novel, 'Revolution 2020'. This novel dissects the education sector to reveal the prevailing corruption in this sector. So it is clear that Chetan Bhagat exposes the youth culture and pathetic condition of their studies in their college life. This article traces that youth culture and analyses its pros and cons.

Bhagat has established a few distinctive fashions in the writing style of Indian writing in English and he has focussed on the concerns of the youth, which makes the readers to feel the reflection of their life. Particularly he wants to channelize their ripe energies of young minds into constructive direction because he displays the ambition of the youth as a mixture of fears and tears. The main characters of Bhagat's novels are not happy in their college life. He has portrayed them as the characters, which fears about their future and has tears because they could not cope with the system to get good grade or mark. It is because of their modern culture and attitude towards education. This attitude is perfectly pointed out by Mun Mun Das Biswas in his article. *Five Point Someone* is the first novel and earned fame to Chetan Bhagat as a debuted writer. Its plot is built on a story of three roommates, Hari, Alok and Ryan, who are studying in an engineering college. Hari, the hero in the novel stand for the insight of the author Chetan Bhagat. The heroin name is Neha. Her father is a professor in the college, where the friends study. Accidently Neha and Hari met and become good friends because they have same notion about the education system that they are not contented with the education system, which prevails at present. Education has the core authority and accountability to mould a civilized society. The future generation can be evaluated and criticized only by the quality of morality, which is inculcated primarily in schools and later on in colleges. It has to carve the qualities of good humane to become good citizenship in the midst of the youths. But in college life, students frame a different culture, which deviates them from studies. Bhagat's *Five Point someone* has very cleverly traced the true picture of that culture through India's most celebrated establishment IIT (Indian Institute of Technology). The story has pointed-out the disturbance and gloominess of the students, which surely lead to suicide or some other extreme actions. The middle class people spend a lot of their earning towards their children's education fees. But to their frustration the education sector significantly fails to take care of employability and entrepreneurial skills of most of the pass-outs. Because most of the education institutions has become a business centres and give mere certificate, which is not the duty of education sectors and that is why it fails to enhance or increase their confidence o be fit for modern society and get success in life. Bhagat has very skilfully gives a picture of all the problems of these vices of Indian education system with students' culture in the novel. The writer's description says that it is a

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blunder but it is not only the blunder of the education system but also the fault of unwanted youth culture in students' college life.

Instead of making the student community feel happy and secured, in the beginning of the first semester itself, students are threatening with exaggeration of workload and grading system by professors. They warn the students by saying 'the workload will be a tough one, which may out you on your toes, it is the grades that gives you a identification and if you score good grade, you can get job otherwise your future will be a dark one'.

Chetan Bhagat uses the above mentioned words to indicate the wrong evaluative system of students' skill and ability. He considers that there is no aspect to evaluative the creative and innovative ability of students in this system. And he exposes the monotonous aspect of the college life studies, which diminishes the interest of students on studies. It is expressed by the words of the character Ryan such as

*"Damn," Ryan said as he got up his easy chair to stretch his spectacular spine. "What a Cray week; classes, assignments, more classes, assignments and not to mention the coming attraction quizzes. You call this a life?" (13,14)*

Students' get bored and loses their interest with the overload and they feel that there is no place for their new ideas and thinking. Most of the students don't want to mug up the texts but they want to have the text as base for their studies and innovative thinking. It idea is clearly expressed the character Hari as

*"Continuous Mugging, tests and assignments. Where is the time to try out new ideas?" (25)*

Those examples exhibit the notion of present generation student community. They want latest and updated methods for teaching learning process and they want a place for their innovative thinking in that process. It indicates that we simply produce degree holders rather than producing really learned graduates. There is heart touching example in this novel, which shoes the feeling of a student. The student, Ryan, wants to do his project in his own chosen field but that project proposal was rejected even without listening the students plan. Once in a class students are taught about working pattern of a car jack and they are asked to draw the sketch of the jack. Ryan with his innovative idea just give an improvement in that car jack. Instead of screw type he planned and designed an automatic jack to reduce humane effort. But instead of encouraging the idea the professor insults Ryan as



*Prof Vohra walked along the class rows, looking at the familiar design that all students drew year after year – the simple screw-jack. His stroll ended at our desk.*

*“What is this? Prof Vohra said, twisting his head around to make sense of Ryan’s unfamiliar drawing.*

*“Sir, this is modified screw-jack,” Ryan said, “it can be attached to the car’s battery....”*

*Is this an electrical engineering class?”*

*“No sir but the end need is the same....”*

*“is this an internal combustion engines class?”*

*“Sir, but...”*

*“If you don’t want to be in my class of follow my course, you may leave.”*  
(118)

These dialogues expose the defected part of the present education system, where a students’ inventive thought is buried even in its budding stage. These are the defects, which are pointed by the author Chetan Bagat. And through these examples the positive side of the new generation students’ college culture is expounded by the writer. Since every coin has two sides, every aspect has its two sides. This college culture of students also has another side, which is bitter.

Students indulge in unwanted activities in their peak time. That is in their college life. Few of the unwanted activities are Ragging, Smoking, Drinking, Love and Sex. The novel begins with a scene of ragging. First year students are asked to assemble in place for ragging and they are asked to remove their clothes.

*“You bastards,” Baku was shrieking, “off with your clothes.”*

*“Aw Baku. Let us talk to them a bit first.” Protested Anurag, leaning against the wall, sucking a cigarette butt.*

*“No talking” Baku said, one scrawny hand up, “No talking, just remove those damn clothes.” (3)*

This type of ragging causes severe mental trauma for those, who are very sensible. After entering second and third years, students started considering their self as superior to first year even though they don’t have the knowledge of their respective year. This is one of the unwanted event of the bad side of students’ culture, which should be eradicated from all educational institutions. At present government has implemented many laws in order to vanish the ragging.



Drinking and smoking are another ill healthy activity, which prevails almost all educational institutes. Using cigarette and consuming alcohol are now considered as casual as having fast-food. Here in this story even the heroin demands cigarette to celebrate her first love with her boyfriend. She asks her boyfriend to get her casually as “Hurry, get me a fag please.” (171)

The college culture has gone to its worst that students involve in premarital sex without any guilty feeling. In this story the protagonists involve in sex as casually as they do their home work. This culture is clearly pictured by the writer in this novel but he never remarked it as a sin or something else, which destroy our tradition and our own Indian culture. He allowed his characters to involve in those bad activities casually. Whether he support or indicate the folly, it is up to the writer’s personal view. But altogether, it is a dark side of the students’ college life culture.

By the above discussed information, the students’ culture is revealed in this article that students want to be free from overload of subjects, limited tests, limited assignments and to be allowed to expose their innovative ideas. These demands can be allowed because it can increase the level of understanding of students in their subjects. It may give the expected result of producing knowledgeable graduates than simply delivering degree holders. And most importantly, students want good support and a good rapport from their teachers for improving ability and skills. At the same time, the other side of the students’ culture should be changed into good side, which may help the students to become a good citizen. Otherwise, even if a student get good understanding of his/her subject without discipline, punctuality and sincere effort, his/her knowledge will be drained.

So it is clear as Chetan Bhagat wishes that there should be a educational revolution in India to make a change in education sector and have a purely service oriented educational institutions. Then only the students’ college culture can be study oriented only.

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