

LIBERTY AND INDIVIDUALISM IN CHETAN BHAGAT'S NOVEL FIVE POINT SOMEONE: WHAT NOT TO DO AT IIT

***DR.T.VASANTHAKUMARI & **K. KALAISELVI**

**Assistant Professor & Research Advisor, PG & Research Department of English, Govt. Arts College for Women (Autonomous), Pudukkottai - 622 001, Tamil Nadu*

***Ph.D. Full Time Research Scholar, PG. & Research Department of English, Govt. Arts College for Women (Autonomous), Pudukkottai - 622 001, Tamil Nadu*

ABSTRACT

Chetan Bhagat is an Indian writer and a journalist contributing regularly to a magazine or a newspaper. Chetan Bhagat's first novel Five Point Someone What Not To Do At IIT was published in 2004. It continues to exist in the list of bestselling English novels in India. This article gives special importance to two pivotal keynotes – liberty and individualism in Five Point Someone What Not To Do At IIT.

Keywords: *Chetan Bhagat, Indian Novel Writer, Novel Journalist, IIT, Liberty and Individualism.*

Initially, Chetan Bhagat is a former student of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He had an opportunity of working as an investment banker before becoming a full-time writer. He is a symbol of representing youth. He talks about young people, profession, topics related to national development. His principal concepts in his novels are liberty, individualism, impact of globalisation, present day educational system which lacks good quality and so on.

India's economic liberalization began in 1991 to 1995. It involves disinvestment in public sector, opening of large domestic market. This domestic market was opened to foreign investors and MNC companies. India's present educational system gives special importance to marks, scores, grades and originality is not given importance in present day educational system. This educational system compresses creativity which is used to convert imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity is used to produce solutions to a problem, increase the ability of imagining the world in an entirely different way, and discover hidden things. Thinking and producing are the two processes of creativity. It focuses on the negative aspects of education in India.

Hari, Alok and Ryan were ambitious enough to achieve freedom and wanted to be self-reliant in their lives. They wanted to enjoy freedom to the maximum level. As Ryan's parents involved in handi-craft business, they had to travel foreign countries regularly. Hence Ryan was away from his parents for so many years. This situation forced him to stay in boarding schools. That's why he had a sense of resentment against his parents. He did not reply to the letters written by his parents though he received cheques and costly foreign gifts from them.

The novel portrays the exhilaration of three friends who made an entry into IIT. They were discouraged by perseverance and dullness of academic work. There were no places for fun in the midst of tight course schedule. Other students kept on memorising class notes and started preparing for tests and quizzes which were conducted in a surprise moment. The level of three friends was substandard in the first semester. Their GPA was five point someone. They were at the lowest stratum of student community in IIT.

Three friends namely Hari, Alok, Ryan proceeded with 'draw-the-line study plan' which was concocted by Ryan. He explained it to his friends thus: "See, I am not saying we stop mugging. We just draw the line. A day of classes, then three hours a day of studies and the rest is our time. Let's just try, just one semester. Isn't it fair? A kind of decentralization of education" (FPSO 40).

The novel emphasises the incomparable virtuosity of the IIT students in a very precise manner. Professor Dubey gave his lecture on Manufacturing Process. He gave a simple definition of a machine. "It is anything that reduces human effort"(9). Ryan asked very innocently: "Sir, what about a gym machine like a bench press or something?... That doesn't reduce human effort. In fact, it increases it." (10). The whole class remained silent because the teacher did not have the capability of answering the question in a clever manner. Professor Vohra started giving lectures in the class. During class hours, he asked the student to design a car jack which is used to lift the chassis or a framework in case of a flat tyre. Ryan started remodeling a screw jack that could be linked up to the car battery. He could not encourage Ryan for his innovative ideas. Ryan was not encouraged for his creativity, the professor instructed him not to act smart in his class. As the professor's knowledge was limited to book alone, he discouraged the students. The two occasions revealed the fact that the teachers were in a state of clueless condition before the perplexing questions and original thinking of their students.

The impediments of top-ranking technological institutes in India were brought about vividly. The limitations were portrayed by the narrator through Ryan Oberoi who was the smartest of the Mechanical Engineering students. Ryan arranged informal get-together in his room, Ryan says: "this is supposed to be 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?” (34) He felt reproachful of the system which gave importance to grades. This system gives extra burden to the students which he considered unfair. The present day educational system crushed creativity and original thinking. It gave importance to the memorising techniques and they had to accept the lectures of the teachers without questioning. Mice Theory came into existence because of Ryan. It was used to identify the problems in the IIT system. He said to his hostel mates:

This IIT system is nothing but a mice race. It is not a rat race, mind you, as rats sound somewhat shrewd and clever. So it is not about that. 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. Profs who have no idea what science and learning are about ... what have IITs given to this country? Name one invention in the last three decades” (101).

He evaluated the system followed in IIT was unjust as it subdued the natural aptitude and independent mood. The minds of IIT students were best minds. IIT educational system played a pivotal role in spoiling the best lives of students. Students were judged by the merciless GPA system. There was no place for relationship. The Professors cared their students occasionally. Ryan made up his mind to argue against IIT system. He motivated his two friends namely Hari and Alok to help him in carrying out his plan which was known as “C2D” i.e. ‘Cooperate to Dominate.’ He explained the important principles of his plan one by one. (i) They allocated the responsibility of writing down the assignments among themselves. Each person would hold the responsibility of writing the assignments of their own subjects. And then each person would copy the assignments written by others. (ii) They decided to split up the subject accountability among themselves and allocated the lab experiment observations. If the two friends followed Ryan’s plan they would consume time and their strenuous effort. This system invented by Ryan would pave the way to enjoy their life to the maximum extent.

Chetan Bhagat’s novels are built on famous themes. Bhagat attained success because of his selection of his theme. He has the habit of writing whatever he knows well. Chetan Bhagat evokes the memory of Jane Austen, who confessed frankly that she wrote about the life she knew very well. Bhagatre invigorates and inspires the youth. Young people could lead a life according to their desire and inner mind. He supports the youth to foster libertarian point of view through his writings.

REFERENCES

1. Bhagat, Chetan. *Five Point Someone What Not To Do At IIT*. New Delhi: Rupa & Co, 2004. Print

2. Ghosh, Tapan K, and Dhawan, R.K. *ChetanBhagat: The Icon of Popular Fiction*. New Delhi: Prestige Books International, 2014. Print