

Psychoanalytical Perspectives in Chetan Bhagat's Select Novels

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Abstract:

This paper examines psychoanalytical perspectives in selected novels of Chetan Bhagat, including *Five Point Someone* (2004), *One Night @ the Call Center* (2005), and *The Three Mistakes of My Life* (2008). Using psychoanalytical film theory, it analyzes the psychological struggles, frustrations, and anxieties of Bhagat's characters. The study highlights how parental expectations, rigid academic systems, and societal pressures impact young individuals' mental health. It explores the coping mechanisms of characters when faced with failure, stress, and existential dilemmas. Adaptations of these novels into films, such as *3 Idiots*, *Hello*, and *Kai Po Che*, are also critically examined. The paper reveals how psychoanalytical approaches can illuminate underlying human desires, fears, and motivations. The educational and professional environments depicted in the narratives are shown to shape emotional and cognitive development. By comparing novel and cinematic portrayals, the research underscores the universal challenges of contemporary youth. The study concludes that Bhagat's fiction provides valuable insight into mental resilience, social pressures, and personal growth. It contributes to the understanding of contemporary Indian youth through psychoanalytical and cinematic lenses.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis ,Chetan Bhagat ,Youth Anxiety ,Film Adaptation ,Educational Pressure

This paper probes psychoanalytical perspectives in Chetan Bhagat's Select novels like *Five Point Someone* (2004), which has adapted into movie *3 Idiots* in Hindi and *Nanban* in Tamil. *One Night @ Call Center* (2005), which has adapted into movie *Hello*, *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* (2008), which has adapted into Hollywood movie *Kai Po Che*, Characters Ryan, Alok and Hari in *Bhagat's Five Point Someone* (2004),

Nanban in Vijay, Jeeva and Sri Kanth *3 Idiots* in Aamir Khan, Madhavan, and Mona Singh, *One Night @ Call Center* in Shyam Mehra and Priyanka Sinha, *Hello* in Shyam Mehra and Esha Singh, *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* in Sushant Singh Rajput, *Amit Sadh Kai Po Che* in Raj Kummar Rao and Amrita Puri. All these novels and characters are critically analysis with using of Psychoanalytical Film theory.

The novel *Five Point Someone* puts education under microscope. It is set in the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi in the period 1991 to 1995. It is about the adventures of three Mechanical Engineering students Ryan, Alok and Hari who fail to cope with the grading system of the IITs as the system of evaluation is unjust. It begins in a unique way.

Bhagat opens his novel with a mysterious prologue in which the narrator of Hari is one of the three friends in the first person narrative. Ryan and Hari are in ambulance with Alok who got thirteen fractures. Hari informs the readers that his Alok limbs were motionless, just like his father's right side. Many queries aroused in the minds of the readers like 1. Who are Alok and Ryan? 2. What is the relationship between narrator and Alok? 3. What did happened to Alok injured severely? and 4. What did happen to Alok's father that his right side is motionless? These questions spark the readers' mind to read more. This is how Chetan Bhagat uses psychoanalytical techniques to make the storyline gripping.

Therefore, Bhagat's construct the character Alok belongs to the lower middle class or a poor family. He has much burden of family responsibilities on his shoulders and also he is not come up with the grade system. Bhagat's constructs the trio Ryan, Alok and Hari are similar to Sankar's *Nanban* creates Panchavan "Pari" Pariventhan., Venkat and Sevarkodi Senthil are affected by mugging system which leads to face some stress and frustration in their life. Neha is the daughter of Prof. Cherian in *Five Point of Someone* and Sankar's *Nanban* Riya falls in love with Pariventhan. The novel Hari and Neha fallen in love with each other but in movie Ryan and Neha fell in love. Prof. Cherian is the professor and head of the Mechanical Department of the institution in which the trio study. He has some strict rules and principles for himself and his profession. Bhagat creates Neha and Sankar constructs Riya has some complaints against her father's parental over-expectations. Thus, she faces some hurdles in the name of her father and his strict rules and regulations.

The situation becomes so pathetic Bhagat's Alok as Sevarkodi Senthil in *Nanban*. and Samir Neha's elder brother as Sankar's Paneer Selvam, senior of trio. When Alok attempts to commit suicide and Samir, the only brother of Neha commits suicide for not being able to crack the entrance test to get into IIT. The letter of Samir, addressed to his sister Neha, exposes the mental pressures and tension felt by young boys and girls due to over expectations and needless domination of parents on their children. The atmosphere of IIT which is revealed in the novel may not be an exact picture of the IIT culture of the time and also it exposes psychological perspective. Thus, Samir's suicide leads to change Cheria mind.

The only ray of hope is found in the sympathetic behavior of Prof. Veera who appreciates the creativity of the students and stand by them. He is a symbolic illustration of an ideal teacher who motivates the students for their genuine creativeness and originality of ideas. He is a very good example of humanity expected in educational institutions. He has a high sense of identifying the best in both the high performers and under performers and giving the right direction to the talents. Chetan Bhagat uses some pessimistic and optimistic characters through psychoanalytical approaches.

The academic atmosphere in the institution is rigid and monotonous. There is little scope for original ideas. Much work is based on mugging or cramming. The grade point average (GPA) system does not anyway promote creativity or innovativeness of any kind. The students madly rush after the maximum GPA. The novel exposes the inner sentiments of the average students who are underestimated or not given necessary importance in the classrooms. The trio feel themselves clutched in the system. Bhagat's *Five Point Someone* and Sankar's *Nanban* are crystal clearly revealed rote learning affected not only their education but also creates some psychological pressure and tension which leads to young minds decide to commit suicide in the current era.

The novel *One Night @ the Call Center* (2005), was also adapted into a movie named *Hello* (2008), with Bhagat and Atul Agnihotri as writers. Atul Agnihotri's characters are Sharman Joshi as Shyam Mehra, Sohail Khan as Varun Malhotra, Arbaaz Khan as Anju Jha, Gul Panag as Priyanka Sinha, Isha Koppikar as Esha Singh, Amrita Arora as Radhika Jha and Sharat Saxena as Military Uncle. Agnihotri and Bhagat characters are faced obstacles in their life and how they overcome pressure and frustration to change as a suitable life. Chetan Bhagat used psychoanalytical views on the main characters of his second novel, *One Night @ the*

Call Center (2005). The novel revolves around the six main characters—Shyam, Priyanka, Esha, Varun, Radhika, and Military Uncle. They all came from their own unique background and struggles. Connexion, Call Center surroundings is projected as a monarchy of monotonous, unfulfilling work. Workers spend their hours with answering innumerable phone calls from American customers, often dealing with trivial issues and facing impolite words, and pompous attitudes. The recurring scenery of their job leads to a sense of stagnation and frustration, it is also symbolizing the larger existential struggles faced by the call centre employees. Bhagat reveals urban middle class youth and middle age man are faced some hurdles and deep-rooted aggravation which leads to psychologically affected.

Shyam is the determined and confident, he is not a good job and also unloved feeling undervalued and overlooked. Priyanka, his ex-girlfriend, grapples with societal and familial pressures, especially with an impending arranged marriage she is lack in confident. Esha is the hopeful model, continually faces rejection and dejection with the harsh realities of the modeling industry. Varun is a rebellion spirit with a skill for technology and also is disappointed by the crooked cum corrupt corporate world. Radhika is burdened by an unfaithful husband and the limitations of a traditional marriage. Military Uncle feels separated from his family and decline for a connection with his estranged son and grandson. These characters' exposes their own personal struggles and ambitions simmering beneath the surface of their professional façade in the contemporary era.

The call center serves as a representative of the larger world outside, reflecting the Richs and poor's of life, the pursuit of dreams, and the reality of compromises. Each character's tale adds a fuel into the narrative, inspiring the reader's understanding of their collective and individual experiences. The monotony and dissatisfaction of their jobs become catalysts for introspection, setting the stage for the transformative events that are about to unfold.

Therefore, the collective tension within the call centre is not enough; the external and internal elements seemed to conspire against them. A severe technical issue arose, leading to a bewildering surge in call volumes, further exacerbating the stress levels among the employees. The breaking point arrived when an furious caller hurled unwarranted insults, pushing Varun to snap completely. This sparked a heated confrontation among the group, who began to inadvertently spill their deepest fears and unresolved conflicts. The call center, initially a soulless corporate hub, turned into a kettle of raw human emotions.

A salient feature of this novel is when characters of the novel received a phone call from God. Bhagat incorporated some optimistic note through the phone call from God. The conversation with God motivated the group to such an extent that they got ready to face their problems with utmost determination and motivation.

God began to deliver messages and advice tailored specifically to each individual in the group. Shyam focused on the importance of self-respect and the courage to stand up for oneself. This resonated deeply with him, given his recent break-up and the humiliation he faced at work. Priyanka's engagement was on the brink of collapse, the message was about self-worth and the courage to make life-changing decisions with confidence. Esha is struggling with the aftermath of a failed modeling career; the counsel was about recognizing inner beauty and valuing oneself beyond societal standards. Radhika is dealing with betrayal and a stifling marriage, received advice that pushed her to reclaim her happiness and independence. Varun frustrated by the meaningless shake of the call center, was urged to direct his energies toward what he truly loved and to take risks in pursuit of his passions. Military Uncle is the solitary figure isolated from his own family, encouraging forgiveness and reconciliation. As God's words permeated the room, a sense of clarity replaced the prevailing chaos. The characters realized God's messages from a new perspective, focusing not just on their struggles but on the possibilities for change and growth. The mysterious phone call served as a catalyst for self-reflection, compelling each of them to confront their deepest fears and to reconsider their future paths.

Chetan Bhagat's third novel is *The Three Mistakes of My Life* which was published in 2008 by the Rupa & Co, Delhi. The novel has been modified for the Bollywood movie *Kai Po Che* in 2013, directed by Abhishek Kapoor. It is one of the most important case of suicide attempt is clearly depicted in the novel. The central character Rajkummar Rao as Govind Patel tries to commit suicide in utter depression in his life. He swallowed a high dose of sleeping pills but fortunately he was timely admitted in the hospital and he was saved. He writes an e-suicide note to the writer himself. When the writer comes to see him in the hospital, he confesses the reason of his suicide at the beginning of the fiction.

Govind is a very determined young man, around twenty five years of age. He runs a small business in partnership with his close friends Sushant Singh Rajput as Ishaan Bhatt and Amit Sadh as Omkar 'Omi' Shastri. He also handles Maths tuitions to local children to earn some money. One of his students is Amirta Puri as Vidya. She is the heroine of the novel. She is eighteen years old and also preparing for her

medical entrance examination. She is the only sister of his close friend Ishaan. Govind and Vidya fall in love with each other. They are frequently using physical intimacies during the tuition hours. Govind and Vidya maintain their hidden relationship from his friend Ishaan but Omi knows of this relationship. Ali is a Muslim boy who is called in the earlier as a national treasure in the field of cricket. At the end of the novel, while Govind and his friends were striving hard to save Ali from the deadly attacks of the rioters of the post-Godhra sabotage, Ishaan comes to know about the relationship between his sister Vidya and his close friend Govind. He becomes so angry but this was the crucial time to save Ali's life so he does not speak a word. He cuts all the relationships with Govind including the friendship and the business partnership.

The Protagonist, Govind is depicted in the fiction as a disenchanted young man in life. He has struggled all his life to become rich but all his attempts was in hopeless. Though, he is elegant and intellectual but he commits certain serious mistakes in life. In his calculation, he believes that he has committed three very serious mistakes in his life. His first mistake is his blind investment of all his earnings to buy a shop in a mall which collapses in the earthquake, His second mistake is sexual relationship with his close friend's sister and his student Vidya, and His third mistake is to split second delay to save Ali from the deadly onslaught of Bittoo Mama to kill Ali. The frustration and anxiety in Govind's life is not only because of his friend Ishaan's cutting off friendship with him because of his physical relationship with Vidya. He was a complete failure in all his dreams of life. The character of Govind can be taken as the actual representation of the frustrated youth of the contemporary Indian society.

The foremost part of the present novel is dutiful to divulge the fact how such two-facedness disturbs the peace and harmony of society. Bittoo mama and Parekh-ji are two high-flying characters representing the rampant political and religious hypocrisy in the society exposed in the novel. Bittoo mama is the maternal uncle of Omi. He is an ardent Hindu and also associated with the Hindu Political Party in the novel which works on the basis of protecting Hindu people's concerns and welfare. Parekh-ji is a political cum spiritual leader. Bittoo Mama is a passionate follower of him. He has bottomless faith in Parekh-ji's preaching. Through the character of Bittoo Mama, the writer has revealed the religious hypocrisy in the contemporary India. Bittoo Mama is assigned the duty by Parekh-ji to inspire more and more young people to join their party. He is also a trustee of the Swami-Bhakti temple of Belrampur

mentioned in the novel. The religious hypocrisy of people like Bittoo Mama and Parekh-ji are dangerous creatures to the social peace and harmony of the country.

Vidya, is an attention-grabbing picture of the rationalized approach of the young generation. She does not like to be controlled by the parental pressure. She wants to live her life as she wishes. She does not want a peripheral dominance of any kind on her life. Her parents want to become as a doctor, but she is interested a PR course and settled in Metropolitan cities like Bombay. She is an over-realization of modernity forgets some of the basic values and morals of life.

Chetan Bhagat's *Five Point Someone: What not to do at IIT!* Remarkable *Nanban*, *The One Night @ Call Centre* adapted into *Hello* and *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* (2008), which has modified into Hollywood movie *Kai Po Che*. All the novels and films characters like Ryan as Pariventhan, Alok as Sevarkodi Senthil and Hari as Venkat, Sharman Joshi as Shyam Mehra, Sohail Khan as Varun Malhotra, Arbaaz Khan as Anju Jha, Gul Panag as Priyanka Sinha, Isha Koppikar as Esha Singh, Amrita Arora as Radhika Jha and Sharat Saxena, Govind Patel as Rajkumar Rao, Vidhya Bhatt as Amrita Puri, Bittoo Mama as Manav Kaul and Parekh-ji' are some ay affected by psychologically how they overcome all the obstacles and hurdles in their life to lead a successful and happy life in the twenty-first century.

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