

# Beyond the Classroom: The Disillusionment of Educated Youth in Chetan Bhagat's *The Girl in Room 105*

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## Abstract

This article focuses on disillusionment among educated youths in Chetan Bhagat's *The Girl in Room 105*. Beyond the genre of a crime thriller, the novel explores the disappointment of Indian youths particularly those who have high academic qualifications but low emotional and professional compassion. The novel analyses the difference between the idealized promise of educated youths and the real-world satisfied Indians who remain entrenched in systemic barriers, cultural complexities, and existential crises. This paper examines how the writer portrays the disillusionment of educated youth, showing that real learning often happens beyond the classroom personally and professionally.

## Keywords:

Disillusionment, educated youth, education system, career dissatisfaction, Indian fiction, youth crisis.

## Introduction

The novel *The Girl in Room 105* has been written by Chetan Bhagat a best-selling author often focuses as the narration of India's urban middle class. He has gradually analysed the aspirations and disillusionments of young Indians. At present, the number of highly qualified youths is produced by India's well known educational expansion. Even though, many of them are endured because of career expectations, lack of opportunities, and personal disappointments. This novel captures above these all disillusionments of educated youth through the protagonist character Keshav Rajpurohit.

*The Girl in Room 105* is known as a murder mystery novel. While closer reading, it shows the inner function as a social commentary on unsatisfied experience of the modern educated youths. Keshav, an IIT graduate is served as a coaching tutor. He becomes a authoritative of educated still underutilized potential. A larger generational condition is revealed by His personal and professional crises where the promise of education demolishes under the weight of systemic stagnation, communal politics, and the emptiness of neoliberal consumer culture.

This paper situates Bhagat's novel within the discourse on youth disillusionment in India, analysing how the work criticises the limitations of classroom-based learning and focuses the necessity of experiential, often painful. This article concludes the author's depiction of disillusionments invites the readers to rethink the purpose of education in a society where the academic success doesn't necessarily translate into emotional or moral fulfilment of educated youth with the realities of love, labour, and politics.

## Keshav as the Manifestation of Disillusionment

In the novel *The Girl in Room No. 105*, Keshav Rajpurohit is not only the protagonist but also the main representing character of disillusionment—with education, love, identity, society, and his own personal

aspirations. His emotional journey expresses the inner disappointments of a young Indian man trying to reconcile personal desires with societal expectations. This paper investigates themes including love, ambition, general conflicts, and socio-economic challenges. These relatable topics have gained the writer's popularity and the young readers who determine with the expectations and disappointments of this character.

Keshav's journey in this novel is how significant personal development can be validated by disillusionment. From a heartbroken, aimless youth, he changes into someone with ability, emotional intelligence, and a new sense of purpose. His story marks the essence of post-traumatic growth, showing that even in the darkest times, growth and healing are possible.

### **The Classroom as a Failed Promise**

In India, the institutions like IITs are symbolized for academic excellence and societal expectations. Even though, this pressure makes youths to get succeed academically and guides to oversupply of talent and an undersupply of meaningful employment frequently. Chetan Bhagat shows the inner reality of urban people who are still being as religious fanatics when the people have changed their mental attitude in metropolitan cities.

*Geeta Bisht Walia says, "The unemployment among the youngsters, aspirations of young ones for IIT, pre-marital sex. The novel not only entertains us but also teaches us a lot." (47)*

The protagonist character Keshav represents the youth of today who is facing the problem of job of choice. Both, Keshav and Saurav don't like to teach in Chandan's classes as tutors. But they do not have another choice as they do not get jobs of their interesting. The novelists also reveals the professional demeanour of the coaching centre which makes the youths to prepare for IIT. The students and their parents are built to get admission in their institutions. Keshav says that once to impress a parent Chandan, the owner of the institute drags him out of the classroom and says;

*Does he look like there's anything special about him? See, if he can get into IIT, your child can too.*

Thus the novel critiques the education system makes failed promise to educated youths in reality. The promise is considered as Education means a job, not to personal growth. Keshav's job as tutor in Chandan's classes is always colourless and struggling. The writer through his view denotes a number of young Indians are being pushed into their careers and they are not passionate, leading to an enlarge identity crisis where the academic success doesn't bring no longer stable happiness or purpose.

### **Romantic Disillusionment and Identity Politics**

Romantic disillusionment exposes another deficiency, if academic stagnation shows one of the disappointments of youths. The novel explores a girl who named Zara Lone, a beautiful Kashmiri. Keshav and Zara were in relationship. Unfortunately, they broke their relationship due to certain situation. Later, Zara moves forward from this and gets engaged to Raghu, owner of a tech company.

But Keshav still loves Zara. One day on Zara's birthday Keshav receives a message from Zara's phone and Keshav decides to go and meet her in her hostel room no105. While he enters the room, he sees Zara lying dead on bed. Initially, he is assumed to have murdered Zara but Keshav finds out the real culprit, Raghu, who is Zara's fiancée.

In his travel by Keshav to find out the truth for her murder, many truths are revealed to him like Zara's step brother participants in terrorists, Zara's sexual relationship with her cousin, Faiz, a military officer. Keshav first suspects Faiz as a victim. because Faiz presented Zara an expensive earrings and they search his house in Delhi.

They find pregnancy kits in his place the same pregnancy kits already has been found in Zara's room, by checking internet history they find that he searched for abortion and divorce. This evidence made them to think that Faiz could have killed Zara. So, they interrogate him but he admitted that he had a physical relationship with Zara but he didn't kill her. A conversation between captain Faiz and Keshav as follow.

*"I gave these really special Kashmiri earrings to Zara."*

*Saurabh and I looked at each other, surprised.*

*Oh, I said, special as in?*

*They are traditional Kashmiri earrings.*

*They cost a few lakhs. Zara said she would pay for them" (Bhagat 258)*

Prema Latha declares, "Chetan Bhagat followed the typical style of Agatha Christie's murder mysteries by writing the thriller book. Though the story is written on a serious note but didn't fail in making people to laugh at few scenes especially on Saurabh's jokes. The present paper throws light upon the investigation of Zara Lone's murder and Keshav's mad love on his lost love."

At the end of the novel Keshav himself realizes that he doesn't love Zara. Though the novel is about a murder mystery but Chetan Bhagat through his characters depict modern Indian society and its new social values.

### **Systemic Disillusionment and the Search for Meaning**

Bhagat creates the attention to a critical issue on the Indian education system which is producing winners but not visioners. This system always doesn't achieve to make the youngsters for real life challenges beyond academic success. The author utilizes Keshav's character to question the success of the society without personal growth or societal contribution. When Keshav refuses to convert this religion, Mr. Lone becomes angry and threatens him not to meet his daughter. He says:

*You are just a kafir. Taking advantage of my precious daughter. Leave her alone, or it won't be good.*<sup>7</sup>

This was the end of Keshav and Zara's relationship. It displays the stark reality of our society. Religion is a major cause of breaking off of such relationship. In the book *Psychology*, Robert A. Baron says that *the death of a loved one is very stressful, and life is filled with countless minor annoying sources of stress termed hassles.*

Keshav moves through emotional pain, and he feels guilty after Zara's death is discovered. He regrets his activities. Investigating her murder is the best trace to make sense of what has happened. Instead of completely breaking down, he delivers his pain into uncovering the truth about her murder. His search for justice marks the beginning of his growth, as he learns to control his emotions and think logically.

Keshav learns a deeper understanding of love, loss, and the importance of letting go. As he comes across different problems in his life, he learns to cope with grief in a productive way instead of self-destructive habits.

This proves his resilience. His journey increases his personal strength. The journey transforms him into a more mature and independent individual. Above all, he develops appreciation for life. He starts valuing his own life and future, rather than being stuck in the past. Thus, Keshav's journey of emotional transformation after the tragic death of his ex-girlfriend, Zara is beautifully presented by the author.

### **Beyond the Classroom: Experiential Learning and Existential Growth**

Significantly, Keshav's most meaningful education occurs outside the classroom. His detective-like investigation exposes him to the messy intersections of politics, love, and betrayal. In this process, he acquires resilience, adaptability, and a deeper awareness of the fragility of human aspirations. The character keshav's transformation in *A Girl in Room No 105* includes with the concept of post-trauma growth. His personal development, driven by tragedy and it explores how new strength, wisdom and recover can be led by his sufferings and loss.

When Keshav examines deeper into this murder case, he comes to realise that solving the mystery is more important than his own trauma. This investigation brings about a vast transformation in his journey of life. With great difficulty, Keshav and Saurabh find the true killer. Keshav says, "I am happy to say, we have solved the Zara murder case" (301). Keshav discovers the value of life, and he says, "And thank you for also teaching me to never love someone too much... 'Goodbye, Zara. I unlove you" (301). Keshav seeks to overcome the trauma and uses his contextual or practical intelligence.

## Conclusion

In *The Girl in Room 105*, Chetan Bhagat critiques the myth of education as a linear path to success and fulfillment. Through Keshav's professional frustrations, romantic disillusionments, and systemic struggles, the novel dramatizes the pervasive disillusionment of India's educated youth. By juxtaposing the sterile space of the classroom with the transformative potential of lived experience, Bhagat suggests that true learning emerges from confronting the contradictions of love, labor, and politics in contemporary India.

Thus, the novel occupies an important place in Indian popular fiction—not merely as entertainment but as cultural critique. It forces a reconsideration of education's role in shaping identities and futures in a society where the classroom increasingly appears as a site of disillusionment rather than empowerment.

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