

Corruption and the Quest for Change: A Study of Chetan Bhagat's Social Commentary in *Revolution 2020*

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: Corruption is not uncommon in the ears of developing countries. It is considered one of the prime factors contributing to poverty in the world. Its importance in today's world cannot be emphasised. The prime motive of the study is to analyse, how corruption affects educational institutions and the revolt of the young generation against corruption to bring up the changes in society. Even the work *Revolution 2020* depicts the changes in the young generation and corrupted minds in the existing society.

Theoretical framework: The study analyses the previous research done in the area. A detailed description of corruption and its effects are discussed which is followed by the suggestions and ideas given to eradicate the same

Methodology: The study is based on literature and some secondary materials from articles, novels, internet sources and libraries. Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020*(2011) is selected for standard understanding towards corruption in education and society.

Findings and Conclusion: The finding depicts the young generation nowadays is opposed to people's corrupt minds and begins to revolt against the system in society. The negligence of the people also affects society and ruins its wealth. The suggestions provide in conclusion to decrease the level of corruption.

Findings implications: The poor and the abled are affected a lot due to corruption. Bribing paves, the way to corruption which is done by the common men and found in almost all sectors. The youth of today are against the odds as they want to eliminate them.

Uniqueness/value: The paper brings to light that the youngsters should stand together to revolt against corruption.

Keywords: Society, Corruption, Bribe, Education, Revolt

1. INTRODUCTION

In many nations, corruption is expanding like a social disease and it is considered as a social evil. In Indian society, corruption became the prime social problem. Every day corruption is spreading rapidly like some disease. The prime cause of corruption is due to the contact of criminals with officials and political people, who ruin the nation. It affects every sector such as education, hospital, technology etc. Nowadays everything is considered a business and earning money is an improper way. In the educational sector, corruption plays a prime role and ruins moral values. Due to corruption, many of the ecological systems also get affected. In Indian literature in English, some of the authors show light on corruption. Aravind Adiga, Mulk Raj Anand, and Shashi Tharoor are some of the writers who portray corruption in Indian writings. According to Brademas J (2005), "The corrupted power structures still enjoy extensive impunity. With weak rule of law, corrupted law... contributes to trafficking of women".

Chetan Bhagat brings out the corruption and negligence of people through his novel *Revolution 2020*. Bhagat focuses on the contemporary social problems and conflicts in Indian society. In *Revolution 2020*, Bhagat shows corruption, negligence, pressure on the young generation, education system, entrance examination, scam, rezoning of land and revolution of youth. The story revolves around the friends Raghav, Gopal and Aarti. It shows the revolution of the current generation against corruption.

1.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chakkaravarthy (2015) in his research article titled *Corruption in Chetan Bhagat's Revolution 2020* explores the types of corruption involved in the novel *Revolution 2020*. The main role involved in the corruption is newspaper and they are linked with many politicians. So, the newspapers publish articles or news that is positive for the politicians. Nivas states about the varieties of bribes and corrupted minds in his article. The reports about the deemed institutions are stated, due to the worst kind of facilities and the news about the cancellation of universities by UGC is mentioned. Nivas depicts the

dealing of newspapers and society, and the connection with political parties is also depicted. In India, no one has the capacity to end corruption, yet young people can make their country less corrupt.

Aravind Kumar Sharma (2015) in the paper entitled *Corruption in Education System in Chetan Bhagat's Revolution 2020, Love, Ambition, Corruption* states that *Revolution 2020* depicts the current contemporary society, and portrays the defects in the current education system. The establishment of new institution reduce the mind of the corrupt and increase the education of many people. Aravind depicts that the increase in private colleges provides the opportunity for students who fail to get into reputed institutes, but in some private institutes didn't maintain the facilities and high fee structures. The position in education deals changes, the higher seats are only for making cash. A large number of young people would be unemployed if the current system is kept in place longer. These institutions will certainly provide people with degrees, but they will be for nothing.

Chand Ali (2015) in his article *Rampant Corruption in Indian Education, Politics and Love in Chetan Bhagat's Revolution 2020* depicts that our society is being swamped by a massive quantity of corruption, and a line needs to be drawn. Nothing good will remain if the current world is submerged in the great ocean of corruptive systems. The method of corruption varies according to the sectors. Chand opines that in previous times corruption was seen in some specific sectors but nowadays it lay out in every part of the globe. Chand mentions the universities in various nations dealing with corrupted practices. Even the coaching centre has tied up with many institutions to get more students. The career fair is crucial among the universities or colleges in India and they are also involved in the practice of corruption. The same factor is connected with politics through emotions. Chetan Bhagat attempted to put an end to it with his suggestions and informative messages in *Revolution 2020*.

Suman R and Suresh P (2017) on their paper *An Analysis of Chetan Bhagat's Revolution 2020: Love, Ambition, Corruption* explores Chetan Bhagat as a remarkable writer of moral and societal estimations. Suman portrayed the authors and histories in India as well as the post-freedom movements. The modern method of connections is portrayed through the characters such as mail, Twitter, WhatsApp etc. Suman also concentrates on various universities' research on social media communication in the modern era. Some paper agencies publish ads related to their connected political parties. The tale elucidates the contemporary political and socio conditions and also states the defects in educational institutes. He holds the social and moral responsibility of the people in the highest regard. He intends to convey his message of social obligations to society and the nation in an honest manner.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study is based on literature and some secondary materials from articles, novels, internet sources and libraries. Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020* (2011) is selected for a standard understanding towards corruption in education and society.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of corruption can be seen in every part of our nation. It affects the life of every people. It ruins society's wealth and spoils everything. In the early days, corruption is seen in both the public and private sectors. The corruption also spread into the educational institutes in every part of the world. It plays a vital role in the education sectors such as admissions, entrance exams, approval from UGC and AICTE, buying the officials for other kinds of approvals etc. To destroy the power, government belongings and individual political member only by political corruption. The side of political parties embezzles both money and power in unethical matters. Some individuals on the political side provide benefits through their power to their well-known people. In the previous reports, half the people pay bribes to get a job in the government sector and in the upcoming year people pay bribes to officials to get higher contacts. In India, massive type of corruption is done through public schemes and some crucial sources of corruption are factories paying bribes to many parts of the government sectors including media, police, higher sectors, political individuals etc. The lights towards the corrupted people are brought by the media and they get into prison for the case. The political individuals came out very shortly from prison due to the influence and money paid to buy the officials. The statement of Amundsen (1999) "Political or grand corruption takes place at the high levels of the political system. It is when the politicians and state agents, who are entitled to make and enforce the laws in the name of the people, are themselves corrupt...status and wealth".

In *Revolution 2020*, the traces of corruption in the educational sector, rezoning of agricultural land and scam in GAP (Ganga Action Plan). Here, the newspaper plays a vital role among social evils in society. Nowadays young generation became to revolt against the system and brings out the truth. Bhagat always concentrates towards the current generation in Indian society. After finishing their schooling, Raghav, Aarti and Gopal started preparing for the entrance examination to get into NIT and IIT. When the result came, Raghav cracked the exam and Gopal didn't make it. Gopal's father didn't digest when his son didn't crack the exam. Even nowadays the pressure on the young generation by parents still exists. Bhagat also mentions the death of Samir in *Five Point Someone*, due to the pressure from his father to crack the IIT exam. In the same way here Gopal's father pressurises Gopal to crack the exam. There are many students didn't able to crack the entrance exams, here the coaching centre plays a prime role for them. The generation today is going to coaching classes to clear the entrance examination for medical, engineering, reputed colleges etc. Many coaching classes are only looking for profit more than students' marks. When Gopal plans to do a degree course at Allahabad University, his father refuses the plan and sent him to Kota.

In Kota, Gopal joins the coaching class to crack the exam. But he didn't crack the exam, Baba shouted at him. Due to the entrance result of Gopal, Baba died. This is the mindset of every parent when their children didn't work out their wishes. After the death of Baba, Gopal meets Sunil and goes with him to an admission event. At the coffee shop, Gopal says about his entire story to Sunil, such as the land case, the death of Baba etc. Sunil says about MLA Shukla and states that "There are people in our country who are above the law" (119). There are many people, officials, and people with power involved in the other side of the law. The other side denotes unlawful things such as corruption, scam, using power for unethical matters etc.

The next day Sunil brings Gopal along with Bedi (education consultant) to MLA house. Gopal says about the thirty acres of agricultural land to Shukla. The plan is to open a new college in the agricultural land. The agricultural land is only used for flourishing the crops, not for any other purposes. Agriculture is known as the backbone of India. But due to some people's greed, they do some unethical ways to achieve the goal. It is like a cakewalk to rezoning the land for politicians. The politicians use their power to officials to achieve whatever needful things. Shukla states that "We don't fix cases. We fix the people in the cases" (125), this depicts the power of politicians who can fix anything with their money and power. The land matter responsibility is taken by Shukla and finally, they plan to open a new college. The rezoning of land is such an impossible thing according to the law, but people like Shukla use their power and money to capture their goals. The rezoning of agricultural land affects the ecosystem too. It affects the country's economy, food chain process of flora and fauna etc. Groundwater became dry while rezoning the agricultural land, the level of water may be high or low which leads to disaster for the globe. The greed of some powerful people affects agriculture.

Power is the ultimate element in the society. When the combination of power and money is in the hands of an individual person, the person can do whatever. By the power and influence of Shukla, the property completely turns to their side from Gopal's uncle. The VNN (Varanasi Nagar Nigam) approval is needed for rezoning the land. Bedi states that "No, any government work, especially in education, requires a fee. Get used to it" (138), which clearly shows how bribe plays a prime role in those departments. Gopal and Bedi go to VNN and meet an official agent, Sinha. After the conversation, Sinha mentions the word "Everything" (139), the everything points out the term bribe. Some of the officials do unethical and unlawful things for the money is also called corruption.

At the VNN office, Gopal started to bargain for the amount even for bribes. Finally, they get the approval for the college building, with the power and money. Here the revolt of the current generation is shown through the character Raghav, who joins Dainik as a reporter. The current generation begins to think about the problems and issues happening around their society. Aarti states about "Society changes only when individual family norms are challenged" (149) is also known as revolution. The newspaper is the main aspect of the revolution, so here Raghav is a reporter to bring evils out. Today some of the young generations are against the current system.

Hiring the faculty is more important, even though there are many ways in it. Some of the intuitions hire the faculty only for teaching, some for only the name, some only to manage the higher officers for approvals etc. Bedi and Gopal reached Prof Shrivastava's residence to hire him as a faculty. Most of the colleges in our society hire senior or retired faculty, because they know completely about the sector. Those experienced people know how to accomplish the higher officials in the same sector. Here, Prof Shrivastava knows people from AICTE and expects more salary than other faculty. Prof Shrivastava states "Which faculty goes to teach every day in private colleges?" (157), this clearly states that some of the private colleges hire faculty for only the college's reputation and not give any importance to teaching. Those private colleges can adjust everything for inspection with the help of the senior faculty and also some colleges use seniors to

teach the junior students, still happening in reputed colleges too. In the way of admission, some of the colleges go to school for a presentation about the college, only to fix the principal for the admission process. The school is the prime matter of admission to college. Students nowadays focus on reputed institutions, but many of them fail. Those students seek private colleges for admission because they weren't able to clear the entrance examination. Finally, those students follow the words of the principal and he suggests the college which pays him. The same method happening in the coaching centre, tuitions etc.

Mahlangu (2023) claims that "Young individuals can create and promote corruption storytelling podcasts... related to corruption". Some of today's young generation started to revolt against the current system and they bring out unlawful things to light. The generation begins to question everything. Raghav visits Ganga Tech and had a conversation with Gopal. Raghav starts to question the way of collecting money, rezoning land and GAP. Raghav opines that "I can't be part of a corrupt enterprise" (163), which portrays that the young generation today get aware of the corrupt society. In our society, some of the young generations are flexible in their needs and goals, and some are against the system to bring the revolution. However, Raghav, the one who is against the system and brings out the evils into the light.

During the inspection day in many sectors, the bribe plays a prime role. The bribe can convince many officials to do any kind of inspection nowadays. When the AICTE inspection came to Ganga Tech, Prof Shrivastava states the amount of bribe for each member and the party arranged for the inspection members. The arrangement of the party is also part of a bribe to comfort the officials. The previous year, the government got back the approval of some private universities. Students face a lack of facilities in the institutions. Each and every facility is needed for approval in the college. The government will didn't approve the universities which have no facilities. In our society, many of the institutions didn't have any kind of facilities, but they get approved. The bribe is the only answer for all. Finally, the approval came from AICTE.

Many institutions the opening day is inaugurated by politicians or higher officials. Shukla asks Gopal to read the Dainik article, which states the headline "New engineering college opens in the city- with corruption money?" (175). So, the newspaper is a main element to bring out everything happening in the world into public view. In ancient days, the newspaper showed the only truth of the incidents and should not involve any other things. The newspaper nowadays made a tremendous change, they tie up with politicians and do favours for them. The advertisement part is the prime role of the newspaper; the politicians gave more ads about their party. The only matters because the politician's connection with the newspaper is not to reveal the evils in their political party. Nowadays even politicians have their own news agencies. Those news agencies publish the positive side of the party and attack the other political party. Many political parties have their own news agency for their usage. But still, there are some newspapers portraying the corruption of the political parties. Some of the news agencies have dealt with political parties, the party gave cash for publishing positive notes and hiding all the other sides.

The news about Ganga Tech and MLA is totally roaming the whole city. Gopal directly goes to the Dainik office and argues about the news with them. Raghav, from the editorial part, published the news about corruption. When other agencies spread something against any officials or politicians, they will do anything to those agencies such as they can buy the whole agency or make a business deal with the news agency. When the news agency tied up with politicians, they publish only the positive note of them. In some of the news agencies, the labours cannot work genuinely, but there are still some labours in various parts of the section news agencies collect genuine information and process them. Some members of news agencies didn't encourage the genuine information of the reporters, because the higher authority of the agency may have linked with the business deal with political parties and pressure from higher officials.

On the other hand, Raghav brings out the land rezoning (agriculture land to building construction) approved by VNN, the gas cylinder is supplied illegally, the involvement of the black market in ration shop and bribe plays in RTO etc. The article of Raghav depicts the VNN approving illegally the farming land to construct building such as malls, hotels, towers etc. There are many procedures to give approval for rezoning the land, but due to the bribe, everything gets approved. But when the news was published, the VNN directly came to Ganga Tech with bulldozers to destroy the building. Gopal tries to confuse them, but they are very strict to demolish the construction, so Gopal contacts MLA and convey the situation. When MLA communicates with one of the VNN officials, the official became quiet and gave the mobile to Gopal. MLA states that "Give it to him. Put the notes in an empty cement bag, topped up with sand" (193), it portrays how the bribe makes a change in people's minds. The news spread to every part of the city, so the officials destroy the machine lab only for taking pictures as proof. The power of bribes is clearly stated here. The news agency fired Raghav and he started his own newspaper "Revolution 2020", because due to the MLA influence no other news agency hire

Raghav. The Revolution 2020 portrays “Power will be with the youth...put the new one in the place” (197), which shows that revolution is in the youth’s hands.

After a few days, Gopal has seen a small paper with the headline Revolution 2020. The article states the top leaders are lawbreakers; in many other countries, people make up more than half of the average Indian people and depict a corrupt society. It also portrays that corruption and social injustice can be abolished by the revolution of the young generation. Another news about GAP is published in Revolution 2020 article, it spread to each part of the city. The scam is clearly portrayed with the shreds of evidence. When the government sanctioned the money for the people’s welfare, some of the officials and officers take a huge cut from the amount. This may lead to misleading the people’s welfare plans, like some of the officials taking their cut and producing the fabricated report to gain attention and publicity. This shows the involvement of the officials, and officers from the particular departments in the scam, for the sake of money. This injustice way affects public life, the scam shown here is water pollution that affects the health of every individual. Water pollution also leads to waterborne diseases and it affects several people’s life and the environment. Raghav portrays these things in his article and it spread widely to the state, this shows the power of the newspaper. The news agency can able to bring the unethical and injustice to light. The honest news can change anything or whatever in power, CM instructed Shukla to resign his post in the party to show the public that the party is clear. Shukla states that “If you pay, jail is like a hotel” (246), even the bribe can play a role in prison too.

4. CONCLUSION

The corrupt mind and society are seen in every part of the world. One of the deep-rooted diseases nowadays in society is corruption. It also makes an ethical person do unethical or injustice matters. The newspaper is one of the prime sources to bring every injustice to light and it has the power to spread the matter to everywhere. Some of the young generation is flexible with society and some of them try to bring revolt to the system. Corruption cannot be abolished in a day or month, it can be only abolished by revolution. The revolution makes society clean and ruins the corruptive mind of people. Only the current generation can bring revolt against the system. The news agency also has the power to change the system, they can bring them anything with proof and shreds of evidence. So, when the young generation and the news agency work together, they can definitely beat the traditional system of society.

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