

## Societal Pressures on Youths : A Study on Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020*

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### Abstract

Chetan Bhagat is a reputed Indian author. He is a trend changer among the Indian youths. He has written ten novels and three non-fiction. His contribution to newspaper columns has raised the reading habits of the common people of India. Chetan Bhagat has a special concern for Indian youths. Almost all his novels are centered around the young generation of India. His novel *Revolution 2020* (2011) deals with the burning issues of Postmodern era. Chetan Bhagat projects many aspects of younger generation- their economic conditions, education, relationships, and human values. This paper presents how the novelist creates the characters' real situation in life and how they face problems to earn money and have a better future.

Key Words: Postmodern, younger- generation, Indian youth, human values

Chetan Bhagat, an emerging novelist, has great consideration for younger generation of India. He narrates his story in simple language so that common people can understand what he tries to convey to society. He does not have any fear to express his ideas to develop the nation. He wants corrupt free India.

In *Revolution 2020*, the title refers to Anna Hazare's anti-corruption movement and Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam's *India vision 2020*. It is a story of three friends - Gopal, Raghav and Aarthi. Chetan Bhagat is more interested in portraying joys and sorrows of the middle class. The creation of his characters has uniqueness. The impact is evident through the character of Gopal. His life reflects the lives of the middle class people. Gopal belongs to a poor family. His father, a widower, is a teacher forced to retire due to his incurable illness. Gopal is an average student. His father wants him to be an engineer. He writes the entrance exam, but cannot get enough credits to join IIT institution. By nature he is ambitious. His feelings, his emotions, his ambitions and his frustrations Postmodern character.

*Revolution2020* highlights the current problems - education, love and ambition. Nowadays education becomes more materialistic. Morality, knowledge and spiritual notions are questionable in the present day educational system. In achieving high status in society, the students face the mental and emotional pressure during the preparation for entrance examination. The students are trained to get good marks not to lead a moral, cultural and traditional life. So that many coaching classes have become more common. They are more commercialised. Their main aim is to make their institute's students to get high mark. The products of such colleges do not get original thinking. Chetan Bhagat stresses the importance of the education of India. The youths of today will be the leaders of tomorrow. They have the responsibilities to carry cultural values of their nation. Gopal and Raghav are childhood friends. Raghav belongs to a well -to- do family. He is good at studies. Gopal as an average student struggles to get high rank in IIT,JEE and AIEE. His friend Raghav gets higher rank than Gopal. Gopal's father is eager to promote his son to become an engineer though Gopal finds it more challenging to pass the entrance exam. His mind is not fixed on studying the texts. When Gopal's father persuades him to join coaching classes he shows his unwillingness:

The entrance exam had given me so much pain. The mere thought of repeating it caused physical agony. 'Stop it, Baba,' I screamed. 'If you had settled on the land, we would have money for a private college. You didn't so I have to keep suffering. (R2020 -33).

Gopal feels humiliated when he hears Raghav's father praise his son. Gopal visits many coaching institutes like Resonance, Bansal, Careerpath, Aim,Iit and Career Ignite, etc. Some of

them are relatively cheaper but not good as Gopal thinks. Aarti is a daughter of District Magistrate. His grandfather is a local MLA. The attraction between Aarti and Gopal is shown in the beginning of the novel. Gopal used to talk with Aarti on internet. The love of Gopal for Aarti does not seem to be reciprocated. Many times Gopal shows his affection but Aarti does not show any clear point on her love on Gopal. Aarti's relationship with Raghav disturbs Gopal. He does not want to see Aarti in the hands of Raghav. No one restricts them. Gopal's mind wanders away from his studies:

She logged out. I had twenty minutes of Internet time left. I spent them doing what most guys who came here did- surf the official IIT website or watch porn. I guess these are the two things boys wanted most in Kota. At least the coaching centres could help you get one of them.(R2020-67).

Gopal begins to concentrate on his studies and improves his grade in the internal exams. As a result of his hard work, he gets the rank of twenty among the boys in his class. Once again, Aarti's birthday interferes with his studies. He wants to wish Aarti first on her birthday. He tries many times to connect her from the STD Booth. Having failed, he runs almost five kilometers to reach the Kota station to reach the other STD Booth. However, he would like to wish Aarti as the first wisher. When he hears that Aarti has gone to Kanpur with Raghav, he loses his temper. Seeing Aarti and Raghav together upsets Gopal a lot. He feels that he is living for nothing. He loses control over his emotions. The mental agony rises due to his deep thoughts of Aarti. He gets diversion on his aim at Kota. He does not have a good sleep. At that time he gets the company of Prateek who is really the epitome of despair. He is a repeater but his room does not look like a hardworking repeater. He gives some tips to reach the goal. He states:

Grip. Yes, that's the word. The trick to these entrance exams is that you have to get a grip on them. You need a game plan. What are your strong subjects, which are your weak ones? Are you working with the teachers on the weak areas? Are you tracking your progress on the mock-test? Are you thinking about nothing but the exam all day? Do you eat your meals and take your bath as fast as possible so that you have more time to study.(R2020 81-82)

Chetan Bhagat exposes the corrupt education system of India. He wants changes in Indian education system. Their parents give importance to power and status. They do not care about their children's interest. They force their children to choose either medicine or engineering. Gopal becomes the victim of the false myth of the Indian parent. After Aarti's break off, he loses his grip on studies. Prateek fills up the void. Due to Prateek's friendship he is addicted to some unwanted behaviors. So his expenditure left by Aarti also increases. Gopal is aware of the poor economic condition of his father. According to him, money is all that he needs in order to live a happy life, and he does not hesitate to make concessions in life. Krishna Kant Singh observes in his work *A Study in Contemporary Indian English Novels*:

Gopal is conscious about his Baba's economic condition. He does not want to impose more economic burden on him. But circumstances force him to demand more and more money from his father. He makes a long call and demand more money to buy books. Baba shows his difficulty but he manages to do so only for the sake of his son. But a sense of realization comes in Gopal's mind. He wants to study for his father's happiness. When he keeps the receiver down he realizes the compassion for his Baba. (191)

Gopal's birthday is a turning point in his life once more. He starts to get high rank and spends much time on study. The result of the entrance exam does not favour him. In the meantime, his father expires out of heart break due to Gopal's failure. He has to arrange his father's funeral and watches the funeral-pyre in calmness. No one consoles him. He seems to be depressed. At the right time MLA Shukla-ji enters in his life and solves the land dispute. Gopal's innocence, sincerity, ambitions attract Shukla-ji. The society changes Gopal's innocence to wicked which is seen through Shukla-ji of snatching of land from Gopal's uncle by frightening him .

Raghav lives with some ideals. He wants to abolish the corruption in society. He would like to bring a revolution in society such as social, political and educational. On the day of opening of Ganga Tech college. Gopal understands the mission of Raghav. He publishes an article in the *Dainik* : "The headline said: 'New engineering college opens in city with corruption money?'" (R2020, 175). Though Raghav is an IITian , his interest is in journalism and he commits himself to Revolution 2020. Due to the publication of his article, the CM cancels his meeting in the last

minute. Raghav is a strong man in his ambition. He never compromises for anything. Gopal also understands Raghav's aim and its importance.

The Indian society after the assimilation of the western values and standards has lost its traditional values. They feel empowered with the flow of money and power. Thus they give importance to one's success in career and life. If anyone is a loser, he or she is devalued. The society views the youths on the criterion of American society. Everyone neglects the failed people. Gopal, being a loser is rejected by both his lover Aarti and other friends. Being alienated, he is pushed into the hands of unscrupulous MLA Sukla-ji. Entry into IIT is a dream of every Indian parents. Gopal's father sells his land and invests his last savings on his education. But Gopal cannot make it successfully. At last in his trying moments, it is the MLA who rescues him from humiliation and shelters him.

The Indian parents are under the illusion that only through entry into IIT, a student can get higher position in society. It is false myth through which Gopal is victimised by the false society. The unscrupulous MLA makes use of such youths for their selfish purpose. Chetan Bhagat, being a revolutionary, wants to bring on a better future for Indian youths. He gives many suggestions and inspire the aspiring youths. At the same time, he notifies the pitfalls in the society which prevent the growth of youngsters. One such is the parents' imposition of their dreams and desires on their sons and daughters. Gopal's prime life is wasted due to his parents' pressure on him. Thus Bhagat wants to change the parents' attitude.

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