UNIT 5 : YOUTH UNREST

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

- 5.2.1 Youth Unrest
- 5.2.2 Types of Youth Unrest

5.3 You thagitation

- 5.3.1 Types of Youth Agitation
- 5.3.2 Process of Growth of Agitation
- 5.3.3 Some important Youth Agitation in India

5.4 Causes of Youth Unrest

5.5 Let Us Sum Up

5.6 Further Reading

5.7 Answer To Check Your Progress

5.8 Possible Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to-

- understand the meaning of Youth Unrest
- know about the different types of Youth unrest
- understand the concept of Youth Agitation
- know about the different types and processes of Agitation
- understand the influence of different factors behind Youth unrest
- understand the contemporary scenario of Youth unrest in India

5.2 INTRODUCTION

Youth unrest is a very serious social issue of Indian society. Most of the young people are directly or indirectly involved in different social problems. It is also often seen many of them easily get involved with different anti social activities due to multiple reasons such as the excess

aggressiveness, their frustration, anxiety and depression. It is not uncommon to find many young people indulging in different criminal activities such as murder, attempt to murder, robbery, dacoity, kidnapping, sexual assault, terrorism etc. At this stage many of them are also acquire many bad habits like smoking, drug addictions, etc. which sometimes lead them to committing criminal acts. However, their deviation into undesirable activities which can be attributed to a plethora of contemporary issues such as defective education system, problem of unemployment, regional conflicts, religious conflict, defective political system etc. which play a major role behind the youth unrest. Besides, there are other contributing factors like decline in human values in general, increasing selfiness on the part of the individuals, less concern for intellectual honesty, and, above all the uncertain future of the youth.

5.2.1 Youth Unrest

The youth are considered a category or group of people who are considered to be young. It is a concept that could be found in different types of literature. Though fundamentally it is a concept associated with biology as a stage in human growth and development, it is also the subject of interest in many disciplines such as education, psychology, anthropology, sociology and demography among others. The age group in between the 21-35 years is the most crucial, since it constitutes the passage for an individual from young age to mature adulthood with all experiences that help him/her to take any decision. It is the period in which an individual takes vital decisions of life and tries to establish in various fields in life in terms of family, profession, economic decision and social aims and objectives. Therefore, this specific period is an important phase of human life.



LET US KNOW

Youth unrest may be defined as the manifestation of collective frustration of the youth in the society. It is manifested when the existing norms in the society are perceived by the youth as ineffective or harmful and they feel discontent.

Unrest means 'disturbed condition'. It is the state of disillusionment and dissatisfaction. The concept of Youth unrest can be defined as the manifestation of collective frustration of the youth in the society. It is manifested when the existing norms of the society are perceived by the youth to be ineffective or harmful making them feel discontented. As a result, they try to change the existing norms. To reset the norm in society they sometimes start revolting against them. This creates a condition of unrest in the society. The concept of Youth unrest and social unrest are both inter-related. Social unrest refers to the collective disillusionment, dissatisfaction and frustration of the group, community or society with emphasis on collective frustration and disillusionment on common issues of the groups. When a group of young people collectively revolts against the existing disillusionment and dissatisfactory condition of the society, it is known as youth unrest. The Youth tend to become angry when they face the problem of adjustment with the unbalanced conditions of the society. The emergence of the different youth agitations are the important examples of youth unrest.

Some of the important characteristics of Youth Unrest are mentioned below:

- Collective Discontent
- Dysfunctional condition
- Public concern and
- The need for change in the existing norms.

5.2.2 Types of Youth Unrest

Youth unrest is reflected through different ways. The most common types of youth unrest is briefly discussed as follows:

- **POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND MOVEMENTS:** In some instances, youth unrest is associated with larger political movements. In India students often take up political issues and join hands with other non-youth organizations and political parties and fight for them. Students have participated in various political movements launched for issues such as border disputes, steel plant relocation, price rise, water dispute, and anti-English agitation, etc. They have taken out procession, staged demonstrations, resorted to violence, challenged and fought with police and authorities.

- **STUDENTS AGITATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL CAUSES :** Students have agitated for educational causes also. Students have agitated demanding the appointment of teachers, enough supply of laboratory equipment and library books, cancellation of donations and capitation fees, reforms in examination system and type of question papers, being set recognition of the student union, participation of students in university, representation in administrative bodies such as governing body, academic councils, postponement of examination etc.

- **AGITATION ON NON-ACADEMIC ISSUES :** Students have agitated for non-educational and non-political causes also. For example: they have agitated demanding special concessions for travelling in buses and trains, concessions in commercial recreational centres etc.

- **SPONTANEOUS STUDENTS AGITATION :** Sometimes, students do agitate suddenly in an unexpected manner. They may quarrel with the bus conductor, the auto-rickshaw drivers, hotel-owners, police and public servants and may even go on strike . This agitation can be treated as spontaneous outburst of the youth.

If this agitation is not handled carefully it may get intensified and prolonged with worse consequences.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What is Youth Unrest?

.....

Q2. Mention some important characteristics of Youth Unrest?

.....

Q3. What are the different types of Youth Unrest?

.....

5.3 YOUTH AGITATION

Agitation is a hostile act intended to harm or object something and often it is the result of frustration Myres (1988) defines aggression as 'physical or verbal behaviour that hurts, harms or destroys. 'Youth agitation is that behaviour of the youth whose goal is neither to injure a person nor to destruct public property but directed towards a social cause. It is neither the result of innate destructive drive nor is an inborn reaction to frustrations. It is a learned behaviour. Various forms of youth agitation are: demonstrations, slogan shouting, strikes, hunger strikes, road blocks, boycott of examination etc. Ram Ahuja (2014) in his famous book *'Social Problems in India'* has mentioned some preconditions for youth agitations which are mentioned below:

- Structural strain,
- Identifying the source of strain
- Precipitating factor in initiative action
- Mobilization of force for action by a leader.

In this book Ram Ahuja has also mentioned some important objectives intended to be achieved through youth agitation. These are

- To create collective consciousness and group solidarity,
- To organise the youth to work for new programmes and new plans,

- To provide opportunities to young individuals to express their feelings and to make some impact on the course of social change.

5.3.1 Types of Youth Agitation

Youth Agitations are not always violent or coercive. Many a time they use persuasive technique too. Youth agitations may be classified into the following groups:

- **RESISTANCE AGITATION-**The main objective of resistance-based agitation is to negotiate with those holding power. For example, faulty marking system in a university. This may be resisted by the students through agitation which may ultimately force the Academic Council of the University to change the evaluation pattern. Resistance agitation expresses the dismay and concern of the students towards the direction in which a University is working.
- **PERSUASIVE AGITATION-** In persuasive agitations, the youth attempts to change the attitude of those holding power by discussing their problems.
- **REVOLUTIONARY AGITATIONS-** The basic aim of revolutionary agitation is to bring sudden sweeping changes in the educational and social system. Instances of revolutionary agitation can be illustrated by the youth agitation in china in 1987, the AASU agitation in Assam in 1994, Uttrakhand agitation in Uttar pradesh in 1994 and Bodo agitation in Assam during 1989-96.etc.

5.3.2 Process of Growth of Agitation

There are some stages of youth unrest which finally turn into youth agitations. These stages are:

- The Discontent Stage : The discontent stage is the stage of dissatisfaction and growing confusion with the existing conditions.

- THE INITIATION STAGE: In the initiation stage a leader emerges who makes others conscious of the causes of discontent. In this stage excitement increases and proposals for actions are debated.
- THE FORMALISATION STAGE: In this stage the programmes are developed, alliances are forged, and support is also sought from the people concerned.
- THE PUBLIC SUPPORT STAGE: In this stage the problems of the youth is recognised as public problem. This not only creates awareness among the public but also seeks public support on the concerned issues.

5.3.3 Some Important Youth Agitations in India

After independence, a few important youth agitations occurred in India which, though functional in their own way, they had some tragic consequences. Some of these were: the anti-reservation agitation in Gujarat in 1985, the All Assam Students Union agitation in Assam in 1984, the Anti-Mandal agitation in northern India in 1990 and the agitation for creation of Uttarakhand in Uttar Pradesh in 1994, riots in Gujarat in 1981, in terrorism in Punjab and Kashmir between 1985 and 1995, and Jharkhand agitation in Bihar etc.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4. Fill in the blanks

a) The Author of the book *"Social Problems in India"* is.....

b)The basic aim of revolutionary agitation is ..... system.

c) Assam Students Union agitation in Assam took place in the year.....

5.4 CAUSES OF YOUTH UNREST

There are different causes behind Youth unrest. Some of these are mentioned as follows:

The UGC committee of 1960 pointed out some important reasons for student agitations. These are:-

- Economic cause for example, a routine demand to reduce fees, and increase scholarship for the students.
- Demand for changes in the existing norms pertaining to admissions, the process of admission and teaching.
- Poor administration or functioning of colleges and universities
- Inappropriate socialisation in campus, hostel and other infrastructure.
- Conflicting Relations between students and teachers.
- Leaders being instigated by politicians.

Dibona, studied agitations in one university in Uttar Pradesh and found out three causes of students agitations:-

- Economic Causes : It included a sense of insecurity for the future and the gap between the economic needs of the country and the educational system, that is, education being viewed as non- job-oriented.
- Socio Psychological Causes : Socio psychological causes include defective educational system, gap between aspiration and achievement, social distance between teacher and students, non committed teachers, policy of status quo, corruption and inefficiency, large number of students in the class or inadequate number of section in the department or college.
- Political Causes : It includes the political interference, and instigations by political leaders.

All these factors indicate that the main cause of student unrest and agitations in particular and youth agitations in general lie in the social system rather than the personality of the youth.

Besides these there are some other causes for youth unrest. Some of them are noted here.

- Improper Socialisation And Family Problems: The failure on the part of the parents to bring up their children in accordance with the cultural expectations of the society has made many youth go astray. The bad habits and undesirable qualities of the parents also have a harmful effect on the personality growth of the children. The family problems spoil the mental peace and the emotional balance of the growing children.
- Political,Social And Economic Inequalities : The young people are more sensitive to the political, economic and social inequalities and exploitation. With the existing inequalities they become disillusioned about the future.
- Defective Educational System: The outdated, uninspiring, uninteresting and irrelevant educational system is responsible to a large extent for the student unrest and aggressive behaviour.
- Unemployment : Unemployment is a important factor leading to youth unrest. The unemployment of the educated youths is on rise wher the education they receive does not enable them to become economically self-reliant the youth became frustrated.
- Corrupt Authority : The youth is disappointed with the corrupt and discredited authority. Corruption, craze for power and moral lapses, opportunism, nepotism, discrimination, etc., can be found among the political and social leaders. this has generated contempt in the minds of the youth. The leadership has failed to set a good model for the students to emulate.
- Misuse of Student Power by The Politicians : The corrupt and unscrupulous politicians, who are making use of student power to fulfill their partisan political interests, are also contributing to the problem. Students are becoming puppets in the hands of some opportunistic politicians to serve their selfish ends.
- Administrative Failures : Youth unrest is often caused by administrative errors and miscalculations. The lack of sympathy for

the student's demands on the part of the administrations (of the university as well as the government) many times force the students, to resort to strikes.

- Communication Gap : Lack of understanding and lack of proper communication between the students and the teachers on one hand, parents and children on the other also cause youth unrest. The failure on the part of the parents to understand the aspirations of their young children also adds to the problem.
- Value Differences And Conflict of Values : The value differences in society, the changes and conflicts of values also contribute to youth unrest, because some of the old values are at conflict now, The traditional beliefs, practices, ideas, ideals and values appear to be outmoded, unscientific, irrelevant and irrational for the modern youth. The youth is becoming more and more rationalistic. They are impressed by the modern values based on science and rationalism. Still, they are not in a position to give up the traditional values completely. They are in a state of confusion. They can neither accept the new completely nor can they do away with the old ones. This has made them become restless. The youth are influenced by the values of individualism and democracy. Hence, they are revolting against the old traditional order. They resent their elders treating them as 'immature' and 'irresponsible lot'. They feel annoyed and embarrassed to find themselves in a helpless situation.
- Lack Of Opportunities : The youths do not get proper opportunities to express their talents to cultivate their interests and develop their personality. This has contributed to their dissatisfaction.
- Gap Between The Aspirations And Achievement: The youth is likely to have their own aspirations and ambitions. They will be dreaming about it all the while. But the reality of life makes them become dispaired. The youths with unfulfilled desires and aspirations can hardly be at rest.
- Lack of Determination And Self-Responsibility : Some of the youth lack will power and self-determination. They depend more on others

rather than on their intrinsic abilities and talents. They imitate others and fail to develop the spirit of self-reliance. They are hesitant to assume responsibilities. Such youths are highly vulnerable for any kind of use.

- Influence Of Movies: The modern movies which mostly describe violence, arson, loot, rape, murder, immorality, crimes, etc. have a great demoralising effect on the modern youth. Inadequate respect for their cultural values and the imitation of the Western tendencies has further contributed to the problems. The adult world has to accept the fact that the problems the youth cannot be solved for them but with them. Therefore, the co- operation of students and youth needs to be sought by parents, teachers, educational administrators, and political parties who should cooperate in understanding the problems or grievance of the youth and give them logical and proper guidance. that the power of the youth can be utillised to achieve collective goals.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4. What is Youth Agitation?

.....

Q5. What are the responsible factors behind Youth unrest?

.....



5.5 LET US SUM UP

- Unrest means 'disturbed condition'. It is the state of disillusionment and dissatisfaction.
- Youth unrest may be defined as the manifestation of collective frustration of the youth in the society.
- The concept of Youth unrest and social unrest is interconnected.

- Social unrest refers as the collective disillusionment, dissatisfaction and frustration of a group, community or society which emphasis on collective frustration and disillusionment on common issues of the groups in the society.
- Some important characteristics of Youth Unrest are Collective Discontent, Dysfunctional condition, Public concern and the need to change the existing norms.
- Agitation is a hostile act intended to harm or object, often a result of frustration.
- Youth agitation is a behaviour of the young people whose goal is neither to injure a person nor destruct public property.



5.6 FURTHER READING

Ahuja Ram; (2014).Social Problems in India; Rawat Publication, New Delhi

Ahuja Ram; (2012). Criminology; Rawat Publication, New Delhi

Adams E. M; (1971). Youth Unrest and Our Cultural Crisis, Modern Age, Vol. 15, No. 3 pp. 259-67

Butt Iqbal Touseef; Insurgency Dislocates the Social Life of Jammu and Kashmir: Youth Unrest and Agitation, International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, Volume 3, Issue 8, August 2014.

Dr. Sharma Dev Kapil; Mordern Indian Youth: Reasons and Result of Unrest and Core Agitation; IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume 19, Issue 4, April 2014.



5.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No. 1. Youth unrest may be defined as the manifestation of collective frustration of the youth in the society.

Ans to Q No. 2. The important characteristics of youth unrest are Collective Discontent, Dysfunctional condition, Public concern and the need for change in the existing norms.

Ans to Q No. 3. The different types of youth unrest are political activities and movements, student's agitations for educational causes, agitation against authorities and spontaneous student's agitation etc.

Ans to Q No. 4. The Author of the book *"Social Problems in India"* is Ram Ahuja.

Ans to Q No. 5. The basic aim of revolutionary agitation is to bring sudden sweeping changes in the educational and social system.

Ans to Q No. 6. Assam Students Union agitation in Assam was took place in the year 1984.

Ans to Q No. 7. Youth agitations may be classified into three types such as resistance agitation, persuasive agitation, and revolutionary agitation.

Ans to Q No. 8. The major factors behind youth unrest are improper socialisation and family problems, political, social and economic inequalities, defective educational system, unemployment, corrupt and discredited authority, misuse of student power by the politicians, administrative failures, communication gap, value differences and conflict of values, lack of opportunities, gap between the aspirations and achievement, lack of determination and self-responsibility, and influence of movies etc.



5.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q.1. What is the meaning of unrest?

Q.2. Mention the different function of youth Agitation?

B) Write short notes (within 150words)

Q.1. Discuss briefly the process of growth of Youth Agitation.

Q.2. Write a note on some important youth initiated movement in India.

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words

Q.1. Write an essay of causes and consequences of youth unrest in context of contemporary India.

*** ***** ***