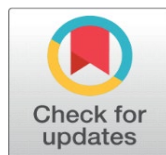
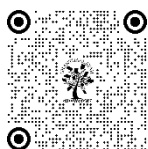


YOUTH AND POLITICS – A THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the theories on youth and the history of youth politics. Generation categories are explained here. They are Revolutionary youth, Bohemian youth, Activist youth, Conformist youth, Reactionary youth, and Delinquent youth. Revolutionary youth are highly active politically, although only in limited ways. Their ideology states that progressive social changes can only be achieved through a radical social transformation. Bohemian youth generally share the revolutionaries' attempts for the social institutions of the dominant society, but they are suspicious of the solutions offered by the revolutionaries. Activist youth consequently work largely within accepted political channels, often concentrating their efforts on one particular issue or limiting their activities to political campaign periods. Conformist youth are politically withdrawn due to apathy, indifference, or satisfaction with the status quo. The reactionaries have many things in common with the revolutionaries. Delinquent youth admire strength and power and reject the existing authority figures. The socialization theory emphasizes the family as being the most important mechanism in political value socialization. Generation unit theory argues that youthful activism is age-linked. In the historical part contains student and youth politics in the U.S.A, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Scandinavian countries and Japan. It also deals with student politics in socialist countries and India.

Keywords: Youth Politics, Autonomy, Youth Movements, Revolutionary Youth, Bohemian Youth, Activist Youth, Conformist Youth, Reactionary Youth, Delinquent Youth, Socialization Theory, Generation Unit Theory, Skeptical Generation, Young Italy. Gerontocratic Fascism, Chavekkar Sangam, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangam, all India Students Federation, all India Muslim Students Federation, Student Congress, all India Youth Federation, Indian Youth Congress, Democratic Youth Federation of India

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. THEORY ON YOUTH

In most human societies the young are a source of perennial interest and hence of continuing conversation. Socrates wrote of them in the fourth century B.C. The question of youth has been a dominant theme for outstanding English writers. The young and their activities have become one of our major preoccupations and with some of us at certain times almost an obsession. The young constitute a direct threat and the most important promise. 'Youth' is a highly emotional subject.¹ The youth threaten the established structures of value, authority and power. Societies have three distinct but related purposes with their young: to communicate culture, to perpetuate through the young, a recognizable identity for the community and to gain their support for existing structures of power and thus to mobilize them to resist change. The youth anywhere in the world seeks identity. It is one of the most important factors for their positive development. In our country there are many forces at work, which seek to divide and to create disunity. The family, the educational institutions, the political and village institutions, provide many factors for the formation of negative identity.² There is also a need for finding out suitable methods and conditions, which might help youth to develop

positive identity. Under the present conditions, the youth movement particularly those agitating for changes in value-orientation or for some political principles, might provide positive identity formation for the members of such movements.

Like identity, the youth tend to seek autonomy. This is one of the sources of perpetual inter-generational conflict. The various kinds of agitations might be an expression and a desire on the part of the youth to seek and declare their autonomy or independence of the older generation. The youth is a social issue as well as an asset. They are the source of very powerful energy for national development. Young people are expected to be creative and concerned, but the necessity for long years of education and the lack of generally accepted social goals block them from a feeling of active participation in society. Many young people are alienated in their values but do not engage in political activities. There are, indeed, different generation units among both the politically active and politically withdrawn groups of youth. Among the politically involved, the most important criterion of differentiation is ideology.

2. GENERATION CATEGORIES AMONG CONTEMPORARY YOUTH

The six-generation units among contemporary youth can be described as follows:³

1) Revolutionary Youth

Revolutionary youth are highly active politically, although only in limited ways. Their ideology states that progressive social changes can only be achieved through a radical social transformation. Revolutionaries are consequently, hesitant to engage in conventional political campaigning since this is working within the system. They believe that revolutionary change must be brought about by the people, and that these changes will be resisted by the ruling elites. Much of the activity of the revolutionary youth is devoted to spreading radical ideology with a long-run goal of building support for the revolution.

2) Bohemian Youth

Bohemian youth generally share the attempt of the revolutionaries for the social institutions of the dominant society, but they are suspicious of the solutions offered by the revolutionaries. Rather than working politically, they seek a personal solution. Emphasis is placed on personal authenticity and on sympathy for unconventional lifestyles.

3) Activist Youth

The activists differ from the revolutionaries both in ideology and in tactics. While activists are often critical of some aspects of society, they are less likely to see social problems as symptomatic of basic social - structural contradictions, which must be resolved before any satisfactory change can take place. Activists consequently work largely within accepted political channels, often concentrating their efforts on one particular issue or limiting their activities to political campaign periods.

4) Conformist Youth

Conformist youth are politically withdrawn due to apathy, indifference, or satisfaction with the statusquo. Their needs are for personal gratification within the bounds set by the society, and they are not inclined to engage in political or social rebellion until their needs are frustrated or, having fulfilled them, they seek a higher level of self- expression.

5) Reactionary Youth

The reactionaries have many things in common with the revolutionaries. These include high level of political involvement, a disdain for the dominant political establishment, a belief in the need for radical change. They differ in the goals, which they hope to achieve, calling for a return to traditional patterns with an emphasis on continued social inequality and hostility towards alien and minority groups.

6) Delinquent Youth

The delinquent youth share certain characteristics with the reactionaries and the Bohemians. They admire strength and power, and reject the existing authority figures. This group seeks personal fulfillment through acts of prowess and adventure, taking out aggressions in acts of vandalism or victimization.⁴

Today in India, violent protests, agitations, strikes, bandhs and gheraos characterize our lives. The young people generally take a leading part in creating unrest. The causes attributed to youth unrest are many, a defective educational system with its lack of emphasis on preparing and equipping students for economic pursuits of life, lack of healthy contact between students and teachers, and exploitation by political parties.⁵ Some people feel that youth unrest is a

symptom of the wide spread disease of social indiscipline, reflected in corruption, bribery, nepotism, and political immorality, including defection by politicians for personal ends.⁶ The problem of youth unrest is a cultural, economic, sociological and educational problem, which calls for understanding through an interdisciplinary approach. At the root of the problem of youth unrest is a conflict between the old and young generations. The youth movement is, by its nature, likely to be ahead of other social and political movements. Since this is so, it must necessarily ally itself with groups, which do not share its complete vision of the needs for social change. Failure to do this leads to sectarianism and isolation from real possibilities to play a political role.⁷ The 'Youth Gang' is common to most societies. These loosely organized groups are formed on a spontaneous basis to meet diffuse needs of groups of young people. Such gangs are often the basis of socialization for young people, particularly in societies where the family has given up some of its socializing roles.

In addition to the spontaneous youth gang, there are other kinds of youth organizations.⁸ Youth people form many different kinds of groups for specific purposes, and many of these groups go almost unnoticed by adult society. Groups such as sports clubs, social groups, special interest hobby groups, and even political groups, are often formed by young people to meet felt needs. Societies differ greatly in the kinds of groups which are fostered by official agencies, and the kinds of groups which are sanctioned. Most totalitarian societies have tried to build highly organized youth groups of many different themes in order to involve youth in socially useful activities.⁹ Youth groups vary in nature and purpose, and differ between cultures. They also differ in the impact, which they have on individual young people. One of the characteristics of youth is that it is always changing, and that young people graduate from specific groups relatively quickly. The organized student groups directly involved in politics. Such groups may be partly political, such as international affairs groups and similar organizations, or they may be wholly cultural, social, religious, or fraternal, as in the case of dramatic clubs, religious societies, and literature groups.¹⁰

In general, the socialization theory emphasizes the family as being the most important mechanism in political value socialization.¹¹ Activist students carry out the political orientation and values learned in their home. Their attitudes are not fundamentally changed during college years. Alternatively, the Generation unit theory argues that youthful activism is age-linked. A political movement should consider the influences of peer groups, age-stratified institutions such as schools, and particularly time-bound societal events, all of which are determinants of political orientation of the young. University students are a particularly important element of the youth population of a country. The youth of a country are of special interest to all those who are concerned with growth and development of the country. Unemployment is a potent cause for violence and crime. Economic difficulties and the uncertain future facing the youth increase their proneness to blame society for all their ills and to agitate. Politicians were willing to resort to violence to topple constitutionally established governments and even to assassinate their rivals to satisfy their selfish urges.¹² Crime is perceived to be a problem of the young, and with 45% of recorded crime being committed by young people under the age of twenty-one there is some evidence to substantiate this perspective. It is often too easily forgotten that young people are also the main victims of crime, especially violent crime.¹³

3. STUDENT POLITICS IN THE ADVANCED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

The 1960's was a turbulent decade which experienced an upsurge of student/youth movements throughout the world with hardly any country escaping the wrath of this generation. It is difficult to generalize student protest activities at a global level on account of the diversity, causes, consequences and impact on society. The Cold War shaped the political experience of a whole decade of students in the West.¹⁴ It contributed to the political passivity of the Western students. The conflict between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R generated massive anti-communism feelings among students of the West and made them defenders of their socio-political system. This had practically smothered all politics. In the U.S.A. since the end of the First World War, there has been no political labour movement nor a widely based political party could challenge the domestic and foreign policies of their country. University students filled this vacuum during the early sixties and assumed a prominent role in expressing opposition to the policies of the American government. They have remained the most important element in the radical movement, even after the rise of the militant Negro movement, as provokers of critical ideas, as leaders of mass demonstrations and as a major influence upon national politics through their support of opposition candidates.¹⁵

The most powerful issue of the student movement in the United States, the Civil Rights struggle, was based on moral grounds.¹⁶ Student involvement for Civil Rights for Negroes grew steadily following the desegregation decision of the American Supreme Court in 1954. Students launched Civil disobedience against unjust laws as the most effective way of

achieving the supremely moral idea of equal rights enshrined in the Constitution. A New Left movement swept through the universities of most of the advanced western countries. It began in the early 1960's and its first overt manifestation in the U.S.A was at Berkeley in 1964.¹⁷ Part of the cause of the Berkeley student 'revolt' of 1964 was a protest against the "Computerization" of the University and the absence of teacher - student contact. The birth of the New Left in the U.S.A is said to have been due to the civil rights movement, the absence of a broad based left-wing political party and student's apathy to the 'multiversity'. In the United States round about 1966, student movement emerged as a protest against the continuance of war in Vietnam.¹⁸ The opposition to the Vietnam War following the decision of the American Government in February 1965 to escalate American participation which has been a major source of student activism on many campuses. The faculty has lent support to the students in their opposition to a war in which the world's greatest power was engaged in a war of attrition in a small under-developed country. Student agitations at Columbia University in 1968 were stimulated particularly by "Columbia's participation in the Secret Institute for Defense Analysis".¹⁹ Students objected to Columbia's lack of help to its surrounding neighbourhood which happens to be one of America's worst Negro ghettos and attacked the University's ivory tower attitude to community. During the Cambodian incursion in May 1970, American campuses also demonstrated opposition to the war through protest movements.²⁰ Black students have supported the demand for Black power in the USA. They demanded recruitment of more Negro students and faculty in the university campus and a change in the curriculum that predominantly featured Anglo-American history and experience. They have fought against the white domination in American Society. Thus race, the war and the defects of the modern university have contributed to student unrest in USA. A new youth culture has emerged in the post-industrial era.

1) Britain

The British New left movement as existed between 1957 and 1960 had its origins in the political events of the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956 and Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the years after 1958. There was a general sense of disillusionment among university students about the Vietnam War, particularly during the Wilson Government's support for American policy. The issue of South Africa and Rhodesia also agitated students in Britain. Students fought for academic reforms demanding adequate student participation in the decision-making process, enough contact with faculty, courses in touch with modern-day reality and less number of examinations. In Britain, the home of conservatism, some of the campuses, like the London School of Economics and Political Science, have especially for last three decades have thrown forward widespread student activist.²¹

2) France

Prior to the immense upsurge of student militancy in the May Movement of 1968, which culminated in barricades in Paris and street fighting with the police throughout the University cities of France, the French student movement had suffered a decline from its high water mark during the Algerian war in 1961.²² The May Movement of 1968 in France led by students and teachers was a turning point in French Politics, which challenged the Gaullist administration and led to the ultimate fall of Gaulle. The May Revolt attracted the entire society. It exposed the structural contradictions in an affluent capitalist society. The radical students consider representative democracy a failure. They argue for "some kind of utopia where everybody votes on everything that affects them". In the elections for the National Assembly at the end of June 1968, the Government of de Gaulle won an overwhelming victory, although students claim a great deal of credit for de Gaulle's fall after the defeat of May 1969 referendum.

3) Germany

Germany has a long tradition of youth movement and the youth in Germany had been active in social and political life since the end of the Napoleonic Wars.²³ In Germany 'Young Hegelian' movement and 'Young Germany' were started. As in other western nations, the student movement in Germany is the product of the 1960's. The general discontent with material accumulation and the lack of political commitment in the 1950's as well as the first signs of economic instability in western capitalism, are common sources for this widespread student unrest.²⁴ During Hitler's regime the student movement had discredited and deauthorized itself by giving itself to the Nazis. The post-war German students became known as "the Skeptical Generation". They were without ideology, without zeal to protest against wrongs in society and were animated by a philosophy that gave primacy to private life and activity. The students during the late 1960's led the notorious anti-Springer campaign. They organized the mass demonstrations against the Springer publishing house, one of the largest and most conservative in the Federal Republic and the publisher of the Bild Zeitung, a sensationalist newspaper with the widest circulation in the country. The newspaper was particularly harsh in its criticism of the students, and its inflammatory rhetoric contributed to the violence and repression that occurred in 1967 and 1968.²⁵ In

1965, mass demonstrations were launched by thousands of students against insufficient public funds available for higher education. The new German student movement raised the typical issue 'democratization of the university'. Student discontent at the Frei University in West Berlin, reached a climax on June 22, 1966 as nearly 4,000 students demonstrated outside the hall of the academic Senate, while in session.²⁶ The legal recognition of the role of the students in university affairs, unique to West Germany, is referred to as the "Berlin Model".²⁷

4) Italy

Italian students have characterized the student revolution as a global confrontation. They attacked the operational values of modern society and "the corrupt and non-responsive institutions of the establishment". They condemned with equal vigour the imperialist policies of both the United States and the Soviet Union as exemplified in the intervention in Vietnam, the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, American economic investment in Western Europe, the Russian economic domination of Eastern Europe. the NATO and the Warsaw Pact.²⁸ In 1831 Giuseppe Massini formed 'Young Italy' and in 1848 formed 'Italian National Association' instead of young Italy'. Like their counterparts in other Western European countries, Italian students have fought for university reforms. During 1967-68 student revolt swept the campuses beginning with the seizure of Turin University. Nineteen of the thirty-three State Universities were affected. More than any other country, the focus of the Italian student movement was "reform of the content of higher education".

5) Spain

The Fascist regime installed in Spain during the 1930's was hostile to the intellectual class and continued to neglect all levels of education. The emergence of the Spanish Students revolt in the 1960's is related both to the crisis of Franco's fascist regime and to deplorable university conditions. Spanish university students in their continuing effort to establish a representative student union have clashed headon with the police and government.²⁹ Students also demanded modernization of the university through much needed reforms. Spanish students have campaigned for the right to form free unions. This has brought them closer to the workers who had been struggling for free trade unions. In February 1967, students in Madrid demonstrated to demand workers representation on a committee deliberating change in Trade Union Law. The new student- worker solidarity was consummated by the three days of national struggle declared from 1-3 May 1968.

Spanish students have thus scored two notable successes. They have initiated open popular struggle against Franco's military dictatorship- thereby showing that students can temporarily act as a vanguard in conditions of the direct political repression. Secondly, the Spaniards have been the first European student movement to achieve an organized solidarity alliance with the workers. The fall of Franco's regime and the subsequent democratization of the Spanish policy owe a lot to the Spanish student movement. The Portuguese student movement has been characterized by Lewis S. Fever as a "revolt against gerontocratic fascism". Portuguese students, of whom almost ninety percent came from the economically privileged classes, revolted against "fascist dictatorship of old men and secret police". They have protested against the waging of several colonial wars in Angola and Mozambique. They have also demanded student self-government, academic freedom and university reform. The Portuguese students set the basis for shaping the base for political opposition.³⁰

6) Scandinavian Countries

Student Politics in the Scandinavian countries of Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland has been marked by a low level of activism and a low degree of "confrontation politics". In many respects Scandinavian student politics is an ideal one. The student bodies are responsible for social welfare among the students. The student bodies often own property and thus student government assume a considerable amount of economic and social responsibility. Student Unions in Scandinavian Universities have displayed broader political interests through their commitment to democracy and internationalism. In Sweden they planned to invade Stockholm in May 1968 to demand increased aid to under-developed countries. They held sympathetic protest demonstrations which erupted into violence on the night of May 25-26, 1968, in the wake of the May Revolt of French Students. In Norway, students have demonstrated to demand State loans to all students irrespective of parent's economic status.³¹

7) Japan

Student unrest at Japanese Universities has combined political dissent with educational complaints in a manner similar to other countries. Anti-Americanism has been the major source of student Political activism in Japan since the Second World War. The most famous and publicized political revolt of Japanese students took place in 1960 against the renewal of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Prior to this, different sectors of the student movement have been active in all

major political struggles of the post-Second World War period: against the Mac Arthur Purge in 1950 and against the subversive Activities Prevention Law in 1958.

The militant Zengakuren, Japan's national student union has been the focus of radical student politics since its inception in September 1948. It has been able to mobilize large number of students to participate in political demonstrations, which led to the cancellation of the visit of the American President Eisenhower. They were also instrumental, in toppling the then Prime Minister Kishi. In 1968, massive student protest demonstrations against the Vietnam War clashed continually with the police. Japanese student militants have forged links with peasants and workers on many important issues.³²

4. STUDENT POLITICS IN THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

The advanced and developing non-capitalist countries which have ind adopted Marxian Socialism as their political system and way of life according to their own interpretations have also not been immune to youth and student revolts and movements. Despite the highly centralized political systems in the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe, student activism has been a significant political phenomenon. Student unrest in various communist nations has been based at least in part on the differences which young people perceive between the theory and practice of communism.

1) U.S.S.R

Soviet Russia had a long tradition of revolutionary student movement stretching back to the 1960's when several thousand students inspired by selfless idealism and feelings of guilt and responsibility for the backward people embraced the 'back-to-the-people' movement. The universities were a focus of revolution in Tsarist regime and students were credited with many terrorist activities to undermine the autocratic system. The students played a vanguard role in the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 led by Lenin and his followers who considered them as conservative and reactionary elements. Despite the absence of major student revolt in the Soviet Union in the post-war period, students along with intellectuals have played a major role in demanding reforms of the Soviet society, insisting on more freedom and greater intellectual integrity.³³

2) China

The important role of students in the movements for national independence in the developing areas also goes back over half a century. In imperial China, students were crucial to the imperial efforts at modernization, but at the sometime spread radical ideas throughout the society. Students helped overthrow the dynasty in 1911, and were there after one of the elements continually pushing China towards modernization and radical ideologies. In other Asian and African countries, students were often a central element of anti-colonial struggles. Particularly important Decer were the "returned students" - those individuals who had lived and studied abroad, mostly in Europe, and returned home with ideas of modernization and Marxism, socialism and struggle.³⁴

Peking students heralded modern Chinese revolutionary politics on 4 May 1919 by launching a gigantic demonstration against China. Students played an important role in undermining Chiang Kaishek and his Kuomintang during the 1930's and in organizing a united resistance to the Japanese. In the fight between the Communists and the Kuomintang, the student movement turned increasingly to the left and the post Second World War student activism resulted in the downfall of Chiang's nationalist government and the victory of the communists. During the early fifties, the Chinese Communist Party prompted student political Hungaria action in a series of mass movements controlled by the Party and Youth League. Chinese students entered dramatically into the political life of the country by playing a vanguard role in the great proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966. With the official launching of the Red Guard Movement of 18 August 1966 University students came to the national political scene. Through the Cultural Revolution students were able to achieve experience of mass political conflict.

The student activity in China since the May 4 movement of 1919 has been considerably influenced by partisan politics. From 1949 "Student movement became a tool of Party control". Chinese students launched protests in the streets of the nation's principal cities in November and December 1986, supporting the call for greater freedom and democracy.³⁵ The party moved quickly to suppress the student protest, imposing new restrictions on street demonstrations. An intense propaganda campaign was launched against those who allegedly advocated "bourgeois liberalization", or "complete westernization", in 1986. The Tiananmen Square incident in June 1988 was a major turning point in Chinese current history. Although the struggle was suppressed and many students were killed, there was

worldwide condemnation of the incident. Very soon, China turned its attention to improve its economy and reform the political system.

3) Hungary

The Hungarian student revolt of October 1956 was aimed at "shaking of the tutelage of the regime's control organs". Students founded their own independent organization, which was a challenge to party veterans of the old guard. Student demonstrations on the streets of Budapest were joined by the crowds who "wrecked the Communist Party headquarters, stormed the citadel of the secret police, and lynched them". Stalin's statue was also toppled. Students with their organizations considered themselves "the nerve center of the revolution". The uprising was crushed but its spectre continued to haunt the Communist world.

The Polish students have been critical of the regime's authoritarian measures and they rose in revolt in the anti-Stalinist demonstration of October 1956. In March 1968, Warsaw University students defied the warning from the authorities and demanded the reinstatement of six dismissed professors. They denounced censorship and demanded the release of their colleagues arrested or drafted into the armed services because of their participation in demonstrations.³⁶ Students of Czechoslovakia have been in the forefront of demands for liberalization and democratization in the country. In 1967 students protested against the poor living conditions and political repression by the Communist regime. Student activism and protest were a key factor in the decline of the old Stalinists and in the inauguration of liberal measures.

Yugoslav students were less disaffected with their society on account of the liberal government with a mere decentralized socialist economy under President Tito. In June 1968, the students of Belgrade University engaged in a sit-in, a struggle which lasted eight days. The immediate issues were poor food, crowded dormitories, poor instruction, etc. By the time the sit-in ended with the personal intercession of President Tito, the students were raising the deeper generational issues. with the slogan "Down with Red-bourgeoisie".³⁷

Youth and student movements in East European communist countries are marked by a similarity in organizational structure, basic goals, and policies. There are separate autonomous student organisations. which are actually under the control of the party-approved leaders of the youth organization. The younger generations in large number were enthusiastic supporters of the communists in the early years after the accession to power.

In other communist countries such as Cuba and Vietnam students have provided with the "initial leadership and a large part of the base." The Communist Party of Cuba was founded after a massive student demonstration in the University of Havana and the Castro movement developed from student activities in the same University. The Vietnamese Communist movement was to a large extent the offshoot of student movement in that country. Students, in these communist countries where the regime is engaged in achieving political stability and economic progress, are rarely opposed to the policies of the party and the government. The student activists in European communist countries are in one vital respect, different from their American and Western European counterparts. In the communist countries of Eastern Europe, the students were fighting not so much for improved system of education, as for human liberties, which are absent in all the communist States.³⁸

5. STUDENT POLITICS IN THE THIRD WORLD

Students constitute a vital and vocal segment of the population of the new states of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In many Asian and African countries students were in the vanguard of the nationalist movements and many of the student leaders achieved political leadership in the post-independence governments. Latin American students have participated in political affairs and have had a constitutional voice in university administration for generations. In Latin American countries, disturbances have occurred on grounds of dissatisfaction over deplorable academic conditions in universities.³⁹ The Cordoba Manifesto of 1918 marks the large-scale entry of university students of Cordoba in Argentina. They presented a manifesto demanding University autonomy and the introduction of student participation in academic affairs through *Cogobierno* (student membership in all university committees and Governing bodies). In the late fifties Fidel Castro became the symbol of student political activism in Latin America. During 1966, many of the larger republics witnessed open clashes between government forces and student guerillas. Many student leaders are able to maintain their status within the university for years by postponing their examinations and devoting themselves full-time to political activity."⁴⁰

Students' politics in most parts of Africa under colonial rule has had a glorious tradition of fighting for national independence. In North African countries of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria which were under French colonial rule, students played a crucial role in the nationalist struggle. After independence the Moroccan Student Union fought for the abolition of the regime. The Student Union fought relentlessly against the traditional feudal and despotic political elite. In Algeria, freedom was achieved only after a protracted and violent struggle and "national liberation was an intensely politicizing experience" for the students. After independence students in Tunisia and Algeria are in greater touch with the regime in power and hence student activism is much less anti-government than in Morocco with its feudal system and continuing academic grievances.⁴¹ Universities in Egypt, Ethiopia, South Africa and other countries have seen scenes of student protest activity on various issues. Students in South Africa have occasionally fought against Government's apartheid policy and interference in academic affairs. Students all over Africa have lent a powerful voice of protest against South Africa's policy of racial discrimination. Youth in Kenya and Tanzania are deeply committed to the future of their nation. In a large number of Asian countries under colonial rule, university students provided leadership to nationalist movement and generations of political leaders were trained in these student movements.

In the turbulent sixties, in the revolutions and political turmoils in South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Burma, Iran and Turkey, the political power of students has assumed national proportions. In South Korea, students braved bullets from the military and in large measure contributed to the abrupt downfall of Syngman Rhee. The Korean Student Revolution of April 1960 was "a spontaneous, open and unplanned mass uprising". In Thailand, the student uprising of October 1973 was in actual fact a re-emergence of the urban left-wing movement after a long period of severe repression. The Burmese Students clashed violently with the soldier-rulers in 1962. Indonesian students were politically quiescent prior to the "30th September Movement, when the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) attempted to seize power.⁴² The Indonesian Student Action Front conducted a street demonstration on January 11, 1966 to protest against the cost of public transportation. They sought the dissolution of the Communist Party of Indonesia, dismissal of Cabinet members and formation of a new cabinet and reduction of prices.⁴³ Philippines and Malaysia have also experienced intense student and youth activity.

Political instability and the problem of governmental legitimacy continue to grip Pakistan. Student demonstrators played a leading role in dramatizing the tyranny of the Ayub regime.⁴⁴ Student politics in Pakistan has primarily been characterized by political protests closely connected with political instability, military rule and the threat of an external enemy. East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) had long experienced student unrest and its diverse manifestations, often accompanied with police firings. The Bangladesh freedom struggle brought its youth and students to the forefront and involved them in a most violent and brutal conflict.

The role of Turkish students in politics goes back to the last century. Particularly between 1850 and 1920, students were frequently the most active and effective political force.

1) India

The Indian youth and students played an important role in national Freedom movement. On 1894, Damodar Chavekhar and Balakrishna Chavekhar jointly formed Chavekhar Sangham at Pune. It was a youth organization to fight against British with the help of arms.⁴⁵ In Eden Hindu Hostel in 1905 the student youth for the first time engaged itself in a public protest by burning the effigy of Lord Curzon and boycotting College examinations, thus indicating its resentment against the partition of Bengal.⁴⁶ In Maharashtra, Upendra Nath and V.D. Savarkar formed the Young India League in 1906. In Punjab, a group known as 'Nai Hava' came forward to mobilize youth for revolutionary activities.⁴⁷

In September 1922, Subash Chandra Bose conducted a Youth conference at Calcutta for the creation of a youth organization. It resulted in the birth of "All Bengal Young Men's Association". Later, in May 1928 the name of the organization was changed as "All Bengal Youth Association".⁴⁸ It included the provision for women participation also. It aimed at fighting against the evil practices of the society and appealed for boycotting the use of foreign commodities and argued for the "Poorna Swaraj". In 1925 the Rastriya Swayam Sevak Sangham (RSS) was formed under the leadership of Dr. Keshav Balram Hedgekar at Nagpur.⁴⁹ In 1925 Bhagat Singh formed 'Nowjawan Bharat Sabhakar' at Lahore. The 'Independent League' was formed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subash Chandra Bose in 1928.⁵⁰

The first All India Student's conference was convened at Lucknow on 19 August 1936.⁵¹ The formation of an All-India Muslim Student's Federation 1937 and the desire of the communist elements in the student community to capture the All India Students Federation manifested this tendency for disruption. Internal conflicts between communists and non-communists (nationalist) students over ideological issues led to a split in the AISF in 1940. In 1945 the nationalist

group, with the support of the Gandhians and the socialists formed the All India Student Congress. There has been a dramatic transformation of the student movement since independence. With the achievement of independence, Congress leadership called upon students to depoliticize themselves by severing affiliation with political parties and harnessing their energy for constructive nation building activities. It may be noted that Mahatma Gandhi also subscribed to the view that the student community must be brought to the stream of struggle only in emergencies like freedom movement. But the Student Congress did dissolve itself and called for the creation of a National Union of Students.

After independence many youth and student organizations were formed in India. The Youth Congress was formed in 1956 with the support of Congress Working Committee. The All India Youth Federation was formed in 1959 with the support of the undivided Communist party. In 1970, the Student Federation of India and in 1980 the Democratic Youth Federation of India was formed under the leadership of CPI (M).

The State with most active and radical student movement is West Bengal. Students have participated in a number of mass movements including a tramfare strike, Bengal-Bihar merger dispute, agitations over high food prices and a teacher strike for higher wages. Uttar Pradesh has been rocked by a special brand of student politics namely, student involvement in academic crises on the campus.⁵² Universities in U.P. and the Hindi speaking regions of North India have also agitated for the early use of Hindi as the national language. Orissa has witnessed some major student agitations despite a general atmosphere of the peace on the campuses. The anti-fee rise strike in 1951 and student participation in the S.R.C movement in 1956 demanding the merger of two Oriya-speaking regions with Orissa were the highlights of 1950s.⁵³ Activist students of Andhra Pradesh had supported the Naxalite movement in the State. The agitations over the creation of separate Telengana State have involved students. Earlier students also played a key role in the state-wide movement for the creation of a separate Andhra State during the early fifties. Bihar youth movement has rightly concentrated itself on opposition to political corruption, rising prices and other issues that immediately concern the masses.⁵⁴

Student politics in Tamil Nadu came to limelight in the Statewide agitation in 1956 against the use of Hindi as India's national language. Students played a vanguard role in the agitation and their support for the D.M.K. party helped to pave the way for the party's assumption of power in 1967.

The student movement in Gujarat became the harbinger of a new phase of student activism in India. In Gujarat, larger societal issues like rampant corruption, black market, rising prices and unemployment became the crucial issues and the real might of student power was witnessed in the agitation. Later, the struggle against repressive laws resulted in the struggle for Total Revolution in mid 1970s, which culminated in the imposition of Emergency in June 1975.

2) Kerala

Kerala has had a long and chequered history of student activism and struggle. The youth and student organizations originated as part of the national freedom movement. During this period Kerala State was divided into Travancore, Kochi and Malabar. The modern Kerala State was formed on November 1, 1956.

6. YOUTH MOVEMENT IN TRAVANCORE

In 1891 there occurred a struggle through "Malayalee Memorial" to protest against the Tamil Brahmin domination in Travancore Administration. The Travancore government neglected the Malayalees in government jobs. All important positions were occupied by 'Non- Malayali' Hindus. The natives naturally resented this and resentment crystallized itself in the form of Malayali Memorial. The youth actively participated in the working of social groups like Nair Service Society, Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam and Yogakshema Sabha.

The Boy's strike in 1922 was a student protest movement against the enhancement of fees in Travancore. It was directed against the administration of the Diwan, Raghavayya.⁵⁵ The government succeeded in crushing the agitation through brute force.⁵⁶ The students played an important role in picketing of foreign cloth shops, in the untouchability movement and the Vaikkom Satyagraha of 1924. They participated in the massive black flag rally against the Press-control Act in 1926 and Salt Satyagraha.

By the beginning of 1930's, new youth organizations were started in Travancore, Kochi and Malabar which were not a part of social reform movements. In 1931, N.C.Sekhar organized a 'Youth League' at Balaramapuram.⁵⁷ Thiruvithamcore Youth League' was started by some sections of the youth at Thiruvananthapuram. Ponnara Sreedhar was the president of this organization.⁵⁸ The first agitation of Youth League was to protest against the British Government. Youth League also supported the Abstention Movement, popularly known as 'Nivarthana Prakshobham'. However, the working of Youth League became inactive. Again it became, active from 1938 onwards. The AISF had begun

earlier in Travancore region. In 1938, the State Congress was organized. A section of students formed a new organization Thiruvananthapuram Students Organization. (T.S.O). In August 1936, the working of the State Congress and Youth League was banned by the Government. Later the ban was withdrawn.

7. YOUTH MOVEMENT IN MALABAR AND KOCHI

'Kerala Vidyarthi Sanghom' was formed in Malabar.⁵⁹ The Youth League was also working in Malabar. On April 13, 1934, 'Abhinava Bharat Yuva Sangham' was organized in Karivallur.⁶⁰ The middle class sections and youth farmers participated in this organization. The youth organizations spread in Cochin region also. The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930's, the Guruvayoor Satyagraha of 1931 and the Agricultural Workers Struggle in 1932 had linked the Cochin youth movement with the national struggle.

8. YOUTH MOVEMENT IN UNITED KERALA

Modern Kerala became a political reality on November, 1956. The first notable student agitation was 'Orana Samaram' in 1956 led by Kerala Students Union (KSU).⁶¹ Another agitation led by KSU was the 'Vimochana Samaram' or Liberation Struggle against the Communist Government.⁶² The Kerala Students Federation (KSF) was formed in 1956. It however could not remain the center of attraction for the students. The Kerala unit of AIYF was formed on June 7, 1959 at Ernakulam. In 1967 A.K.Gopalan organized "Kannur District Socialist Youth Federation" at Pappanasseri.⁶³ The 'Kerala Socialist Youth Federation' was formed in 1968. The KSYF undertook many agitations and campaign against unemployment. In 1969, KSYF conducted a demonstration in front of the Parliament to protest against unemployment.

In 1970 the Student Federation of India (SFI) was formed. It conducted various agitations to protect the rights of student community. Its major agitations are Pre degree Board agitation in 1986-87; the struggle against privatization of education in the field of Ayurveda and Polytechnic in 1985 and the Medicos struggle in 1991 etc. In 1980, Democratic Youth Federation was formed. Currently in Kerala, several youth and student organization are active. Among them the most important are DYFI, Bharatheeya Janatha Yuva Morcha, Indian Youth Congress, AIYF, RYF, Youth League and Youth Front (M) etc.

Most of the youth are not interested in the active politics due to factors such as corruption, violence, lack of transparency in political system, fast life and new trends. The youth and student wings are suffering from a shortage of capable young leaders.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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