The Academic
International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

An Online Peer Reviewed / Refereed Journal
Volume 4 | Issue 10 | October 2026
ISSN: 2583-973X (Online), SJIF IF(2026): 5.6
Website: www.theacademic.in

Youth Unrest: Causes and Remedies

Dr. Johnny Tech

Associate Professor, Head of Department, Govt. College Doimukh, India

Email: jhoneytechitara@gmail.com

DOI : https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24491055

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Received: 23-11-2026

Accepted: 09-11-2026

Published: 20-11-2026

Keywords:

Youth unrest, Student activism, Revolutionary movements

ABSTRACT

Youth unrest which is often described as 'Student revolt', 'Student power' and 'Student activism' has become today an established fact, a reality. The last three decades have witnessed innumerable outbursts of student power in many nations of the world. It is true that there is youth unrest. But it is a part of the National malady. The students at a class can play a vital role in any attempt to change the National scene. Student activism is positively anti-establishment. As Pater Worsley says, it is quite obvious. If the establishment, by the same logic tends to be anti-student 'it will create an extremely unfortunate situation. Asking the students to behave, without the authorities doing anything to solve their problems, is not only unjust to the students but will further alternate them from the authorities. The student is a force. He is not a citizen of tomorrow, but he is very much a citizen of today. He has a participatory role to play in the task of nation building, what he wants is not a dose of advice but he wants to see the models to be emulated by him.

Youth unrest: A world phenomenon

The phenomenon of 'youth unrest' has become worldwide. As Gareth Stedman Jones has rightly observed, "From Berlin to Peking, from Tokyo to New York, in Paris and in Prague, the rise of these movements (student movements) has altered the nature of politics. Virtually, every government has some reason to fear its students, with good reason. From Cuba in 1958 to Czechoslovakia and France in 1968

Disclaimer: The opinions, interpretations, conclusions, recommendations, analyses, and statements expressed in this research article are solely those of the author(s) and do not reflect the views, policies, or positions of the Publisher, Chief Editor, Editors, Editorial Board, Reviewers, or their affiliated institutions. The author(s) are solely responsible for ensuring the originality, authenticity, and integrity of the manuscript and for ensuring that it is free from plagiarism, AI-generated content, copyright infringement, data falsification, and any other form of academic misconduct.

students have played a crucial role in political change, again and again helping to discredit, transform or topple governments. Students have erupted in the world of politics with a suddenness no one could have foretold". The students are today a new social force of incalculable significance.

The student power seems to have an anti-establishment and a revolutionary tone. In Germany, the Socialist Student Union declared the students 'lack of confidence in political parties and parliament and justified their taking democracy into the streets'. In Italy, student strikes accompanied by an 'anti-university' stance marked the happening at Turia and other universities including those of Rome, Naples, Bologna, etc. In February 1968, the disturbance in Belgian University of Louvial contributed directly to the fall of the Belgian Government. In Czechoslovakia, in the movement towards liberalism the students and the youth union joined hands with the workers in "heralding the democratic revolution". In America, the anti-Vietnam and civil rights issues brought about confrontation between the students and authorities. The students were led by the S.D.S students for a democratic society. In May-June 1968, France saw battles between demonstrators and police and violent attack of students and workers. Students boycotted examinations in Sorbonne and occupied the buildings. When the crisis was over, the minister of Education was no longer in the Government for he had to resign. It is said that this event accelerated the downfall of De Gaulle. In England, the London School of Economics was the scene of confrontation between the radicals and the authorities. In Indonesia, the partnership of the students and the Army militated against Communism and brought about the fall of the Soekarno regime. Japan has witnessed the most massive demonstrations by students.

Youth unrest in India

In India the student activism has erupted in different forms and for totally unconnected reasons in different parts of the Country. A quarrel between the staff of the bus transport and a group of Students in Jabalpur led to massive demonstrations and strikes in the whole of M.P and U.P some time ago. A change in the method of payment of examination fees resulted in total strikes in Lucknow University. A demand for a steel plant brought the Andhra students on the street. Vietnam has always provided an early opportunity to the Calcutta students to agitate. Demands for an Agricultural University gave rise to massive agitation in the Vidarbha regions of Maharashtra. A demand for reforms in the Agricultural University was the reason behind agitation in Jammu and Kashmir. A few rusticated student leaders aided by the 'disgruntled Politicians' brought the closure of the Banaras Hindu University. A rivalry between student (youth) factions, one supporting the vice-chancellor and the other, chief minister of Andhra Pradesh in the Osmania University was said to be the real beginning of the Telangana agitation. Anti-Hindi agitation and the Expo-

70 agitation resulted in the closure of all the colleges in Karnataka. Semester system was the target of attack for the student (youth) of the Mysore University some years back. The 'NAV Nirman Andolan' of Gujarat (which toppled down Chimanbhai Patel's Government) ultimately gave birth to the Chhatra sangharsha samities guided, inspired and led by Late Jayaprakash Narayan and the Assam agitation spearheaded by the All-Students Union (being supported by the Gana Sangrama Parishad), all Arunachal Pradesh Student Union (AAPSU) movement in Arunachal Pradesh have been the recent examples of youth (student) agitation of semi-political nature. Barring a few successful agitations the student Solidarity has failed to be peaceful in its agitations.

Causes of Youth unrest

Student unrest in this country has earned a peculiar connotation because of the unprecedented social dimension achieved by the student leadership at least in some instances. The unrest is there no doubt but the student movement is not in sight anywhere. The Leftish Slogan of the Sixties, 'Students today and workers tomorrow' seems to have become hollow. The students are no more visualized as 'vanguards in a revolution led by and controlled under the hegemony of the working class'. The students do not constitute a "revolutionary class" as such. 'The promise held out by the activism in the sixties was, however, belied by the apathy in the seventies. The American student activism has slowly evaporated. The Japanese Student enthusiasm has gone dormant. The student energy in India is dissipated. Lack of proper leadership, absence of clear national goal, lack of guidance and inspiring model have all made the youth power in India become idle. The University is no more an isolated community of scholars but is more community of young people. The reality of the world today involves serious problems and the universities just are not doing much about it. The various factors have contributed to the problems of youth unrest. Some of them may be noted here:

1. Empower Socialization and family problems: The failure on the part of parents to bring up their children, in accordance with the culture expectations of the society has made the youth to go astray. The evil habits and bad qualities of the parents also have harmful effect on the personality growth of the children. The family problem spoil the mental peace and the emotionality of the growing youth.

2. Political, social and economic inequalities: The young people are more sensitive to the political, economic and social inequalities and exploitation. They have contempt for the existing 'system'. They are disillusioned with what they are having and are pessimistic about the future.

3. Defective Educational System: The students do not have any respect for the present defective educational system. The outdated, uninspiring, un-integrated and irrelevant educational system cannot make the students (youth) to become disciplined and responsible.

4. Unemployment: The unemployment of the educated youths is on the increase. The education that they receive does not enable them to become economically self-reliant. On the other hand, the government is not in a position to provide employment to all the educated youth. As a result, the youth are losing confidence in themselves and are becoming more and more restless.

5. Corrupt and discredited Authority: The youth are disappointed with the corrupt and discredited authority, corruption, craziness for power, moral lapses, opportunism, nepotism, discrimination, etc., found among the political and social leaders has made the youth to have nothing but contempt for them. The leadership has failed to set a good model for the students (youth) to emulate.

6. Misuse of Student (youth) power by the politician: The corrupt and unscrupulous politicians who are making use of student power to further their partisan political interests, are also contributing to the problem. Students are becoming puppets in the hands of some disgruntled politicians to serve their selfish ends.

7. Administrative Failures: Youth unrest is often caused by administrative errors and miscalculations. The indifference and lack of sympathy for the student demands on the part of the administrations (of the university as well as the government) many times force the students, to resort to strikes.

8. Communication Gaps: Lack of understanding and lack of proper communication between the students and Teachers on the one hand, parents and children on the other, also cause youth unrest. The failure on the part of the parents understand the aspirations of their young children also add to the problem.

9. Value differences and conflict of values: The value difference in society, the changes and conflicts of values also contribute to youth unrest: -

    (i) 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 youths.

    (ii) The youths are 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 not do away with the old once and for all. This has made them to become restless.

(iii) The youth are influenced by value of individualism and democracy. Hence, they are revolting against the old traditional order.

(iv) The youths feel they are also matured, responsible and sensible. They resent their elders treating them as "immature" and "irresponsible lot". They feel annoyed and embarrassed to find themselves in a helpless situation. They do not want to remain dumb witnesses to all the unfortunate and unwanted events that happen in society.

(v) Some of the youths are carried away by the hedonistic values or pleasure philosophy. They want to take the maximum benefit out of the disturbed social situations. They have no respect for any values for they have lost faith in them.

10. Lack of opportunities: The youths do not get proper opportunities, to express their talents, cultivate their interests and develop their personality. This has contributed to their dissatisfaction.

11. Gap between the Aspirations and Achievements: The youths are likely to have their own aspirations and ambitions. They will be dreaming about it all the while. But the reality of life makes them to become disgusted. The youths with unfulfilled desires and aspirations can hardly be at rest.

12. Lack of Determination and Self-Responsibility: Some of the youths lack will power and self-determination. They depend more on others rather than on their intrinsic abilities and talents. They apishly 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.

13. Influence of movies: The modern movies which, mostly portray violence, arson, loot, rape, murder, immorality, crimes, etc. have a great demoralizing effect on the modern youths, students, in particular, imitate their pet film actors and actresses with all their frailties. Scant respect for their cultural values and the apish imitation of the western tendencies have further contributed to the problem.

Remedies for Youth Unrest

The problem of the youth must be understood in connection with the relationships of the students with parents, teachers, politicians, police authorities, student union leaders, university authorities, and the values, traditions, needs, motivations and aspirations of the students. Patterns of these variables are found to be associated with the tension in the college going youth. A few suggestions and remedial measures may be made here to minimize the youth unrest.

1. System of education: A thorough overhauling for our education system is necessary to help the students to face the problems and challenges of life. No hotch-potch change in education would suffice. But education requires a comprehensive planning and an integral approach. This would bridge the gap between what the students actually experience and what is taught to them in schools and colleges. Colleges and Universities should make proper provision for (a) adequate boarding and lodging facilities, (b) better libraries and reading rooms and laboratories, (c) enough facilities for recreation and extra-curricular activities, (d) Seminar and tutorial system.

2. Employment opportunities: Efforts should be made to provide opportunities for the students to offer courses in agriculture, engineering, business management, commerce, medicine, etc. The spirit of self-reliance must be created and the students should be encouraged to set up business and industries of their own.

3. Provision for leisure-time activities: Students should not be allowed to idle their time. Hobby clubs and workshops catering to painting, music, photography, stamp collection, swimming etc. may be established in colleges. Indoor games, dramatic performances, excursions and picnics, functions catering to the interest of fine arts and literature must be encouraged among the.

4. Economic Difficulties: Poor and the needy students should be given financial help through scholarships, freeships, loan scholarships, free hostel facilities, stipends, etc. so that they do not drop out of schools and colleges. The programme of “earn while you learn”, needs to be well organized.

5. Discipline: Students should be assisted in developing self-discipline for it is long lasting than the imposed discipline. Acts of indiscipline should be dealt with sternly, but of course, humanistically. The teachers must play an important role in this respect.

6. Able leadership: Students very badly need able and efficient leadership. In any democratic setup leadership is very important. Leadership training programmes under supervision should be introduced in colleges. Politicians must not be allowed to misguide the students (youths).

7. Role of Political Parties: Political Parties should be kept out of college campuses. The students should have political awareness, but their active participation in politics would spoil the peaceful atmosphere of the campus. The student leaders, teachers and university authorities must make joint venture to save education and campus from power politics.

8. Students Participation: As Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao, Ex-union minister for education has suggested (in his address to the common wealth inter-university conference in New Delhi, Jan, 1970) 'students the world over have become restive and are demanding a voice in the affairs of universities and a fair share in running the machine and the decision-taking. This demand cannot be evaded for long except a great peril'. In brief, the students should be given ample opportunities to take part in the administrative bodies of the university.

9. Proper Communication between Students and Teachers: The communication gap between the students and teachers should be bridged. The teacher must not look at the students with suspicion. He must have confidence in them. He must act as their friend, guide and philosopher. The teacher-student ratio must be reduced. Every student must get due attention of the teacher. More than this, basically the teacher must change his attitude towards the students and the profession.

Conclusion

It is true that there is youth unrest. But it is a part of the National malady. The students at a class can play a vital role in any attempt to change the National scene. Student activism is positively anti-establishment. As Pater Worsley says, it is quite obvious. If the establishment, by the same logic tends to be anti-student 'it will create an extremely unfortunate situation. Asking the students to behave, without the authorities doing anything to solve their problems, is not only unjust to the students but will further alternate them from the authorities. The student is a force. He is not a citizen of tomorrow, but he is very much a citizen of today. He has a participatory role to play in the task of nation building, what he wants is not a dose of advice but he wants to see the models to be emulated by him. Events, crisis and challenges of constructive activity have shown that he can rise to the occasion and meet the challenges of reconstruction. In the changing society where the authority stands discredited, the youth shall triumph and usher in an era of social change. The student power has shown that it is a potential factor that can bring about vast socio-political changes.

Reference

1. C.N. Shankar Rao, Sociology Primary Principles.

2. Fair deal for backward classes: Publication division (ministry of information and broadcasting), Government of India.

3. Girish Chandra Roy, value conflict in study of social changes in India.

4. Henry, Nikhila, Pan Macmillan, The ferment: youth unrest in India.

5. Historical accounts of the May–June 1968 student protests in France.

6. Historical accounts of the Nav Nirman Andolan in Gujarat and the Assam Movement.

7. Historical accounts of student activism and political change in India.

8. Jones, Gareth Stedman. Writings on student movements and political change in the 1960s.

9. Leading change Newton (LCN), India's youth movement: A decade of uprising and more (2026).

10. New Delhi Publishers, Modern Indian youth: Reasons and result of unrest and core agitation.

11. Parimal B. Kar, Sociology-The discipline and its dimensions.

12. Rao, V. K. R. V. (January 1970). Address to the Commonwealth Inter-University Conference, New Delhi.

13. Research Gate, Introduction to youth movements in India.

14. Research Publish Journals, youth unrest: crises in ethics and moralities.

15. Shaheen Falki (2021), The student unrest- its causes and remedies.

16. Singh P. (2025), Youth unrest in higher education institutions in India.

17. Student movements in Europe, America, Japan and India during the 1960s and 1970s.

18. Youth Research and Evaluation exchange (https/youthrex.com), seven strategies for supporting youth in movements of Global unrest.