



# **FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES**

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## Youth Unrest in India

Youth unrest may be defined as the “manifestation of collective frustration of the youth in the society”. What is unrest? What is social unrest? What is youth unrest? ‘Unrest’ means ‘disturbed condition’. It is “the state of disillusionment and dissatisfaction”. Social unrest is the manifestation of collective disillusionment, discontentment and frustration of the group, community or society. If there is unrest among the students of one university, it is not perceived as the problem of ‘student unrest’ as such. It is only when students all over the country feel frustrated on common issues like admissions, content of courses, the examination system and the representations in academic bodies, can we say that there exists the problem of student unrest in our society. Similarly, it is not the unrest among the workers of one industry that is termed as ‘industrial unrest’ but it is the collective discontentment among all workers in different industries in the country on issues of minimum wages, safety measures, security of employment, and certain intra-mural and extra-mural facilities that is referred to as the problem of ‘industrial unrest’. The same is true of the peasant unrest, tribal unrest and women unrest. The emphasis in the concept of social unrest is on “collective frustration and disillusionment on common issues of the groups in the society” On this basis, 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 to the extent that they offend them, and they feel so disillusioned and disgusted that they recognize the need for changing these norms. Characteristics of Youth Unrest: On the basis of the above definition, it may be said that youth unrest is characterized by: (i) Collective discontent, (ii) Dysfunctional conditions, (iii) Public concern, and (iv) The need for change in the existing norms. Youth agitation on the other hand is characterized by: (i) Action based on the feeling of injustice, (ii) Growth and spread of a generalized belief among the youth which identifies the source of discontent, frustration and deprivation, (iii) Emergence of leadership and mobilization for action, and (iv) Collective reaction to stimuli. It will not be out of place to explain the concept of student indiscipline at this stage. Indiscipline is disobedience to authority, or disrespect to elders, or deviation from norms, or refusing to accept control, or rejecting goals and/or means. Student indiscipline leads to the ‘use’ of ‘undesirable methods’ by students. A committee appointed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in 1960 included three types of behaviour in student indiscipline: (i) Disrespect for teachers, (ii) Misbehaviour with girls, and (iii) Destroying property. Further, it included the indiscipline of not a few students but of a large group of students. Some scholars describe this definition as faulty. They maintain that three situations create indiscipline among students: (a) Students lose interest in the goals of the (educational) institution. In such a situation, they remain members (of the institution) but do not follow its norms, (b) Students accept the goals but doubt whether the institution can achieve them. They, therefore, try to ‘improve’ the institution by deviating from its norms, (c) Norms of institutions fail to achieve goals and students, therefore, want a change in norms. Youth unrest may be viewed with three perspectives: (1) Unrest among youth, (2) Unrest due to the youth, and (3) Social unrest in the country and its effect on the youth. Important Causes of Youth Unrest Essay on the Important 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 leftist slogan of the sixties, ‘Students today and workers tomorrow’ seems to have become hollow. The students are no more visualised 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.