***Original Research Article***

**Social And Personal Dilemma Among Youths**

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| **Abstract:** *Youth is the most valuable human resource of every country. A nation’s progress is depended on the progress of the youth. The young people constitute about forty per cent of the total population of India. A country is responsible to provide proper atmosphere for education, involvement, innovation and for improvement of the youth. Today’s society is not remaining as simple as earlier. In the modern society they are facing different problems. To understand their problems, it is important to understand the youth. Psychologists, sociologists and educationists have placed young people in today’s society from their different perspectives. This study strives to present an understanding of the personal and social problems of youth. This study targets the policy makers, researchers, educationists and practitioners to address these issues which not only affect the youth but the whole society.*  |
| **Keywords:** Youth, society, social,personal ,dilemma  |

1. **Introduction :**

Dr. APJ. Abdul Kalam, former President of India (2002-2007), states that “the resource of the youth is an important building block for transforming India into a developed nation”. Present Indian society is youth-oriented. It should be a major concern of our society to keep the well-being of our youth. As reported by Census 2011, youth in India constitutes one-fifth, i.e. 19.1% of the total population and is expected to have a 34.33% share of youth in the total population by 2020. When a child takes birth, adults aspire, and youth can bring the aspiration into reality. “Youth” is a term used to describe a period in the human life cycle that covers young females and males aged 15 to 24 years. World Health Organization (WHO) defines “youth” as those in 15-24-year age group. The National Youth Policy of India (2003) defines the youth population as those in the age group of 15-35 years. ‘Youth’ is a critical phase of life with major physical, cognitive, and social development. These changes bring behavioural changes with stress, which affects their relationship and keeps them in a dilemma between ‘right and wrong’. It reflects the stage of physically full-grown development, biological maturation, cognitive development, and transition period of social roles. Youths are the key source of a nation’s development. Their physical, mental and social well-being are very important factors for the proper growth of a nation.

Youths are like the poster which reflects the situation of society. There are societies where age is not the basis for determining youth. Generally, in those societies, generational principles are taken into account. *Emile Durkheim* said, “When societies undergo a transition from the mechanical stage to the organic stage, traditional norms and values become disrupted and uprooted. People become restless and dissatisfied, and a new moral consensus about what people can reasonably expect from a life would be needed”. Rapid changes in the technological sphere have posed a challenge among youths- the necessity of being up to date to keep oneself amidst success in academics or careers has prized society with massive erosion of human values and conflict. The pressure of society and the parents, the craze for easy money, and the easy availability of not-so-useful commodities have gunned down the conscience of most of the people in our society. The youngsters have to tolerate the blame of eroding values, relationship conflict, and lack of patience, resulting in student unrest, absence of values, intolerant behaviour, lack of sensitivity, aggressive social behaviour, risky sexual behaviour, substance abuse, academic failure, school dropout, and crime. etc. On the other hand, they also have to adjust to the current social trends in a technologically advanced age with a balanced personality. The problem of the generation gap is a vital issue for the youths of today. They are often misunderstood by the adults of our society. There has always been a conflict between tradition and modernity. The elders consider the youth to be immature and often criticise them. The problems of social disparity, corruption, unemployment, reservations and nepotism have developed negative attitudes among youths towards society and government, which may develop frustrated and antisocial behaviour. This situation is undoubtedly creating confusion and problems in their life, which not only affects millions of people and causes pain and suffering but also those around them.

In a country like India, one of the most contributing factors to problems is gender. Adolescence is one of the most critical periods of human development, as it has a long-term impact on health and well-being. (Blum, Mmari, & Moreau, [2017](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02673843.2019.1590852)). Further, the construction of gender attitudes and perceptions of gender norms also develops at this stage. Many health behaviours acquired during early adolescence (ages 10–14 years) are influenced by gender norms and beliefs, and these gender norms have implications for both girls and boys. The consequences for girls include lack of education, child marriage, child pregnancy, poor health, violence and depression. Boys also have consequences such as engaging in higher rates of physical violence, higher risk of substance abuse and suicide, greater number of deaths from unintentional injuries, and, as adults, shorter life expectancies than women (Blum et al., [2017](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02673843.2019.1590852)). The family environment and parental pressure are one of the prime factors for the problems that occur among youths. unhealthy family environment characterised by physical and verbal conflict, disengagement, negative communication, harsh discipline, rejection, etc., is associated with increasing behavioural problems in adolescence (Eshrat Ara,2015). The lifestyle of the modern era has also been a threat to the mental sanity of the youths. The recklessness, indifference, the violent attitude and the self-centred lifestyle are the disguise of the technological advancements. Along with these factors, the generation gap, corruption, unemployment problem, differences in class, and uprooting from rural life are adding fuel to the fire (Salagare 2016),

**1.1: Significance of the study:** The youth is the most valuable human resource. This period is considered the most colourful and creative period of life. The youth take part in nation-building through various developmental activities. As in this age, they become socially aware and responsible, energetic and efficient; it is high time for them to take responsibility for change, progress and innovation lies on their shoulders. Youth can transform a society by their proper vision and mission. They represent the identity and culture of a nation. Therefore, their energies should be directed properly. As a transitional age, they have to face different physiological, psychological, emotional and sociological problems. To guide them in to the right track we must have the youth’s understanding.

Different factors may abuse the youth mentally, emotionally and socially. Our country does not look to afford for the youth what they want or what they are competent for. Our parental behaviour, aimless educational institutions and exam-oriented curriculum often create frustrations among the youth. Despite their best effort, sometimes they are unable to achieve according to their potentiality. Differences in social class and economic background are also burning issues for the young mind. The social boundaries and the so-called class ‘Have’ and ‘Have not’ create inferiority complexes in front of their peers. Youth can build or destroy a society. Therefore, their energies should be directed properly. This study highlighted the social and personal problems of youth and strives to find the differences with respect to gender and demography.

**1.2: Objectives of the study:**

The present time and the society have become more complex today. With the rising craze for the metaverse, we’re going far away from reality. The unexpected pandemic has also paused many challenges among us. Physical isolation has resulted in social and emotional isolation, which triggered many problems among the youths. Considering the various facets, the study has been intended to find out the personal and social problems that are faced by the youths of the present era on the basis of gender and the place of residence.

**2: Methodology**:

In this present study Descriptive survey method has been used to analyse the data. For the present study total of 170 youths from various colleges of

Kamrup District was taken using stratified random sampling. Among the 170 students, 85 were girls and 85 boys. The standardised questionnaire developed by Mithilesh Verma, ‘Youth Problem Inventory,’ has been used. The original scale has five dimensions. However, the investigators have adopted two dimensions from the scale: the Personal and Social Dimensions. The personal dimension includes five questions, and thesocial dimension includes 24 questions. The data were collected through the Google form, considering the situation.

**3: Analysis and interpretation**

**Table 1: Social Dimension (Percentages of males and females in social dimension)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sl.****No** | **Statement** | **Boys(%)** | **Girls(%)** |
| **True** | **Partially true** | **Untrue** | **True** | **Partially true** | **Untrue** |
| 1. | I take my dress as inferior before others | **29.41** | **29.41** | **29.75** | **47.06** | **29.41** | **23.53** |
| 2. | If my social status were higher, it would have been much better | **52.94** | **29.41** | **3.75** | **28.23** | **36.47** | **41.17** |
| 3 | I feel ashamed at my economic condition | **15.29** | **28.23** | **64.7** | **24.7** | **35.29** | **51.76** |
| 4 | Inspite of my wish I hesitate in interacting with others | **37.64** | **24.7** | **43.52** | **24.7** | **24.7** | **50.59** |
| 5 | Others don't like to interact with my family or me | **5.9** | **1.94** | **81.17** | **11.76** | **14.11** | **74.11** |

**Table 2: Difference between male/female in social dimension**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dimension** | **Area** | **N** | **Mean** | **SD** | **t-value** | **Level of significance** |
| Social | Male | 85 | 7.47619 | 2.131102 | 0.034048 | Not significant |

**Table 3 : Differences between Rural / Urban in social dimension**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dimension** | **Area** | **N** | **Mean** | **SD** | **t-value** | **Levels of significance** |
| Social | Rural | 85 | 10 | 2.299111 | 0.011156 | Not significant |
| Urban | 85 | 08 | 2.369696 |

In the social dimension we have used descriptive statistics. The following are the results found after analysis the Table-1

In the case of feeling inferior for dressing in front of others, a total of 38.24% of youths agreed with it, where 29.41% are boys and 47.06% are girls. Appearance is a characteristic that is immediately accessible to others in a social environment, and the clothes in modern times are part of the outward appearance. The Greek poet Sappho wrote, ‘What is beautiful is good’. Such type of beliefs and stereotypes have contributed to the increasing pressure among the youth to look good, especially among girls in the Indian context. Goodstadt and Hjelle (1973), in a social psychology experiment on workers, found that beautiful workers received differential treatment from their supervisors. This result of the study reveals that girls are more concerned about their dress because the stereotypes of society from childhood imbibe the notion of being beautiful among them. 40.59 % of youths accepted that they were concerned about their social status, where 52.94% were boys and 28.23% were girls. Social status has been correlated with the behaviour and personality development of students. Many researchers in their studies found that family background plays an important role than the school in academic achievement. ([Arnold and Doctor Off, 2003](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01297/full%2523B4); [Reardon, 2011](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01297/full%2523B72); [Berkowitz et al., 2017](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01297/full%2523B7); [Lawson and Farah, 2017](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01297/full%2523B52)). 58.24% of youth responded that they don’t feel ashamed of their economic condition, whereas boys’ and girl’s percentages were 64.7% and 51.76%, respectively. 30.58% of youth opined that they hesitate to interact with others in spite of their wish, whereas the boy’s percentage is 37.64%, which is higher than the girl’s percentage of 24.7%. Only 8.82 % of youths accepted, and 13.53% accepted it as partially true that they feel that others don’t like to interact with them and their family members. Tables 2 and 3 show that there is no significant difference between the male and female youths and youths of rural and urban areas on the social dimension. In the social dimension, we have used descriptive statistics. The following are the results found after analysis of Table 1 In case of feeling inferiority for dress in front of others total 38.24% of youths agreed with it where 29.41% are boys and 47.06% are girls. Appearance is a characteristic that is immediately accessible to other in a social environment and the clothes in modern times are part of the outward appearance. Greek poet Sappho wrote ‘What is beautiful is good’. Such type of beliefs and stereotypes has contributed in the increasing pressure among the youths to look good especially among girls in the Indian context. Goodstadt and Hjelle (1973) in a social psychology experiment on workers found that beautiful workers received differential treatment from their supervisors. This result of the study reveals that girls are more concerned about their dress because the stereotypes of the society from childhood imbibe the notion of being beautiful among them. 40.59 % of youths accepted that they are concerned about their social status where 52.94% were boys and 28.23% were girls. Social status has been correlated with the behaviour and personality development of students. Many researchers have found that family background factors can explain most of the variance in students’ academic achievement and play a more important role than schools ([Arnold and Doctor off, 2003](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01297/full%2523B4); [Reardon, 2011](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01297/full%2523B72); [Berkowitz et al., 2017](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01297/full%2523B7); [Lawson and Farah, 2017](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01297/full%2523B52)). 58.24% of youth responded that they don’t feel ashamed at their economic condition where boys and girl’s percentage were 64.7% and 51.76% respectively. 30.58% of youth opined that they hesitate in interacting with others in spite of their wish, where boy’s percentage is 37.64% which is higher than the girl’s percentage 24.7%. Studies also reveal that Masculine and feminine cultures and individuals generally differ in how they communicate with others. For example, feminine people tend to self-disclose more often than masculine people, and in more intimate details so they can interact more without hesitation than the boys. And only 8.82 % of youths accepted and 13.53% accepted it as partially true that they feel that others don’t like to interact with them and their family members. The table 2 and 3 shows that there is no significant difference among the male and female youths and youths of rural and urban area on the social dimension.

| **Table 4. Dimension 2: Personal dimension** |
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| **Sl No** | **Statements** | **Boys (%)** | **Girls (%)** |
| **True** | **Partially True** | **Untrue** | **True** | **Partially True** | **Untrue** |
| 1 | I have fear of marriage | **18.82** | **9.41** | **71.76** | **25.88** | **21.18** | **52.94** |
| 2 | I feel sick in talking to the people of opposite sex except my near relatives | **28.23** | **35.29** | **24.7** | **18.82** | **17.64** | **63.52** |
| 3 | Being laughed at or criticised keeps me worried for long | **58.82** | **23.52** | **17.64** | **76.47** | **17.64** | **5.88** |
| 4 | Even a little thing deeply pierces my heart | **29.14** | **43.52** | **27.05** | **48.23** | **23.52** | 2**8.23** |
| 5 | My family or personal incidents deeply sadden me | **44.7** | **32.94** | **22.35** | **57.64** | **25.88** | **16.47** |
| 6 | I remain worried as i don't keep good health | **15.29** | **29.41** | **55.29** | **22.35** | **28.23** | **49.41** |
| 7 | I feel inferior on account of my physical constitution | **22.35** | **31.76** | **45.88** | **27.05** | **27.05** | **45.88** |
| 8 | I am less charming than an average person | **16.47** | **27.05** | **56.47** | **31.76** | **27.05** | **41.17** |
| 9 | My voice should have been more melodious | **15.29** | **28.23** | **41.17** | **36.47** | **32.94** | **30.58** |
| 10 | I feel ashamed of my manners and behaviour before others | **15.29** | **34.11** | **50.58** | **16.47** | **28.23** | **55.29** |
| 11 | I feel that there should be a change in my habits | **81.17** | **14.11** | **4.7** | **68.23** | **27.05** | **4.7** |
| 12 | I am worried as I am unable to decide which occupation to adopt in future | **75.29** | **22.35** | **2.35** | **69.41** | **18.82** | **11.76** |
| 13 | I am worried about my present | **81.17** | **14.11** | **4.7** | **83.52** | **14.11** | **2.35** |
| 14 | I feel difficulty in speaking or lecturing before others | **58.82** | **29.41** | **11.76** | **75.29** | **22.35** | **2.35** |
| 15 | I am unable to impress others with my personality | **47.05** | 25 **29.41** | **23.52** | **60** | **30.58** | **9.41** |
| 16 | I am unhappy because I am not proficient in games and sports | **30.58** | **16.47** | **52.94** | **18.82** | **34.11** | **47.05** |
| 17 | Whatever I may do, i don't get proper appreciation | **45.88** | **27.05** | **27.05** | **32.94** | **24.7** | **42.35** |
| 18 | Since people don't attach due value to me, I am unenthusiastic | **14.11** | 23 **27.05** | **58.82** | **23.52** | **29.41** | **47.05** |
| 19 | I don't know why, even before commencing any work I often feel that it will not be properly done | **30.58** | **36.47** | **32.94** | **71.76** | 1**18.82** | **9.41** |
| 20 | Often in hurry I do things wrongly | **48.23** | **31.76** | **20** | **27.05** | **27.05** | **45.88** |
| 21 | I am unable to anything significant | **37.64** | **27.05** | **35.29** | **54.11** | 1**18.82** | **27.05** |
| 22 | I feel that I am inferior to others | **24.70** | **41.17** | **34.11** | **41.17** | **40** | **18.82** |
| 23 | I have no merit | **14.11** | **24.70** | **61.17** | **20** | **22.35** | **57.64** |
| 24 | There is no meaning of my life | **22.35** | **25.88** | **51.76** | **18.82** | **36.47** | **44.70** |

**Table 5: Differences between male/female in personal dimension**

| Dimension | Area | N | Mean | SD | t-value | Level of significance |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Personal | Male | 85 | 29.88235 | 12.09625 | 0.436745 | Not significant |
|  | Female | 85 | 38 | 11.50861 |  |  |

**Table 6: Differences between Rural/ Urban in personal dimension**

| Dimension | Area | N | Mean | SD | t-Value | Levels of significance |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Personal | Rural | 85 | 31.56471 | 6.169793 | 0.750234 | Not significant |
| Urban | 85 | 31.85882 | 7.536178 |

In case of personal dimension following are the results.

It has been found from the study that 22.34% of youths have a fear of marriage, with the percentage of girls more than boys. This may be attributed to our social structure as girls are more prone to domestic violence after marriage owing to different reasons. But it was interesting to note that 28.23% of boys feel sick while talking to people of the opposite sex except their relatives, whereas the girl’s percentage in this regard is lower than that of the boys. From the childhood stage, prejudices and differences are pushed into the minds of children regarding gender differences. If we analyse the table, it can be seen that youths fear criticism and even agree that the slightest disappointments deeply pierce their heart. Various empirical studies supported the view that fear of negative evaluation builds social anxiety. (Coles, Turk, Heimberg, & Fresco, 2001; Horley, Williams, Gonsalvez, & Gordon, 2004). A total of 51.18% of youths said that their family and personal incidents deeply sadden them. In this case, boys’ percentage is higher than that of girls, which is 44.7% and 22.35%, respectively. 27.05 % of girls feel inferior and less charming than others owing to their physical attributes, which is higher than the boys. 25.88% agreed that their voice should have been more melodious. Early adulthood is the time when students are at a stage of forming a concrete self-image of themselves by relating to others and, at times, by defining their abilities as evaluated by others (Penuel &Wertsch, 2010). From the study, it is found that a total of 74.71% of youth agreed that there should be a change in their habits, where boy’s and girl’s percentages are 81.77% and 68.23%, respectively. A total of 72.35% of youths are worried as they are unable to decide which occupation to adopt in the future, and 82.35% of youths are worried about their present. Czapinski& Peters (1991) mention that due to two factors, there may be anxiety one is uncertainty and an unknown future, and the other is past experiences. The study reveals that a total of 67.05% of youth agreed that they feel difficulty in speaking and or lecturing before others, whereas boys’ and girls’ percentages are respectively 58.82% and 75.29%.A survey of students from two UK universities found the highest number of students (80%) reported that oral presentations were a source of social anxiety impacting learning and well-being. A total of 52.53% of youth said that they are unable to impress others with their personality, where the percentage is higher than that of boys. A total of 51.18% of youth felt that before commencing any work, they often feel that it will not be properly done. Here, it is found that there is a vast difference between the responses of boys and girls, the percentages are respectively 30.58% and 71.76%. From the study, it is found that a total of 37.65% of youth often in a hurry do things wrongly. Here, the percentages of boys and girls are 48.23% and 27.05%, respectively. It is found that a total of 45.88% of youth agreed with the statement that they are unable to do anything significant, where boys’ and girls’ percentages are 37.64% and 54.11%, respectively. According to the study, a total of 32.94% of youth responded as true,41.18% responded as partially true, and 26.47% responded as untrue towards the statement that they feel inferior to others. Here, girls’ percentages are higher in comparison to boys. The study explored that 20.58% of youth felt that there is no meaning in life, but very significantly, 48.24% of youths denied the statement. From the table 5 and 6, it can be inferred that there is no significant difference among the male and female youths and youths of rural and urban areas on the personal dimension.

**Discussion and conclusion**:

Youth is the very critical phase of life with changing social interaction and relationship patterns which is accompanied by vulnerability and acquisition of new skills. The present study has an immense scope to understand the youth’s behaviour. The young people in India wants to experience the world as their classroom, they want freedom of choice and to embark on a creative journey. But during this journey they have to face the difficulties- personal, social which curbs their enthusiasm and make them confined. Every problem is unique in itself but it is important to understand the changing concept of youths and their problems. Undertaking the behaviour of the youth the present study reflects their likes, dislikes, their social, personal and mental life and problems. The uncertainty regarding their future, the social taboos, the consciousness regarding their physical self has caused serious issues among them. The problem of unemployment is on the rise in India which has make the youths uncertain about their future. According to the World Development Report 2013, 9% of males and 11% females aged between 15 to 24 years are unemployed. Young people are increasingly seeking productive employment opportunities and career paths that reflect their individual aspirations. Differences in gender and social background plays an important role in determining the problems of youth. The study reveals that there are no significant differences in the problems of youth irrespective of sex and region. National youth policy ,2003 emphasized four important areas like, youth empowerment, Gender justice, Inter-sectoral approach and information and research network. Different programmes and activities have undertaken under the responsibilities of central and state government for providing implementation mechanism for youth development. The New Education Policy 2020 has highlighted the different important recommendations in the higher education sector which will comprise the youth of our country. Multidisciplinary subjects, multiple entry and exit, credit bank system, skill oriented and value-oriented curriculum will definitely bring some changes in the life of the youth of our nation. Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 1999 shows in their ‘Acceptance and commitment Therapy’ that when people receive help with adopting the type of acceptance, they become more flexible in making their way in the world. It is the responsibility of every one of us to provide the helping hand to every youth to stand in with belief and confidence to face the challenges of the world.

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