



Youth in Politics

Description

Theme:-

- Youth have always been in politics especially at the time of reform movements. Most of these young people are in informal politics rather than formal politics. Ex – Social movements, Pressure groups etc.
- There are some formal student wings in political parties dedicated to the young peoples' participation in politics. Ex – Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, Indian Youth Congress etc.

Importance of youth in Politics:-

- Fresh and innovative ideas.
- Comparatively young people have fewer responsibilities and more zeal towards the betterment of society.
- Youth tends to more enthusiastic, energetic and flexible.
- India is one of the youngest democracies having 65% of its population below the 35 years. But the percentage of the young MPs is just 13% in the parliament, which is a drawback to the representativeness of the democracy.
- Policies affecting youth can be framed by young people themselves rather than old politicians, who most probably cannot feel the contemporary problems young people are facing.
- By making politics accessible to youth, the negative perceptions of politics can be slowly erased in the minds of young people.
- The involvement of young people in politics ensures inclusiveness.
- Older politicians have to prove their loyalty to their political parties by supporting their authoritarian practices because of the long term commitment to their parties. Young people are at advantage in this case, because for them, ideals and ideas dominate their commitment to the political parties.

Negative side:-

- Young people tend to have idealistic and unrealistic visions for society, which may not be successful in implementation.
- They lack experience. [Experience teaches tolerance](#) and the ability to have realistic visions.
- Young people can easily be manipulated and can be used as mere puppets in the hands of older politicians. This can be clearly seen in the violence and destruction of public properties by a few student groups.

Hindrances:-

- At present, Politics are not accessible to the common young people.
- Most of the young politicians of the present generation are from political families.
- Politics is not a career option in the present days and there is a strong negative feeling in the minds of people on politics that it is only for the corrupt. So, parents don't encourage their children to settle in it.
- Economic constraints. Being active in politics doesn't ensure a regular paycheck.
- Even if one choose politics as a career, she/he has to wait for a really long time to get public support.
- Lack of political institutions.
- No incentives for political participation.
- A threat to life, if they are sincere.

What needs to be done:-

- Reservation for youth should be created in the political parties and in the parliament as well. The children and relatives of the politicians should be excluded from this reservation benefits.
- Political participation of youth should be beyond the mere casting of vote. Young people must be involved in the process of elections as election observers, poll station workers etc.
- Youth should be given the opportunity to do an internship in parliament.
- Political awareness should be given to the students of schools and universities and they should be encouraged to participate in politics.
- Student wings of the political parties need to be given more strength and priority.
- Skills training has to be provided to young politicians by experienced politicians.
- Political awareness campaigns must ensure that young people are turning out in the elections to cast their vote.
- Student wings of the political parties have to be too transparent.
- Young people led community development programs and volunteering organizations must be supported by the government.
- There is a need to form local level youth councils.
- Youth groups should be allowed to visit the national parliaments.
- Youth movements should be dealt in a respectable way and their voices need to be heard in the parliament.

What other countries are doing:-

- In Uganda, five seats are reserved for youth representatives in the parliament.
- 'National Youth Parliament' in Srilanka influences National youth policies.
- Youth enrollment campaign in Australia educates young voters with fun activities.

Conclusion:-

There is a dearth of young talent in the present politics. Youth should be given the opportunity to prove themselves by making politics accessible to them. The right balance of young talent and experienced politicians can lead to the cleaning of politics and can restore the public faith in the political system.

Your Turn...

Do you support the participation of young people in politics? And what are your thoughts about this topic? Feel free to express your opinion in the comment section.

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