

Personal View Why? The Angry Adolescent..

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ABSTRACT

This paper is based primarily on the theoretical analysis of the possible causes that may underlie the youth rebellion in Egypt, with special emphasis on the interaction between youth and their families, the effect of the peer groups, the role of the university and the influence of the society in general.

The interplay of these complex factors leads to identity diffusion, ideological confusion, alienation and unbelongingness.

The possible recommendations to minimize the youth agitation are explored. An invitation is offered to deliberate and to work on youth psychological problems.

INTRODUCTION :

An outpouring of newspaper and magazine articles seeking to explain the recent agitation of the youth population have crowded in upon us. With many of the arguments presented we are in substantial agreement. However, the psychological perspective has been sufficiently utilized for the explanation of the event and the search for the roots of the problems, as it was usual to concentrate on the individual and to neglect the social forces which have contributed to the generation with this phenomenon.

This paper is based primarily on the analysis of the possible causes that may underlie the youth rebellion, and these considerations must, of course, remain speculative until a methodology for validation

can be developed. A methodology which is urgently needed to unravel the possible factors contributing to the problem of youth agitation aiming at a broad and logical approach before the designing of a remedial and preventive program.

Rebellious activities among youth is not a new phenomenon. Centuries ago youth unrest took the form of open warfare. But during the past few years a perplexing phenomenon has emerged within our youth, their rebellious activities for many, manifested with radical change in values and life style and with sudden embarrassing of spiritual values, religious, moral and social codes. However, history when focussing upon adolescent violence generally restricts itself to the discussion of university students, hence the studying of these new dimensions of the youth culture and focussing especially on the university student population becomes a matter of urgency.

To delineate the size of the problem we know that in our country we have about 8 millions their ages ranging from 18 to 25 years. They form about 20% of the total population in Egypt, and more than half a million are university students who form about 6.5% of the youth population.

The theoretical analysis of the possible contributing factors to the recent youth agitation could be explained through the following issues:

The family influence; the peer influence; the university role and the society.

(1) The Family Influence

The first step to become acculturated or enculturated is within the family (Clarke, 1968). Many of the troubles of youth spring from ignorance and misunderstanding. The home life must be interesting and worthwhile as providing food and shelter, the circle should be patently interested in the adolescent activities and problems (Crow and Crow, 1956). The Egyptian family is denying the benefit of having special interests or involvement in recreational activities. They usually blame their

youth if they are engaged in these activities and they force them to be preoccupied only by their lessons and books and not to "waste their time".

The type of interaction between our youth and their families is characterized by great dependency and this relationship has created a young generation lacking enthusiasm and ambition, unable to decide and unable to plan their own future (Okasha et al., 1982).

(2) The Peer Influence

The adolescent period is characterized by the peer group overstimulation. However, instances where peer influences play a very dominant role in an adolescent's life may result from unsatisfactory relationship at home (Bronfenbrenner, 1970). The peer culture provides support for anxious and insecure individuals, the fanatic groups encourage its members to try to gain approval by participating in dangerous acts to prove their manhood and by adopting certain morbid standards and they take a very dogmatic unshakable stand behind their new values.

(3) The University Role

For a student; the university is the final contact with his adolescence, from here he steps into adult life. But our universities fail to balance the students' demands, and fail to offer the opportunities to build up mature students. The condensing curriculae, and the present student-professor relationships are no longer adequate to permit personal involvement in their relationship. Little interest from the university is directed to encourage different activities. They introject the same parental attitudes. The recreation areas are removed for faculty buildings to replace them, rarely do we hear of competitive sport games between faculties. Faculty libraries are deficient in books that could encourage or promote other mental activities being limited to a great extent to academic books.

Universities are often assumed to wean students away from traditional beliefs; however, it is important for the adolescents in the uni-

rsity to have mature concepts as it is for them to have clothing suited for their mature bodies; childish beliefs like childish clothes so not fit when the individual is mature (Hurlock, 1949).

When the intellectual development of the individual reaches the stage where abstract concepts are meaningful, his interest in religion increased, and this leads to reconstruction of religious beliefs (religious awakening) (Horrocks, 1962). At the same time the university fails to offer the proper religious education for the students and fails to give them the stability they need.

(4) The Society

Frustrated aspirations

The employment by the means of the Training of Manpower Ministry cannot supply all its youth with career opportunity, and the realization of this fact leads to frustration of all their aspirations and ambitions.

Rapid and technological changes are taking place. Values are changing or under challenge and create a climate of conflict and stress.

The introjection of alien westernized life style as supplied by the mass media which encourages violence, aggression, indulgence in alcohol and drug abuse, crimes and sexual permissiveness (Okasha, 1977). On the other hand it fails to meet the adolescent's aspiration and moral needs. The sociopolitical movements are incapable of generating the utopian futures promised by their ideologies. How do such complex factors influence our youth and what are the results we gain from the interaction of these complicated variables?

We gain identity diffusion of our youth together with ideological confusion which enhance alienation, unbelongingness, rejection of society and detachment from its codes.

(a) Identity diffusion

An important task confronting the youth adult is the development of a sense of his own identity, a conception of "who is he" and "where is he going".

According to Erikson (1968) "identity is the result of a person's ability to integrate his early partial and varied identification". His identification with both of his parents, school teachers, university tutors, political leaders, intellectual and emotional endowment and social roles. This process of crystallization of the identity now is impaired resulting in identity diffusion and poor self-integration.

The young adult cries loudly.

"Who am I?", "I don't know what I believe", "I have no self".

The defective identification and the absence of the father figure is the responsibility of the adult society.

What kind of positive identification figures are offered to youth?

Though different religions speak of peace, mercy and love we show them a world of hatred, cruelty and destruction. Though political leaders speak of harmony among peoples, social and economic progress and respects for human rights, we show them the dominance of arbitrariness, dictatorship, racial and religious persecution and the supremacy of force over law. Though speaking of preserving moral and faithful work, we offer them images of robberies, violence, frauds and lies (Knobel et al., 1973).

(b) Ideological confusion

The adolescent tries to establish a determined ideology to consolidate his identity. The content of the chosen ideology is influenced by the social, political and economic environment surrounding the adolescent, together with education, personality and unconscious factors (Erikson, 1963; Crinberg, 1973).

However, the following items may contribute to the ideological confusion among our adolescents.

The rapid technological development, the massive communication, the bombardment of advertisements, the political apathy, which has resulted from the adoption of the previous unitary political system. This system deprives youth from learning how to practice democracy.

(Okasha, 1977), and despite the presence now of many political parties most of our youth do not participate in these parties, because they no longer have trust in their leaders owing to the discrepancies between what previous ones have said and what in fact has been implemented.

One of the main causes of ideological confusion is the radical change in some political concepts before adequate preparation.

So in the end the adolescents find themselves in an ideological dilemma which to a great extent facilitates their resorting to the morbid ideological and fanatic systems. They find their ways into these morbid social groups which support and validate their resistance and fanaticism. This may be considered an incipient revolution to seek the attention of the adult society which still treats the adolescent as a child when he attempts to determine his rights and responsibilities.

(c) Alienation, unbelongingness, rejection and detachment

The adolescent finds the adult society unappealing that the future goals are uncertain. They are profoundly distrustful of adults so that they reject society, detach themselves from its rules and codes and escape from reality with a marked deterioration in their sense of belonging and heightened experience of being persecuted from their society so they develop the idea to alter the sinful society even by violence and they try to actualize and realize themselves even by murdering, being verbally and physically aggressive. By doing so they consider themselves martyrs working for the sake of God (Okasha, 1977).

Possible Recommendations to Minimize the Youth Agitation :

A) Family :

Through healthy interaction, the family should understand and encourage youth to be more independent, able to bear responsibilities and able to plan reasonably for the future.

The family should encourage the youth to form good social adjustment and promote the development of moral standards.

B) School and University :

It is necessary to modify the educational system, to rearrange the student - teacher interaction, to direct youth into healthy channels aiming at building a mature adolescent. Apart from the condensed curriculae, they should be taught how to be responsible, how to practice democracy and how to develop a coherent ideology and philosophy, and how to select the proper system values. School and university should help to prepare youth for their gradual assumption of adult responsibility.

University should pay attention to teach religion in order to permit youth to have mature concepts. The importance of religion as a cognitive dimension of the student's personality should gain a further interest. School and university should encourage the different interests and recreational activities because they serve as tension reducers, encourage relaxation and promote the development of self-sufficiency, physical and mental health.

C) Society

Mass media should limit the aggression, violence and sex provocation, and should enhance moral and religious values and should heighten the sense of belonging.

The employment policy should resort to the competition system instead of the present way to eradicate the irresponsibilities and the lack of enthusiasm. Political leaders should offer the proper identification figure and they should not speak of an unrealistic future and overestimated progress and expectations. Political parties and their leaders should gain the respect of youth and help them to participate and to practice democracy.

Adolescents' agitation as a problem must await further observat-

ions and investigations. The already prescribed analysis remains speculative until a methodology for validation can be developed. Until then we can begin by inviting you to deliberate and to work on youth problems in order to help in the synthesis of a healthy youth, to minimize their frustration and unhappiness and to let them live efficiently in materialistic and non-materialistic aspects.

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المراجع العربية :

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الموجز

حول مشكلات الشباب

تناقش هذه المقالة الاسباب التى تتسبب عن ظاهرة العنف في الشباب المصرى مع التركيز على دور الاسرة والاقربان والمدرسة والجامعة والمجتمع ككل .

وقد تم تحليل النتائج المترتبة على تفاعل هذه الاسباب المتشابكة مما ادى الى اضطراب في هوية الشباب المصرى مع خلط في ايدولوجياته واتجاهاته مع احساسه بالاغتراب وعدم الانتماء .

واخيرا عرضت بعض الاقتراحات التى من شأنها تقليل مشاكل الشباب .

ABSTRAIT

La Rébellion de la Jeunesse

Cette étude est essentiellement basée sur l'analyse théorique des

raisons possibles qui sont à l'origine du rébellion de la jeunesse en Egypte. Le point est mis sur l'interaction entre les Jeunes et leurs familles, sur l'effet des groupes de même âge, le rôle de l'université, et l'influence de la société en général.

De même les effets réciproques de ces éléments compliqués amènent à la diffusion de l'identité, la confusion idéologique, l'alienation, et l'absence de l'appartenance.

Finalement les recommandations possibles pour réduire au minimum l'agitation de la jeunesse, ont été explorées. Une demande pour travailler et réfléchir sur les problèmes psychologiques de la jeunesse a été offerte.

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