

## DECLINING MORAL VALUES AMONG YOUTH: AN EMERGING ISSUE

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### ABSTRACT

*An important issue that needs to be addressed in today's society is the deterioration of moral standards among younger generations. This is a reflection of greater cultural, social, and technological shifts. Within the scope of this investigation, we investigate the ways in which digital media, evolving family ties, and cultural norms are all contributing factors into this problem. Through the use of quantitative and qualitative evaluations, we investigate the ways in which the moral growth of young people is influenced by the interactions they have with their peers, the prevalence of individualism, and the exposure they have to a variety of perspectives. The findings point to a complex relationship between external factors and human choices, which necessitates the implementation of targeted treatments that cultivate ethical reasoning and empathy. In conclusion, the purpose of this research is to provide light on the challenges that contemporary children face and to provide potential answers for reviving moral education in communities inside the United States.*

**Keywords:** *Morality, Ethics, Behaviour, Generation, Degradation, Values.*

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### Introduction

The goal of both ethical theory and practice is to lead human society and to offer individuals with practical instruction on how to live as virtuous humans. The term "ethics" refers to a set of moral principles that outlines the guidelines that people ought to follow in their daily lives. These guidelines are often defined in terms of individual liberties, group obligations, societal good, fairness, or specific virtues. The concepts of right and wrong, as well as propriety, are all components of ethics. Ethics is the foundation upon which the distinction between right and wrong is built. Regarding matters of ethics, it is necessary to consider the real world. It endeavors to provide answers to questions concerning duty and worth, as well as those concerning good and evil, and the appropriate action to take.

According to the fact that people have been adopting moral principles based on what works best for them, it follows that these concepts have changed and evolved over the course of centuries. On the other hand, people in prehistoric societies were more inclined to cling to and emphasize their values, whereas in modern times, values appear to be beginning to disappear. When people's lives have been severely impacted by waves of modernization, westernization, industrialization, and urbanization, it would appear that the effect of values has been undermined in the current day. This is because the waves of these processes have occurred simultaneously. There is a widespread perception that the great qualities have been replaced by the egos, individuality, and selfish ambitions of humans.[1] The youth of today appear to have little faith in the moral and cultural norms that have been established by society for a long time. This is likely due to the fact that their worldviews are so heavily influenced by Western ideas. In addition, the elders of our society are totally unable to alter the so-called Westernized worldviews of their offspring. Some of them have given up attempting to convince their children of the validity of Indian values, while others are still fighting an uphill battle.

In spite of the fact that contemporary young are made to believe that western values bestow upon them greater independence, adaptability, self-confidence, and novelty, they continue to place a priority on these principles, despite the fact that they appear to be unsuitable for our culture. In order to emphasize this point, contrary to the religious and cultural conventions that we have, the youth of today are more comfortable simply saying "Hi" or waving their hand when they are greeting someone.

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The youth of today blindly subscribe to beliefs that are imposed from the outside, rather than making any attempt to comprehend their own principles via their own efforts. Each and every one of our guiding principles has been meticulously formulated with the welfare of humanity in mind, with the intention of promoting cohesion and solidarity within our society. In this particular instance, however, it would be dishonest to throw the blame exclusively on the youth; it is undeniable that they have adopted the ideas of their contemporaries and have been exposed to western principles through a variety of media.[2] However, we must not lose sight of the reality that, as parents, grandparents, and guardians, we may be responsible for the failure of our younger generation to properly implant these principles in them. This is something that we must not overlook. One possible explanation for the youth's lack of faith in values is that they did not receive any form of guidance or instruction during their childhood.

### **Moral Value Decline in Today's Youth**

In our culture, the moral degradation of today's youth is a problem that is receiving a lot of attention. Despite the fact that the extent of this problem has only lately expanded, its roots can be traced back to ancient society, and its repercussions may be seen even in the present minute. In today's society, this form of degeneration can be seen reflected in a great number of undesirable aspects. In spite of the fact that there are historical examples of powerful movements that may witness to the notion that the youth of a nation are its driving force. On the other hand, the youth of today are being redirected in a bad direction, which has implications not just for society but also for the next generation of our global civilization. Consequently, in the coming decades, we will be forced to deal with a scenario that is both more frightening and more hostile.

There is no question that moral standards are falling, and there are a number of scenarios that lend credence to this assertion. Miscommunication and distrust have become increasingly prevalent in society as a result of the absence of any evidence of interpersonal relationships currently existing. In spite of the fact that you are a trustworthy and moral individual, you can find that you are being exploited as a pawn in social experiments. There is a possibility that you could foresee a situation in which morals and principles are utterly submerged beneath the waves of contemporary materialism.[3]

Humans, as a species, have developed sentiments via evolution that other organisms do not have. His development of a moral compass is a gift from evolution. As a result, we come to the realization that morality is discussed and analyzed in each and every culture across the entire world. In this contemporary setting, there is no doubt that the moral activity of all individuals has slowed down as a result of an evolutionary "knot" that no one is aware of. It is true that young people are vulnerable due to the fact that they lack knowledge and are subject to negative peer pressure. Because their brains are weak and they do not grasp life, which comes with a dread of the unknown, they have been victims of alcohol and fatal drugs, which has led to psychological impairments. This fear of the unknown leads to unethical behavior.

In days gone by, the vast majority of adolescents had exceptional moral character and were generous and compassionate to all they encountered. The majority of the adolescents possessed the self-control necessary to adhere to the ideals that they had learnt at a young age. These concepts included respect, politeness, consideration, decency, propriety, honesty, and righteousness. As a result of the fact that the majority of the younger generation is rapidly disregarding these ethics, the number of people who adhere to these moral values and discipline themselves is decreasing. It is becoming increasingly apparent that adolescents' moral standards and self-control are failing to the point where the values described above are no longer of significant importance to them.[4]

### **Objectives**

- To understand what is driving the moral decline in India's youth.
- To understand the fallout from the moral decline experienced by young Indians.
- To offer some recommendations to lessen the moral decline of the youth of India.

### **Methodology**

Secondary data are gathered from a broad variety of sources, including but not limited to books, journals, papers, and online resources. This qualitative study depends on this secondary data.

### **Various Causes of the Moral Decline in Young People**

- **Peer-Group Influence:** The term "peer-group influence" refers to the influence that their peers have on them, which plays a significant role in the formation of their moral framework. They

choose to spend more time with them, engaging in open conversation and soliciting assistance, rather than spending time by themselves. They do an investigation and analysis of the ethical practices that are carried out in their homes, and they come across contrasting viewpoints. It is simple for them to accept the beliefs held by their peer group.

- **Childhood Control:** The adolescent went through a period in which they started to feel more independent of their parents. It is his responses to the environment in which he was formed that determine the degree of rigidity or flexibility of these norms and guidelines.[5]
- **Alterations to Values and a Growth in Interpersonal Interactions:** The environment that people are in is different when they step outside. Children acquire a plethora of knowledge in this changing environment as they learn to adjust to new conditions and discover new ways to adapt to them. As the youngster navigates through this period of adjustment, the child's moral principles go through a shift.
- **Society-Specific Moral Requirements Based on Gender:** There is a gender-based double standard and subpar that exists in society, which is another element that contributes to the erosion of moral ideals among young people. The specifics of the tasks that boys are expected to complete, traveling to the market by themselves, and laughing in public are all examples of behaviors that lead to this form of social degradation.
- **Openness to Identifying With Oneself:** The ability to think critically, to generate unique viewpoints, to discover acceptable explanations for occurrences that appear to be irrational, to challenge established conventions, to rebel against authority, and to forge one's own unique identity are all abilities that arise in teenagers. As a result of their tendency to engage in self-exposure or identification, adolescents and children frequently find themselves on a path that leads them to engage in criminal, anti-social, and immoral behavior.[6] This may include engaging in eve teasing, making sexual comments about females, running away, using abusive language, smoking, drinking, fighting, abusing substances, and other similar behaviors.
- **Modern Materialism and the Nuclear Family:** Children who have parents who are employed frequently experience feelings of abandonment since they do not have sufficient time to spend with their parents. The sentiments and emotions that they had were dormant and unresponsive, much like a kid who had been ignored. As soon as children cease spending time with their parents, they begin to waste their time on activities such as watching television, hanging out with their friends, reading pornographic or otherwise unsuitable material, and other similar activities.
- **Parental Behaviour:** There is no denying that the actions of parents have the potential to have both positive and negative effects on the character and personality of their children, as well as impact the development of their moral principles. In today's society, the authority that parents have over their children is gradually diminishing. Therefore, the teenagers are allowing themselves to be distracted by other influences, which includes engaging in a wide variety of dysfunctional relationships, attending rock concerts, and going to nightclubs. They have been experiencing a tremendous deal of distress and their lives have been ruined as a result of the combination of being isolated and not receiving help from loved ones.[7] On the other hand, children who are subjected to harsh punishments as children and whose parents are extremely controlling may develop a sense of revolt. This is one of the potential outcomes of such a situation.
- **Socialization:** One's socialization has a significant impact on the development of their personality; the manner in which a youngster behaves reveals the extent to which he has been socialized. Regrettably, it has been observed that parents in today's culture do not actively teach moral and ethical values among their children. This lack of socialization can have a substantial impact on the behavioral and decision-making patterns of their children.
- **Influence Of Technology:** However, depending on the manner in which it is utilized, scientific technology has the potential to either positively or negatively influence the way in which the personalities of young people grow. The use of mobile devices and the internet has been demonstrated to have a particularly negative impact on the moral and ethical behavior of young people, which ultimately results in a decline in ethical values. This conclusion is based on observations and studies. The rapid advancement of technology in all of its forms over the course of time has had a significant impact on a significant portion of human life and the way

people connect with one another. The ways in which people, particularly young people, obtain their news and pleasure with the help of these new technologies have undergone a significant transformation in recent years. When it comes to young people, technology has both positive and negative aspects. They are able to interact with individuals from all over the world and maintain continual communication with their friends and family, which is one of the benefits of this technology. On the other side, it has resulted in a decline in the moral and ethical standards that are held by young people.[8]

- **Other Factors:** A multitude of triggers, including but not limited to: a miserable life, the effect of entertainment methods, sexual impulses, filthy publications, heroism, a desire for speedy money, drug usage, and so on, all contribute to the acceleration of the moral decay that occurs in adolescents.

### **Moral Decline and its Aftereffects on Young People in India**

We ought to be concerned about the moral deterioration that is occurring in our culture. The youth of India are more prone to participate in violent and disrespectful behavior toward their elders and teachers, and they are also more likely to commit crimes like as kidnapping, murder, robbery, and crimes. These crimes have become more widespread among a younger generation. The antisocial behavior that they exhibit is detrimental to society. However, despite the fact that religion, culture, and tradition are all potential sources of moral values, our younger generation is not very religious for some reason. By their standards, our traditions are considered archaic, and our culture is seen to be out of date. When young people allow their imaginations to run wild, they are more likely to engage in a variety of bad behaviors, including smoking in public, acting out in class, abusing drugs, acting out at home, and engaging in juvenile delinquency.[9] As a result of the fact that antisocial actions damage social values, regional mobility, conflict, partiality, hatred, and other factors all play a significant role in the breakdown of civilization. The worrying trend of anti-social behavior and criminal activity in India is on the rise due to shifting social dynamics and personal motivations. This causes the trend to be more concerning. This demonstrates that young people are less concerned with human values and more interested in the straightforward methods to acquire wealth, power, fame, and other such things. New forms of fraud and scams have emerged in recent years. It is possible for those individuals who first viewed the group as unethical to experience an identity crisis as well as experiences in their relationships.

### **Remedial Actions**

Several of the actions that have been taken to address the issue are a direct result of the findings of the study, which focused on the consequences that result from a decrease in moral standards:

- **Moral Education at all Levels:** It is of the utmost importance that courses on human values be incorporated into schools' and universities' curricula. College graduates in today's society are not concerned with doing the right thing; rather, they are only concerned with finding a job or beginning a business from the ground up. Consequently, as a result of the introduction of human values into higher education, students will develop a sense of what is right and wrong.
- **Enjoying the Company of the Elderly:** When younger individuals want to spend quality time with elderly people, they should approach them at the appropriate moment. They will eventually develop feelings of love and respect for one another as a consequence of this act. In this manner, the knowledge that has been accumulated over the course of many years may be transmitted to the subsequent generation.[10]
- **Office-Working Parents' Work-Life Balance:** A significant number of parents exhibit hostile behavior toward their children as a consequence of the stress and exhaustion that are associated with working. If they are able to establish a balance between their personal and professional lives, they will be more responsible and will be able to spend sufficient time with their children.
- **Monitoring of Children's Activities:** It is imperative that parents maintain a close check on their children and take the necessary steps to correct any errors that they observe in their children. There is a strong connection between the younger generation and social media, and they spend the majority of their time in front of screens, whether it be a television, a computer, or a mobile phone.[11] In order to ensure that their children are not abusing these devices, it is the responsibility of the parents to monitor their children.

- **Government Censorship of all Online Speech:** Content that is published on social media platforms has the potential to spread across the world in a very short period of time. It is the duty of the government to make certain that the website does not host or encourage the dissemination of any content that is considered to be immoral.
- **Learning about the Shared Traditions of Families:** Therefore, it is essential that we disseminate information regarding this cultural practice because it is via mixed families that individuals acquire the appropriate behavior toward both older and younger members of the family. It is the grandparents and other relatives who are responsible for passing on moral principles from one generation to the next.[12]
- **Knowledge of Lofty Ideals and Minimalist Lifestyles:** The young people of today are very much into displaying themselves and putting on a show, which is the root cause of many of the problems that plague society. The next step is to make sure that people are aware of how vital it is to live a simple life and to engage in in-depth thought. The youth of today should look up to people who lived a simple life and thought profoundly about the world around them.

### Conclusion

It is commonly considered that the power of a nation's youth serves as its engine. As well as being detrimental to society, education that is devoid of moral foundations serves no constructive function. This is the reason why today's youth are in a difficult situation; they have a great deal of issues that need to be resolved. They are unfairly directed into a variety of immoral activities, which have an effect not only on the current generation of Indian society but also on the generations that will come after them. By making investments in the education of today's young, we can assure that future generations will have a prosperous future. Today marks the beginning of the modern era. Therefore, if we utilize science and technology in the appropriate manner, it will not be difficult for us to solve all of the difficulties that are associated with meaningless and immoral things. However, in order to build a society that is both moral and peaceful, it is essential to strengthen the moral compass of the younger generation. In the absence of some constructive and harmonious approaches to young people, the present and future of the nation would be in peril, and it would be incredibly challenging to cultivate an atmosphere that is characterized by humanity and morality.

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