CHAPTER II

A Review of Related Literature

2.1. INTRODUCTION:

A study of related literature is an essential requirement of any research study. It gives a fuller and clearer picture of the problem. It helps in understanding the various relevant factors and in forming consistent and reliable hypotheses of the problem. In the following sections some aspects considered relevant to the problem under investigation are discussed. Historical perspective of student activism, student activism in India, explanations and interpretations put forth by educationists and social scientists for student indiscipline and existing research studies on various aspects of the problem are dealt with in this chapter.

2.2. STUDENT ACTIVISM:

2.2.1. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Historically student activism is as old as universities themselves. In the middle age "the most usual type of conflict was the clash between the "town and the "gown". The gathering of several thousand young men in cities with a fighting population of perhaps and equal size gave rise to a great many disputes and quarrels. To increase their mutual protection and power, the scholars sought to incorporate themselves as universities (at the time, a term applied to any guild) basing their claims for corporate privileges and exemption from the public jurisdiction on both the general rights of corporations and on the traditional rights of the individual scholar in Roman canon law"¹.

The steady increase in the growth of the number of universities and the varied privileges accorded from them, resulted in these universities becoming politically important in Europe during the middle ages and the Reformation period. The university of Paris played a decisive role in the conciliatory movement of the 15th Century in Western Europe, which ended the Great Schism. During the Reformation and earlier to that, most of the religious movements in Europe originated in the Universities and they became centres for these movements. This concern of the intelligentsia for the religious-cultural issues provoked the authorities to curb their freedom. The emergence of the centralized states in Europe in the 15th Century curtailed their freedom and reduced their power. So from the 15th to the 19th century, they became politically negligible entities in Europe.

In the later half of the 19th century, the situation slowly started changing. The universities in some countries then became concentrations of politically conscious intellectuals who were playing important roles as originators of political movements. While in the middle age, universities as an organization took part in such movements, during the nineteenth century only teachers and students joined social movements and political parties as individuals or as organised groups.

4. Ibid. p.155.
In the twentieth century the situation once again reverted to that of the middle ages, but the issues of student activism had a wider focus—ranging from students' interests and benefits, and the affairs of the university, to the problems of the community and the national politics.

A brief review of student activism abroad and in India during the past few decades is made in the following two sections.

2.2.2 STUDENT ACTIVISM ABROAD

2.2.2.1 STUDENT ACTIVISM FOR UNIVERSITY REFORM:

"University reform can perhaps best be defined as a process of planned change in higher education." Student activism has been responsible for initiating broad university reforms and in many instances student activism have shown that their aims have been inclined to university reforms administrative and academic.

2.2.2.1.1 STUDENT ACTIVISM FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS:

Student activism of the 1960's in the United States erupted when the Berkeley administration denied a political group, the use of a small part of the campus on which they had been previously allowed to collect funds for civil rights movements and recruit participants for off campus activities. This was widely interpreted as the yielding of the University to pressures from outside, and the Berkeley Free Speech Movement started in 1964-65. Following the decision of the U.S. Government in Feb. 1965 to escalate American participation in North Vietnam, campus opposition of both faculty and students grew. The 'teach-in tactics' and other forms of protest

spread to many campuses. In May 1970 following the invasion of Cambodia, student demonstration occurred in a third of the 2500 US universities. Violence erupted in different university campuses in which some were killed. This marked the culmination of several years of disturbance in the United States.\[6\]

This revolt was seen by some as partly due to student discontent with the quality and method of undergraduate study. But the surveys by Somers and Korn Hauser (1967) show that most activists share with other American undergraduates relative satisfaction with the undergraduate education. But they were distinctly dissatisfied with what might be called the "Civil libertarian" defects of their college administration and were more responsive to the student participation in decision affecting campus life.\[7\] A focal point of student discontent was university governance.

The origin of the student crisis in the Free University of Berlin in 1965 was much the same as that of the university of California—administrative prohibition of political expression followed by demands for virtually unlimited free speech and unrestricted political engagement.\[8\] But in Berlin University in West Germany they finally came to demand vastly increased rights for themselves in the self government of the university. The activism was triggered off when early in 1965, the 'Rektor' of the university rebuked the Professor in charge for inviting a speaker well known for his sensitive

views on German collective-guilt, to speak at the twentieth anniversary of the collapse of Hitler's Germany. The news leaked out and the left-wing leadership of the University student government went further, inviting a highly controversial speaker. When the Rektor and the senate denied permission for this person to speak at the University, student leaders charged the Rektor with political regimentation and with reactionary tendencies. Protests, and street demonstrations followed over this matter, over Vietnam and many other, and finally ended in demands for reorganisation of the University's internal structure which would give them equal representation on the 'Troika model'.

2.2.2.1.2. STUDENT ACTIVITY—FOR ACADEMIC REFORMS:

Examples of student activism for University reforms—academic as well as administrative—can be seen in Latin American countries. In 1871 law students of the University of Buenos Aires in Argentina mounted a University reform movement, which had some effect in changing the structure of the University. From 1903 to 1906, the law and medical students of the University were involved in reform movements. In 1908 the 'principle of student representation in University Directive council' was proclaimed by acclamation at the congress of the American students. It sought unsuccessfully for many years to obtain student representation in the superior council of the university, until in 1918 when the radical party government institutionalised many of the demands as University laws. The principal reforms were: attendance at University free and conditional only on successful

completion of secondary school studies, students, professors and graduates to be represented in the governing council of the University and faculty; professors free to teach and students free to attend classes without compulsion or restriction. Some of the other reforms were, provision of university extension courses for the public, regulation concerning examinations and periodicity of the chair by which professors are subject to appointment or reappointment every six years by election within the Faculty Directive Council.\textsuperscript{10} Beginning with 1919 and continuing into twenties the reform movements spread to other Latin American Countries with varying success.

2.2.2.1.3. STUDENT ACTIVISM—OPPOSING PROPOSED OR BROUGHT IN REFORMS:

As well as the demand for reform, proposed or brought in reforms have been the cause of student indiscipline in many instances. A riot in Morocco in Casablanca in 1965, for instance was brought about by a ruling of the authorities that students over certain age may not take the 'Baccalaureat', a measure which affected those who were retarded in their studies by war.\textsuperscript{11}

"In Dec. 1920, two days before its official opening, the University of Rangoon was a victim of a strike by the students who were outraged by a purely educational requirement that the freshmen year should be a year of probation."\textsuperscript{12}

12. Ibid P. 115.
"In Pakistan, in order to improve the curricula, the government attempted to implement the report of the country's Education Commission; the student opposition rose and it led to demonstrations and strikes."\(^{13}\)

In Venezuela to reduce the oppositional politics the university introduced "no repeating rule", student strike supported by communists and Democratic christians erupted.\(^{14}\)

2.2.2.2. STUDENT ACTIVISM AND NATIONAL POLITICS:

Student activism in many countries have been closely related to national politics.

2.2.2.2.1. STUDENT POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES:

Since students enjoyed comparative immunity from the repression of the colonial rulers, their participation in the freedom movements in India, Burma, Vietnam, Nigeria and many other nations were encouraged by the national leaders. According to Lipset (1967) this political tradition has persisted into the post independent period. Their self consciousness as a distinctive group with high status and relative immunity from the law has also continued into the post independent period in many of the developing countries.\(^{15}\) Students have continued to be a force in the national politics of some of these countries in the post independent period also.

In Turkey, South Korea, South Vietnam and Ecuador they have actually brought down governments. In Iran, the role of students in the overthrow of the Shah's regime was crucial.

2.2.2.2. STUDENTS POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

In Communist countries, in Poland and Hungary in 1956 and in Soviet Union in '56-'57, students and intellectuals have played major roles in liberalising the totalitarian regimes. During the "Hundred Flowers" campaign in China, encouraged by Mao Tse-Tung and other party leaders, open criticisms were made by the students.

Students were mainly responsible for the fall of many of the pre-communist regimes. In Russia they played a crucial role in the revolution of 1917. In China, students backed Sun Yat-sen and helped to spread the radical ideas of modernisation and democracy. The second Chinese revolution of 1919, was inaugurated with a student demonstration. Student movements, strikes and demonstrations played a major role in undermining Chiang Kai-shek in 1930, in the fall of the Chiang Government; and in the formation of a communist government in China. The Castro movement developed from student activities in Havana, and the communist party of Cuba itself was founded after a massive student demonstration in Havana. The first Vietnamese Communist movement, the Association of Vietnamese Revolutionary Young comrades were formed from among "large number of Young men who escaped from the repression following the Hanoi student movement of 1925". In Yugoslavia, before World War II the

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communist student organisation (SKOJ) played a major role in the partisan resistance. The Syngman Rhee regime in Korea was finally overthrown in 1960 as a result of student demonstration.

2.2.2.2.3. STUDENT POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES:

Though the student political activity as a campus phenomena is rare in advanced countries, the decade of sixties has witnessed American students involved in National politics. Protest against American involvement in Vietnam and Cambodia led to the formation of 'Vietnam Day Committee' and the peace Rights Organising Committee and finally to the anti-Vietnam-war-agitations and similar involvement of American students in national politics for a decade.18

French students charter-'La charte de Grenoble'-is a reconciliation of the old defence of students' corporate interest with the new ideology of social and political responsibility. The charter, defined students as 'a young intellectual worker' and elaborated the rights and duties of a student as a young person, as a worker and as an intellectual. As an intellectual, student has a duty to defend freedom against all oppression which is the foremost consideration for an intellectual. Therefore during 1956-'60 UNEF(Union Nationale des Etudiants de France) launched an intensive educational campaign in favour of Algerian Independence. It was able to mobilize vast number of students and play an important political role in bringing together the more reluctant labour unions to put pressure on the government for Algerian Independence.19

2.2.2.4. STUDENT ACTIVISM AND VERTICAL CLEAVAGES

Brodkey (1967) describes vertical cleavages as tensions between groups, and unrest derived from the sense of threat from other contemporary groups to one's interest within this world.\textsuperscript{21} He cites the 1965 maneuvers between French-speaking and English-speaking students in Montreal as an example of activism based on ethnic cleavage; the 1957 upsets at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria as based on racial cleavage; student demonstration in Warsaw in 1957 as based on social—class and inter-university prestige; and Rangoon disturbances in 1953 and similar riots in Burma as rebellion against the University authority, because they object to some educational provisions rather than because of specific grievance of social or political type.

In Montreal the tension built up on fears and aspiration of two different national groups. In the Quebec, French Canadians form a cultural majority, but in Canada as a whole they form a minority and hence are threatened by the overwhelming Anglo-Saxon majority. The formation and show of strength of the Union of students of Quebec (UQEG) which was dominated by the French-speaking students of Quebec could not leave unaffected the English-speaking students of Quebec. So when the UQEG demanded from those joining it, a condition that they secede from Canadian Union of Students (CUS), 53 percent of the students of the McGill University in Montreal voted against joining UQEG. McGill is the most prominent Protestant Anglo-Saxon Canadian University in Montreal. This was followed by many accusations and disclaimers of


\textsuperscript{21} Ibid. P.97.
Racialism on both sides and some heated exchange of passion.

Riots following admission of Negro students in Southern Universities at the University of Mississippi in 1958, and Nigerian students' demonstration against the authorities of the University college of Ibadan in 1957 are examples of student activism due to racial cleavage. Hostilities based on inter-university prestige such as rivalry between Harvard-Yale, Army-Navy football games are common forms of student indiscipline. In Poland in spite of Marxist philosophy, the prestige of the scientist is high as compared to the humanists and feelings of inferiority and superiority persist. Therefore when in 1956, Poland became a scene of bid for power by two groups of communist leaders, the internal social class tension within the group of intellectuals led to the Warsaw University and Warsaw Polytechnic taking sides in the conflict.

The 1953 riot in Rangoon took place when the usual one month vacation at the end of the first semester was shortened to two weeks by the University. The military police and fire-brigade had to be used to clear the University campus of the strikers. Here the rebellion was against the University authority whose actions the student felt was against their interests.

2.2.3. STUDENT ACTIVISM IN INDIA:

Before reviewing student activism in India, a brief description of higher education in India is dealt with in this section.
2.2.3.1. HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

The foundation of the modern system of education in India was laid by Wood's Dispatch of 1854 which can be described as "The Magna Carta of English Education in India". It paved the way for the establishment of the universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857, Punjab in 1882 and Allahabad in 1887. To begin with, these universities were affiliating bodies and their functions were conducting examinations and conferring degrees. In 1857 the total number of colleges in India was 27 and by 1882 it rose to 75. Recommendations of the Hunter's Commission (1882) for the withdrawal of State from direct support and management of higher education, led to the growth of a large number of institutions fostered by private enterprises, and raised the total number of colleges in 1902 to 192. The Act of 1904 brought the educational institutions under strict Government Control, reconstituted the governing body of the university and enlarged the functions of the university to teaching and supervision over affiliating colleges. By the resolution of the Educational policy of 1913, areas of control of affiliating universities were restricted and new teaching and residential universities were established. With the passing of the Government of India Act of 1919 education became a provincial subject and the earlier university Act of 1904 came to be repealed. Later, Government of India Act of 1935 brought it under

the jurisdiction of the Central Government and it was further amended by the Government of India order of 1940 to bring it under the jurisdiction of the provincial Government. So prior to the Indian constitution (1950) the legislation on education including universities was a provincial subject, with the exception of the Banaras Hindu University and Aligarh Muslim University which formed the subject matter of the Federal, list. In the constitution, the power of the Union regarding education, specially at the higher level is greater and it has a supervening control over the state Legislature in so far as it is necessary to effect Co-ordination and determining standards of higher education. Except for certain institutions of national importance which are in the union list, education including universities are in the concurrent list. Universities have the power to issue ordinances including those prescribing qualifications for the appointment of staff personal in colleges affiliated to it.

2.2.3.2. Growth of Higher Education in India:

There has been a phenomenal growth in the number of universities and colleges and in the enrolment during the post-independent period in India. The tables (1) and (2) summarise the growth of the Universities, colleges and enrolment in India from 1947-'48 to 1977-'78. (1) (2) (3) (4)

Higher Education in Tamil Nadu:

As on date (79-80) there are five universities and one Deemed University in Tamil Nadu. They are (i) Madras University, Madras (ii) Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai (iii) Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar (iv) Agricultural University, Coimbatore and (v) Perarignar
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Structure of the Academic Population of the Universities of Tamil Nadu During 1979-80.</th>
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<td>Student Enrolment</td>
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<td>Madras University:</td>
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<td>1. Arts &amp; Sciences &amp; oriental institutions</td>
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<td>Madurai Kamaraj University:</td>
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<td>1. Arts &amp; science college</td>
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<td>Perarignar Anna University of Technology:</td>
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<td>1. Technology Institutions</td>
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<td>2. School of Architecture and planning</td>
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Data does not include part time students. Arts & Science includes commerce.
* Figures relate to only the Agricultural colleges & Research Institutes at Madras and Madurai.

3. Fourteenth Annual Report of Madurai Kamaraj University Vol.II.
ina University of Technology, Madras, and (vi) Gandhigram Rural Institute of Higher Education, Gandhigram. The last one is a deemed university.

It was in 1841 that a high school was opened in Madras and entitled a "University", a collegiate department being recognized in this institution ten years later. The Madras University was incorporated by the Act XXVII of 1857, with a constitution similar to that of Bombay and Calcutta. Originally it was an affiliating university and by the Act of 1923 it became a teaching university as well. As on date (1980), there are 169 affiliated colleges, 49 university departments and two post graduate extension centres. Sixty three colleges are managed by the government and the rest by private bodies. The student strength as on date (1980) is 1,10,991.

Annamalai University was established in 1928 as a unitary and residential university. The Madras University Act was amended by an Act in 1966 and Madurai University was established by affiliating the colleges in Madurai, Ramnad, Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli districts in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu Agricultural University was established in 1971, and the Perarignar Anna University of Technology in 1978. Gandhigram Rural Institute was founded in 1956 and was established as a deemed university in 1976. The structure of the academic population of the various universities is given in Table 2 (bet. pp. 2.13 - 2.14).

27. Records of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.
2.2.3.3. **Student Activism in India in the pre-independent period**

Though student activism in India in the pre-independent period was largely motivated by Nationalism, there had been sporadic outbursts on campus issues such as difficult examinations. During the 1880s there was some agitation for holding the Indian civil service examination in India instead of in England.

It was with the Nationalist movement and the consequent political and radical excitement that student insubordination grew very rapidly in the Indian University and college campuses. According to the Sedition committee Report of 1918, 68 out of 186 arrested in Bengal between 1907 and 1917 for revolutionary crimes were students. However, the first political struggle in which students were involved in large numbers was Gandhiji's Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920. The movement provided students with valuable political experience and established student political activity as an important aspect of student life in India. During Simon Commission's visit to India in 1928, students organised a series of demonstrations on a national level, demanding that the Commission recommend independence for India. The ideas of radical nationalism expressed by the socialists and the communists appealed to the student leadership, and when in 1930's there was an intensification of political struggle in India, students involved themselves in militant activities against the British administration. All India Students' Federation (AISF) was formed during this

31. Ibid P.52.
32. Ibid P.23.
2.2.3.4. **Student activism in India in the post independent period:**

Student activism of the pre-Independent period was largely motivated by Nationalism. The focus of the activism in the post independent period is mostly the local issues. There is no national student movement. The issues are both political and non-political, academic and non-academic. An analysis of 286 student strikes and demonstrations which took place in India in 1964 shows that 100 were related to examinations, sixty protests were against police and government functionaries and the rest for miscellaneous causes.\(^36\) While in some states like West Bengal and Kerala the student activism show political motivation, in some others it is not so. On the basis of the issues that triggered off the activism they could be broadly categorized as follows:

2.2.3.4.1. **Student activism for university reforms:**

a) **Demanding administrative reforms:**

"In the later half of 1977, there was a prolonged and virulent agitation by students in Mysore to back their allegation concerning the University administration under the Vice-Chancellor. The charges of maladministration made by the students and also the teaching faculty formed a memorial submitted to the Governor.\(^37\) This led to the appointment of an enquiry committee by the Karnataka Government to probe into the affairs of the University".

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\(^36\) Ibid p.52.

On and off students have been demanding student representation in the University bodies. The Vice-Chancellor of the Jawaharlal Nehru University was gheraoa for more than eight hours on 15th July '73 by about 100 students who wanted to get their representation in the admission committee of the University accepted.38

b) **Demanding academic reforms:**

One of the agitations in the Banaras Hindu University in 1967 was for the abolition of English from the University curricula. Such agitations for the reform of curricula is very rare in India. But there have been some agitations for changes in the existing academic policies. An agitation in Osmania University in 1966 was for setting up parallel classes for the Engineering students who fall in the pre and final examinations so that failed students will not lose more than three months. When the principal refused the proposal on financial grounds, a semi-violent agitation took place which continued till their demands were sanctioned.40 A strike in 1963 in Siraha Institute of Technology in Ranchi was for changing the rules of the examinations.41

c) **Opposing proposed or brought in reforms:**

Many times proposed or brought in reforms have been the cause of student indiscipline. In 1964 when Osmania University, in order to make the students more serious about their studies, decided

to institute a formal first year examinations of the B.A. course at the end of the first year and not to promote to the next higher class those who fail in more than two subjects, students went on a strike demanding that the students who failed in as many as three or four subjects be allowed to continue their studies.  

The student activism of 1965 which swept North India started in Delhi as a protest against the implementation of the Advocate Law which required the law students to undergo apprenticeship before practicing in courts. It spread to many colleges in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Calcutta. Soon the agitation lost all connection with the local issues and took a violent turn.  

1. A strike in Tamil Nadu in Sep. 1980 was in protest of the ruling of the Madras University that a student who wishes to improve his grade in an internal assessment in a semester has to repeat the semester.  

2. 2.3.4.2. STUDENT ACTIVISM FOR SAFEGUARDING STUDENT INTERESTS AND BENEFITS:  

Incidents in which students make special demands to the government, university or college authorities for safeguarding student interests and benefits represent the most common form of indiscipline.  

a) Demands on Government:  

7. In a violent demonstration in Aug. '79 in colleges in Bangalore was for special concessions to backward community students. Two buses were damaged by stone throwing. In 1977-78, Lucknow, Gorakhpur and  

44. Hindu: Oct, 80.  
Allahabad Universities were affected by anti-reservation stir. The state Government of Tamil Nadu had to order closure of all colleges in the Madras city in Aug, '78 in the wake of student agitation for revival of Rs.15 all route bus pass.

b) Demands on University and college authorities:

Most often the demands directed at the University authorities are concerned with examinations-postponement of examinations, revaluation of answer papers and passing failed students. Students of an Engineering College in Guwahati gheraoed the principal of the College and the Director of Technical Education in Aug, '79 demanding postponement of examinations. 48 400 students in Guntur stoned the Nagarjuna sugar University campus demanding revaluation of answer papers.

Fifty five students of a junior college in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad boycotted the classes and marched to the Board of Intermediate examination demanding that all those appeared that year be considered as passed. The poor percentage of pass (37 percent) that year was stated as the reason for their demand.

Other demands on the college or university authorities relate to fees, and amenities. Students of a college in Erode (Tamil Nadu) abstained from classes in Aug, '79 seeking implementation of their 21 joint charter of demands, which included reduction of college and Hostel fees.

49. Indian Express: Aug. 11, 79.
2.2.3.4.3. STUDENT ACTIVISM PROTESTING REAL OR IMAGINARY DISREGARD OF STUDENT RIGHTS BY GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES OR PUBLIC:

In Aug. 1978 students of Osmania University boycotted the classes protesting against the alleged attack on a student by the transport personnel in the altercation between the busmen and the students.53

In Aug. 1979 Yoshi Valley had to be indefinitely closed due to violent incidents in the campus. The trouble between students and shopkeepers in the event of a bill was the cause of the incident. A mob of shopkeepers and police clashed with the students.54

In Villora (Telangana) in Feb. 1979 all colleges were closed for five days following clashes with busmen and students.55

2.2.3.4.4. STUDENT ACTIVISM OPPOSING DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AGAINST STUDENTS:

Student indiscipline on many occasions were opposing disciplinary action against students. The agitation of the students of Calicut Regional Engineering college (Kerala) in December 1979 was for the withdrawal of disciplinary action against half a dozen students involved in a ragging incident.56 In Kumbakonam (Tamil Nadu) when thirteen students were suspended from taking the examination at the centre, protesting against it no student came forward to write the semester examination in Dec. 1979 at the Centre.57 In Haridai in Aug. 1979 when some

53. Hindu, Aug 24, 1978
students were caught using unfair means in the examination by flying
squadrs, the students turned violent.\textsuperscript{58}

2.2.3.4.5. **STUDENT ACTIVISM AND SYMPATHETIC STRIKES:**

A number of strikes in Tamil Nadu during 79-80 were in
support of the striking university teachers.\textsuperscript{59} A token fast by Law
College students of Coimbatore was to express their sympathy with the
striking students of a women's college.\textsuperscript{60} Medical students of Tamil
Nadu went on a strike in May 79 in support of the striking house-
surgeons.\textsuperscript{61}

2.2.3.4.6. **STUDENT ACTIVISM AND GROUP RIVALRY:**

Group rivalry is the cause of many of the incidents of
student indiscipline. Shaw(1968) reports two clashes due to group
rivalry in Osmania University in 1966-67. The first one in 1966 was
between students of Arts Colleges and science Colleges. The second
one was a brawl between Hindu and Muslim students due to which the
colleges had to be closed. The reason for the brawl was a remark of
a Hindu girl and the counter by a Muslim boy.\textsuperscript{62} "At
Benaras Hindu University the student community is divided, the teaching community is
divided, and even the class IV employers are divided."\textsuperscript{63} The Benaras
University Enquiry Committee(1969)
found that many of the incidents of indiscipline were due to the
rivalry between the opposing groups. In Aug.79 a college in Karur

\textsuperscript{58} Indian Express; Aug,7,79.
\textsuperscript{59} Hindu; Feb,6,79, and 18,79.
\textsuperscript{60} Hindu, March, 2,79.
\textsuperscript{61} Indian Express, May, 2,1979.
\textsuperscript{63} Report of the Benaras Hindu University Inquiry Committee(1969)
in (Tamilnadu) was closed indefinitely in anticipation of trouble between two factions of students who were opposed to each other on the issue of the Government order on backward class concession. 64

Kokatya University had to be taken over by armed police in Aug. 78 in view of the tension that was prevailing in the campus prior to the student union elections in the University. 65

2.2.3.4.7. STUDENT ACTIVITY AND NATIONAL POLITICS:

Some times involvement in National politics have been the cause of student indiscipline. When India became independent there was a largely politicised body of student in the college and University campuses. But the political leadership in the country then did not like political participation by students, and hence disbanded student congress, the largest pre-independent movement which had taken active role in the freedom movement. Later, the congress leadership felt the desirability of a non-political student organisation resulted in the formation of the National Union of Students (NUS) in 1950. But it could not rid itself of its political affiliation and was practically dead by 1958. The two student organisation which today claim to have representation at the International level are National Council of University Students in India (NCUSI), which was formed after 1958 and which is politically tied to the west and the Communist dominated All India Students Federation (AISF). Both have small student representation. AISF is active in Kerala, West Bengal, and Andhra but are almost non-existent in many other states. Now there

64. Hindustan Times, Aug. 1979
65. Hindustan Times, Aug. 18, 1978
are regional and national youth political affiliates such as youth congress, Yuva Janatha, Samajwadi Yuveg Sabha (SYS), Akhila Bharathiya Vidyarthi Parishad etc. Vidhyanthi Parishad has the largest student representation, but it is almost non-existent in South. Thus there is no longer a unified national student movement in India. Generally demonstration to-day often ideologically oriented. Even political youth organisations like NSF are involved more in academic problems than in ideological ones. Yet ideological tendency among students is not dead in India. In Allahabad, in 1950 the communist president of the University union led a demonstration against the government. In 1966 students in Calcutta who have traditionally been politically active led a demonstration in favour of a United Left Front Anti-Government Campaign. The pro-Marxist student Federation of India is still active in Kerala and West Bengal.

The analysis of the 280 students' strikes and demonstrations in India in 1964 showed that communists associated themselves with student strikes on thirty occasions Janasangh twice and other parties seventeen times.

Some times it is seen that when some compelling issues arise students involve themselves in political activism. The Anti-Hindi agitation in Tamilnadu in 1965 was against what they considered as the government policy of the imposition of Hindi on the non-Hindi speaking people of Tamilnadu. At present Assam students are involved in national politics over the issue of citizenship of the foreign national in the state.

68. Altbach, P.G. (1968), op. cit. p. 56.
69. Ibid. p. 52.
Some times student agitations have been against corrupt governments as in Orissa in 1964, when student leaders charged the state Chief minister with corruption and demanded his resignations.70

Student political activism have been very often the sequel of student agitation on local issues. When their demands are met with opposition from the government authorities, the agitation takes on a political colour. In 1966 police opened fire on students in Patna and used lathis & tear gas against students in Ranchi, a month before general election. The Congress Government rejected the popular demand for judicial inquiry into these incidents and closed the colleges and schools till the end of the general election. Students from urban centres scattered to all parts of the state and organized campaign against Congress party, which helped in the defeat of the party in the general election.71 The agitation in Gujarat in 1973 was triggered off on the issue of a rise in hostel bill. But when the demand was met with repression it became a revolt against the ruling state Government. It continued till the government was overthrown. In these situations political parties manipulate the students to suit their purpose.72

2.3 STUDENT ACTIVISM-INTERPRETATIONS AND EXPLANATIONS:

Several explanations and interpretations have been put forth to account for the wave of student disruption in college and University campuses all over the world. They fall into the following broad categories: economic, political, psycho-social, Cultural and religious and internalistic. In the following sections some of these interpretations and explanations of student indiscipline are reviewed.

70. Ibid. P.55.
2.3.1. Economic Interpretations:

Some see the cause of student indiscipline in the frustrations created by the sluggish economy of the country. Many of the commentaries on French student revolt have emphasized devaluation in the quality of educational institutions and of student life, and the educated unemployment as decisive factors for student unrest. The overcrowding, the increasing failures in examinations, educated unemployment and the devaluation of the degree according to some, mirror the sluggish economy which has contributed to student frustration and to the wide gaps between the have's and 'have not's and to the consequent conflict of classes of which student indiscipline is one form. McCully's thesis on the causes of Nationalist Movement is that "graduates of colonial Universities unable to rise above the status of petty clerks formed a kind of rootless educated proletariat whose dissatisfaction with their lot "led to that grossest form of indiscipline, the Nationalist movement". Arguments similar to these are put forth to account for the present wave of student unrest. They maintain that Universities and the needs of the economy when incongruent develop stresses of which indiscipline is but a symptom.

But these interpretations fail to explain student activism of the 1960's in advanced countries with very little problem of

educated unemployment or devaluation of the degree. It also fails to explain why in India with its acute problem of educated unemployment and economic disparity the focus of student activism is seldom on vocationalisation of education or on economic insecurity. From a study of Delhi University students, Singhal (1977) states that "what happened during the agitations was not a projection of the feelings of economic insecurity... the meaningfulness of education with respect to employment or vocationalisation of education did not remain the focus. Non issues such as cases of victimisation, increased facilities, and the most insignificant modification of some policy, constituted the core points". The weakness of the hypothesis then lies in linking it with these issues Educated unemployment and deprivation of future expectations may have contributed in increasing the students' dissatisfaction and frustrations. As Lipset (1967) states the poor employment prospects for educated youth may be a crucial factor "which enlarges the reservoir of late adolescent rebellion from which revolutionary politics can draw support." But economic explanation above is not sufficient to explain all the manifestations of student indiscipline.

2.3.2. POLITICAL INTERPRETATIONS:

Some see student indiscipline as the whirlwind, we are reaping for the wind sown by us when we called upon students to take part in the National movement. "Civil disobedience" called them to disobey


unjust and unjust laws. But it is difficult to draw the lines between just and unjust laws..." Lipset (1967) sees the present wave of student indiscipline in India as a persistence into the present period the early agitational traditions of students during the freedom movement. There are others who see it as the teething trouble of a young democracy.

Another political interpretation sees the student unrest as a function of the tension in the larger polity. Singh (1968) states: "A society gets the kind of University it deserves". Kalman Silver puts it: "The Latin American University is the child of its parents."

Awareness of the cultural and economic backwardness of their own country in the minds of the modern educated youth and their feelings of obligation to serve their people is seen as the cause for the liberal movements of the 19th century and the progressive movements of the 20th century in Latin American countries. Student demonstration which led to the downfall of the Government of Bolivia, South Vietnam and Sudan in 1964 and Syngman Rhee Regime of Korea in 1960 are seen by some as the result of the vaguely felt feeling on the part of the students that the

process of modernisation is at a standstill.\textsuperscript{84} Some see the educational organisation as a political system which hinders the full participation of the students and the student unrest as a consequence of such a hindrance.\textsuperscript{85}

For Shaw (1968) "the structure of the University in relation to the state is too political. The result is that many students and faculty members are dragged into the political arena.\textsuperscript{86} Two types of political interference are seen as responsible for student indiscipline (a) Interference of the government authority in the affairs of the University\textsuperscript{87} (b) building of factions in the University and College campuses by political parties.

The weakness of the above interpretations lie in their inability to explain the susceptibility to manipulation of the large majority of students who are not politically oriented. It also fail to explain the greater politicisation of non-professional students as compared to professional students as found by Spencer (1968). The study revealed that students of social sciences and humanities are more politicised than science students who in turn are more so than students studying for a profession.\textsuperscript{88}

\textsuperscript{84} Lipset, S.M. (1968). op. cit. p.45.
\textsuperscript{86} Shaw, Robert C. (1967). op. cit. p.201.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid. p.178.
Smith, Bruner & White (1960)\(^{89}\) and Bay (1970)\(^{90}\) see deeper socio-psychological functions in a person's political or other social opinions. These theories suggest that there are deeper socio-psychological factors which may have to be probed even to account for the activism of the student political activists. Therefore political interpretation is inadequate to explain the political activities of a large majority of students who are professionally oriented.

2.3.3. **Psycho-social Interpretations:**

2.3.3.1. **Social changes and indiscipline:**

Some see student indiscipline in India as the consequence of the transitional disorder when a traditional society changes into a modern society. Dibona (1973) views student unrest in India as a modernising process indicating a marked cultural shift in the values of obedience, respect, docility and silence.\(^{91}\) For, Cormack (1961) students have been caught in the whirlwind of rapid social changes. She writes; "India's problem is not student indiscipline" corruption or party politics - it is the deeper problem of social change.\(^{91(a)}\)

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90. Bay, Christian. op. cit. p. 79.


If student indiscipline is only the problem of social change or cultural shift in values, it fails to explain the institutional differences in indiscipline, especially between professional and non-professional colleges.

2.3.3.2. Individual, institutional, cultural and historical factors:

For Keniston (1970), "the active expressions of dissent have become more prevalent because of an interaction of individual, institutional, cultural, and historical factors. Basic to the make-up of an activist is a protest-prone personality and an activist producing force. It is to produce student dissent. "There must exist sufficient numbers of protest-prone students in the campus, and they must have an opportunity to interact, to support one another, to develop common outlooks and shared policies, in short to form an activist subculture with sufficient mass and potency to generate a demonstration as an action programme". The other factors necessary to produce student dissent are protest leaders and issues for protest. The issues are provided by historical or national and international scenes or by the attitude of the university administration. 92

Freedman and Kanzer (1970) see four basic factors which join together to produce the phenomenon of strike in USA. They are: the waning power of the authority which is a worldwide trend.

This is manifested in the American students of the 1960's by a significantly higher degree of rebellious independence than characterise college youth of the 1950's. The second factor is the student mobility which permits migration of rebellious students to certain campuses. The curricular crisis in higher education is considered to be the third factor. Liberal education is seen as at a dead end. The fourth factor has to do with the changing roles of peoples classified as faculty and students.  

2.3.3.3. Developmental Stress:

Brown (1970) takes an individual developmental view of student activism. He argues that if a student is thwarted and frustrated in the normative developmental sequence, he will, if he is to survive, often be forced to turn to readily available groups for his goals and rewards. To some extent there has always been unrest and considerable stress among university students. The upset follows from the nature of the growth during late adolescence. It is exaggerated to dry as it has been in other historical periods by pressing social concerns.

2.3.3.4. Idealism of Youth:

For Parsons (1963) the youth are "inculcated with the major values of the society...however good the current society

may be from various points of view, it is not good enough to meet their standard.\(^{95}\)

2.3.3.5. **Identity Crises:**

Erikson (1963) the psycho historian sees the modern youth passing through a "psycho-social moratorium", a period between adolescence and adulthood when they are freed from the conventional social or work roles. These "moratorium years" offer them golden opportunity to define their identities and perfect their moral senses and ethical capacities. Unencumbered by families or jobs and protected by immunities, the young dare to risk punishment for breaking laws and conventions and defyng authorities. In so doing they speak out their moral insights, identify with the oppressed and seek an inner liberation an authentic selfhood, a true identity.\(^{96}\)

2.3.3.6. **Suddenly from authority and Indiscipline:**

Shils (1968) sees "The removal of the student from the authority of the parents and elders in the family, the contrast between the effective gerontocracy within the household and the weakness or absence of authority in daily life in college or University is a strain creating matter."\(^{97}\) Barnabas (1976) sees in this gap an easy entrance for external and internal manipulative

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\(^{96}\) Erikson, H. Eric. op. cit.

forces to step in and influence students to behave in a manner suited to their purpose\textsuperscript{98} Singh\textsuperscript{(1967)} considers the serious inconsistencies in the normative basis of socialization between the two stages, schools and colleges, in India as a stress creating experience which explains the high susceptibility of Indian students to emotional manipulation.\textsuperscript{99}

An Indian study \textsuperscript{(1965)} which indicates that, more conservative the political party, the more likely were its supporters to live with parents when studying in college, is seen by Lipset as evidence of the effect of sudden release from parental authority in enhancing the students' readiness to mobilise organised activity. The above study found a disproportionate number of left students staying in hostels.\textsuperscript{100}

Havighurst, to account for the rebelliousness of the Latin American and Japanese Youth, has put forward the hypothesis that higher the degree of parental control exercised before youth leave home for University, the more violent the need to demonstrate autonomy once they are free.\textsuperscript{101} A similar hypothesis is put forward by Walter Laqueur to account for the rebelliousness of German youth before World War I. The revolutionary movements are seen as giving them the idyllic rationale for breaking with their families.\textsuperscript{102}

\textsuperscript{100} Bureau of Social Science Research.\textsuperscript{(1955)}. Political attitude of Indian students. Washington: The American University. p.46. In: Student Politics op.cit. p.25.
Mannheim (1956) locates the concerns of "adolescents and young adults particularly students" for major political and social concerns beyond their personal interests in the "uncertainty and anxiety" which results when "one's questions outrun the scope of one's inherited answers". In seeking distance from his primary ironment "with a sense of liberation... the adolescent discovers alternative interpretations and new values. Self assertion and once accompany this new experience". Due to this uncertainty doubts they are confused. However rather than remain in a state of uncertainty, many of them seek new values and beliefs which appear pliant, but may be opposed to what has been urged by the family. Intellectual flexibility is not the product of a tacitly accepted tag, but the expression of "an anxiety to end the wear and tear, state of suspension by the adoption of a categorical creed."

The weakness of these hypotheses lie in accounting for sudden violent outburst of indiscipline in the 1960's and the consequent cooling off in some of the developed countries of the west. On freedom from authority is a phenomenon of the sixtees as well boy but the campuses in the west are calm today compared to violence of the sixtees. In the Indian context perhaps since sudden freedom experienced by the college students the very end, it may be an important factor for indiscipline. But it still is to explain why student indiscipline in India is more in liberal and science colleges than in Engineering and Medical colleges.

2.3.3.9. Intergenerational gap-indiscipline:

A sample of 100 students of the Delhi University and their parents were drawn for studying the difference in values and attitudes of 2 generations. The result of the study is as follows: in the conformist families where both generations have traditional values and in modernist families where both adopt modern values and attitudes, there is no generation gap; but not so in the transitional families, which form a majority. \(^{106}\) Cormack (1961) also found considerable opposition to parents during her study of social changes in India. \(^{107}\) Intensive interviews with 250 college students of 14 colleges in Bangalore were conducted by Ross in 1961-62. The study revealed that most of the students disagreed with their parents on some points and resented their strictures. \(^{108}\) Some see the cause of student unrest in this familial conflict. All the studies showed that students do not dare reveal their feelings because they could not face family displeasure. The traditional family structure is still strong enough that parents' authority is accepted as inevitable by the children. Ross writes (1969): "This situation builds tension which are released in other ways. It is possible that one of the main reasons for students taking part in demonstrations at college is that they suffer little punishment for their behaviour in comparison to the pain they would have to endure in defying their families."\(^{109}\)

But these explanations fail to explain the identification in values and attitude of the activists and their parents as found


\(^{107}\) Cormack, (1961), op. cit.

by Keniston (1970), Flacks (1967) and many others from their studies of the activists of the 1960's in USA and their parents.\footnote{110} After examining various studies Keniston concludes: "Indeed if there is any single psychological thread that runs through student activists it is the identification with parental values".\footnote{111} From a study of Poona University students Prayag Mehta (1971) also found factors to support the view that "a great majority of (student) activists hold conservative views. They keep committed to tradition in various walks of social life. In precise terms he states that their revolt is more against the established authority than against the ingrained value system."\footnote{112}

2.3.3.10. Discontinuity between values embodied in families and in society:

A theoretical perspective to account for the emergence of oppositional movement among youth is the person-Eisenstadt theories about the 'conditions giving rise to generational conflict'. A salient feature of society is the formation of distinctive groups or movements among persons of the same life cycle. The appearance of such a groups is seen as the consequence of the discontinuity between the values and role expectations of the family and those of the occupational structure.


The problems of socialization created by the necessity of orientation to these roles, need an institution which combines some of the features of the family as well as the occupational structure, and youth movements or youth groups or youth culture is seen as serving this function. Sharper the disjunctions between family values and those of the larger society, the more oppositional will be the youth culture. Hence in societies undergoing rapid social changes, this will be more marked because of the fundamental conflict between traditional orientation of the families and modernising orientation encountered in the university and the cosmopolitan society associated with it.\textsuperscript{113}

2.3.4. Revolutionary interpretation

Flack (1970) sees the central determinant of student indiscipline in the sharp discontinuity between the values embodied in the family and those emerging in the social context. But, to him, in the developed countries the discontinuity is not between a traditional family and a modern society, though it may be the case with rapidly changing societies. In the modern societies, he sees it as the vanguard of a new social order. In these societies, the expansion of higher education has produced a social stratum which tends to rear its children with values and character structure which are at variance with the dominant culture. There is an emergence of a sector of youth population which finds its fundamental values, aspiration and character structure in sharp conflict with the values and practices which prevail in


society". "Affluence and secure status further weakens the potency of conventional incentives and undermines motivations for upward mobility". The outcome of these processes is a new social type of sub-culture among American youth—humanistic youth. "The romantic style of youth revolt", he says does in fact represent the beginnings of the efforts to create a workable new culture.115

2.3.5. *Counter Revolutionary interpretation*:

Daniel Bell (1968) sees the student revolution in USA not as a vanguard of a new social order, but rather as the "guttering last gasp of a romanticism soured by rancour and impotence". Those who hold this view consider youth as a counter revolutionary force a resistance especially of the high status intellectually and artistically inclined youth against the incorporation into a technocratic society.

2.3.6. *Religious interpretation*:

One school of interpretation compares the youth movement in USA to the religious movements such as the great awakening in the United States in the 18th and 19th centuries, or the Methodist Revival or the Protestant Reformation. Such movements, it was pointed out originated in periods of spiritual impoverishments and material plenty. The students are attacking the corruption of the Professorate like the Reformation students attacked the venality of the clergy. They see the University like the Mother Church sunk in 'Babylonian captivity' and must be destroyed if it would not be liberated and purified.116

3.7. *Internalistic explanation*:

Still another interpretation sees the real cause of a

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student indiscipline in the academy itself. Shack sees the "educational system today—from kindergarten to the university as their (youth's)enemy". Shipstone sees the cause of the student revolt of the late sixties—in the affluent west and among the Indian students—in the "inhumanity of the educational philanthropy." They were in revolt because they were the forgotten generation of their times.

Some explanations see a combination of internalistic and externalistic factors for student indiscipline. Writing on student indiscipline in India Humayun Kabir draws attention to four main factors for student indiscipline. (i) loss of leadership by the teachers (ii) defects in the existing system of higher education (iii) loss of idealism in the society and (iv) growth of economic difficulties.

The teachers loss of authority and prestige was found to be a crucial factor in the current situation by the UGC committee which investigated student indiscipline in India in 1960.

The World Brotherhood 'All India Committee' which conducted a survey and seminar (1960) on the attitudes and opinions of Bombay University students on student Indiscipline reported the following causes for student indiscipline (i) too much leisure time(ii) political participation(iii) sex problems(iv) poor student-teacher relations (v) lack of facilities for representation of complaints(vi) inadequately handled student behaviour(vii) anxiety over examinations(viii) student frustration(ix) emotional immaturity.

Basing his analysis on visits to ten Universities, Chanchal Sarkar (1960) entitled his series of "Statesman Articles": where the "Demoralised Teach the Disgruntled" "Myths and Mysteries about students" "Universities and Government—a Bad Relationship". The author probes areas of pseudo-prestige, power politics, personal insecurities and professional immaturity to account for student indiscipline.\footnote{122}

2.4. Conclusion:

Student indiscipline is not a twentieth Century phenomenon. It is as old as the University education itself. But with the unprecedented enrolment expansion in higher education, student indiscipline have assumed new dimensions in the present period. It has become a power to be reckoned with, capable of toppling governments and incapacitating Universities and colleges in their normal functions. It is very often marked by violence and its frequency and intensity is on the increase in many countries. The many explanations and interpretations put forth by educationists and social scientist to account for this phenomena have failed to explain all its manifestations. Perhaps it erupts owing to a combination of many factors economic, political, psycho-social, internalistic and ethical, the relative significance of the factors differing in different cultures and social milieu. In the next chapter an attempt is made to identify and analyse the dynamics of student indiscipline in India.

\footnote{122. Ibid.}