CHAPTER I
Concepts, Problems and Methods

Introduction

No epoch in human history is perhaps wholly free from problems confronted by the youth. However, contemporary society has faced the nastiest challenge in these social problems. The striking factor contributing towards this issue is often seen as a result of unprecedented social change and development. The youth are living in a world of rapid change, although the pace and dimensions of change may vary from place to place. In general, this is governed by many factors such as modernisation, westernisation and urbanisation. Not long ago, it was largely confined within the industrialised and developed societies. Slowly but steadily, however, this has become a global phenomenon. It begins to threaten the existing local values and norms as it makes its inroad into the underdeveloped and comparatively tradition-based societies. This eventually causes concern, since it affects the smooth transition of the young people into adulthood by way of driving them into a period of preparation and uncertainty.

It is pertinent, in this regard, to start by defining the interrelated concepts of value and norm. In sociology, values are defined as collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable and proper – or bad, undesirable and improper in culture.\footnote{Richard T. Schaefer and Robert P. Lamn, Sociology, Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing: New Delhi, 1998, (Sixth Edition) p. 78.} It indicates what people in a given culture prefer or consider as important and normally right (wrong). Social values influence peoples’ behaviour and serve as criteria for evaluating the actions of others. Thus, in general, values are the accepted way of life, mode of attitude and functional system that are directly or indirectly involved in social relationships.\footnote{Harry M. Johnson, Sociology: A Systematic Introduction, Harcourt, Brace and World: New York, 1999, (Seventeen Edition) p. 87.} Likewise, norm is a shared expectation of behaviour that connotes what is considered culturally desirable and appropriate.\footnote{Gordon Marshall, Oxford Dictionary of Sociology, Oxford University Press: New York, 1998, (Second Edition) p. 453.} It is the common standards or ideas, which guide members’ responses in a society. Social norms are thus general percepts that
are internalised or accepted by individuals inducing conformity in simple actions or in complex ethical judgment, thus increasing group unity.\(^4\)

The magnitude and intensity of the problems that the youth are facing have been increasing. The youth not only stand at a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, but the social conditions also create further problems for their social growth and promotion. Every moment is new for them. Erickson defines this situation as "identity confusion,"\(^5\) which means that many youth are uncertain about their future and role in society, as well as the sense of discontinuity between their personal past and future.

Society and its fortune has always been a matter of deep concern to all right thinking persons. It emanates from their concern for the future of the society, which inevitably brings the study of the youth, on whom the future holds, to the centrestage. Thus, the increasing concern about the youth and their welfare over the years is but natural. With the transitory nature of youth, the importance of symbols and attributes, and the relations of these virtues attached to culture and community,\(^6\) it is natural that scholars dealing with youth have considerably increased. The enigmatic dimension of the youth has captured the interest of the sociologists and scholars alike. In short, the youth who represent the purest embodiment of the cultural charismatic orientations and symbols of the emerging modern socio-cultural order\(^7\) have eventually caught the attention of people from all walks of life.

In a broad sense, the youth are identified with healthy and relatively mature section of the population in the society.\(^8\) At the same time, they are considered highly volatile as well as a reservoir of the society because of their age, energy, and spirit of adventure.\(^9\) Youth have the potential to either mould the society towards the augmentation of all or lead the society into a retrogressive mode and servitude. Apart from the demographic aspects, youth comprise the physical and mental vigour of a

\(^9\) S. N. Eisenstadt a, op. cit., p. xii.
society. Youth are the sources of idealism and strength of a society. No amount of investment can make a society develop unless the youth are properly trained. They need to be ignited and imbued with the ideology and aspirations of a society.

Keeping this in mind, the present study spells out that the paradox of youth is the product of interfaces between change and tradition. In a society like that of the Shiipfomaramth Nagas, where the current socio-cultural establishment is undergoing rapid change, the youth are confronted with problems to uphold the values in which they are raised. At the same time, there is a lack of viable alternative norms regarding this transition and most perceptibly norms patterning the youth. This thesis is an attempt to delineate the possible impact of the socio-cultural change on youth and its implications in the Shiipfomaramth society at large. It is not an attempt to develop the sociology of youth. Rather, while accepting the study of youth as one among many sociological enterprises, it examines issues confronting the Shiipfomaramth society by focusing on youth as a context and source of sociological explanation. It is an attempt to paint the general character of the society through detailed observation of the responses of the youth and their reactions towards social change.

In the transitional phase, a certain amount of uncertainty of ideal social course and confusion of values is a common phenomenon. Central to this confused situation is that the existing cultural tradition is getting eroded as a guiding force on which the youth can depend.

Universe of Study
Manipur, one of the smallest states in India, is popularly known as the ‘Land of Jewel’. With its topography naturally structured to accommodate some of the rare species such as the Sangai or the brown antler deer found on the floating part at Loktak – Keibul Lamjao National Park, and the famed Siroi Lily at the Siroi Hill, the state is as enchanting as its name. The erstwhile princely state, which was a protectorate of the British colony since 1891, until the former merger with the Indian union in 1949, became the 21st state in 1972.

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Geographically, Manipur lies in the north-east frontier of the country with an area of 22,327 sq. km. Out of which, one-tenth is in the valley and the rest nine-tenths is covered by hills. The state is bounded by Burma in the East, Nagaland in the North, Assam in the West and Mizoram and the Chin hills of Burma in the South. According to 2001 census (provisional), the total population of Manipur is 2,388,634 spread into nine districts. Four districts namely- Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal and Bishnupur are located in the valley and the remaining five districts namely- Ukhrul, Senapati, Tamenglong, Chandel and Churachandpur are in the hills. The average density of population in the state is 107 persons per sq. km. Manipur, having made significant progress in the field of education in recent years, has an average literacy percentage of 68.87 percent (Male =77.87 and Female =59.70 per cent respectively). The state sex ratio is 978 females per 1000 males.13 Agriculture is the main occupation of the state. Paddy is the main crop followed by maize. Other agricultural products are cabbage, potatoes, chillies, oilseeds and sugarcane.

The Meiteis (Manipuri) are numerically dominant in the valley, while the hills surrounding the valley have been the home of numerous tribes, which can be broadly divided into two major groups – the Nagas and the Kukis. According to the latest revised list of the Scheduled Tribes, there are 33 tribes in the state.14 Some of the major tribes of Manipur are Kabui (Rongmei), Tangkhul, Mao, Poumai, Thadous, Hmar, Paite, and so on. In addition to the Meiteis and the hill tribes, there are migrants locally known as mayangs, found in the state such as the Punjabis, Gujaratis, Bengalis, Biharis, Nepalis, Marwaris and Tamils.

The present study is focused on the Shiipfomaramth Nagas located in the territorial division of Senapati district, which lies in the north of the state, bordering Nagaland.15 The said district covers an area of 3,271 sq. km. The total population of the

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14 The Act of Parliament, [the SC/ST Orders (Amendment) Act 2002] received the assent of the President on the 7th Jan.2003. The Schedule Tribes Orders are hereby amended in the manner and to the extend specified in the Second Schedule in Part X of the Act of Manipur - Poumai Naga, Tarao, Kharam and “Any Kuki tribe”.
15 It may be mentioned that besides the Shiipfomaramth community, other ethic communities such as Tangkhuls, Zelaingrong, Thadous and Napalis are also resided in the district. So the population figure is a figurative representation and not the actual number/figure of the Shiipfomaramth Nagas.
district according to 2001 census is 379,214 (provisional) with an average population density of 116 persons per sq. km. It is a mountainous region, situated at approximately 1,061 metres above sea level. The Shiipomaramth people are spread over all the subdivisions in the district, namely, Mao-Maram, Paomata, Purul, Sadar Hills West, Sadar Hills East and Saitu Gamphazol.

Other than some villages, which are included in the Phek district of Nagaland, in the Chakhesang dominant region, the Shiipomaramth Nagas are predominantly concentrated in the above mentioned district. However, large chunks of population are now settled in Imphal valley, Kohima, capital of Nagaland and Dimapur, the nearest train station for Manipur and Nagaland. The immediate neighbours of the Shiipomaramth are the Angamis, Chakhesangs and Rengmas in the north, Kabuis (Rongmei) in the west, Tangkhuls in the east and the Thadous and Meiteis in the south.

Statement of the Problems
Today, Manipur is passing through one of the most critical phases, which is characterised by political instability, general tension and social unrest. The disturbance and conflicts have left deep impact on the social, intellectual and economic life of the state. The institutions of governance and administration are dogged by corruption and unresponsive to peoples' needs. Development, peace and security are at stake and have taken a back stage. People are increasingly losing the hope and confidence in the governing system and government. The governmental institutions have come to regulate the lives of the poor and common people in a most exploitative way. This has led to economic and material improvement of a few and impoverishment of the majority.

Apart from this, institutionalisation of violence in a subtle interplay of divide and rule had caused extreme economic, social and political hardships to the common people. This institutionalised violence facilitates the maintenance of status quo and promotes the interest of those with power and influence at their disposal. In the course of time, this has given rise to more injustice, exploitation and uneven development. This is partly predisposed by the dynamics of internal geopolitical situation leading to the emergence of various competing and contesting interests based on ethnic lines. In turn, the brunt of the combination of political instability, high social fragmentation and stagnation of economy.
are borne by the younger generation. Amidst all these problems, the government appears to have lost the political will and purpose. The symptom of instability looms large, law and order shows little scope for improvement, and insurgency seems to have come to stay.

The problems of the Shiipfomaramth youth cannot be studied in isolation from the prevailing social, political and economic situation, since these play an integral role in shaping the hopes and dreams of youth in the state, particularly those of the marginalised groups. Today the Shiipfomaramth youth are standing at the crossroad, not encountered by the older generations. In addition, many old social values are crumbling and traces of these are looked upon with doubt. This dilemma is the accumulated effect of social change, in particular, the process of christianisation that the Shiipfomaramth society experienced since the last century. As a result, adherence to indigenous traditional social values has witnessed a decline and has been replaced by a wave of copying the ‘western’ cultural value system and mode of life. Nevertheless, the feeling of satisfaction and contentment remains far from fulfilled. Coupled with this cultural void, other problems of the youth are becoming increasingly visible in the Shiipfomaramth society. These include problems of education, unemployment and alcoholism.

A number of factors are responsible for the general uncertainty and aimlessness among the youth. The increasing rate of unemployment, particularly among the educated youth not only dashed their hopes but also adds to their frustration. The current socio-economic and political order has failed the youth to meet the challenges. The youth, particularly the educated ones, whose numbers are rapidly increasing, are the worst hit. Between their individual expectations and the inability of the government to meet their expectations, they are afflicted by widespread frustration. This is partly responsible for driving the youth into socially deviant behaviours such as alcohol and drug abuse, and other anti-social activities, and even fuels the insurgency problem.

The coming of modern education has done little to address the problems of youth. It appears that due to reason of economic backwardness and poverty, the purpose of education is primarily meant for jobs and immediate economic security. Thus there is a choice between quitting the studies with the hope of earning something and to continue studies with much financial constraints. Such is the picture that there is a vast dichotomy
between the aspiration and actual happening of the educational development in the Shiipfomaramth region.

Similarly, the younger generation seems to experience almost total alienation from their cultural tradition and history. Imparting of knowledge includes not only transmission of technical knowledge but also values and lessons alien to their environment. This development consciously or unconsciously has affected the attitude and outlook of the receiver. The prevailing educational system, which has failed to harmonise their socio-cultural life has created intellectual imbalance at the societal level. In turn, this has not only led to internal cultural alienation but also to less interest in the subject, leading to eventual weak conceptual insight and low academic achievement.

Added to their woes is the poor facilities and quality of education that has prevented them from having strong educational foundation and interest in studies. This, in turn, has created the problem into tentacles that have gripped the education system. The fallout of the larger problem of social unrest, political instability and economic stagnation has not helped either. A cursory stance at the rampant bandhs, strikes and corruption at all level manifest the sorry state of education. Faced with all these structural constraints, problems of education cannot be discussed in isolation. A comprehensive view of the cause of various problems in the field of education is very much called for.

Another predominant problem faced by the Shiipfomaramth youth is their confusion with the prevailing socio-cultural course. The process of transition from tradition to modernity creates imbalance of social values. This is largely the outcome of the influence of change in the form of christianisation and eventual westernisation. The gradual abandoning of the old way of life and acquisition of new one creates this confusion. In their attempt to replace the indigenous traditional values without proper blending of similar values in turn produce confusion of values. It is observed that tradition is fast disintegrating but the incoming socio-religious system is not adequate to bridge the gap.

In this way, the Shiipfomaramth youth tended to be caught between two worlds - the old and the new. The thought of the past rich tradition and the influence of the new forces of change pose a challenge to the youth. The confusion arises out of the feeling of the need to preserve the old values on the one hand, and the need to follow the new trend
and the new values within the parameters of change, on the other. The two sets of 
identification - the traditional identity and the new identity based on the western values - 
contribute a confusing situation among the youth. The consequence of this confusion is 
the inability of the youth to discern between choices.

In this scenario, it appears that the emerging social order (Christianity) has also 
failed to fill the gap created by the erosion of the cultural tradition. The coming of the 
western cultural value system in the form of christianisation seems not to bring about the 
bonding of similar values in the indigenous tradition. In this way, the youth are finding 
neither the existing nor the emerging traditions provide a lease of satisfaction. They find 
themselves in a state of confusion.

Similarly, the fractured knowledge accumulated by the youth on the values of the 
emerging tradition (Christianity) is not doing them any good either. Most of them seem to 
follow the new cultural mode of life as another convention without worthwhile 
experience. Consequently, the current generation is bankrupt of the past and pushed 
forward with no solid foundation. Either way, they are handicapped of the much-needed 
heritable knowledge as well as fostering new values.

Against this background, increase of alcohol abuse and subsequent problem of 
drinking has emerged as a serious social problem. So long drinking behaviour does not 
deviate from the accepted norm it is culturally permitted. Thus, as long as the 
Shihipomaramth community adhered to orally enforced deterrence, drinking wine in 
general is temperate and moderation is the norm. The members of the society followed 
the behest and dictate of the oral law and the young at the command of the elders. The 
limited choice of leisure, near absent of distilled and foreign liquor has also served as a 
means of social deterrence. Drinking wine (rice-beer) in traditional practice was not a 
means to secure social acceptance but as food to meet bodily requirement. Wine was 
considered as a medicine and part of the dietary item.

In the wake of social change, however, drinking wine has assumed a new 
meaning from the erstwhile concept of food to a symbol of lifestyle and enjoyment. 
Today, drinking wine is increasingly considered as being modern and fashionable. 
Besides, there is an increasing misuse of alcohol. Instead of consuming it to soothe one's 
physical requirement, it is taken for intoxication and pleasure. The increasing frequency
of drinking for intoxication particularly among the youth is, therefore, posing a serious threat to the earlier cultural view on wine. When one starts, drinking for the sake of drinking it leads to untold problems due to its detrimental effect. To say the least, the price of pursuing modern lifestyle is the unfettered growth of alcohol fondness.

**Objective of the Study**

In social life, no problem can be understood in isolation without involving the whole. No man is an island, separated from family, society or the cosmos. The sense of belonging is not only essential to mankind but also an inevitable fact of human being. Any unilateral examination of a problem is inadequate. It is imperative that for any meaningful means of solving social problem needs to involve both the actor and society.

While keeping the above purview in mind, there are a number of related questions that surface throughout. The immediate question is, does the prevailing socio-political environment affect the youth? Does problem of unemployment in any way lead to social disturbance and growth of an anti-social personality among the youth? Does increase of unemployed educated youth affect the larger social environment? Is resolving the issue on contesting demand of territorial arrangement can in anyway help to reduce the problems of youth?

Similarly, why in spite of mounting growth in higher education, government has failed to help the less privileged students like the Shiipfomaramth youth? Has not the government set a goal of moving towards greater social justice, with clear indicator and predefined milestone for a long-term target in education? Why it is so that the reality is contradictory? Are the socio-economic conditions and structural constraints of the less privileged in any way indicators towards this failure? Is there a need to incorporate tribal cultural and traditional knowledge to make the curricula dynamic and more effective?

Further, the study looks into how far the society understands and initiates the blending of the indigenous traditional and incoming socio-religious (western) values? If so, why is there an increasing feeling of the confusion of values among the youth? Are the youth being adequately equipped and socialised in the new values of Christianity? Has the emerging new value system in the form of Christianity even in some form incorporated the similar values and lessons, which concern the native tradition? Does the
inadequate blending of identical values that exist in both the traditions -native and Christianity, affect the youth’s social growth?

The study also looks into how far the society plays a constructive role to combat alcohol menace. Has cultural permissiveness of alcohol led to increasing fondness of it and subsequent problem of drinking? Does falling into the trap of modern lifestyle lead to considering alcohol as fashionable and being modern? Does lack of proper knowledge on evils of alcohol related to the increase rate of alcoholism? Does the presence of self-interested individuals in alcohol in any way an indicator of the societal failure to combat alcohol problem?

**Propositions of the Study**

The present study undertakes to test the following hypothesis.

1. The structural constraints and economic backwardness results in the weak conceptual insight and low motivation in studies.
2. Low academic attainment is the consequence of unequal facilities and lack of conducive social environment.
3. The compulsion of the internal dynamic of geopolitical situation results in imbalance socio-economic development thereby causing more social unrest and tension.
4. Lack of initiative to blend the identical social values, which exists in both the indigenous tradition and Christianity, has resulted in confusion of values.
5. The confusion of social values is the outcome of an inability to follow either native tradition or western value system (Christianity).
6. The misuse of cultural value of wine and imitation of modern lifestyle has led to increase fondness of alcohol.
7. Easy availability of alcohol and abundance of non-committed individuals to combat its menace has resulted in increased problem of drinking.

**Genesis and Concept of Youth**

The available sources and the existing literatures have suggested that the term ‘youth’ is of recent origin. Youth as a social category in all practical sense is a modern concept. In the pre-literate and archaic societies where home and workplace were closely linked, age-
stage classification of youth was unknown. Traditionally, the young ones become young-adults through the conventional mode of the 'initiation ceremonies'. The custom of 'rites de passage' and initiation ceremonies in which the young people are transformed into full members of the community is known as *macha kozii* (for boys) and *alekape* (for girls) in the Shiipfomaramth society. Until recently, this is the normal practice of the Shiipfomaramth community, as the individual becomes social and legal members of a society. From the time of the 'initiation ceremonies' the individual customarily becomes the integral, bonded and responsible member of the society.

Likewise, Aristotle, and the other philosophers, mentioned the term ‘youth’ in their writing, in all practical purposes meaning the young adult. Moreover, they did not identify specifically the youth in any shape and form. It was Constantine the Great who, in his division of human life into seven stages used ‘youth’ more widely than other thinkers did. To him it is a stage in which ‘the person grows to the size allotted to him by nature’. The modern concept of youth is traced to Hall [1904], one of the earliest psychologists believed to have given a serious thought to it.

The scholars and philosophers in the medieval age do mention the stages of life. However, in real and practical sense, youth as a stage of life is a modern connotation. Youth then, is neither evolutionary nor biological; it is rather a social construction. F. Musgrove, in his *Youth and Social Order*, says, ‘Adolescence was invented about the same time as the steam engine. The principal architect of the latter was James Watt in 1765, of the former, Rousseau in 1762’. It is pertinent to note that for Musgrove adolescence and youth are synonymous and analogous, as he did not specifically acknowledge the social category of the latter.

Soon after the identification of youth as a separate stage of social life there was need of a space to accommodate it in the social structure. In turn, social legislation and conventions are made to change with the aim to meet the impending demands of this new

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17 Quoted in George Paloeizi-Harvath, ibid., p. 37.
stage of social life.\textsuperscript{21} With this youth not only becomes a distinct phase of life cycle but also a socially classified and recognised category. The growth of prolonged and specialised educational system was also an important contribution in the growth of youth as a separate stage of social life.\textsuperscript{22} A change in the role of the middle class parents for children, and the emerging of public schools to cater to the need of the less privileged abridged the disparity of the latter, which culminated in the growth of youth.\textsuperscript{23} This aside, the theory of "precocity", that the young people are actively and steadily maturing in the process of formal learning further fortify the growth of youth.\textsuperscript{24} Likewise, increasingly growing concern of the parents about their sons and daughters to have longer period of ‘life preparation’ also sharpened the youth as a separate category of social life. This is partly made possible with the advancement of economy and living standard.\textsuperscript{25}

To Kenneth Keniston, therefore, the stage of youth is an option that only society can make possible. Youth as a social stage of life was largely found among the most talented, rich, determined and lucky fellows.\textsuperscript{26} It is this minuscule proportion of young people who primarily enjoy the social status of youth. By and large, the social development and change made it possible to differentiate the youth from the biological adults.

However, as the human society moves to modern period, the occupational structure changes whereby it is mandatory for the young ones to undergo formal training for future responsibility and work. Formal school was derived to provide specialised training for new occupations, which also delayed the entry of young people into the workforce.\textsuperscript{27} The introduction of large-scale formal schooling and the development of

\textsuperscript{23} M. Bachte, “Individualism as Hope and as Disaster: A Socioeconomic Perspective”, in K. Hurrelmann & U. Engel (eds.) op. cit., pp. 27-41.
specialised and higher studies in the aftermath of 'Industrial Revolution' thus changed the whole identification of the social age-stage. In the post-industrial revolution, pursuing specialised and a higher study is not only desirable but also becomes a necessity. Formal education, then, is fast emerging as a social requisite since the family and neighbourhood by itself cannot adequately prepare the children for the adult world. The increasingly complex, differentiated, industrialised and bureaucratised society needed the young people to be trained and imbibed in the task of transmitting values and cultural system of the society.

Notably, the training for many professions in the post-industrial society is protracted whereby full citizenship and responsibility is impossible until one has reached the age of twenties. The parents and guardians have loosened their conventional and traditional mindset and they are no longer averse to late entry into family and professional life so long as their offsprings are in training. In this scenario, youth have increasingly led to postponement of much of the adult role. Practically, they deferred entry into the economic world of responsibility. Inherent changes in economic, educational and attitudinal approach thus enhance the social stage of youth. In this regard, Musgrove notes that youth is the creation of modern social attitudes and institutions since persons in this category are discouraged from learning many of the adult roles. It is the social institution and changing social conventions that lead to the emergence of youth as a social stage.

In like manner, Erikson also argues that youth was partly the creation of the technologically advance society. Eisenstadt too agreed in principle that the process of modernisation, development of modern industrial society, which is concomitant with the division of labour accentuated the youth as a separate stage of life. As a social stage of life, youth are necessarily an offshoot of industrialisation and the extension of formal schooling.

From the preceding account, it is clear that the concept of youth, in all practical sense, is a modern usage. The intertwine development of knowledge system and

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29 Kenneth Keniston, op. cit., p. 265.
30 F. Musgrove, op. cit., p. 13.
32 S. N. Eisenstadt a, op. cit., p. xv.
technological change hasten the modern concept of the life-stage-youth. To be precise, it was in the first quarter of the twentieth century that youth assumed a practical social usage in everyday life. Thus, prior to World War I, there were young people rather than youth. Similarly, Ramaa Prasad writes, "Youth is a twentieth century phenomenon at least in India. Formerly we never had adolescent youth". Youth, as a separate stage of social life becomes possible due to the change from family-based division of labour to contract and impersonal system, economic enhancement and socio-political revolution.

Youth is thus the product of the post-industrial society. The possibility of youth as a social stage is the creation of modern society. Industrialisation created a social gap, from family and community centred life of the pastoral and agricultural to a specialised and individualised economy. A vast and complex division of labour, which requires professional and expertise personnel, was introduced. At the same time, the young people are relatively relieved from economic responsibilities but making longer duration to depend on parents. A scope of individuation and leisure was created. They are provided with more avenues and opportunities. Life was no more monotonous as the human society experienced until recently. The prolongation of life span between biological and social adult in post-industrial era thus culminated in the growth of youth as a separate social stage.

However, it is difficult to define the concept of youth. Some thinkers have even questioned the existence of the category of youth. For instance, scholars like Musgrove and others argued that there is no such thing as 'youth', for young men and women just change from adolescence to adulthood. Moreover, various definitions of youth are not only vague but also arbitrary in many respects. Thus, for A. Gesell youth means those people in the years from ten to sixteen. To H. Sebald, youth primarily refers to the broad and somewhat non-specific "younger generation", including children, adolescents in (certain societies) and young adults. Similarly, K. Keniston refers to growing number

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35 F. Musgrove, op. cit., pp. 2-11.
37 Hans Sebald, op. cit., p. 10.
of young men and women who delayed their entry into adulthood as youth and applied to the years 18-26.\footnote{38 Kenneth Keniston, op. cit., p. 264.}

The historical approach laid emphasis on the point that youth is the creation of modern civilisation since the young are needed to train for future roles.\footnote{39 R. E. Young, “Childhood, Adolescence and Socialisation,” in F. J. Hut (ed.) Socialisation in Austria, Australian, International Press: Melbourne, 1978, pp. 318-319.} According to this school of thought, ancient societies such as Greek, Chinese and the tribal societies do not specifically mention the social category of youth. The stages of life are categorised into childhood; young adult (adolescence), adulthood and old age based on the role one plays in the society. The young adult is mentally and physically fit to play its role in the society.\footnote{40 George Palaeoezi, op. cit., p. 40.}

Besides, the ambiguity in the definition and the concept of youth, the way people perceived the stages of life is varying throughout social history. Though biologically, there may be little difference but culturally and socially it varied from society to society. Thus, Eisenstadt has defined youth as the period of transition from childhood to full adult status of full membership. The youth is no longer a child but is yet to shoulder the role of an adult.\footnote{41 S. N. Eisenstadt b, “Archetypal Patterns of Youth,” in Manning and Truzzi (eds.) Youth and Sociology, Prentice Hall: New Jersey, 1972, p. 9.} However, the problem arises when we have to determine what life span should be included in the youth category.

To classify the youth primarily based on age and marriage is not easy either. In western countries, people are increasingly delaying the age of marriage thereby deferring to take up the role of an adult. In countries like India and Nepal where child marriage is still prevailing, they are bound to take up the adult roles at an early age. The situation is even more problematic in the tribal societies. While it is tragic that many children are forced to grow up prematurely, we cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that economic backwardness often forces them to engage in economic activity at an early age. Among many tribes, the legal concept of child labour, which considers employment of children under the age of 14 as a crime, do not have practical efficacy. The question of survival is paramount to both the young and the old. Huge child labour population still exists in
India struggling everyday against hunger and exploitation. In fact, many children are fighting the battle for mere survival. A look at the villages in the interiors among various tribes in the country will unmask the blatant actuality prevalent of child abuse. In such cases, the prevailing socio-economic background largely determines the category of youth. Thus, for Manning and Truzzi, the concept of youth is but the creation of older generations.

What we have seen from the above discussion is that the category of youth is not a standard measure for all societies. We can, therefore, only speculate on the category of youth with respect to a particular social standard and development. Taking this problem into account, Kenneth Keniston writes:

Millions of young today are neither psychologically adolescents nor sociologically adults, they fall into a psychologically no man's land, a stage of life that lacks any clear definition. (1971: 3).

Similarly, no clear definition of youth has been given in the International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences. It has been defined along with adolescence as:

the starting point of a new period, especially as marked by striking events, in puberty, marked by striking biological events that signal the initiation of the sequence of biochemical, physiological and physical transformation of child into adults (1968: 84).

Even more difficult is the problem to demarcate the youth from adolescent. As noted earlier, many scholars, including an expert in this field, as Musgrove, did not recognise the category of youth. According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, adolescent means, in the process of developing from a child into an adult, while youth refers to the period between childhood and adult age. By far this definition is not exhaustive in itself. The meaning of youth and adolescence is so closely intertwined that it appears synonymous, and used interchangeably in the English language.

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In this context, Richard Flacks writes, ‘puberty is a biological fact, but youth is a social one’. He argued there is no biological reason to endorse the idea that for several years after puberty young people should continue to be segregated from adults. What he means is that biological adults started with the onset of pubescence. Biologically, the young people reached the stage of sexual maturity but they are yet to attain social maturity. This is because, social maturity usually lies behind biological maturity, the biological changes of puberty are not usually given a full cultural, normative meaning, and their evaluation is limited to adolescent stage. In terms of personality attributes, adolescence is marked by a great deal of insecurity, and face problem of clear personality identity. It is a phase of life marked by transition from a stage of dependent childhood to sexually mature woman.

However, this does not mean that adolescence and youth are interchangeable. Adolescence may be referred to as youth in a loose sense but not vice versa. Etymologically, the term adolescence is derived from the Latin word *Adolescere*, which means “to grow up” or to grow into maturity. The reference to growth is nonspecific and somewhat illusory. In a sociological sense, adolescence refers to the experience of passing through unstructured and ill-defined phase that lies between childhood and adulthood. It is characterised by rapid and uneven biological growth. The pubescence period is loosely referred to as adolescence. Adolescence stage is characterised as the time of turmoil, fluctuation and experimentation, when passing moods and enthusiasm follow each other with dizzying speed. Whereas, youth is a stage of life in which one passes through a period of transition, preparatory stage for a fuller and longer period of adult life that is not far away.

Youth is no longer viewed as the immediate relatively immature stage of childhood. High potential of universal pluralism of thought and emotion rather signifies the youth. Broadly, this is what Klaus Mehnert writes,

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45 Richard Flacks, op. cit., p. 9.
Youth means young people in that period of human life when three supreme tasks must be mastered: working out, with the awakening of sexuality. An appropriate relationship to the opposite sex, developing one's personality while loosing ties with parents; and finding one's place in the wider social setting (1976: ix).

As a separate social stage of life, the youth claims a new membership. They are qualified to have wider privileges and obligations. At the same time, they are expected to shoulder economic responsibility, though still distant from the adult. However, the youth are far from freed individuals. Much of their claims and duties are dependent on adults. Youth, then, is an intermission period between carefree teenage life and subsequent responsibilities. To Kaspar D. Naegale, it is the last hesitation before certain serious commitments concerning work and family; a move takes fully into or against the wider conventional life. Yet, the classification of youth is not easy. What age group should be included in youth category continues to haunt social demographers, sociologists and scholars alike. Considering this problem, Bourdraker Ly writes,

There are different ways of being young; youth is relative, different culture does not perceive it in the same manner. They do not have the same attitude to it... Nevertheless, the wisest attitude may be considered, the rather pragmatic one, which sees youth in terms of the society, which the young are members. In this case, the young are whomever society regards as such (1980: 87).

Although the concept of youth appears vague and arbitrary, it is universally applicable since all societies normally have younger generations, if not, society will be on the verge of dead. In most human societies five stages of life: infancy, childhood, youth, adulthood and old age are common. However, among the Shiipfomaramth Nagas human life is divided into four stages, which include, nanamei/anakaching (infancy), onamei (childhood), nalumei/rahangralii (youth), kotsiimei/tsiimei/katingmei (adulthood). It may be worth mentioning here that there is no clear-cut demarcation of life-stage between adulthood and old age in the Shiipfomaramth society. The stage of infancy (nanamei/anakaching) generally refers to the first one and half years of an individual’s life. From this time onwards till the young enters the stage of youth (nalumei/rahangralii) is commonly regarded as the stage of childhood (onamei). On the other hand, the youth (nalumei/rahangralii) as a stage of life usually ranges from 14 years to 30 plus. And

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adulthood \((kotsiimei/tsyimei/katingmei)\) is the last stage of life, which usually begins from middle age.

Nevertheless, in the Shiipfomaramth society, it is rather difficult to differentiate the youth from the adults based on work and occupation, since the young take on major responsibilities at an early age. In their economic activities, the young people are not commonly segregated from adults. The nature of their economy and work pattern demands that children and young people, most of the time, need to work alongside the adults. There is simply no specific division of work to divide children from parents in their economic activities. The burden of poverty and backwardness force them to give little significance to the meaning and concept of child labour. Irrespective of age, they are recruited in agricultural work and cultivation. This clearly suggests that there is no guarantee for survival other than to struggle for one’s own belly since a young age.

Agrarians with barely subsistence level of economy, therefore, do not easily allow the Shiipfomaramth community to spare the children and the young people from almost working like the adults. As a result, responsibility of self-sustenance or, at the most, family joint endeavour starts at a much younger age in comparison to develop societies. Young and old alike contribute to family income and welfare. The need for work and survival is injected well ahead of pubescence. The sense of maturity has very little role as far as their work is concerned.

Taking this factor into account, Musgrove’s example best describes many of the tribal youth including the Shiipfomaramth Nagas, where children would work alike the adults. Many young people do not enjoy the real taste and charm of youth. However, with the onset of rapid social change, conversion to Christianity, introduction of formal learning system and process of modernisation, things are slowly and gradually changing from particularistic to universalistic, although the actualisation process is a long way to go. This shifting pattern of life in some way reflects Eisenstadt’s broad concept of youth. According to him, when rapid modernisation, urbanisation, migration or mobility is strongly present, youth force plays its role that leads the society to undergo various changes for development. It is within this broad framework, we shall conceptualise and use the concept of youth in the Shiipfomaramth society.
Further, there is no separate term for adolescence in the Shiipfomaramth community. No specific and clear-cut demarcation of this concept exists in their usual and common usage. Thus, the vernacular terminology *nalumei/rahangrahii* broadly connotes both the adolescence and youth. It comprises the age group ranging from 14 years to 30 plus. In other words, from the stage of pubescence to as long as one remains unmarried an individual is considered as *nalumei/rahangrahii*. The standard norm for membership of youth club in the villages resembles the above age group classification.

The specific identification of the western term such as teenager, adolescence and youth is, therefore, blurred in the Shiipfomaramth society. In loose usage or as a passing reference one may comment: ‘you are still a teenager’, but in all practical purpose, they are considered as youth. Youth is rather the conglomeration of ‘teenage’, ‘adolescent’ and ‘young people’. The common element in all these terms is that they are equally fitted in work pattern as adults. What this suggests is that, the classification and concepts such as teenage, adolescence and youth is by and large the product of fundamental socio-economic condition. In other words, one fundamental universal definition of adolescence and youth and its problem may not be feasible for all societies.

Sociologically, youth is a phase of life, which marks the stage between childhood and adulthood. It is the period of life where skills and social potentials are acquired in preparation for the responsibilities and rewards of adult status.49

What is clear is that the youth is not merely a product of biology or chronological order but social and cultural. The stage of youth is intimately related to the system of division of labour, process of identity formation and pattern of change in particular society. It is a socially fashioned stage of life. Understanding the youth as a social category, youth will be perceived as a point of transition of life from one stage to another - the interval between childhood and adulthood. The UN declared 1985 as the “Year of Youth” and classifies youth in the age group of 15 - 24 years.50 Customarily, social demographers consider children below the age of 14 years as the child population. Using this yardstick, the Indian Census and many social demographers regard the age group 15

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- 34 years as youth population.\(^{51}\) This study will also take the census classification while differentiating youth in terms of their age.

**Parents and Youth Relationship in the Shiipfomaramth Society**

The relationship between the parents and youth in the Shiipfomaramth society is generally cordial characterised by mutual respect based on age, benevolence and experience between them. Right from childhood, children are taught to obey and honour their parents. Obedience to parents is regarded the most valuable virtue for children. Children are imparted with a strong message of unconditional respect to parents. All social disciplines and caring are done in order to reflect the love for parents in their life. The prevailing norms of the Shiipfomaramth community demand the youth to revere their parents. Young people are required to abide by the advice of the parents. Even in matters of severe differences, children are expected not to openly challenge the authority of the parents. Paying heed to parents is the initial quest of life. A young person found arguing with his/her parents is considered irresponsible and unmindful of social etiquette.

No young persons are expected to belittle their parents on account of their education and profession. It is considered undesirable and harmful to oneself to fight with the parents. No amount of simplicity can restore the trust for those who fought with their parents. It is believed that such youth would not achieve anything good in life. Parents come only next to God in the life of the youth. And for children parents meant everything — defender, rescuer, provider and protector. Children are taught to be polite and gentle towards the relatives and seniors. They are expected not to fool around with their parents and should restrain their behaviour in front of them. It is expected that children keep some distance and avoid being too familiar with their parents.

However, this does not mean that the youth are denied a space for personal growth and self-development. Amidst the three jewels of sincerity, honesty and obedience to the parents and elders, the youth enjoy considerable amount of autonomous space for development of one’s personality. The relation between children and parents is

more of mutual respect and understanding rather than that of rigid authority and subordination.

Thus, within the bond of family, children are permitted freedom and spontaneous development towards maturity. The parents often take a more ambivalent posture in the adolescent’s preparation for adulthood. In terms of emotional support and other sexual matter friends and peers play more influential role than the parents.

Review of Sociological Literature on Youth
It is not possible to explain the behaviour of society simply in terms of the individual character. However, it is true that the individual is a product of society. To explain any social behaviour the sociologists need to understand both the actor as well as the society. Thus, to describe certain deviant behaviour as social in sociology is not strange because what is given in a person’s biology is not enough to make him/her a socio-cultural being. It is through socialisation that a biological child learns how to behave in the human society.

Fred Milson’s *Youth in a Changing Society* succinctly illustrates that the youth faced ambiguity as they move from one cultural sphere to another. He shows that one’s varying socio-cultural upbringing continues to hover in his/her life. Further, Milson points out that it is imperative to devote sufficient efforts in order to understand the social environment in which the youth have been brought up since it is the society that ultimately shape their personality. In other words, what we are is in part the result of the way we are brought up in a particular social environment.

Our behaviour is socially defined; we are driven to behave in a socially accepted manner. Much of our daily behaviour are structured and conditioned by the society. One generation is linked to another through cultural traditions. Individual behaviour is a component of socially conditioned norms. It is the duty of the society to prepare the youth to shoulder their social responsibilities for a better quality of life. Milson summarized the content of his work in this manner, ‘The society, in which the adolescent has been brought up and lives, shapes the adolescent task’.52

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*Youth and Established Culture*, by Prem Kirpal shows the link between the emerging youth resentment over their existing culture as well as the need of incorporation with the incoming one. Kirpal comments that the reaction of youth, which is expressed in the form of disillusionment and frustration with the established culture, occurred because it failed to guide them in attaining their aspirations. Significantly, amidst this failure and disillusionment, his study shows that the youth are abide the existing values to realise their goal.

Broadly, Kirpal points out that dissent and protest emerge as a result of modernisation and change. Imbalance economic growth, defective system of education, degrading morals among the elders, perpetuation of orthodox-divisive traditional institution, and unplanned form of urbanisation led to the formation of dissent and protest. Coupled with these, inefficiency, laziness and dishonesty among politicians and the bureaucrats are part of the factors, which let down the youth. He concluded that the values of counter-culture are not applicable in Indian society since in India culture itself is a way of life. Consequently, youth challenged the established culture by asserting many of the traditional values. Kirpal writes, ‘to the youth the concept of modernity comprised of both change and tradition instead of any sharp opposition of the traditional’.

In *The Emerging Youth*, B. G. Desai had done a critical analysis of the youth’s social setting and their family background that define their estimation of themselves, parents’ expectation, and occupation and other aspirations. The study found that parents’ position in social structure, educational and occupational achievements, and the economic condition of a family considerably determined the fate of a student. The book also shows that the chances of getting education gets better with the increase level of education of the parents. The study reveals that it is the social environments that make the youth to realise the need of education. It means that the creation of educational facilities and opportunities are dependent on the socio-economic conditions of a society. However, in terms of academic attainment, though favourable social conditions may provide more facilities, it is not the sole determinant of the academic quality of the student. What it

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proves is that if equal opportunities are given to all sections of the population, achieving academic quality will largely depend on individual efforts.\textsuperscript{54} Desai concluded that the existing social structure largely defines the youth’s motives and goals, which one may hold in their respective society.

The basic message of Richard Flacks', \textit{Youth and Social Change} is that the youth problems are the symptom of a fundamental social issue. Flacks writes, 'in general terms, the crisis evolves substantial conflicts between the emergent technological potentialities of a society and the established social order and cultural system'.\textsuperscript{55} To meet the requirement of the technologically oriented society, existing values, norms and cultural systems are bound to change. This has evolved prolonged crisis, which affects the youth most. In this situation, the youth find culture as incoherent and the future as undesirable and chaotic. The study shows that young people are becoming victims of the confusion because they are future oriented.

Further, this study shows that the near collapse of traditional culture creates social emptiness in the life of young people. It indicates the emergence of cultural ambiguity; traditional practices no longer enable a person to find coherent meaning in his/her life. Incoherent cultural system is highly responsible for creating variance with the established cultural framework thereby intensifying youth confusion. The youth experience cultural discontinuity, which has dislocated them to pose a problem of value confusion. It is manifested in the relations between parents and children, and in the general anomie societal climate.

R. Jayaswal\textsuperscript{56} in his \textit{Modernisation and Indian Youth} stresses that today’s youth represent the first generation in new social setup. This generation witnesses the impact of change and modernisation much more than others do. Assist to their discontent, restlessness and impatience, the acquired new mantra by the youth is the reflection and reaction of change. It is the manifestation of unfinished task, unpredictable future and aspects of hasty change. In such a world, where rapid change is the rule, the future is blurred and vague.

\textsuperscript{54} B. G. Desai, \textit{The Emerging Youth}, Sterling Publishers: New Delhi, 1976, p. 179.
\textsuperscript{55} Richard Flacks, op. cit., p. 6.
Jayaswal laments that there is a growing conviction that traditional cultural system is eroded and dated for the present youth. The youth are responsive to the forces of modernisation because of their conviction that traditional system has failed to meet their demands. There is also an equal general feeling of dissatisfaction, uneasiness and powerlessness towards the invading culture. In essence, as the youth represent the social dynamism, they yearned for new society, freedom and spontaneity; new cultural symbols are but the symbols of collective identity. The study shows that youth unrest and activism hardly transform into greater political consciousness but simply led to the formation of common community symbol that defines a means for better relation between generations.

The pace of social change conditions the status of youth be it social, economic, technological or educational. F. Musgrove's in his *Youth and the Social Order* opines that the youth is neither biological nor evolutionary, but is a social invention. The socio-economic condition propelled the category of youth in the society. To him prolonging of formal education will not necessarily change the status of youth for it will simply undermine their social power. The views that young people are grooming a sub-culture, is misleading, according to him, because in reality the adult fails to accommodate their way of life. Musgrove is also of the view that the youth need to be given impetus towards social experimentation and change.

Further, in contrast to the subjective view that youth are dependent, socially handicapped and have no status, he objectively suggests that they are armed with power and status. Musgrove argues that it is the adult who denies a place to them. In this way, youth (adolescent) are the creation of modern social attitudes and institutions as they are discouraged from being acquainted with many adult roles. In the words of Musgrove: "what they had been at 13 they are, in essence, at 30". However, what is true is that adolescents have shown little difference from the mature adults.

*College Youth: Challenge and Response*, by H. D. Lakshminarayana is an attempt to comprehend the impending challenges and its possible responses of the college youth. In traditional society, youth is a lesser visible category since there are few choices and in most cases, the young move quickly from childhood to adulthood. However, with the dawn of industrial revolution a complete reversal of nurturing the young has been

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Christianity on youth upbringing, particularly among the tribal youth is enormous. The various youth organisations in the region are vibrant and closely associated with the process to address the youth problems. Unsurprisingly, it also shows that in the wake of rapid change role of the family in certain ways is affected thereby leading to increase youth problems.

M. S. Gore's *Indian Youth*, small but illuminating, deals with the structural problem of youth. He notes that elongation of formal schooling is decisive in making youth as a separate stage of life. Under the caste system or Bramanical model, both the high and other intermediate castes follow less strict learning and hence have shorter duration of youth. Gore further notes that personality growth is moulded through socialisation. It ensures continuity. In this case, family as an agent of socialisation has of late given way to educational institutions. However, in so far as family is integrated with the larger society continues to play an immensely important role in conditioning the future of the youth.

The author is also of the view that education changes the attitude as well as alienates the youth from their earlier values. Besides, sections of education in India society are verbal, informational and descriptive rather than emphasising on critical and creative learning, which can lead them to the development of social, relational and value aspects of the student personality. It also led to distancing of from meaningful relationship between education and life of the community. Similarly, the entry of the disadvantaged into higher studies and professions do not change inequality as it merely led to individual advancement.

*Indian Rural Youth* by Yelda G. Simhadri focuses on the role of youth in national reconstruction, their aspiration in the changing context and support to meet their needs. The study found that education is not only meant for economic benefits but also social recognition. Rural youth are on the whole ignorant of changes taking place in the country at large. Although, there is a pattern of change, his study shows that the rural youth still prefer joint-family in comparison to nuclear family. However, they are ready to forgo inter-caste barrier in marriage and traditional occupations. The dominant castes

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continue to play their part in rural affairs, because they are economically, numerically and educationally stronger. Similarly, the caste factor is perpetuated through family and elders.

In the light of mounting problem of unemployment in India, Alam’s *Occupational Choice of Indian Youth*, explores the role of sociological and psychological correlates of occupational choices and aspirations. He categorically points out that vocational formation is a crucial factor in youth development and adjustment. Further, Alam noted that Indian youth are at the crossroad when it comes to career formation.

Indeed, caste continues to play a role in occupational aspiration. Likewise, married, rural settlers and introverts have lower aspiration. He also shows that high occupational aspirants have more social value orientation. Religion does not have much effect in relation to occupational choice. The study supported the contention that environmental conditions, parental attitudes, socio-economic background and upbringing determined the occupational choices.

Dhurjati Mukherjee’s *Youth: Change and Challenge* is a collection of essays, identifying issues and problems, and the possible reasons leading to frustration and alienation among youth. It examines the spectrum of youth and students participation in politics, their ideological instability and desire for change. The book contains a variety of articles ranging from youth violence and delinquency to trends of youth behaviour, both in the rural and urban areas.

Neither the eruption of youth resentment a new phenomenon nor is it an isolated issue. However, the spate of the problem is immense in India due to accelerating social transformation. While tradition is fast eroding, the gap is yet to be filled. The calling is great but the attention is inadequate. This only goes on to show that the present socio-political set up has failed to catch the aspiration of the youth. One major missing link is that student-youth are not made the central focus of our development and change. On the contrary, opportunistic and selfish leaders callously betray them. Indeed, in this regard, tribal youth are far worse, compared to their mainland counterparts.

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Perspective on Contemporary Youth by Kuezyski and others\textsuperscript{66} contribution of articles from well-known scholars in the relevant field analyses the problems of youth which itself is the onus of society. The youth throughout the world is passing through a critical situation and there is no reason to be ashamed of it. The book points out that in spite of the enormous problems faced by youth, no priority is given to study them, as one would expect. The book adopts an interdisciplinary approach synthesising the literature of youth and its problem in the contemporary world.

R. M. MacIver's Dilemmas of Youth\textsuperscript{67} is an ideal piece contributed by prominent scholars from different fields, dealing with difficulties and tensions, which the modern youth are exposed to. Perhaps, this is not strange since the dilemmas youth faced are inherent in the community, which indeed calls for practical knowledge of the entire system. This book reveals that the youth are faced with both the pressure of conformity and uncertainty of rapid social change. It suggests that to configure the problems of youth requires nothing less than understanding the society itself.\textsuperscript{68} The fundamental issue is that others in the society feel the impact of the problems of the youth equally.

Youth Unrest: Conflicts of Generation by L. M. Singhvi\textsuperscript{69} focuses on a range of issues affecting youth with special reference to Indian youth. It talks about the democratisation of modern life in which student unrest is exemplified. This book has shown that the voice and protest in the university campuses reflect no less than the problems of Indian society itself. As the youth represent the dynamism of a society, dissent and resentment in the campuses depict the syndrome of Indian social system. To solve the dilemma, therefore, it requires constructive harnessing of youth potentialities and systematic re-orientation of Indian educational system.

Youth Futures, by J. Gidley and others is a novel exploration combining diverse theoretical perspectives in an attempt to break down the barriers to understand young people's hopes, fears and future aspirations. It is an inter-disciplinary and compilation of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{66} Janusy Kuezyski, Lotika Sarkar, et al. (eds.) Perspective on Contemporary Youth, The United Nations University: Tokyo, 1988.
\item \textsuperscript{68} August B. Hollingshead, "Some Crucial Task Facing Youth: Problems of Adolescence, Peer Groups and Early Marriage", in R. M. MacIver (ed.) ibid., pp. 2 -3.
\item \textsuperscript{69} L. M. Singhvi (ed.) Youth Unrest: Conflicts of Generation, The Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies, National: New Delhi, 1972.
\end{itemize}
up-date researches concerning youth. The book shows that the problem of youth itself provides possible solution to the future. It notes that the problem of youth is but the impact of globalisation, general breakdown of social structure and neo-liberal policies. However, too little attention is given to youth – their problems, hopes, fears and future. Instead we stereotype and disenfranchise them. The possible solution of young people’s problem demanded holistic approach rather than prefacing as “problem”.

B. Bradford Brown and others *The World’s Youth*, a collection of views and writings by experts is a thought-provoking edition. The book shows that in spite of the fast emergence “global youth culture” or rather entering ‘global family’, specific local variations hold strong. ‘Eurocentric’ and western interpretation of youth and their model to solve the youth’s problems do not augur well to capture the complexities of the problems at the local level. Conceptualising the youth problems and its possible remedies require both universalistic and particularistic model. It suggests that the local sentiments and attributes must be taken into account for any durable solution on problems faced by youth. The historical and socio-cultural context of specific communities reflects variegated forms of young people’s problem. In effect, the book recommends the replacement of the ‘kinescope with a kaleidoscope’ - for a more varied and colourful set of moving pictures to understand the problems of youth.

Youth in a Changing world by Estelle Fuchs, from a socio-anthropological perspective provides an illuminating picture of youth as a spatial social category. The book notes that youth are the resultant theme of change and development rather than biological or evolutionary. To understand the concept of youth and their constituent problems demands the knowledge of the entire society. However, since different societies are in varying degree of industrialisation and development, a universal yardstick of youth problems and its aspiration is not possible. Even then, the fact is that an overwhelming

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majority of the young people around the world is prepared to go along with achievement values of the ‘larger culture’. The emerging “youth culture” – elongation of preparation for life and elderly desire to be young is fast becoming a global phenomenon.

The main theme of Kumari and Radhakrishna’s Higher Education and Scheduled Tribe Youth is cultural discontinuity and the resultant problems of alienation. Developmental work and concomitant social change in tribal society has resulted in certain cultural shock. The annihilating of the tribal socio-cultural tradition is counter-productive since the educated youth exposed to new perceptions of realities and opportunities has given a measure of discontent and alienation both from their own culture and dominant one. The study shows that the present educational system fails to modernise the tribal cultural tradition is counter productive.

The youth find their life experience shaped by the society in which they live. Their development, status, patterns of everyday life, aspirations, opportunities, and health are all affected by the nature of their society. Their lives are affected by the culture in which they live. It is society that prepares the youth for future life. The youth are merely participating in the world of changing values, trends and lessons, just as the adults are. In other words, their aspirations, desires and goals are all shaped and constrained by their social environments. S. Parasuraman stresses that the problem youth faced in terms of education and employment are not exclusively their problems; these are problems inherent in the social, economic and political conditions of society. Likewise, R. Subramanian discusses the problem of youth and shows that the profile is a reflection of society in which the youth lives. It is the village youth in which the real shadow of society can be seen. In short, youth reflect the general impression of the existing social problems.

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72 Estelle Fuchs, op. cit., pp. 6 -10.
77 R. Subramanian, “An Overview of the Profile of Rural Youth”, in ibid., p. 49.
Of course, there are differences between youth who are students and the general youth population. But in most cases, it is the student-youth that represent the broader youth problem. While in some cases student-youth have little in common with the broader segments of youth population, by far the former represents society’s ideal aspirations and incentives. Despite difficulties in taking students as representative of the youth population, the present study is concerned primarily with the educated and current students since they are the mouthpieces of society.

**Theoretical Framework**

Experience reminds us that it is a fallacy to assume that one theory alone can account for the whole range of social problems. Different scholars have their own perceptions and views to issues confronting the society. Impressions people receive in the course of their everyday life affect their attitudes towards social problems. Thus, what seems, as apathy to one person may be normal for the other. It is clear that in the end the values held by people in society determine whatever social problems it might be.

However, this does not mean that there is only chaos of conflicting theories relating to study of social problems. In the absence of one comprehensive and uniformly accepted theory, the various ‘schools of sociology’ do agree on certain fundamental ideas and pattern of theories pertaining to social problems. Thus, Merton writes, “in place of one all encompassing theory we find a condition of theoretical pluralism, with different theories often complementing each other rather than being inevitably opposed.”

By keeping the above fact in mind, this study follows the working hypothesis that the problems faced by youth are not isolated from the society. To test the hypothesis, Durkheim’s theoretical framework is taken as the model. For this, special attention will be given to his four major books, which appeared during his lifetime. This includes, *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893), *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895), *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (1897), and *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912). The study will also take insight from contemporary critiques of Durkheim.

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78 Philip G. Altach, “Youth and Student in Contemporary Society”, in L. M. Singhvi (ed.) op. cit., p.10
In the first place, Durkheim’s sociological perspective is vital to the study because his contribution to sociology contained the dominant theme pertaining to contemporary social issues. Durkheim’s methodology provides a rich source and insight in interpreting that current social situation is conditioned by society. This formulation is further refined in his two subsequent works after he wrote *The Rules of Sociological Method*. He explicitly formulated the methodology that to understand social problems we need to study the society itself. In short, sociological discourses need the aid of Durkheim’s concept to get rid of from the analytical errors like utopianism and anthropocentrism.\(^80\)

Durkheim declared that the subject matter of sociology is social facts. He defined sociology as a science that studies the collective behaviour in the society.\(^81\) Social facts are manifestation of collective will. It refers to beliefs and practices of the group members, which is general, social and external but also exerts constraint on human behaviour.\(^82\) Durkheim’s work shows that current social situation depends upon the laws governing human beings. In other words, by suggesting that social problems are the product of society he goes on to formulate this as a natural law.\(^83\) This does not simply mean reductionism but that social fact has its own law in relation with nature.\(^84\)

Durkheim’s *Suicide* is the logical outcome of *The Rules of Sociological Method* in which the thesis showed that suicide is not an isolated social problem.\(^85\) By taking suicide as an index, Durkheim had asserted that society is accountable for social problems.\(^86\) We tend to judge suicide as a matter of individual matter. However, Durkheim shows that suicide is not free from societal role. The cause of suicide is rooted in the society. He rejected psychological, geographical and climatic factors as the cause of suicide. The exteriority of social fact is the central cause of suicide. Jones writes, “The connection of exteriority to interiority in reality is the most important to the


\(^{83}\) Emile Durkheim, ibid., p. 27.


\(^{86}\) Ibid., p. 215.
understanding of the logic of suicide." 87 Human being values the ideal of happiness and pain in terms of social environment.

As a true agnostic, Durkheim propagated that belief in the existence of gods or spirits is not a necessary condition of religion. 88 The fundamental feature of religion is its "sacredness" and to Durkheim this sacredness is nothing but society itself. 89 While identifying sacred as the original and lasting residue element of religion he goes on tracing the sacred from "totem" of which the clan or group considered it as sacred. Religion is derived from and supported by society. 90 Divinity is nothing but the collective expression of the society.

Thus, the principal feature of Durkheim's sociology is his distinction between 'normal' and 'pathological' in social behaviour. Far from general understanding of crime as individual behaviour deviating from normal, he believed that social deviance is an endorsement to the failure of society. He argues that some degree of crime is normal and inevitable in every society. 91 He goes on to say that what crime is normal and what is pathological needed a full knowledge of social situation.

However, by using Durkheim's perspective as a model to study the problems of the Shiipfomaramth youth in relation with society does not mean that it is exhaustive. By saying that problem of youth cannot be studying in isolation from society, care should be taken lest the whole explanation will fall into the crater of functionalism.

Critics of Durkheim had emphasised that he is preoccupied with the vitality of cohesion and social order in society to almost total exclusion of conflict and innovations; and neglects the intermediary roles of institution. 92 While each of these criticisms carries an element of truth, according to A. Giddens this sort of interpretation will present a misleading picture of Durkheim's position on each of these dimensions. 93

89 Emile Durkheim, ibid., p. 10.
91 Emile Durkheim, op. cit., 1893, pp. 69-72.
Emile Durkheim's opposition of revolutionary thought and change does not necessarily mean that he ignored the aspiration of the working class. What Durkheim tried to emphasise is that social problems cannot be solved by economic measure alone. Otherwise, there are strong arguments in Durkheimian tradition that fitted nicely with conflict approach. In the words of Randal Collins, Durkheimian theory provides a crucial means of showing what determines their internal group solidarity, as well as the nature of the symbols and sentiments that make up their class cultures. He opposed both class domination and economic inequality.

Likewise, in *The Division of Labour*, he profoundly made clear that transformation of an institutional arrangement is a necessary concomitant of transition from mechanical to organic solidarities. In his organic analogy, the comparison of society to an organism, he recognised the significance of an intermediate level - the individual 'cells' and their complex unity with social institution –, which is the 'social organism'. According to Lehmann, he depicted repeatedly social institutions as the 'heart' and the 'brain' of society.

To Durkheim, individualism is not only essential but also a normal feature. In sum, Durkheim theoretical framework called for holistic approach that judgments on issues confronting the society should be delayed until complete positions are fully known. By following this yardstick, he never fully defined the concept of normal and pathological. As health contained the concept of sickness so also normal and pathological are not exhaustive in itself but form the larger standardisation of human society.

**Methodology and Sampling**

Interview schedule is the primary tool of data collection for this thesis. It provides the opportunity to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data with ease. Demographic characteristics such as age, educational qualification, family income, size and type of household as well as the youth's pattern of life, insights and aspirations can be adequately tapped through this method.

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94 Ibid., p. 25.
Besides, the method allows the researcher enough flexibility to modify the questions in the course of the interview to suit the situation and circumstances at hand. Thus, the field study is carried out with flexible interview schedule as a general guide. The schedule is set in four parts depending on the broad frame of the study. Each set contains both open-ended and pre-coded questions.

The study primarily focuses on the sample of two hundred youth consisting of educated and current students selected from the four villages [Mao, Maram, Poumai and Thangal] of the Shiipfomaramth community. The selection of the sample combines both the purposive and probability sampling. The use of purposive sampling, although liable to error, is necessary in this regard as the study universe is not amenable to listing the prospective respondents in a sampling frame. Therefore, four villages have been chosen from the Shiipfomaramth community. From each of these villages sixty youth were selected on the basis of certain criteria such as students, school/college-dropouts, alcohol users, educated unemployed, employed, student and youth leaders, women society leaders, youth leaders in the church, theological students and NGO functionaries. Then, from these youth fifty respondents were selected by using probability sampling for interview.

Out of the total 200 respondents in the final sample there are 108 males and the rest are females. The sample is drawn from the Shiipfomaramth youth in the age group of 15-34 years, which is the targeted social group of the study. Taking insight from the discussion made in the earlier part of this chapter, youth is defined as one who is no longer a child and is yet not fully an adult. A relatively free life coupled with impending responsibilities characterises the youth. Biologically, many of them have reached the adult stage but are considered socially immature due to either continuing of formal learning and training or delaying of marriage thereby debarring from becoming a full legal adult status.

The fieldwork is mostly concentrated on the educated and current student among the Shiipfomaramth youth. However, assuming the youth, as independent and an exclusive social category divorced from the larger social structure would distort the problem. Therefore, a complete understanding of the problems confronting the youth would be inadequate without obtaining information on other aspect of the community.
Against this viewpoint, a cross-examination is undertaken of some elders belonging to various walks of social life such as social workers, mission workers, officers, headmaster/principal of educational institutions, NGO functionaries, village elders, experts in traditional practices and non-Christians.

A study based on personal interview is an incredibly challenging task and a momentous experience. It was more challenging because the interview had been carried out amongst my own cohort and age group. Interestingly, many of the respondents shared a lot of my feelings and problems. Yet, some of the respondents were quite reluctant to express their views, at the same time tended to test my real intention and integrity. On a number of occasions, in the process of interview they tried to sidetrack from the questions posed to them. It was a moment of real challenge to remain patient and focus on the problems of study. It required a lot of perseverance and determination to make sure that the main focus of the study remains intact while carrying out an interview. Easily the rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee can be shaken by the slightest provocation, if the researcher does not have the will to control the situation. Therefore, it became crucial on my part to keep in mind that I am studying human beings and that too of my own people and same age group. There were times I felt the respondent had carried me away or I have prevailed upon them. The fundamental truth is that our senses are not free from liability, and if not checked, this can mislead the whole process of interview. Whatever it might be, I have tried my best to keep the objectivity of the study from being conditioned by the situation and influence of the respondents.

The respondents were given the liberty of the time and space rather than stick to ‘doorstep’ or in-door interview. It happens that most of the time the interviews were held in respondents’ place except on occasions of group interview. The amount of time taken for the interview ranges from 1½ hours to 2 hours. At the initial stage, it was essential to undertake the task of explaining to the respondent the purpose and nature of the study. It became necessary to make similar explanation repetitively since the interview was conducted on individual basis in most cases. In a few cases, the interview was done in the presence of family members. Some respondents were not been very cooperative. However, on the whole, it was a memorable experience and a time of testing the depth of my sociological knowledge.
Chapter Scheme

The thesis is broadly organised into eight chapters keeping in mind the nature of its study. It is an attempt to understand the problems that are facing the youth and the rise and development of modern Shiipfomaramth Nagas. The new understanding and explanation represents the basic feature that combined regularities, variations and dynamism.

Chapter one, Concepts, Problems and Methods, deals with the concepts used in the thesis. It outlines the problem and objectives of the study. The suppositions and hypothesises are stated is this chapter. It also spells out the method and technique used in the research, as well as the limitation of the work.

Chapter two, Historical Moorings of the Shiipfomaramth Nagas, antecedent of cultural tradition and mode of life of the Shiipfomaramth community is penned down in this chapter. It spells out the structure and function of the traditional institutions and practices.

Chapter three, Dimension of Social, Economic and Political Change deals with the various factors of social change that brought about a sea change in the Shiipfomaramth society. This chapter shows the growth of unbalance economic development and change of socio-economic relationship from one based on co-operation and sharing to one driven by self interest. It also reveals in detail the coming of Christianity and its impact, effects of western education, the consequences of divide and rule policy and electoral politics.

The fourth chapter, Social Consequences of Unemployment, Structural Constraints of Education and Problems of Youth shows that unemployment has serious repercussions on the youth and social life in general. This chapter also shows that prevailing social environment and economic conditions are no lesser factors that determine the fate of the youth educability. It shows that failure to include the native thoughts and traditional knowledge in the syllabus has led to low interest in studies as well as cause sense of alienation from both their own tradition and educational system. Further, it shows that lack of facilities and quality of education has come down heavily on the Shiipfomaramth youth’s interest in studies.

The fifth chapter, Tradition, Christianisation and Problems of Youth shows the confusion of values as it oscillates between tradition and
western (Christianity). It reveals that in the absence of blending of identical values and lessons the process does not lead to a meaningful accomplishment as expected. In effect, the youth are vacillating between the two – native and western (Christianity), finding it difficult to emulate either value.

Chapter Sixth is Social Causes and Consequences of the Emergent Trend of Alcoholism and Problem of Youth, shows that growing menace of alcohol is not an isolated issue. Wine (rice-beer), which was considered as food and medicine in tradition, has become a symbol of lifestyle and pleasure. This is how drinking alcohol is increasingly considered as fashionable and modern. Likewise, abundance of self-interested person in alcohol has made the youth evasive of its evil consequence.

Chapter Seventh, Views of Select Respondents highlights the views and perspectives of some of the respondents on the factors that contribute to the problems of the youth in the Shiipfomaramth society.

Conclusion and Summary summarises the major findings of the study.