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(Peer Reviewed Journal)
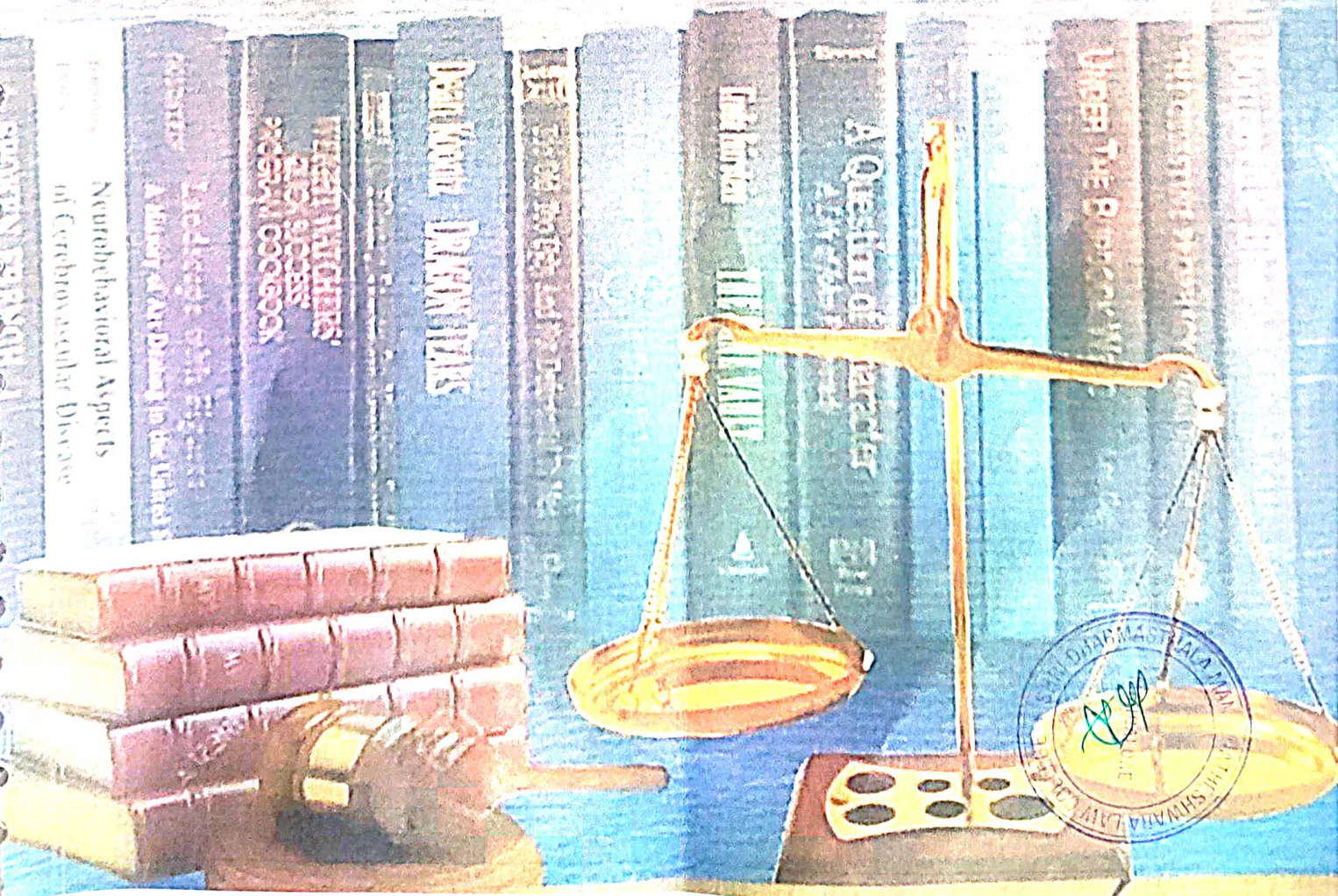
LEGAL OPUS

Issue 13 | June 2020

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THE ROLE OF THE YOUTH IN THE FUTURE SOCIETY

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Introduction

Society plays a huge role in moulding the behaviour and attitude of the youth. Society influences youth on their culture, basic etiquettes and moral values. Parents and teachers influence the youngsters, but they learn many things from the society and the societal impact is stronger than parents and teachers influence.

The globalisation has its own effect on the Indian society. This impact is more negative than the positive. Where, the adults in the society need to be the role models for the youth are indulging into things which are misleading the youngsters to gather more bad from the society than good[1]. In the troubled society every child can be a potential victim. The discipline of parents, teachers and the religious institutions go weak, when youth is not able to control their temptations toward the negative aspects of society.

Real Concerns

Use of Narcotics and alcohol

Drug and alcohol usage is increased from 1975 to this date on an average of 17% to 20%[2]. Youth finds it easy to get access of these intoxicants from the parties, or by ordering from shops by simply calling up, as the family members do, which deliver order to home. Many liquor places are allowed access to youth without checking their age as there is no legal age for alcohol, drugs consumption in India.

In the study conducted on boys aged between 8 to 18 years, in home for juveniles-under-enquiry, it is observed that out of 487 juveniles-under-enquiry, booked for committing different crimes, 86.44% had a background of substance use. The study showed the interrelation between the substance use and the criminal behaviour in youth[3].

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1. Kuppuswamy. B., "Social Change in India", (Vani Educational Books, New Delhi, 1986).

2. Beauvais F Am, (Indian Alsk Native Ment Health Res, 1992).

3. Sharma Shridhar, Sharma Gautam, *et. al.*, "Substance Use and Criminality among Juveniles-under-Enquiry in New Delhi" 58(2) *IP*178-182, (2016).

Emphasis of Crime and Sex in Television and Movies

Large number of youth are spending long hours in watching T V shows and movies. Excessive brutality, sadism and illicit sexual behaviour are shown as if they are normal. Youth accept it as it is there in social media in open and they consider it as accepted by the society.

Added to this, the 'Reality Shows' and other shows involving the celebrities, many superfluous activities are included. These will build up the pressure amongst the youngsters and they get into depression. Some shows involve stunts done under supervision of the professionals. Without knowing the danger of it kids try those stunts at home and get injury. The harmful effects are grouped into 3 categories: children learning aggressive behaviour and attitude, desensitisation, exaggerated fear of being victimised by violence[4].

Association between TV viewing and suicidal behavior has also been reported from India[5]. Both content exposure and screen time of media had independent detrimental associations with school performance in children and adolescents. Ray and Malhi (2006) reported that children having exposure to violence through media had poorer school performance and its impact on their psychosocial adjustments was detrimental[6]. Another study by Ray and Malhi (2005) showed that cruel display of violence in media (9/11 terrorist attack) caused stress in adolescents[7]. Another study explained that most of the fears, tensions, and bad dreams in children are result of frequent and regular exposure to murder-mystery movies, and stories of violence and torture that children watch on TV and movies[8].

Sickening news shocked the world when a six-year-old girl in Osaka fell to her death from her family's 43 story-high apartment after watching an Anime film DVD about children who could fly.

Effect of Advertisements on Youth

Advertisements are important source of information for kids and youth. Youth are vulnerable to advertisement due to their lack of knowledge and experience, and inability to critically analyse the persuasive nature of advertisement. Kids consider whatever is communicated through mass media is the truth and reality and they follow it honestly.

Advertisements on unhealthy food items, adults' products, prolific lifestyles with branded products like accessories, vehicles, footwear, dresses, huge houses and other constructions, dangerous products without warnings, alcohol and other intoxicants etc. will convince the kids and the youth about its need and necessity in life. When

4   Kamini Tanwar, Priyanka, "Impact of Media Violence on Children's Aggressive Behaviour" 5 (6) JSSN 2250-1991 (2016).

5   M.G., Krishnakumar P., "Television and suicidal behaviour" 42 IP 837-838 (2005).

6   Ray M., Malhi P., "Adolescent Violence Exposure, Gender Issues and Impact" 43 IP 607-612 (2006).

7   Ray M., Malhi P., "Reactions of Indian Adolescents to the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks" 72 IP 217-221 (2005).

8   Thakur Y., Khokhar C.P., "Mass media and children" 31 PL 135-138 (2001).
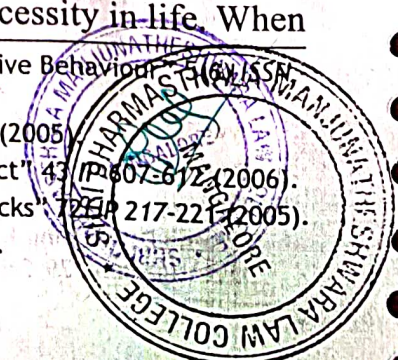
they are not able to afford it or when they realise its truthfulness, if they are able to buy those, they may feel vulnerable and cheated. It makes them not to believe the society for whatever reasons[9]. Tobacco products advertisements can tempt youth to use tobacco. Advertisements on e-cigarettes have increased rapidly since 2011. About 69% of high school students were exposed to e-cigarette advertisements in retail stores, on the Internet, in magazines/newspapers, or on TV/movies[10]

According to a study in 2018, the majority of young people stated that they had seen gambling advertising on television and 39% had seen them more than once a week and they stated that they are tempted to enter into gambling[11].

Mobile Usage

The Study named "The Digital Lives of Generation Z" show that 21% of the Indian kids are into mobile usage and more than three millions of them are using the internet on mobile[12]. Many parents provide mobile phones to children for their safety, as children can call parents or any guardian on any emergency situations. Mobile phones are more convenient in ordering something or browsing some needed information. It is useful for technology availability. Parents support children to use mobile for genuine reasons. But as parents are not able to control the kids from its usage it is becoming a disaster and part of the crime too[13].

But at the same time, mobile phones lead to distractions, lack of focus on studies, access to unwanted immoral, criminal aspects, affects the physical health like developing eyesight problem, hands, shoulder, back, fingers pain and also some psychological issues like lack of focus, aggressive behaviour, depression, getting addicted to games and shows etc.

Mobile addiction not only has physical effects but also psychological and academics effect at the same time. Sleep deficit, anxiety, stress, and depression which are all associated with internet abuse, have been related to mobile phone usage too[14]. Excessive use of smart phones paired with negative attitude and feeling of anxiety and dependency on gadgets may increase the risk of anxiety and depression[15].

9 Spiteri Cornish L., *"Mum, Can I Play on the Internet?"*, Parents' Understanding, Perception and Responses to Online Advertising Designed for Children 33(3) IJA 437-473 (2014).

10 "Vital Signs Issue Details: Exposure to Electronic Cigarette Advertising Among Middle School and High School Students – United States", MMWR 2014; "Exposure to E-cigarette Ads may Contribute to Youth E-cigarette Use", *Vital Signs - E-cigarette Ads and Youth PODCAST - 1:15 minutes*, accessed on 4/10/2019.

11 "Young people and gambling", Gambling Commission 2018, https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/survey-data/Young-People-and-Gambling-2018-Report.pdf, accessed on 3/10/2019.

12 www.themobileindian.com, (accessed on 3/10/2019).

13 www.theclassroom.com, (accessed on 3/10/2019).

14 De-Sola Gutiérrez J, Rodríguez de Fonseca F, et. al., "Cell-phone Addiction: A Review" 7 FP175 (2016).

15 Rosen LD, Whaling K, et. al., "The Media and Technology Usage and Attitudes Scale: An Empirical Investigation" 29 CHB 2501-2511 (2013).
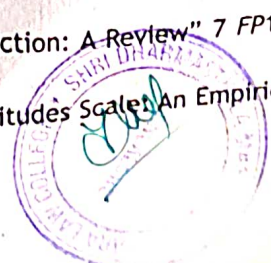
Videos provoking crime and Suicide

A video game that encourages youth to rape and murder women was viral. The video game 'PUBG' is confusing the young minds to commit suicide. Similar is the case of a video games 'Blue Whale' and pokemon go.

The recent video app tiktok gives some challenges to young children and provoke them to do it, leading to getting into serious injuries.

There are videos promoting self-harm tips, adventurous, harmful stunts, squeezed between clips of some popular video games. The suicide instructions are sliced between clips from the popular Nintendo game Splatoon and delivered by a man speaking in front of a green screen, blending him with the rest of the animated video[16]. In 2015, the American Psychological Association (APA)[17] released a report. Based on the results of the studies mentioned:

"The research demonstrates a consistent relation between violent video game use and heightened aggressive behavior, aggressive cognitions, and aggressive affect and reduced pro-social behavior, empathy, and sensitivity to aggression".

Easy access to Pornography leading to Rape and Murder

When pornography is easily accessible through internet, youth simply tend to get tempted to watch it. Unknowingly they may try to implement all unnatural things just with the experimental mindset or with curiosity. Pornography is affecting moral and psychological fabric of the society and youth being most dynamic in accepting things; will easily get tempted to get involved.

Youngsters are ready customers for these pornography sellers. They are ready to spend their pocket money on these porn movies. They obtain this material by road side petty shops, or known designated places of the town.

The alleged gang rape of a 13-year-old tribal girl, by seven tribal men, five of whom were juveniles, was in Jharkhand state. The child was grazing cattle outside her village when seven men were said to have pounced on her[18].

The gang rape of a 23-year-old student in Delhi in 2012 is said to be caused by six men who were watching violent porn along with consuming alcohol[19]. This has gone to the extent of calling the city "the rape capital of the world". It's really a matter of shape for the citizens of India if we do not take precautions on such issues in future.

The Impact of Social Media on Students

Media has very wide access due to globalisation. It may be movies, shows on T V,

16 Available at *https://www.cbsnews.com/news/youtube-kids-inappropriate-horrified-mom-discovers-suicide-instructions-in-video-on-youtube-and-youtube-kids/*, (referred on 2-10-2019)

17 *"Technical Report on the Review of the Violent Video Game Literature"*, Task Force on Violent Media American Psychological Association (2015).

18 *Hindustan Times*, 02-10-2019

19 Available at *https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jul/23/why-india-bad-for-women*, (Accessed on 2-10-2019)
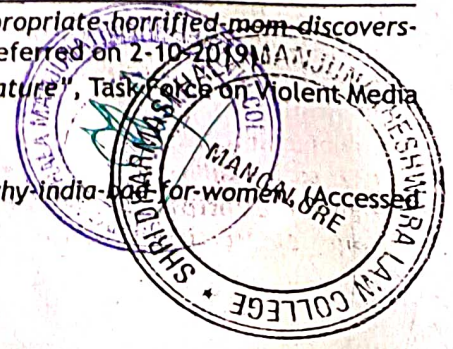
video games, networking bases like Face Book, Instagram, Tictoc, different gaming apps and giving challenges apps, all play a huge role in shaping youth.
If they see all violence, dishonesty, rape, murder and such heinous crimes on these social media, which is created by adults of the society, day in and day out, it is natural for them to become prey for it.

All the issues of religion and caste, anti-nationalism, personal hatred, developing bitterness against some profession, spoiling the reputation of some trade etc. gets more weightage due to the free access to social media. Youth see the wrong messages spreading on the media and develop their behaviour based on that, as they consider it as right.

In June 2014, 2 preteens took their friends to a remote place and stabbed her 19 times. When asked for the reason for doing so, they reported that the internet meme "Slenderman" inspired them to do it[20].

A study done by the Observer Research Foundation in March 2018 observed that on social media hate speech and counter speech pages are active in India. The study reported that religion and 'religio-cultural' practices related to food and dress. were the most reacted issues and they are responsible for violent incidents within one year time span of the study[21].

There are many cases of causing death and the recent on is lynching on the suspicion of being child-lifters or involved in cow slaughter in Dhule district causing deaths of 22 people including a transgender[22].

Commercialising youth talents without values

There are many instances in and around, wherein youth make money by displaying the talents in so called 'famous' forums, and gets into pressure and humiliation. Due to this they may develop psychological health issues.

In 2011, the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights had issued guidelines for children participating in TV shows and advertisements, regulating working hours, prohibiting inappropriate roles and providing for adequate supervision. But nobody follows these measures "99% of the times", says Amit Behl, senior joint secretary, Cine & TV Artistes' Association. "That is primarily because there's no regulatory body for reality and talent-based shows in India to supervise or counsel"[23].

The Effect of Crime, Corruption and other aspects of Society on the Youth

The youth is exposed to the crime in the society. When they see it on daily basis,

20 Meredith E. Gansner, "The Internet Made Me Do It", *Social Media and Potential for Violence in Adolescents* 34(9) (September 5, 2017).
21 Maya Mirchandani, "Digital Hatred, Real Violence: Majoritarian Radicalisation and Social Media in India", www.orfonline.com, (20 Aug, 2018).
22 Available at https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/16-lynchings-in-2-months-is-social-media-the-new-serial-killer-1275182-2018-07-02, (Accessed on 5/10/2019).
23 Available at https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/sunday-times/why-reality-shows-are-no-childs-play/articleshow/63060916.cms, 25th February, 2018, (Accessed on 5/10/2019).

they feel it as normal and accordingly change their behaviour. Similarly the corruption and other aspects like domestic violence, poverty and inequality, power and influence at the wrong hand, manipulation of public resources by few, suppression of the weaker sections, decline in value system in the family and society etc. makes youth feel that they are normal things to follow and they design their behaviour as per negative societal needs, unintentionally.

The Influence of Schools Atmosphere on Students

Schools play tremendous role in shaping students behaviour. If they get good behaviour friends, they can improve their behaviour, if not, may get into some bad habits, addiction and also may involved in unwanted or unlawful activities.

Most common crimes done by youth due to peer pressure are: theft or shoplifting, smoking and drug abuse and illegal sex.

To socialise in a group, the person has to understand the peer groups own cultures, sanctions or rituals. Those who do not follow are treated accordingly[24].

Henslin, (2008) noted that "groupthink" can lead to the destruction of a society. It needs to be prevented from the root itself[25].

Imitation and experimentation have been identified as ways by which teens and adolescents learn anti-social and criminal behaviour[26]. Peer pressure becomes the strongest influence on youth in the alcohol, drugs consumption, smoking, unwanted activities like prostitution, developing religious hatred, crime and violence[27]

Impact of social values on youth

The prevailing social values like accumulating wealth by whatever means to get good status in society, the mistaken definition of success, youth getting into pressure to score highest marks in competitive exams to keep good reputation in the society, having luxurious lifestyle without proper means of livelihood, power play and incorrect influences, adjusting to the oppression or mistreatment by people who are dominating with power in hand, for promotion, chance in shows, or related benefits, influence the mind of the youth. Due to lack of experience youth may not be able to differentiate between good and bad and follow these blindly. In the verge to follow and grab these material aspects, youth lose its focus on productive things and get into anxiety, depression and suicidal tendency[28].

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[24] Carlson, A., "How Parents Influence Deviant Behaviour among Adolescent: An Analysis of their Family, Life, their Community and their Peers", www.semanticscholar.org, (2010).

[25] Henslin, J., "Social Problems: A Down into Earth Approach", (8th ed., Allen and Bacon, Boston, 2008).

[26] Powell, L.M. Tauras J.A., et. al., "Peer Effects, Tobacco Control Policies and Youth Smoking Behaviour", 24 ITRPS, (University of Illinois, Chicago, 2003); Ogbebor G.G., "Youth Violence in Contemporary Nigerian Society: A Psychological Approach", 2(1) JNSS 53-59 (November 2012).

[27] May Omogho Esiri, "The Influence of Peer Pressure on Criminal Behaviour", 21(1) IOSR-JHSS 08-14 (Jan. 2016) (ISSN: 2279-0837, www.iosrjournals.org).

[28] Srinivas M. N., Social Change in Modern India, (Orient Blackswan Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad, 2019).
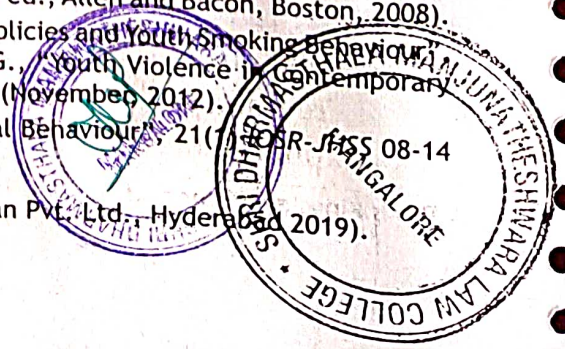
These matters are so impressive that, the behaviour taught by parents, teachers, religious leaders and other organisations go weak and without any force.

Psycho-socio impact

The temptations in the society, knowingly or unknowingly, affect the minds of the youth. There is positive impact as well as negative. But the negative impact is affecting the youth more and leads to spoiling of the young generation. Some of the negative impacts are[29]

- **Physical**: Violence, Unhealthy food choices and Lack of nutrition, unnatural, unsafe sexual behaviour, harmful habits like smoking, consumption of alcohol and related intoxicants, unnecessary buying habits

- **Psychological**: Learning Disabilities, Anxiety, sleeplessness, depression, unruly behaviour with parents, teachers and friends, lack of social skills, no respect for values and culture, developing inferiority complex based on others appearance and lifestyle.

## Measures to deal with negative influences and its reality

No society wishes their next generation to be the prey of negative influences of the situation created by globalisation or by diminishing cultural values of the society. As youth are getting negative influence from the society, it is the duty of the Government and society together to develop some measures to reduce it.

Legislations

Here are the few enactments regulating the 'wrongs' in the society:

- India passed Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, (NDPS Act) in 1985 which was amended till recently in 2014 to punish the drug traffickers and also to rehabilitate the users. It is not been implemented strongly for different reasons.

- Alcohol prohibition in India is in force in the states of Bihar, Gujarat, Mizoram and Nagaland and in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep. All other Indian states and union territories permit the sale of alcohol.

- The directive principles of state policy (DPSP) in the constitution of India (Article 47) state that "....the State shall endeavor to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health". Now it is the duty of the states to implement it, without seeing the revenue part of it.

- Programme & Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, no programme should be carried on TV which denigrates children, and programmes meant for children should not contain any bad language or explicit scenes of violence. Here the parents need to raise their voice against

29 Davis Kingsley, *Human Society*, (Surjeet Publications, Delhi, 2016).
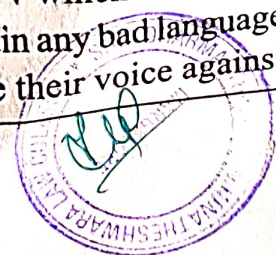
any kind of manipulation of their kids and the government need to take it into consideration seriously. But all the reality shows are going on as it is and citizens of the country are watching it without being sensing its impact on youth.

- The regulatory measures for misleading and deceptive advertisement is given under Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 (MRTP Act), and the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 (CPA). But as people do not raise their voice, the implementation is weak. There is an enactment, Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954 to give protection from misleading advertisements on drugs and magical remedies, too.

- Other than Indian Penal Code, 1860, the Information Technology Act (IT Act), 2000, which was amended in 2008, regulates most of the cyber crimes. There are many ambiguities which makes it not easy to implement.

- The Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO) may also be invoked in the case of pornography and exposure of children using mobile. There is The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 also to the same effect. This enactment is strong but adults forget their duties in raising their voice.

- Provisions of Information Technology Act, 2000, regulate all the issues related to social media. People need to be aware of their right to get protection under the enactment to save the young generation.

- The Copyright Act, 1957, the Patent Act, 1970, and all the Intellectual Property laws regulate the video games in one or the other ways. Still the law-breakers try to find out the loopholes in the law and give aggressive or violent video games to the youth, resulting in damage.

Parental Control

- Parents need to keep a tab on what their children are doing or watching on T V, mobiles, Social media etc. and if needed be strict in saying no to unwanted things.

- Teachers should try to bring awareness among students about how these unlawful, unwanted issues distract them from life goals.

- Parents need to give more quality time to children and make them realise that the personal human networking is better than the virtual attachments.

- Parents and teachers to be role model of the youth by practicing good value systems.

- They need to keep the youth occupied with constructive activities & activities to achieve youth life ambitions so that gradually children get less time for immoral activities.

- Society need to give the youth the pros and cons of whatever they are doing and convince them to select the good over the evils of the society.

- Help the youth to differentiate between reality and fantasy.

- Create the safe, comfortable and free atmosphere at home and schools to make

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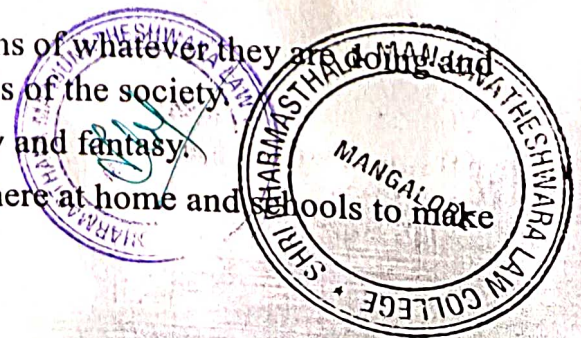
children feel free to discuss their confusing issues, so that they cannot yield to peer pressure and get into immoral activities.

Self-help by Youth itself

Youth need not wait to be an adult or need not depend on any adult in the society to know the right path. They can develop some good values and good habits in their life and can enhance their life to the next level of success. Few of the suggested ways are:

- Know the rights and be assertive in using it
- Learn the law.
- Be updated on the current affairs of the country as well as in the local matters, not to get into any mischief.
- Wherever needed learn to speak out. Say no to immoral, unlawful acts of others.
- Develop network of good, knowledgeable persons, to connect to them in case of doubt in any matter or in case of need and emergency.
- Join good campaigns on negative issues of the society, so that one can be involved only in the good deeds.
- Use the creativity in photography, arts and crafts, theatre, sports etc. and turn it into the civic activism.
- Organise a youth summit to voice your concern through proper platform. Invite authorities to address the youth issues.
- Try to be a role model and be an inspiration to future generation.

Conclusion

The role of unrelated adults like teachers, mentors, employers, religious leaders, service providers etc. come into contact with youth, have their effect. The presence of these adults has great impact on youth's perceptions about society and life. There is a duty on the youth in the society to get proper guidance from the parents, teachers, elders, mentors, religious leaders etc and lead the life in the proper direction.

The youth should not get into unwanted, immoral matters and reduce their abilities, which may make them develop inferiority complex or force them to make wrong choices in life by using their time and resources.

The society should strive to enable to increase the abilities of the youngsters and should nurture them. Youth should be developed based on learning from the society and this learning need to be on learning to be productive, learning to connect and learning to navigate.

Youth power is the greatest power and society should value youth power, to give the country a strong future generation to have a safe and developed nation.

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