



## **A study of Youth Modernization in District Almora Kumaon Division Uttarakhand**

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### **Abstract**

Youth being enthusiastic, vibrant, innovative and dynamic in nature is the most important section of the population. Youth shows strong passion, motivation and will power which also make them the most valuable human resource for fostering economic, cultural and political development of a nation. Modernization is an extremely complex phenomenon, which involves a large number of interrelated changes of many different kinds. Modernization refers to processes in which the society goes through such as industrialization, urbanization and other social changes that completely transform the lives of individuals. The new force of social change like Westernization, Modernization, Industrialization, Globalization, Politicization of issues and Media exposure have changed the norms and the values of the youth throughout the country. Modernization, Globalization, Industrialization and Urbanization have brought various changes in all spheres and sections of society all over the world. Everything is changing very rapidly be it our culture, customs, norms and values, change have been seen in every phase of life. New concepts like live-in-relationship, gay relationship etc. have emerged as a result of modernization.

**Key words: Modernization, Youth, Social change, Education.**

### **Statement of the problem**

In the course of India's different phases of social transformations, significant changes are seen in their societal norms and values which have deep impact on the youth. The new force of social change like Westernization, Modernization, Industrialization, Globalization, Politicization of issues and Media exposure have changed the norms and the values of the youth throughout the country.

Many values of the parent's generation with regard to education and employment are now put in jeopardy. Currently the traditional mystique of the parental authority and guidance defining youth's aspirations, their life style and future planning is eroded. The global culture has influenced the youth in multidimensional ways, from their career choices, family and community interaction, leisure time activities to their inter-generational relations and socialization process.

Modernization, Globalization, Industrialization and Urbanization have brought various changes in all spheres and sections of society all over the world. Everything is changing very rapidly be it our culture, customs, norms and values, change have been seen in every phase of life. New concepts like live-in- relationship, gay relationship etc. have emerged as a result of modernization. We are living in a youthful world with

almost half of the current global population under the age of 25. The world of youth is very fragmented, fast changing and dynamics as never before. The global culture has influenced the world of youth in multi-dimensional way from their career choices, family and community interaction, leisure time activities to their inter-generational relations, socialization process, experience and agents, and also threatens their cultural identity and local cultural traditions. Young people are facing dilemma of modern/tradition/family/career, socio-ethical/consumer-materialistic. All this is bringing a very fundamental and significant change in the lives of youth. It may simply mean regulating the forces of modernization. Simply accepting modernization does not mean complete rejection of traditionalism. It means accepting only those elements of traditionalism which are considered by the society as functional for it, in view of the collective goal.

Thus the nature of social change in India is such that we find a synthesis of tradition and modernity. On the one hand, we have discarded those traditional beliefs, practices and institutions which we believe were more dysfunctional. On the other hand, we have imbibed those modern values and have created those modern institutions which we thought will help us in achieving our basic goals of “Change in quality of life of the people” (Sharma 2007).

#### **Geographic Location :**

Uttarakhand, the 27th state of the Republic of India and was carved out of Uttar Pradesh on 9th Nov 2000. Uttarakhand is one of the states of India having total area of 53,483 sq km. currently density per sq. km in Uttarakhand is 189 per Sq.km which stand less than national average density of India currently being at 382. If measurement is shifted from Kilometer to Mile, Uttarakhand’s total area becomes 20,650 Sq mi having density of approximately 490 per Sq mi.

There are 13 districts in Uttarakhand which are grouped into two divisions— Kumaun and Garhwal. The Kumaun division includes six and Garhwal division includes seven districts.

Details of the division-wise numbers of districts in the State are presented in the matrix ahead— Kumaun Division Garhwal Division Almora Dehradun Bageshwar Haridwar Champawat Nainital Pithoragarh Udham Singh Nagar State has Geographically the state can broadly be divided into three zones, namely—

1. **Upper hills** — Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Pithoragarh and Bageshwar
2. **Middle hills** — Tehri-Garhwal, Garhwal, Almora, and Champawat, the hill regions of Nainital and Chakrata tehsil of Dehradun
3. **Foothills** — The remaining area of Dehradun, Haridwar, Udham Singh Nagar and the remaining area of Nainital

#### **Socio-Demographic Profile of the State :**

According 2011 Census of India, Uttarakhand’s population has reached approximately 1.01 Crore with an increase of 19.17 percent from the past decade. Uttarakhand feeds approximately 0.84% of India’s total population. As per census report of Uttarakhand, the total population of the State is 10,116,752; of which male and female are 5,154,178 and 4,962,574, respectively which has increased from 84,89,349, the total population of the state as per Census 2001 where 43,25,924 were males

and 41,63,425 were females. With regards to Sex Ratio, the state has demonstrated that it has the better indicators than the national averages. As per Census 2011, Uttarakhand's Sex Ratio stands out at 963 which was at 962 in 2001 census and fares better as compared to average sex ratio of India (940) but the child sex ratio (886) of Uttarakhand remains a matter of concern and needs immediate enforcement of PC&PNDT Act in full force along with behaviour change communications to stop female foeticide.

### **Brief History of the Almora District**

Situated in the Central Himalayas, the district is named after the town Almora. According to local tradition, the earliest inhabitants in Almora were Tewaris who were required to supply sorrels daily for cleansing the vessels of sun temple at Katarmal. Sorrel is locally called 'lamora' which in course of time, got corrupted into Almora and gave its name to the Khagmara hill on which it is grown. Chand Rajas made the place their capital. Ancient lore mentioned in Vishnu Purana and Mahabharata present primordial accounts of human settlements in the district. The Sakas, the Nagas, the Kiratas, the Khasas and the Hunas are credited to be the most ancient tribes. The Kauravas and Pandavas of the Hastinapur royal family were the next important princes from the plains who are said to have affected the conquest of these parts. After the Mahabharata war the district seems to have remained for some time under the sway of the kings of Hastinapur whose authority was never more than nominal. The actual rulers were the local chiefs of whom the Kulindas (or Kunindas) were probably strong in the southern and western part of the district. The Nagas held domination over Patti Danpur, Salam and Nakuri of tahsil Almora. The Khasas were another ancient people who belonged to an early Aryan stock and were widely scattered in those times. They gave this region the name Khasadesha or Khasamandala. The next age's silent of them may probably be the ones signaling many petty states, rivaling each-other for supremacy and ultimately chartering the inauguration of the noted and enduring dynasty of Chands. Earlier to this, the Katyuris are recorded as the dominant clans in copper and stone engravings. Very little is known of this dynasty, particularly relating to this district. The Chand dynasty from their inception in 953 A.D. to their ouster in the late 18th century present a saga of strife, with horrifying series of wars with rulers of Garhwal culminating in the destruction of this prosperous land and establishment of inglorious Gurkha rule. This dynasty was peculiar in that it made Almora the seat of strongest hill power in 1563 A.D. From that time onwards, the limits of kingdom of Kumaon extended over the entire tracts of districts of Almora and Nainital. A notable contribution of these rulers was unification of entire Kumaoni land, though, the process was belated by centuries for hostility of the rulers of Garhwal. Some of the kings of this line were of supremely religious temperament and their inclination fruited in maintenance and erection of many temples in the district. These peace time pursuits were possible because of diplomatic patronages procured by Chand rulers from Emperors at Delhi by tact and shrewdness with a view to foiling the horrendous attacks of hostile governors of Delhi bordering southern frontiers of Kumaon. 9 Administrative Setup Till the Census 2001, the district has only three tahsils – Bhikiyasain, Ranikhet and Almora. However, with

the creation of six new tahsils from these tahsils thus total number of tahsils has gone up nine in 2011 namely, Bhikiyasain, Chaukhutiya, Sult, Ranikhet, Dwarahat, Someshwar, Almora, Jainti and Bhanoli, which are further divided into eleven C.D Blocks i.e. Bhikiyasain, Syaldehy, Sult, Tarikhet, Chaukhutiya, Takula, Bhaisiya Chhana, Hawal Bagh, Lamgarha, Dhaula Devi and Dwarahat for developmental purposes. Almora district has 2289 villages including 39 forest villages out of which 2184 villages are inhabited and remaining 105 villages are uninhabited. The district has 1122 Gram Panchayats. During the decade 2001-2011, new tahsil Chaukhutiya with 15 villages from Bhikiyasain and 161 villages from Ranikhet was created vide G.O. number 18 Chief Minister/Revenue/7 February 2004 Dehradun, Sult (232 villages) created from Bhikiyasain tahsil vide G.O. number 10465/Revenue/3 December 2003, Dwarahat (215 villages) carved out from Ranikhet tahsil vide G.O. number 122/ Revenue/12 February 2004 while 3 new tahsils viz. Someshwar (150 villages), Jainti (125 villages) and Bhanoli (227 villages) were created from Almora tahsil alone vide G.O. number 07/Chief Minister/Revenue/19 January 2004, G.O. number 153/Revenue/2004/23 February 2004 Dehradun and G.O. number 152/Revenue/2004/24 February Dehradun respectively. Apart from this, 8 villages were also transferred from Bageshwar tahsil of district Bageshwar to Almora tahsil of the district during this decade. The district has four Statutory Towns and one Census Town. They are Almora (N.P.P.), Almora (C.B.), Ranikhet (C.B.), Dwarahat (N.P.) and Khatyari (C.T.). District level officers belonging to various departments administrative departments under them while the revenue wing is undertaken by the District Magistrate in association with Additional District Magistrate and Sub-Divisional Magistrates. Other district level officers include District Judge, Superintendent of Police, Chief Development Officer, District Development Officer, Chief agriculture Officer, Chief Medical Officer, Treasury Officer, District Rural Development Authority, District Education Officer, District Employment Officer, District Horticulture Officer, District Programme Officer, District Informatics Officer (NIC, Govt. of India), District Information Officer (State Govt.), General Manager, District Industry Centre, District Election Officer, District Supply Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, District Economic and Statistics Officer, Divisional Forest Officer, Chief Veterinary Officer, Assistant Registrar, Cooperative Societies, Executive Engineer, Jal Nigam (Water Corporation), Executive Engineer, Electricity Distribution Division, Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Executive Engineer Rural Engineering Services, Executive Engineer, Irrigation Department, District Youth Welfare and Prantiya Rakshak Dal Officer etc.

#### **Universe of the Study**

Proposed study is to be undertaken in a hill state with vast geographical area. Therefore the multistage sample design technique will be used. Out of six districts in kumaun region of Uttarakhand State one district i.e. Almora with largest numbers of degree colleges and all the colleges are located in the remote areas which are cut off from the main city of Uttarakhand state, will be selected purposively for the study. There are 10 degree colleges in district almora, of which 50 respondents from each college based on gender, caste, and family background will be selected for the study.

Thus a total 500 persons will be the respondents of the study. The Table-01 shows the details of colleges located in District Almora

Table-01

**District Almora**

S.No	College name	Status
1	Govt Post Graduate College, Ranikhet	Post Graduate
2	Govt.Girls Degree College, Dawarahat	Post Graduate
3	Govt. post Graduate College, Manila	Graduate
4	Govt Degree College, Jaynti	Graduate
5	Govt Degree College, chaukutiya	Graduate
6	Govt Degree College, Garurabaj	Graduate
7	Govt Degree College, Someshwar	Graduate
8	Govt Degree College, Bhikayasain	Graduate
9	Govt Degree College, Syaldey	Graduate
10	Govt Degree College, Lamgara	Graduate

India is the youngest country amongst the BRICS. It is estimated that by 2020 the working age population in India would be about 592 million, second to that of China's (776 million). The median age is expected to be about 29 years way lower than China (42 years), Russia (38 years) and South Africa (27 years). However, in absolute numbers, India has the largest number of young people. In other words, this has been understood as the 'youth bulge' that is expected to lead to a demographic dividend—the idea is well known, and fairly extensively researched (James 2008 ; Chandrasekhar, Ghosh & Roychowdhury 2006). India accounted for substantial share of world population. By 2010, India accounted for 17.8% of the world population, recording an increase of 2.7% in its share since 1970. This growth is projected to continue and by 2030, Indians would account for 17.97 of global population. India's share in the decennial addition to global population increased from 18.13 during 1970-1980 to 22.87 during 1990-2000 and is projected to decline to 18.69 by 2020-2030. The present study focuses to assess the attitude of the youth towards various issues i.e. view regarding marriage, superstitious beliefs, views regarding gender equality etc. It also aims to find out the impact of modernization and changes that occur in the views, attitudes and awareness level of the youth as a result of modernization and loopholes if any in our teaching methodology, so that some suggestions may be given to the department concerned and also formulating the strategy for development. This in view of the nature and objectives of the study the exploratory research design will be applied for study under reference.

The concept of youth is ambiguity in the use of the term 'youth' when contrast with childhood on the one hand and the old age on the other, youth seems to stand for period of full physical and mental maturity. Youth represents the dynamic character of human society. Youth has the capacity to absorb new challenges and evolve new values in a fast changing society. Thus, through its youth, a society copes with new challenges and demands, and passes from a traditional mould to modernity. Youth is an alternative word to the scientifically-oriented adolescent and the common American terms of teen and teenager. Another common title for youth is young person

or young people. Youth generally refers to a time of life that is neither childhood nor adulthood, but rather, somewhere in-between. Youth are broadly those who belong to the age-group of 15-24 and 24-34 can be variously classified in terms of residence, sex, traditional background and so on so forth.

Modernization refers to the processes which the society goes through such as industrialization, urbanization and other social changes that completely transform the lives of individuals. It does not mean that traditionalism and modernity are two extremes and the two cannot co-exist. S.C.Dube and Yogendra Singh are of the view that the two can co-exist. Accepting traditionalism does not mean completely rejecting modernization. Modernization is an extremely complex phenomenon, which involves a large number of interrelated changes of many different kinds. The concept of modernization is multidimensional incorporating economic development, technological revolution, rationality and scientific temper, emphasis on achieved status, equality, social justice and individualism. Modernization refers to the processes which the society goes through such as industrialization, urbanization and other social changes that completely transform the lives of individuals.

In the course of India's different phases of social transformations, significant changes are seen in their societal norms and values which have deep impact on the youth. The new force of social change like Westernization, Modernization, Industrialization, Globalization, Politicization of issues and Media exposure have changed the norms and the values of the youth throughout the country. Many values of the parent's generation with regard to education and employment are now put in jeopardy. Currently the traditional mystique of the parental authority and guidance defining youth's aspirations, their life style and future planning is eroded. The global culture has influenced the youth in multidimensional ways, from their career choices, family and community interaction, leisure time activities to their inter-generational relations and socialization process.

Attitude of the College Students towards the Traditional Practices Governing Marriage ,Through this question, researchers tried to assess the view of the college students towards traditional practices regarding marriage. In Indian traditional society, usually marriage is arranged by the parents without consulting their boy or girl, especially in the case of a girl child. It was found during the study that majority of the students 90% prefer the current spousal choice practices, which involve the choice of spouses as suggested by their parents. Majority of the respondents preferred marriage in the same caste as they don't believe in the system of inter-caste marriage. The main reason given in support of this was that marriage outside caste would defame their parents' respect. According to them, the tradition of selecting bride or groom in the same caste was in practice from ancient times. Only 10% respondents were of the view that inter-caste marriage is not bad, but must be done after consulting with the parents.

Attitude of the College Students Regarding Gender Equality,In India, a preferential treatment was extended to male children within a family. Generally speaking, a girl is considered as a *Praya Dhan* (Praya Dhan is a saying; it means that girls have to marry into another family, so they are not supposed to be the member of the original family; that's why girls are considered as Prayadhan) and spending money on their education

was considered to be of no use as she would leave her parents' home and go another family. Keeping this question in mind, the researchers tried to find out the views of the college students towards gender equality. It was found during the study that all the respondents believe in gender equality. According to them there must be no discrimination based on sex. They should be treated on equal terms.

Majority of the respondents (60%) were also of the view that no reservation in jobs, enrollment, etc., should be provided for either on the basis of gender, caste or religion. 40 % were of the view that instead of reservation in jobs, etc., reduced school/college fees or additional scholarships should be provided to the girls. They have to prove themselves without any help. There must be open competition so that the deserving candidates reach the right place. Thus, it was clear from the above analysis that a positive approach was developed among the college students in the sense they believe in gender equality and want equal treatment to members of both genders.

**Views regarding Superstitious Beliefs,**In this era of information technology, superstitious beliefs are still prevalent everywhere, village, town or big cities. However, the beliefs, interest, values and attitude, and practices are in the process of tremendous change.

In the present research work researchers tried to find out the opinion of the respondents towards superstitious beliefs (a belief which has no basis in scientific and logical reason/s and which cannot be applied everywhere as a universal fact may be considered as a superstitious belief). However, it is, indeed, difficult to define what a superstitious act is. So, the researchers carefully observed the activities and beliefs and treated those beliefs and activities (not based on logical reasons) that restrict the productive behavior of individuals as superstitious beliefs or practices. Examples given below in the next paragraph as part of the analysis will reveal this position.

It was found during the study that majority of the respondents (65%) have faith in superstitious beliefs. It was found during the study that pregnant women in the villages are not allowed to do anything.

They were kept in separate room/s for a period until they gave birth. Another superstitions belief found in the village was cat-crossing. When an individual walks toward another place in order to perform some work or the other, if a cat crisscrosses his or her path, he or she will change their direction or postpone his or her work for a day because cat-crossing is generally not considered auspicious. About 90% of the respondents readily agree with the view that cat-crossing brings bad luck. No social change so far has been seen on the life of rural people in this area.

**Views regarding Determinants of Status,**In traditional Indian society, status is usually determined by the gender, caste and money. Status may be determined by other factors such as education and intelligence in modernized communities.

According to Ralph Linton status are of two types.

1. **Ascribed status** Ascribed status is the social status a person is assigned at birth or assumes involuntarily later in life.
2. **Achieved status** Achieved status is a social position a person takes on voluntarily that reflects both personal ability and merit (Gupta & Sharma, 2001:158).

In the present study the researchers tried to find out the view of the college students regarding the determinants of status. It was found that majority of the respondents, 80

% believe in achieved status. According to them, in this era of information technology, nothing is impossible if you have adequate zeal to succeed. Everything can be achieved. So, according to them, the main determinants of status are education and intelligence. Only 20% believe in ascribed status, that is, status determined by money. Thus it was clear from the above analyses that majority of the students believe in achieved status.

Opinion regarding Traditional Health Practices, Women in Uttarakhand suffer mostly due to the child delivery practices. In the rural areas some of the traditional practices still continue, though education, rising economic standard and social awareness have somewhat reduced their suffering. Many women who deliver babies are still subjected to isolation in unhealthy conditions, deprivation of proper nutritional food and other amenities due to false beliefs. Also there is also widespread practice of Dais as “Baby Deliverers” in villages and small towns. These daises (midwives) are experienced in traditional ways of delivering babies. These traditional midwives are preferred by elders in the family rather than the qualified nurses and doctors. It was found during the study that majority of the respondents (57%) still believe in Dais. According to them, they are more experienced than doctors because they are doing it for decades, embracing several generations.

In Uttarakhand, more than 82 % of the deliveries occur at home in rural areas. More than half of these get assistance from dais. Only one of seven births that occur outside a medical facility receives a postpartum check-up within two months of delivery. Facilities available for emergency obstetric care are grossly inadequate in the rural hill area. Public health facilities in Uttarakhand consist of an extensive network of Government health institutions catering to the health needs of the people. These include district hospitals, 49 Community Health Centers (CHCs), 232 Primary Health Centers (PHCs), 1765 Sub-Centers and 389 State Ayurvedic Dispensaries (SAD) which dispense medical services to the far flung rural populace. However, the network of dispensaries and hospitals is not adequate and the access to health services in the rural areas still remains a challenge. This problem is further compounded by the non-availability of trained doctors, paramedics and diagnostic equipment in the interior areas.

Rural families have more faith in dais instead of doctor. One of the important reason behind this is low level of awareness and unwillingness of doctors to visit rural hill area. Almost one third (32 %) of women in Uttarakhand are undernourished as per the weight for height index or the body mass index. Nutritional deficiency is more prevalent among rural, illiterate women and women belonging to households with a low a standard of living. Thus life of people in the area is same as before. No sign of improvement has been clearly seen so far.

### **Conclusion**

A number of striking findings emerged from interviews with youth that warrant further attention. A positive approach of the youth towards gender equality has been seen, but other important issues which need attention are neglected by the youth. In this era of modernization, globalization and information technology, youth are in the stage of transformation. They are still in the stage of transition. Major problem is employment 90 percentage youth want to go Delhi, Mumbai and metro cities for job.

Migration is main problem. Youth want to change his life style and they want to change in hill society. Many youth says that if government provide job in our hill area they never migrated. We can only hope that as the time passes a new approach may be developed among the young people and a major social change may be seen over the years.

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