

Participation of Students in Politics

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Students and Politics

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Students and Political Agitations

The question of the participation of students in politics has always evoked a lot of discussion. It has been a very controversial subject. Two contrasting opinions have been expressed by the two groups of people. Both the groups are equally convinced of the merits of their cases. The discussion goes on between the students, teachers, politicians and other well-wishers of the student community. In spite of their best efforts, no satisfactory or convincing solution has so far been found out.

Those who oppose the participation of students in politics put up a strong case. They argue that politics is a dirty game. It creates groups and parties and leads to permanent enmities. It disturbs the peace of mind of the students. The primary duty of a student is to pay single-minded attention to his studies. He is supposed to lead a life of penance or "Tapasya." He cannot and should not afford to take part in the luxury of politics.

Politics causes a great interference in the studies of the students. Interest in politics leads a student to an active participation in strikes, demonstration and processions. At times, it brings him into serious clash with the college authorities or the police. May be, he lands himself in jail. All this disrupts his studies and he is pushed off the rails. He loses his real purpose in life and goes astray. Participation in politics, thus, spoils a student's career and makes him useless for any purpose other than strikes, demonstrations and slogan shouting.

Those who support the participation of students in politics make out an equally strong case. They argue that education does not mean mere literacy. It means a total and all-round development of personality. Participation in politics leads to harmonious development of a student's personality. It makes him aware of what is happening in his country and in the world around him. It also develops in him the qualities of leadership. Instead of being a timid, shy book-worm, he

grows into an aggressive, dominating and alert young man who knows how to fight the battle of life.

Some people are of the opinion that students can really change the shape of things in the country. The old generation has miserably failed to deliver the goods. Rampant corruption and unprincipled politics have brought the country to the brink of disaster. Why should the students not rise to the occasion to stem the rot? They have given a lead in several countries and have proved to be the harbingers of revolutions. They can certainly bring change in the sad state of affairs prevailing in the country at present.

Participation in politics trains a student to be a good citizen. It gives him training in the democratic way of life. He grows into a responsible and cultured citizen who is an asset to the nation. It creates in him a sense of patriotism. He knows his duties towards his country. HE has a fair knowledge of the affairs of the world. He develops a debating skill and he can always put forward his point of view with force and conviction. He develops all the qualities of head and heart. He is trained for leadership. As a leader in the making, he develops such qualities as courage, sincerity of purpose, a spirit of service, sympathy for the fellow men, self-discipline and a devotion to duty.

Student period is the formative period in his life. A student must develop all such qualities in him during this period as enable him to lead a successful life. If he kept totally away from politics, he is likely to grow into a lop-sided personality. If we study the lives of our great leaders, we shall find that most of them did take an active part in politics even during their student days.

Now, it is difficult to pronounce any verdict in favour of one or the other point of view. The golden mean would probably be the best way out. A student should take part in politics but it should not be an active participation. All activities are good if one remains within reasonable limits. Students should, therefore, pay primary attention to their studies. They should, at the same time, keep themselves informed about what is happening around them. They should not hesitate from jumping into politics if the situation threatens the unity and the freedom of the country.