



Short Communication

Biological Attitude of Youth towards Social Development: A Case Study

KASHIF KAMRAN, ASHFAQ AHMED MAANN¹ AND KANWAL ASGHAR

Department of Rural Sociology, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad-38040, Pakistan

Corresponding author's e-mail: ashfaqmaan@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to explore the biological factors affecting youth's attitude towards social development. A sample of 600 respondents (15-29 years of age) was selected through multi-stage random sampling technique. Socio-biological characteristics of the respondents were found to influence their attitude towards social development. The policy implications related with the association of socio-biological characteristics are discussed.

Key Words: Socio-biological factors; Social development; Youth

INTRODUCTION

Young people often have little understanding of their own maturation and un-aware of the avenues available to them. They not only lack the basic information but also the power and mean to protect themselves from harm and to make informed decisions concerning their lives. The imagination, ideals, enthusiasm and energies of young people are vital for the continuing development of the communities they live. Pakistan has an unusually young overall population. Between 1995 and 2005, the global youth population, defined as persons between 15 and 24 years of age, has grown from 1,025 million to 1,153 million. Young people currently comprise 18% of the world population. Of all youth worldwide, 85% live in developing countries, reflecting a small increase since 1995 (World Population Prospects, 2002). Agriculture is the mainstay of Pakistan's economy and role of youth education is crucial to the sustenance of this sector.

Pakistan currently has the largest cohort of young people in its history (25 million aged 15-24) and subsequent cohorts are projected to be even larger (Sathar *et al.*, 2003; Anonymous, 2006). This study presents the most important asset and resource available to our nation, particularly at a stage of rapid modernization and technological innovation. This paper presents data collected from 600 respondents (15-29 years of age) on the association of socio-biological characteristics with their attitude towards social development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This cross sectional study was conducted in Lahore, Pakistan. A sample of 600 respondents was selected through multi-stage random sampling technique from two union councils. Distribution of the respondents according to their background characteristics has been presented in Table I. Socio-biological information including age of the respondents, marital status years of schooling, vocational training, father's years of schooling, mother's years of schooling, family type

and monthly income was collected on a well structured interviewing schedule consisting of open and close ended questions. Pre-testing was also done to examine the workability of the interviewing schedule.

Descriptive and bi-variate analyses of data were carried out. Chi-square test was applied to examine relationships between the variables. In order to assess the attitude of youth respondents towards social development, they were asked the statements on co-education, youth development, gender equity, women's higher education, women's involvement in family decisions, women's participation in business and politics, women's employment, small family norms and modern communication. Their responses on the Likert scale were computed to construct the index variable. Who attained low score was categorized as the lower favorable attitude of youth towards social development, while the high score was categorized as highly favorable attitude of youth towards social development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Role of youth is crucial to the development of the society, so the provision of opportunities for their betterment is a must (Anonymous, 2006). Majority (91.7%) of the respondent's were aware of changes happened in their attitudes when they entered into youth. Young people are social and economic capital of Pakistan. It is a demographic bonus and it must be managed through apt policy interventions (Anonymous, 2006). It is the time to recognize and value young women and men as a key resource and national asset and place their needs and aspirations central to national development. It would set down the foundation and provide mechanism for youth participation in social development in order to help young people become agents of their own change, transformation and development. The survey asked all the respondents that what role youth can aspire in national and local policies. Almost half (49.3%) of the respondents said that they can promote national interest followed by to develop the

Table I. Distribution of the respondents according to their background characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	
Age Group (in years)			
15-19	230	38.3	
20-24	214	35.7	
25-29	156	26.0	
Marital Status			
Single	428	71.3	
Married	164	27.3	
Separated	4	0.7	
Divorced	4	0.7	
Year of Schooling			
Illiterate	40	6.7	
1-5	44	7.3	
6-10	184	30.7	
11-12	146	24.3	
13-14	120	20.0	
15-16	66	11.0	
Vocational Training			
Yes	214	35.7	
No	386	64.3	
Father's Year of Schooling			
Illiterate	82	13.7	
1-5	64	10.7	
6-10	160	26.7	
11-12	96	16.0	
13-14	146	24.3	
15-16	52	8.7	
Mother's Year of Schooling			
Illiterate	181	30.2	
1-5	167	27.8	
6-10	162	27.0	
11-12	42	7.0	
13-14	42	7.0	
15-16	6	1.0	
Family Type			
Nuclear	272	45.3	
Joint	306	51.0	
Extended	22	3.7	
Monthly income			
1000-10000	358	59.7	
10001-20000	196	32.7	
20001-30000	30	5.0	
30001 and above	16	2.7	
Siblings in Household			
Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
1	11	5.22	1.88

Table II. Relationship between Socio-Biological characteristics and Attitude of youth towards social development

Socio-biological characteristics (Index variable)	Attitude towards development			Total F%
	Low F%	Medium F%	High F%	
Low	10	34	70	114
	8.8	29.8	61.4	19
Medium	8	90	274	372
	2.2	24.2	73.7	62
High	8	30	76	114
	7.0	26.3	66.7	19
Total	26	154	420	600
	(4.3)	(25.7)	(70.0)	(100.0)

Chi-Square value = 14.364**, **Highly significant at P<0.01

locality (25.5%) and self development of youth (25.2%).

The bivariate level analysis indicated the relationship between socio-biological characteristics of the respondents with their attitude towards social development. A higher the influence of socio-biological characteristics, the lower favorable will be the attitude of youth towards social development (Sathar *et al.*, 2003). Table II indicates that 2.2% of the respondents who achieved medium score on the socio-biological characteristics (index variable), they also attained low score on the attitude towards social development (index variable). The respondents

had low score (7%) on attitude towards development (index variable) and high score on socio-biological characteristics (index variable). About 74% of the respondents had medium score on the socio-biological characteristics, while a high score (66.7%) on the attitude of youth (Table II). Therefore, there was an association between socio-biological characteristics and the attitude of youth towards social development. This indicates that medium influence of socio-biological factors highly favors the attitude of youth towards social development and higher the influence of socio-biological factors highly favorable is the attitude towards social development (Qidawai, 1996). Chi-square test applied to examine the association between the socio-biological characteristics and the attitude of youth towards social development indicated highly significant results (Table II). As influence of socio-biological characteristics on the respondent increases, their attitude towards social development also increases (PIHS, 1998).

Young people are the most important resource for a country's future. The aspirations of Pakistan's youth are well expressed and defined in terms of what they want to achieve and the lives they want to live. Unfortunately, the reality of their lives does not correspond with their aspirations. We need to address the gap between aspirations and opportunities combined with severe constraints. Undoubtedly, education is the major transition in the life of a youth, which is a modulating factor in their world of information and exposure and influences their subsequent transitions to work, marriage and childbearing (FPAP, 2002). The lack of gender-equitable access to schools is a major obstacle to achieving universal primary education. The issue of access to schooling is further compounded by the poverty experienced by many young people.

CONCLUSION

The development of positive social attitudes is important for the agricultural and biological development of Pakistan. Based on the present findings, it is suggested that broad spectrum surveys based on basic biological parameters such as age, matrimony, health condition, diet intake, sexual behavior and desire etc. are imperative to ascertain the role of youth on firm footings in the national development.

REFERENCES

- Anonymous, 2006. *National Youth Policy (2005-06)*. Ministry of Youth, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, Pakistan
- FPAP (Family Planning Association of Pakistan), 2002. *Sexuality and Reproductive Health: Knowledge and Attitudes*, pp: 14-55. Final Report
- PIHS (Pakistan Integrated Household Survey Project), 1998. *Pakistan Integrated Household Survey, Final Results, 1991*. Islamabad: UNDP and Federal Bureau of Statistics
- Qidawai, W., 1996. *Assessment of Sexual Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices in Young Males Presenting to General Practitioners in Karachi, Pakistan*. Dissertation, Karachi: College of Physicians and Surgeons, Karachi, Pakistan
- Sathar, Z.H.M., A. Faizunnissa, M. Sultana, C. Lloyd, J. Diers and M. Grant, 2003. *Adolescents and Youth in Pakistan 2001-02: A Nationally Representative Survey*, p: 21-98. Islamabad/New York: Population Council
- World Population Prospects, 2002. *Revision* (United Nations publication, Sales. No. 03. XIII. 7)

(Received 03 March 2008; Accepted 29 May 2008)