Consequences of Youth Bulge in Pakistan

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Abstract

The present study was designed to explore the effects of Youth Bulge in Pakistan. Youth bulge" emerges at population dividend pyramid in which this part of the population cannot achieve their goal, consequently they have to adopt retreatism mode of adaptation to get their target. It is often due to a stage of development where a country achieves success in reducing infant mortality but mothers still have a high fertility rate. The result is that a large share of the population is comprised of children and young adults, and today's children are tomorrow's young adults. Youth often plays a prominent role in political violence and the existence of a "youth bulge" has been associated with times of political crisis. The population pyramid of Pakistan represents a large youth proportion and our government is not using that youth in positive way and not providing them opportunity for development, this situation creates frustration in youth that leads them towards conflict, unrest and violence. This study was focused on the opportunity and motives of the youth bulge situation in Pakistan in the lens of youth bulge theory. Moreover, it gives some suggestions to utilize youth in the development activities and avoid youth from criminal activities in Pakistan. The present research was conducted in the metropolitan entities of Punjab, Pakistan. A sample of 300 respondents was taken from three randomly selected metropolitan entities (Faisalabad, Lahore and Rawalpindi) of Punjab Province of Pakistan. Information regarding demography, household, locality and other socio-cultural variables related to causes and effects of youth bulge in the state was collected through a well structured interview schedule. Chi-Square, Gamma test and multiple linear regressions were applied to measure the influence of various independent variables on the response variable.

Keywords: Youth bulge, Consequences, Violence, Conflict, Social unrest, Crime, Metropolitan entities, Chi-square, Gamma, multiple linear regression

1. Introduction

"Youth bulge" is a demographic expressions frequently emerges at population dividend in which this part of the population cannot achieve their goal, consequently they have to adopt retreatism mode of adaptation to get their target. According to the UN-associated Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), UN agencies define the youth bulge as large cohorts (in excess of 20%) between the ages of 15 and 24 in relation to the total mature population. Other definitions expand the range to include the 15 to 29 age group (Imai et al., 2008). Research found that states have large number of young people have more chances of violence and conflict. Moreover, it is observed that the lack of jobs or development within a country may lead to the disillusionment of the youth and could possibly result in communal unrest. This unrest and

conflict depends on youth's prospect either it is meet to their desires or not. Further research suggested that political and economic conditions were significant determinants of conflict (Moser and McIlwaine, 2006).

It is frequently related to the stage of progress where a state got success in the reduction of child death rate reducing infant mortality rate but mothers tranquil have a high ratio of birth. As a result the portion of children increase that grow into young adults. Within passage of time these children of today converted into the young adults/youth of the future that demand prosperity from the states in all walks of life. If desires unmeet than they play an important part in violence and social unrest. This continuation of a "youth bulge" has been connected to the times of government crisis (Goldstone, 2001).

The rapid growth rate of population also enhance radically put stress on naturally occurring property such as food, water and economic systems that created instability in the state, especially for those societies where the youth portion is greater. This situation in the region creates a lush environment for the terrorist organizations and extremist groups to hire, prepare, and carry out terrorist activities. These groups cause a noteworthy and growing threat around the world and for that country that experience youth bulge to their community as well as state (Zinni, 2000).

There was only 32.5 million population of Pakistan in 1947 and now it is 186million. Due high birth rate Pakistan is facing the population transition, it is estimated that Pakistan is standing on the sixth position in the major populated states that is main check on development. The population of Pakistan has doubled between 1975 and 2005, and the United Nations estimates that 54 million people will be added in the next 15 years (Leahy et al., 2007; Huntington, 1996; Moller, 1968). US Bureau of Census analysed in 2010, that there is 62 percent people were fallen in active age group but only 30.1 percent of the total active age group take part in the income generating activities. This large proportion of young people did not intrinsically unsafe and violent by birth. It is the responsibility of the sate and political elites that provide them jobs, skills and counselling for their expression of though and capability that may pull them out to the extremism, terrorism and crimes. Next generation of Pakistan will facing the major problems, because there will 85 million new people added in the state in future decades (GOP, 2012-13). This increase in population creates problem for state because provision of education, food and other necessity of life and take care of large group of children will be a difficult mission for a community to fulfil the desires of its population. The stakeholder now focus on the youth bulge and want to take benefit from this in the coming years because if government haven't offering opportunity and development agenda for them, consequently social unrest and disorder will be taken place in society. By making the national youth empowerment and capacity building in response to youth bulge in Pakistan all the problems and security concerns are vanish by using youth potential in development of the nation (Blattman and Miguel, 2010; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Fearon and Laitin, 2003).

But unfortunately there is a limited policy to address the youth bulge issue in the developing countries, particular in Pakistan. Moreover, it is tranquil connected to the provision of services like health, education, jobs and political affiliation rather than the youth empowerment and capacity building. No doubt that these basic needs are important for the young people but the empowerment and capacity building and involvement in policy making increase the rate of youth welfare in Pakistan (Ostby, 2008).

2. Theoretical Framework

Theoretical perspectives give a framework for the research or study. All theories provide reasoning as why a phenomenon is occurring in the society and in the reflection of theory research can analyze the phenomenon in a specific direction to predict or find out the consequence of the phenomenon. A frame work is necessary to address the intensity/gravity of the problem. Following frame work will be used in this study.

2.1 Social Structure Theories

Social structure theories are linked to cultural disparities, class and delinquency areas. These theories also examine the various socio-cultural organization relationship and process that influence behavior. Theories related to this perspective attempt to explain the factors within any social setting that cause a youth to become involved into violence/conflict and criminal behavior or remain stable or law building.

2.2 Social Reaction Theories

Social reaction theories claim that conflict is a result from the politically powerful individual and group for example Government. Social theory of anomie explains that a large number of people who find themselves at disadvantages

relative to legitimate economic activities. This concept refers to inconsistencies between societal conditions and individual opportunities for growth fulfillments and productivity within society. The term anomie has been referring to those people who experience personal frustration and alienation as a result of anomie within the society (Shoemaker, 2000).

2.3   Choice Theory

The belief that individuals choose to commit a crime, looking at the opportunities before them, weighing the benefit versus the punishment, and deciding whether to proceed or not.

The main assumption is the large proportion of youth that are not involved in healthy and creative activities. Government is not providing them opportunities and not using their skills, so they are involved into the violent conflict terrorism, crime, civil disorder and other forms of social unrest and conflict.

3.   Objectives of Study

To explore the causes of youth Bulge and analysis of its effects in Pakistan and to suggest some possible measures for coping youth bulge situation

4.   Material and Methods

The methodological techniques and ways of analyzing the observations play a significant role in social research. Social scientists have commonly been using comprehensive sociological approach and advance techniques in social research in the modern era. Social scientists now use the sophisticated methodological tools and techniques in social research. Therefore, methodology is a frame for researcher. "The methodology is an arrangement of clear set of laws and actions on which the whole research build (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996)". The validity, dependability and precision of analytical analysis depend upon scientific methodology. In present study quantitative and qualitative approach was used. The present research was conducted in the metropolitan entities of Punjab, Pakistan. A sample of 300 respondents was taken from three randomly selected metropolitan entities (Faisalabad, Lahore and Rawalpindi) of Punjab Province of Pakistan. Information regarding demography, household, locality and other socio-cultural variables related to causes and effects of youth bulge in the state was collected through a well structured interview schedule. Univariate and multivariate analysis was done to check the relationship between the variables. For this purpose Chi-Square, Gamma test and multiple linear regressions analysis was applied by using SPSS version 17.0.

5.   Results and Discussions

Data Analysis and interpretation is the major part of the research. Without these steps, generalization and prediction cannot be achieved which is the target of the scientific research. Generalization and conclusion are drawn on the basis of characteristics and attitude of the respondents. Results were presented in the form of Bivaritae and Multivariate analysis.

5.1   Research Hypothesis 1: Prevailing inequalities in society is responsible for youth conflict that affects the state in the shape of Lawlessness, state militancy, violence/unrest

Table 1: Association between existing inequalities in society and their effects on the state

H_0: Inequalities and state effects are independent/no association

H_1: Inequalities and state effects are dependent/associated

Inequalities in the society are responsible for the youth conflict and social unrest		Youth bulge effects the state resources in the shape of			Total
		Lawlessness	Militancy	Violence/unrest	
To Great extent	Count	4	36	97	137
	% of Total	1.3%	12.0%	32.3%	45.7%
To Some extent	Count	56	39	10	105
	% of Total	18.7%	13.0%	3.3%	35.0%
Not at all	Count	42	7	9	58
	% of Total	14.0%	2.3%	3.0%	19.3%
Total	Count	102	82	116	300
	% of Total	34.0%	27.3%	38.7%	100.0%

Test	Value	D.F.	P (Value) Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	152.028	4	0.000**
Gamma	- 0.799	--	0.000**

** = Highly Significant

Table 1 describes the independence between the inequalities in society and their effects on state. The value of chi-square and Gamma shows the highly significant association between the two variables. Therefore, the null hypothesis that, "Prevailing inequalities in society is responsible for youth conflict that affects the state in the shape of Lawlessness, state militancy, violence/unrest" is rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted. There strong association between explanatory and response variables. The research results coincide with Moser and Rodgers (2005) argue that there is a link between violence and unequal access to employment, education, health and basic physical infrastructure. They argue that situations of widespread, severe inequality heighten the potential for alienated, frustrated and excluded populations (particularly younger men) to engage in different forms of violence, including economic-related gang violence, politically motivated identity conflict and domestic violence. Results match with Francis (2008) that there is an association between high proportions of youth in the population and a rise in political violence, civil unrest, state repression and state militancy. Indeed countries with a large proportion of young adults in the population are much less likely to attain a stable liberal democracy than countries with a more mature age structure. There is no direct casual link between a youth bulge and an upturn in violence or extremism. Therefore, statements of this kind obviously tend towards generalization and cannot be fully endorsed. They must be cross-referenced against more sophisticated political analyses and above all their validity must be checked in terms of each national situation. It is not possible, however, to do without them, because they are always one of the instruments available to us for assessing the risks of instability in societies afflicted by the youth bulge problem. Likewise, research results match with Frances (2008) argues that horizontal inequalities (defined as inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions or cultural status between culturally defined groups) are an important cause of violent conflict. There is an increased probability of conflict occurring where socio-economic horizontal inequalities are high, especially when these are consistent with political inequalities.

5.2   Research Hypothesis 2: Youth bulge creates problems for state like extremism, terrorism and crime

Table 2: Association between youth bulge and types of problems being faced by a state that had more youthful population

H_0: Attributes Youth bulge and types of state problems are independent/no association
H_1: Attributes Youth bulge and types of state problems are associated

Countries with more youthful population experience more conflict/violence		Type of problems faced by society due to youth bulge			Total
		Extremism	Terrorism	Crime	
Strongly Agree	Count	8	29	101	138
	% of Total	2.7%	9.7%	33.7%	46.0%
Agree	Count	56	48	3	107
	% of Total	18.7%	16.0%	1.0%	35.7%
Disagree	Count	37	13	5	55
	% of Total	12.3%	4.3%	1.7%	18.3%
Total	Count	101	90	109	300
	% of Total	33.7%	30.0%	36.3%	100.0%

Test	Value	D.F.	P –Value (Significance)
Pearson Chi-Square	169.631	4	0.000**
Gamma	- 0.817	--	0.000**

** = Highly Significant

Table 2 explains the independence between youth bulge and problem a state faced due to youth bulge. The value of chi-square and Gamma shows the highly significant association between the two variables. Therefore, the null hypothesis that, "State problems like extremism, terrorism and crime is a function of youthful population i.e. youth bulge or youth bulge creates problems for state like extremism, terrorism and crime" is rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted. Results were coincide with Urdal (2004) concludes that countries with large youth cohorts do have higher rates of conflict than countries with smaller cohorts but he contends that there is no clear threshold as to how many young men make

countries more prone to conflict. Furthermore, he adds that youth bulges are more likely to cause armed conflict when combined with economic stresses. Likewise, Population Action International (2007) report concluded that countries with very young and youthful age structures are most likely to experience civil conflict. Countries in transitional category are less vulnerable to civil conflict and can experience significant benefits if countries take advantage of reduced dependency ratios (which allow greater personal savings and government spending). Countries with a mature age structure are the most stable, democratic and highly developed. Same results were also found by Khan (2011) that Youth bulge increase the crime in the state, juvenile delinquency is a reason of youth bulge. The youth delinquent behavior spans from mugging, mobile snatching to murder. Likewise, Francis (2008) found that there is an association between high proportions of youth in the population and a rise in political violence, civil unrest, state repression and state militancy. Indeed countries with a large proportion of young adults in the population are much less likely to attain a stable liberal democracy than countries with a more mature age structure.

5.3 Multiple Linear Regression Model

Table 2: Influence of various explanatory variables on response variable (Youth Bulge/Conflict/Deviance): A multiple linear regression analysis

Independent variable	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	$t_{cal.}$	Significance (P-Value)
	b_i	Std. Error	β_i		
(Constant)	0.841	0.408		2.061	0.040*
Social Change (X_1)	0.276	0.061	0.250	4.529	0.000**
Low Income Generation Opportunities (X_2)	0.296	0.068	0.230	4.341	0.000**
Economic Recession (X_4)	0.280	0.054	0.263	5.176	0.000**
Poverty (X_5)	0.236	.051	0.213	4.629	0.000**
Un-equal Educational System (X_6)	0.173	0.051	0.168	3.432	0.001**
Inequalities in the Society (X_7)	0.136	0.047	0.127	2.891	0.004**
Sources of Learning Deviant Behaviour (X_8)	-0.228	0.096	-0.140	-2.368	0.019*

Response Variable: Youth Bulge
Adjusted R^2 = 0.835
F = 152. 648
P-Value (Significance) = 0.000**
** = Highly Significant
* = Significant

The variable step wise description of regression model is given below:

The value of regression coefficient i.e. b_i=0.276 shows a highly significant relationship with p-value=0.000 for the variable "social change" indicated that any type of social change like urbanization, industrialization and immigration process caused 0.276 point increase the youth bulge and violent conflict in society. The inference clearly indicates that social change had significant effect on youth bulge and violent conflict. Research Statistics were coincide with Goldstone (2002) and Rodgers (2009) found that 'modernization' i.e. urbanization and industrialization create conditions ripe for social violence as traditional social institutions break down and are gradually replaced by 'modern' ones. The highly significant P-value=0.000 for the regression coefficient b_i=0.296, for the variable "low income generation opportunities" that increase the risk of youth bulge and violent conflict had at least 0.296 points. The result shows that there is a highly significant association between the low income generation opportunities and violent conflict in the state. Research finding was acknowledge with Collier (2000) found that the willingness of young men to join a rebellion depends on their other income-earning opportunities. If young people are left with no alternative but unemployment and poverty, they are likely to join a rebellion as an alternative way of generating an income.

The highly significant p-value=0.000 with regression coefficient b_i=0.280 for the variable "Economic recession" shows a strong relationship that increase the youth bulge and deviance 0.280. The inference describes that economic recession and youth bulge/unrest had highly significant association. Research results were acknowledge with Marcus and Gavrilovic (2010) concluded that the effects of the global economic crisis have been uneven, very few countries have been unscathed by the immediate and knock-on effects of declining demand for exports, reduced remittances, reduced opportunities for migrants and declining aid budgets. The effects of these on employment, public sector revenues and services have been compounded by sharp rises in food and fuel prices, impacting severely on poor people and pushing many millions more into poverty that leads towards social unrest, youth bulge and violence. Likewise, Results also

acknowledge with Ortiz and Cummins (2012) concluded that the global economic crisis hit many countries just as they were experiencing a youth bulge a demographic trend where the proportion of persons aged 15-24 in the population increases significantly compared to other age groups. The jobs crisis is also severely threatening children and poor households worldwide through higher incidences of hunger and malnutrition, illness, child labor, lower educational outcomes, children being left alone and even abandoned, vulnerability to ongoing and future shocks, domestic violence and social unrest.

The value of bi=0.173 with p-value 0.001 for the variable "un-equal educational system" caused an increase of 0.173 unit in the dependent variable. The result shows that un-equal educational system and youth bulge had a highly significant relationship. Results were coincide with Ladbury and Hussein (2008) argue that in the Pakistan the style of education (in madrassas and state schools) leaves young people vulnerable to extremist narratives as it relies on rote learning and unquestioning acceptance of authority. Moreover, they highlight the importance of the power of the messengers (religious teachers, preachers and militant organizations) in influencing young people to get involved in violent extremism. Again this is an area for further research. Likewise, Sambanis (2002) also suggested that large young male bulges are more likely to increase the risk of conflict in societies where male secondary education is low and faced unequal educational facilities.

The p-value 0.004 with regression coefficient bi=0.136 for the variable "inequalities in the state" caused increase 0.136 point in response variable. The inference shows that there is a strong relationship between both variables. The present research results coincide with Moser and Rodgers (2005) argue that there is a link between violence and unequal access to employment, education, health and basic physical infrastructure. They argue that situations of widespread, severe inequality heighten the potential for alienated, frustrated and excluded populations (particularly younger men) to engage in different forms of violence, including economic-related gang violence, politically motivated identity conflict and domestic violence. Research results match with Frances (2008) argues that horizontal inequalities (defined as inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions or cultural status between culturally defined groups) are an important cause of violent conflict. The value of regression coefficient bi= -0.228 with p-value=0.019 for the variable "sources of learning criminal behaviour" caused the increased in 0.019 point in response variable i.e. youth bulge and violence. The result points out that the sources of learning criminal behaviour had a significant influence on predicate. Research statistics match with Leon & Weinburg (2010) concluded that young people are more likely attached to the social and electronic media so they are more influenced from these sources. Social and electronic media aware them from the world situation like economic recession, trigger events etc. When they aware from theses situation, they feel relative deprivation and become frustrated why they have not enough opportunities for them in the state. Moreover, they learn the aggressive and criminal behavior from the media about the rebellion groups and join them for their economic benefits and learn about new types of committing crime as compared to mature population.

6.   Conclusion

It was concluded that present youth bulge in Pakistan was the result of high birth rate in the past, mis-management and unjust in Pakistani society. Therefore, large youth cohort did not find any prestigious place in the society that leads them towards conflict. The results draws from multiple linear regression model reflects that unemployment, poverty, un-equal education, trigger events, economic crisis, political instability and inequality in the state were the main reason of youth involvement in unrest, violence, crime and conflict. Moreover, majority of the youth did not believe on government policy.

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