Youth Bulge, a Forecast of Violence in Developing Countries

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ABSTRACT: The present study has been designed to explore the causes and effects of Youth Bulge in Pakistan. However, youth bulge is a part of population segment which create problem for the whole society. The youth bulge is a common phenomenon in many developing countries due to a stage of development where a country achieves success in reducing infant mortality but mothers still have a high fertility rate. The present research was conducted in the metropolitan entities of Punjab, Pakistan. This research probe the Information regarding demography, household, locality and other socio-cultural variables related to causes and effects of youth bulge in the state. Qualitative information was gather through focus group interviews that was randomly conducted from three selected metropolitan entities (Faisalabad, Lahore and Rawalpindi) of Punjab Province of Pakistan. On the basis of findings it was concluded that large unproductive youth cohorts in Pakistan creates problems for the society in the form of crime, militancy, lawlessness, unemployment and creation of sub cultural youth wings.

KEYWORDS: Youth Bulge, Violence, Developing Countries, Focus group interviews.

1 INTRODUCTION

"Youth bulge" is a demographic expressions frequently used to describe a population in which the share of young people is radically large in contrast to other, elder age groups. 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 King & Olivia, 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 (and not the youth population in and of itself) were significant determinants of conflict (Moser & McIlwaine, 2006). Youth bulge is a widespread phenomenon in many emergent states. 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. After some 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).

Similarly, the entire team of economist did not consider that young people danger to safety; some of them are in opposition that large youth proportions in the pyramid of a region create space and motives for improved funds and reserves for the development of economy. Comprehensive evidence were found in the world that per capita income of a state increase rapidly as the young people who are lies in the working age (Mason & Lee, 2004). 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 states and 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).

1.1 YOUTH BULGE IN PAKISTAN

From the last few months, in Pakistan developers, scholars and policy maker pay attention to the youth bulge that are shown in the center of the population pyramid of Pakistan. This large youth proportion attracted the attention of the whole society and describes the proponent of high rate of birth and low rate of mortality or death. There was only 32.5 million population of Pakistan in 1947. High fertility rate in Pakistan is responsible for this youth bulge. (Fuller, 2005). 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 can be make development and reach at number four in the 2040. 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, Engelman, Vogel, Haddock & Preston, 2007; Huntington, 1996; Moller, 1968). US Bureau of Census analysed in 2010, that there is that 62 percent people were fallen in active age group but only 30.1 percent of the total active age group take part in the development activities. This large proportion of young people did not intrinsically unsafe and violent by birth. It is the sate and political elites that provide them jobs, skills and counselling for their expression of though and capability that push them to the extremism, terrorism and crime (Alesina & Perotti, 1996; Østby, 2008; Stewart, 2001; Nafziger & Auvinen, 2002).

Next generation of Pakistan will facing the major problems, because there will 85 million new people added in the state in future decades. 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. Every year the rate of birth increase that added more young boys and girls who feel alienation, frustration and congested place in the state. The change in population structure in Pakistan wants: To control on birth, Provide education to all, Placement of the increasing active people in industries and other job markets to attain the MDGs in Pakistan (Blattman & Miguel, 2010).

The stakeholder now focus on the youth bulge and want to take benefit from this in the coming years because if society did not have opportunity and development agenda for them than its result will be social unrest and disorder. 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 (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Fearon & Laitin, 2003). But unfortunately there is limited policy making towards the youth bulge in the development, government and public policy 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).

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical perspectives give a framework for the research or study. All theories provide reasoning as why a phenomenon is take place or occurs 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.

1.2.1 THE YOUTH BULGE THEORY

The main assumption is the large proportion of youth that are not involved in healthy and creative activities, government not provide them opportunities and did not use their skills are involved into the violent conflict terrorism, crime, civil disorder and other forms of social unrest and conflict (Heinsohn, 2000).

1.2.2 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 (Brown, 1998).

2   OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- To dig out the determinants and consequence of youth Bulge in Pakistan
- To advocate some reasonable strategies to overcome the problem of youth bulge
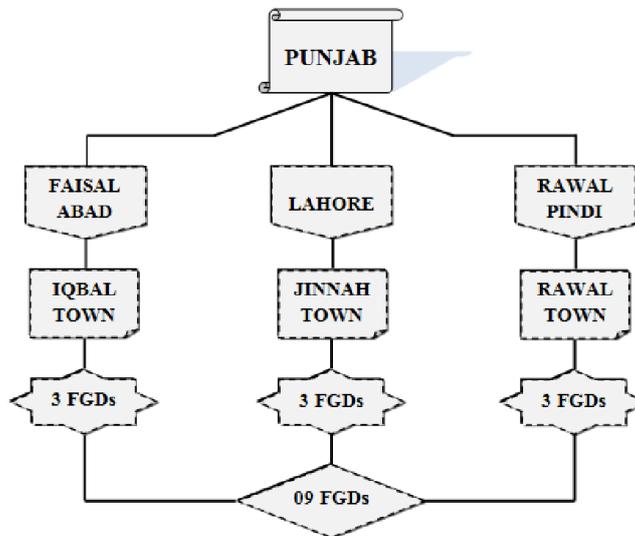
3   METHODOLOGIES

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 & Nachmias, 1996)". The validity, dependability and precision of analytical analysis depend upon scientific methodology. In present study quantitative approach was used.

3.1   SAMPLE

In present study multistage random sampling technique was used, because it is an appropriate technique for drawing sample from large population with limited time and cost. According to this technique, sampling is done in two or more stages. The nature of sampling units change from one stage to another and final stage provides the required sampling units i.e. units of analysis (Moser & Kalton, 1979). At initial stage of sampling, three metropolitan cities (Faisalabad, Lahore and Rawalpindi) were selected randomly from all 36 districts of Punjab. Then one town were selected from each selected cities in second stage of sampling. In district Faisalabad, Jinnah town was selected. Likewise, selected towns from Lahore and Rawalpindi districts were; Allama Iqbal town and Rawal town respectively. In third stage of sampling six union councils (two from each town) were selected. At final stage a nine focus group interviews were conducted (three from each city) (GOP, 1998). In this study qualitative technique of information collection was used. Qualitative analysis is an effective tool for obtaining information regarding values, beliefs, opinions and behaviour of specific population (Mack *et al.*, 2005). The qualitative information was gathered through Focus Groups Discussion.

3.2   DATA COLLECTION

Researchers conducted nine focus groups in March-April 2013, the first of which was used as pilot test of the script questions. Based on the feedback, one question was dropped from use in the remaining three groups. Excluding data from the question that was dropped after the pilot test, results from the pilot focus group are included in this report where those data appeared to reinforce ideas expressed in the other groups. An interview guide/check list is prepared for collecting the information. All discussions featured several open ended questions. Facilitators used probes at their discretion and these varied across groups. The focus group discussion sessions were arranged with the youth groups and educated community members in each district of the study area.

Sampling Frame for Focus Group Interviews

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4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The main focus of the study was to explore the causes of youth Bulge and analysis of its effects in Pakistan therefore, probing questions were also asked according to the need of the situation. Most of the responses given by the key informants were in local languages (Urdu and Punjabi) that were translated into English language. Present portion covers the view points of key informants in FGDs, relevant to concerned topics and conclusions of qualitative analysis.

A. AWARENESS LEVEL ABOUT YOUTH BULGE

- **What do you know about Youth Bulge and where you hear about it**

Most of respondents did not aware with the youth bulge situation in the country but when the researcher describes this thing in simple language they become able to respond. They said that when the birth rate in a country is high and country did not control on that then the country face youth bulge because this high birth rate leads towards overpopulation. Where the large proportion of the population have to be in aged 15–24 that phenomena known as youth bulge.

One respondent add more;

> *Pakistan ma birth rate both zaida hy rozana he kafi tadad ma bachy paida hoty hain es lea Pakistan ma young logo ki tadad barh rahi hy aur us ma roz ar oz azfa he ho raha hy. Es waja se yahan per youth ki tadad zaida hy aur ye situation wo tammam mulik face kr rahy hain jaha per birth rate zaida hy.*

There is high birth rate in Pakistan and it is increase continuously that is the reason of youth bulge in Pakistan and the other countries that did not control the birth rate are facing the same situation. This respondent got information about the issues by from a conference held in Gujranwala by BARGAD (NGO). Most of the respondents hear about this from media and Speeches from PTI leaders.

- **Why Pakistan is facing youth bulge situation and this issue is positive or negative**

There is high birth rate in Pakistan, it is control on death rate but there is no control on birth rate. People did not follow the family planning practices due to socio-cultural practices in the countries. Sometime religious thinking or religious ideology also becomes hurdle in the way of implementing Family planning policy. One respondents added more that there is existing illiteracy in Pakistan is a hurdle in the way of follow family planning policy.

> *Zaida ter log family planning k mutaliq kuch nae janty. Kuch log jo thoda both janty hy wo b mazhabi aur garelo (domestic) halat ki waja se es per amal nae krty kiu k zaida bachy status ko buland krty hain. Es k elawa hamri society ma "Son preference" b both zaida hy jis k lae log her waqt koshish krty rehty hain. En tamam chezaion ki waja se bacho ki tadad zaida hoti hy jo youth bulge ka sabab banti hy.*

There is illiteracy in Pakistan most of the people did not aware from family planning practices. If some of them familiar with family planning, they did not follow it due to religious ideology and domestic conditions or demand for more children. Moreover, the trend of "Son Preference" is very high in our society and people continuously trying for male children and this thing increase the birth rate and number of children that leads the country towards youth bulge. The youth bulge is often seen as a negative issue. Because large population of adolescents entering the labor force and electorate strains at the seams of the economy and polity, which were designed for smaller populations. This creates unemployment and alienation unless new opportunities are created quickly enough. Yet the 16-30 age range is associated with risk-taking, especially among males. In general, youth bulges in developing countries are associated with higher unemployment and, as a result, a heightened risk of violence and political instability.

B. CAUSES OF YOUTH BULGE

- **What are the most important factors in creation of Youthful population in Pakistan**

All the respondents were agreeing that high birth rate, low death rate and social change like urbanization, industrialization are important cause for the creation of high youthful population in the country.

- **According to your opinion what are the Causes of youth involvement in negative activities? Share it.**

People says that youth bulge is considering a negative issue because the more working age population wants more jobs this thing creates unemployment among the youth that leads them towards deviant behavior, because when they are unemployed have no enough opportunities this thing frustrated them and mostly leads them towards crime. Inter and intra

group conflict. Sometime this violent unemployed youth creates counter cultures in the society against the dominant culture. Young postgraduate student added that:

When the population is increased and jobs are not available, this thing creates poverty among them and this poverty creates a violent youth mob that creates civil war and unrest for government and often collapses the government.

Another respondent added that:

Youth is often committing crime by learning from their peer

Agr ek berozgar larka kisi achy bandy k sath beth ta ho yo zarori nae k wo jurm kry kiu k ek mature admi us ki attention positive raky ga. Jab k agr koe larka kisi aise logo ya dosto k sath rahy ga jo kud bury kaam krty hain to wo kud b un se negative behavior he seky ga.

When an unemployed young person make a company with mature person than he will be learn some positive behavior and did not always learn negative behavior. On the contrast, if he makes company with friends or groups that are involved in deviant behavior than definitely he learns negative behavior from them.

So, we claims that unemployed and poverty did not always leads the youth towards crime and conflict, learning deviant behavior is also very important because some people have good jobs but sometimes involved in negative behavior.

- **How Economic recession in the country is a cause of youth conflict/crime**

Respondents said that the global economic crisis is responsible for increasing unemployment in the world that increases the crime rate as well. A respondent said that:

Pakistan is facing the economic recession that creates poverty in the country because the labor market did not have enough job that become a reason of crime because people want money for their survival.

Another respondent add more:

There is huge energy crisis in Pakistan that effect the labor market i.e. industry in the country. This crisis increases the economic recession because investor did not invest in the Pakistan that badly affects the economy in the country and the industrialist shut down their industry and moves from out of the country. This thing creates more unemployment and the youth who are working in these industries put a revolt against the government and mill owner that take a shape of civil war/conflict and violence.

Another young female student of government and public policy said that:

The government did not have control on labor market. There is no proper check and balance system for price controlling and pay system in the market. This low wage amd high commodities price affects the economic system for a common man and he/she become involved in conflict and crimes.

Most of the respondents were agreeing that economic recession creates an environment for violence and conflict in the state. Our country facing the war on terror that damage our economy and international investment in the country that reduce the labor force and employment in the state and enhance the crime and violence in the Pakistan.

- **Illiteracy and Un-equal educational system is a major reason of youth violence. Give your opinion**

Most of the respondents said 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.

One respondent add more:

Young male are more likely to increase the risk of conflict in societies where male secondary education is low and faced unequal educational facilities. This suggests that the availability of large cohorts of poorly educated youth can support conflict.

Another respondent add more:

The unequal educational system unmet with the market need so the lack of technical and vocational trainings decreases the option of good jobs. When they did not proper job due to lack of educational skills they deviate from norms and commit crime as revenge against the society and adopt anti government behavior.

It was concluded that the effect on conflict risk by low education and large youth populations is particularly strong in low- and middle-income countries, although it seems to be contingent on structural economic factors. In particular, education does not seem to have a pacifying effect on large youth cohorts in predominantly agrarian societies.

- **Is the social and cultural environment in the country creates youth bulge**

Majority of the respondents was agreeing that social and cultural environment of the country is creating youth bulge. One respondent said (who is doing M.Sc. in Gender studies): The people of our country did not follow the contraceptive method due to illiteracy and sometime socio-cultural practices of the country. In this way they are continuous produced children that increase the young population in Pakistan that leads state towards youth bulge.

Another respondent added more:

Large proportion of youth is good for the development of any country. So, we don't need to control on birth the need to avoid problem is political will that eliminate the corrupting and provide better opportunity to youth. If the state handle the assets of this young generation in proper way it will be good.

The conclusion is that population increased due to social cultural environment but some people don't consider youth bulge as a problem. They think it could be use full if state utilizes them properly by providing opportunities.

- **Prevailing inequalities in society is a reason of social unrest and conflict. Give your opinion**

There are many inequalities prevailing in our country that creates conflict among the domestic, community level and national and international level.

One young girl added:

The women of our country faced discrimination in every field of life. They did not find their way for development instead of male family member. This behavior frustrated them and some time leads them in negative side.

One other respondent from labor class add more:

Hamry mulk ma hr tara ki inequalities majood hy, ghreeb log jin ki amdni both kam hy wo sara din kam krty hain aur rat ko un ko thodi si mazdoori dy di jati hain aur baz dafa wo b nae de jati k kal ly lena ikaty. Es mehngai k door ma jab logo ko rozgar nae mily ga, un ko necha samjy jae ga, malik aur nokr k darmian fasla ho ga to jurm aur jagro ki shra zarror bary ge.

He said that there are lots of inequalities existing in our country especially socio-economic inequalities, poor people who are working whole day and earn a few rupees at the end of the day and sometime the owner did not pay at night and says you will get pay of two days on next evening. In this situation a poor how can survive, the society see them in lower stratum and did not pay respect to them as they deserve. In this way the young person who is full of energy involved into crime and other types of social violence and conflict.

- **Do you think that political instability play a key to create this phenomenon**

From the day of independence Pakistan faced the political instability due to military interventions and some time the behavior politicians. This instability did not allow them to work on the development policies and governments always fail to overcome on corruption and implanting law and order, providing justice to society and insuring good governance. They did not focus on the development of industries and economy and educational initiatives. The after effects are that mostly state institution are instable that did not provide jobs to people. The government also has less focus on education and welfare. In this way political instability is responsible for this problem.

- **Is there lack of youth empowerment and population welfare policies that create this alarming situation?**

Almost all the key informants in FGDs have the same answer as above just some respondents added more that government has less focus on population welfare policies. If they launch some anti-natalist polices but they did not give a large scale impact due to religious and cultural practices in state.

One other respondent add more (student of leaders ship and management studies):

Pakistan is facing the war on terror and some other form of state militancy and our governments is investing a large part of the GDP on it rather than youth or other development policies. So for the youth empowerment and stability of nation governments should spent some more on the education and youth empowerment, capacity building and skill enhancement. Otherwise, the youth and conflict and violence increased day by day and nobody overcome these issues easily.

C. EFFECTS/SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF YOUTH BULGE

- **Have you knowledge about effects of youth involvement in negative activities on country? Share it.**

Youth is the large proportion of our country that is at the same time is harmful and useful for the nation/state. Bur unfortunately, our state did not provide them opportunity in education, industry, politics and media. These things damage their personality and they involved in negative activities like crime, conflict, violence and other forms of social unrest that increase lawlessness, militancy and crime ration in the state.

- **In your opinion what are security implications of youth bulge on state/effects of youth bulge on state resources**

The youth bulge when goes to the negative side, it has very sever security implications. It increases the crime ratio in state. The issue of lawlessness and extremism emerge. The youth is an easy victim for the terrorist organizations and international secret agencies. These agencies and organization use this golden part of our society for their own cause. When they are capture by agencies they work whole heartedly for their cause and destruct their own state for sake of money and some time revenge from the government that did not give them opportunity. They involved in terrorist activities and suicide bombing that damage the infra structure of society and image of the state at national and international level.

One respondent added more:

This thing not only destroys the physical infrastructure but also had psychological effects on the other youth and state members who are not involved in all this.

Another added more:

When the youth involved in destruction rather than development it also affects the economy of the state. The national and international investors did not invest in the economic sector and un-install their industries due to security implication. This thing creates problem for the whole society and more for the youth member who are not involved in all this activities. They did not find out proper job due to economic recession and safe housing where they live. This thing frustrated them and some time made them violent. And this violent youth put a revolt or social unrest/civil war against the government and had more sever implications of security in the state.

- **How large youth cohorts increase the risk of violence, conflict and unrest in the state**

The bulges may actually increase the risk of more organised forms of political violence. There is a particular focus on both opportunities and motives providing the conditions for conflict: respondents give following points regarding this:

Large youth cohorts will reduce recruitment costs for rebel organisations through an abundant supply of labour. This is particularly the case when the gain from joining is above alternative income earning opportunities.

If young people have limited or no opportunity other than unemployment and poverty, they are more likely to join a rebellion as frustrations mount. Socio-economic problems provide fertile ground for terrorist recruitment.

Prevailing unemployment amongst highly educated youth populations can cause frustration and grievances. High unemployment amongst the educated youth is one of the most destabilising and violent socio-political phenomena in any regime.

Semi-democratic regimes have greater openings for conflict over autocratic states. The potential is increased when large educated youth cohorts are barred from social mobility.

Another respondent added more:

Terrorism is an urban phenomenon, with states undergoing rapid urbanization under an increased risk. Historically youth bulges, in conjunction with rapid urbanization, have been an important contributor to political violence; especially where unemployment and poverty exist. The existence of youth bulges significantly increases the risk of conflict. However, no thorough review exists over government targeted programmes aimed at mitigating the security risk posed by youth bulges. More research is therefore required over youth bulges, political violence and remedial policies; particularly in regards to urban settings.

D. SUGGESTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Please share your opinion/view/knowledge to eliminate or reduce the youth bulge situation**

The present youth proportion is did not reduce it can be settle down by providing them job opportunities. Give them training, skills and career counseling. But in future we can avoid this situation by implementing population welfare and youth development policies. The government strictly had check on birth rate and tries to control it by launching and implementing family planning policies. There is a need of awareness through education that family planning is very useful for the country and the family member as well. For this purpose governments involves the religious leaders who guide the people with health department and told them the benefits of it.

- **Do you think that media, NGOs and international developments agencies play their role regarding overcome this problem**

The media, NGOs, civil society, social and development sector and international development and donor agencies assistance to the community. Media launch such programs that show the positive consequences of family planning. The NGOs and civil society arrange awareness seminar, walks and rallies and tell the benefits of family planning and reproductive health effects on women who had born more children. The international development agencies give the financial assistance to the civil society and local NGOs to arrange the programs for the population welfare.

One respondent added more:

Media and NGOs arrange capacity building programs for youth where they learn new skills and ideas about the social world and get proper career counseling for their future planning, and also learn how they become useful for their country.

- **Give your opinion how large youth cohort reconstruct the society**

Instead of viewing the youth bulge as a problem, we can harness the power of the younger population and improve access to quality education and employment opportunities. Through this, economic activity and stability in these low income communities can be greatly improved. One respondent added more:

if a high number of young people have access to employment, then the number of dependent people in a country will decrease and result in what is known as a 'population dividend'. So, it's important that state/governments effectively involve young people in all aspects of development to make programs more sustainable.

One other respondent student of Development studies:

Apart from their fundamental rights to participation and development, children and young people also have another clear argument to make in favor of increasing their involvement in the development of their communities. Young people are the 50% of the world population. So that, without the involvements of youth a country did not make development in all fields of life. For the development it is necessary to involve youth in all sphere of life.

5 CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded that present youth bulge in Pakistan is the result of high birth rate in the past. This 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 are the reason of youth involvement in unrest, violence, crime and conflict.

6 SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following Suggestion emerges directly from the findings described above.

- There should be a collaboration between government and international development agencies for youth development
- State should set up youth empowerment and population welfare policies that provide skills and training to the youth to match with labor market
- Government should work on capacity and peace building among youth and make them sensible person for the country
- The state should provide career counseling and education to the youth related to the job market.
- The linkages between different forms of violence (e.g. political, criminal, ethnic), whether there are any differences in the processes by which young people get involved and whether they move from one group to the other.

- Proximate factors such as the role of leadership and organisational dynamics, the role of identity politics, ideas, values and beliefs, and trigger events in mobilising individual and groups of youth into violence and how these might be addressed.
- The social characteristics of societies and communities that avoid major outbreaks of violence.
- More systematic studies of individual motivations for engagement in violence including specific studies of the motivations, role, experiences and consequences of young women's involvement in violence.
- The relationship between migration opportunities, including rural-urban migration, and youth violence.
- Furthermore, in any specific country or regional context, large numbers of youth often suffer the same conditions of exclusion, but most of them do not get involved in violence. This area is under-researched

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