

NHDR 2015 - Report on Consultation with Youth Group

A. BASIC DATA

Location	Sargodha
Date and Time	27 th November 2014
Topic	National Human Development Report 2015
Participant Profiles	20 male intermediate level students, between the ages of 16-17, who were studying pre-engineering subjects.
The NHDR Team	Zohra Sohail

B. OVERVIEW

The NHDR team held a focus group discussion with young male students of a private college of Sargodha, the boys were aged between 16 to 17 years and they were studying pre-engineering subjects. The purpose of the discussion was to engage with them in a discussion regarding the issues and problems that are pertinent to their lives. The discussion was conducted in the context of the upcoming UNDP National Human Development Report and largely focused upon education, employment and overall political landscape of the country.

C. KEY ISSUES & THEMES

Issues/Comments

- The male students were very well disciplined and eager to participate in the discussion. They were interested in finding out more about the human development report. A small percentage of the boys were reluctant to participate in the beginning but after a while they started to voice their opinions. The following issues/comments were made by the participants
- We don't have enough educational opportunities in Pakistan, we only have a few universities and college and there admission merit is very high
 - We aspire to be engineers but we know that there are very few engineering universities in Pakistan and these universities have a very high admission merit
 - The universities and colleges are very expensive, it is difficult to afford them
 - Teachers have poor attendance in government schools and hence the quality of education is low over there.
 - The syllabus of the government school is very poor and further the teachers do not cover the entire syllabus
 - The quality of education is not uniform across various government schools
 - The universities discriminate against the Urdu medium students
 - Students who are coming from government schools are used to Urdu medium education so they have a lot of problems with coping with the English medium syllabus of the colleges
 - The teachers from the government schools are not well educated
 - The teachers of government school have encouraged us to do rote learning hence our concepts are not clear, therefore, we face difficulties in our college

- Due to studying in government schools the very base of our education is very weak
- Even the educated teachers of the government colleges/universities are not passing on knowledge to the students of the government colleges
- The same teacher is more effective in transferring knowledge to students of private college as compared to the students of the government college as he knows that the administration of private colleges is very strict.
- Conveyance and transportation is a huge problem for us as the college doesn't have busses for male students.
- We have to travel on public transport to reach our college and due to that we tend to get late for our classes.
- The class size is very large in government schools
- The teachers of government institutes encourage their students to come to them for tuitions
- The private colleges are just a business and their primary purpose is to make profits
- Private colleges just want one of their student to get position in the examination boards so they only focus one or two particular students and they ignore the rest of the class
- Students have a limited subject choices in Pakistan, the subject choice is much wider in foreign colleges
- There is no equality in the private colleges, the teachers only focus on student who have attained higher marks in their matriculate
- The process of paper checking by the examination board is very problematic as the teachers tend to lose the exams and hence they arbitrarily allot marks to the students
- Government colleges don't have facilities such as air conditioner, canteen and good quality teachers. These things are available in the private college. Moreover, the students from private colleges tend to be better disciplined than the students of government colleges.
- The distance of educational institutes from the villages is very large so we have to stay in the hostels which is very costly
- There are a lot of problems with the hostels; the hostels are unclean , they lack basic facilities and are over populated
- The employment opportunities in Pakistan are only limited to engineers and doctors
- People with contacts in the departments tend to get jobs
- Nepotism is a great problem in our country
- Pakistanis are establishing their industries in other countries and hence it provides employment to the labor force of that country and it doesn't benefit the Pakistani labor force
- Everyone wants a big house and better lifestyle and that can only be achieved through becoming either an engineer or a doctor
- A boy mentioned that his neighbors and relatives have convinced his parents to disallow him from joining the air force as they believe that only engineering jobs are considered to be respectable
- We have to fight poverty and therefore we chose to take pre-engineering subjects
- We chose these subjects as either our neighbors or our friends were also studying these subjects

- Commerce and arts subjects are not well liked or respected by our society
- Our city doesn't have a proper engineering university and it is very expensive to go and study in a university which is another city
- Due to the new bus fare which is issued by the government of Punjab, the bus drivers refuse to let us travel in the bus until we pay the high fare
- All of us would want to work abroad as there are no jobs in this country
- Staying back in this country would mean that we are ruining our lives
- Due to shortage of electricity we don't have enough industries in Pakistan.
- Apart from teaching there are very few job opportunities for women but we support female employment in Pakistan
- Government has vacant positions but they have put their hiring on freeze
- We will search for local and international jobs on the internet and through newspaper advertisement
- We watch sports and news channels on the television
- Majority of students would either vote for PTI or for PML N but a few students claimed that there is no point in voting as the system will never change
- Our knowledge about politics comes from news channels, majority of the students watch either Samaa TV or the ARY news.
- Some of us read sports and news columns in the newspaper
- A large number of students had attended one or more political gatherings
- Students complained that the political workers only engage with them when they want the vote
- We should take our problems to political workers so they can take them ahead
- Voting is very important, especially for the betterment of our country
- While voting we look at both the party head and the person who is standing for the party
- A large number of the people in the villages vote according to the choices made by their village head
- We will not look at the *baradari* of the leader but rather we will look at his character and his past performance
- Cigarette smoking has become very common in the youth
- Youth misuses the internet and mobile phones and waste their time; instead they should study during that time.
- Youth should be given more education opportunities, they should be encouraged to study rather than participate in the labor force
- We fear that we will not be able to get jobs once we complete our education
- We fear that the country will continue to be peaceful
- We fear terrorism
- We fear that if we don't get admission in an engineering college then we will not know what to do with our lives
- We fear that if we don't get into an engineering college then we might indulge into inappropriate activities

- We fear that the prevalent indecency in our society will continue to increase
- Our seniors who are unemployed tend to discourage us from completing our education
- We hope that a better leader will rule our country and improve our situation
- Imran Khan is our hope for this country
- We are all positive about the future of Pakistan
- The opposition and the government should work together for the betterment of this country
- We should put an end to sectarianism and sectarian violence
- We should implement Islamic Laws in the country
- We should improve the quality of education of our country
- There should be equality in our country and hence we should put an end to nepotism and favoritism
- We should give job opportunities to our labor force this could be done by solving the energy crisis and starting new industries in the country
- The law and justice system should be equal for everyone. Currently, there is now law for the rich people, the rich can get away with anything
- We should put an end to the feudal system
- Our opinion is very important in terms of selecting our spouse and therefore our families will give us the right to choose our spouse but our families do not support dating.
- Most of the students will get the choice to select their spouse but the females in their households don't get this right
- We believe that females should get the right to select their spouse but they don't support dating.
- Some of the students believe that their parents have greater experience at life and therefore they should select their spouse for them.
- The students will be allowed to work anywhere in the country or abroad but they will not be allowed to work in Karachi as it is considered to be unsafe.
- While voting we should look at the welfare of our entire society.
- If we don't get admission in engineering college then we will either join the air force or take admission in BBA or a law program.

D. INTERESTING QUOTES AND EXAMPLES

- "There is no point in voting, every politician will just come in and crush the citizen, if the citizens are going to get crushed anyways then we might as well just support the status quo"
- " We are very excited about being able to vote"
- "There is a dawn after every dusk"