

Youth in Transition



The Challenges of Generational Change in Asia

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Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils

Edited by Fay Gale and Stephanie Fahey



Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
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YOUTH IN TRANSITION

The challenges of generational change in Asia

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The Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC)
in association with
The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA)

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AASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCILS

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1

Introduction

Stephanie Fahey and Fay Gale

Editors

We acknowledge the *Ngunnawal* Peoples, the traditional owners of the land on which Canberra, the capital of Australia has been built. We thank them for their long custodianship of this land. We pay tribute to all members of the *Ngunnawal* Nation, past and present.

This book has developed from a workshop held in Canberra under the auspices of the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC). Every two years the members of this Association send delegates to a week long workshop to discuss issues of common social importance in Asia. For this meeting, the thirtieth anniversary of the association, it was decided that the problems facing young people in a rapidly changing culture were a major issue for all of our member states.

The workshop was held in Canberra, Australia, where at the commencement Mrs Agnes Shea, a *Ngunnaawal* Elder and representative of the United *Ngunnawal* Elders Council, welcomed delegates to her country.

Youth in transition

Youth in transition is one of the most critical issues facing the Asia Pacific region today but it lacks conceptual clarity, is under-researched and fettered by outdated policy. The issues which confront youth and how they respond to them have varied

through time and place: from rural to urban and from country to country even from region to region. To compound the complexity of transition, the speed of change has accelerated creating additional identifiable intra-generational transitional issues. Within a single generation, the issues vary not only according to time and place but also according to the specific structure of the societal institutions in which they are embedded: gender, class, family structure, workplace, government and community organisations. Furthermore, within each country, youth are embroiled within a complex web of intergenerational relations. How intergenerational relations are played out within each country reflect the various stages of demographic transition, the levels of socio-economic development, cultural antecedents and the impact of globalization.

Although patterns of change affecting youth in the region are clouded by the specificity of time and place, and policy implications are coloured by government predilection, some interesting themes emerge within this volume which lead to a more comprehensive understanding of youth issues and future framing of research. The major part of the book discusses the difficulties facing young people today in each of some twelve countries. The first paper by Atal sets the scene for analysis of youth in transition in Asia. He surveys the emergence of youth as a subject of academic, political and institutional attention within Asia. He is at pains to emphasise that within Asia youth should be seen primarily as a resource rather than a problem. Arnett, Eckersley and Rosenthal present more generalized views of the impact of globalization on youth. They address the challenges which globalization brings including changing moral strictures, sexual liberalization and economic challenges. Hugo and Fahey address specific themes and how they impact on youth across Asia. Hugo focuses on the speed of the demographic transition across the region and the implications that the passing of the Asian youth bulge has on the economy and society. Fahey addresses the political engagement of youth in the region and the impact of new media in countries with diverse demographic profiles, economic levels of development and cultural antecedents. The remaining papers are country case studies, some of which are more narrowly focused than others, some focus on policy while others focus on changing behaviour. These differing perspectives and regional emphases cover a range of important and challenging, indeed confronting, social issues. These are presented in alphabetical order of the country: Gregory Phillips, Australia; Abdur Rahim Khan, Bangladesh; Hardip Singh Kingra, India; Mita Noveria and Aswatini Raharto, Indonesia; Ushioji Morikazu and Watabe Makoto, Japan; Rashila Ramli, Malaysia; Xiaoying Wu, People's Republic of China; Joseph Puyat, Philippines; Sang-Min Whang, Republic of Korea; Siri T. Hettige, Sri Lanka; Amara Pongsapich, Thailand; and Nguyen Thi My, Vietnam.

Definitional issues

In order to more easily navigate this volume two terms require clarification: the diverse meanings of ‘youth in transition’ and the definition of ‘youth’.

Youth in transition is used to refer to various shifts:

- Transition from one sector to another for example from school to work.
- Shift between generations for example from youth to adult.
- Spatial shifts for example migration from rural to urban locations.

Within these transitions between sectors, societal groups and geographical location, the research focus may be on changes in economic position and/or attitudes. Some studies are narrowly focused and concentrate only on the problems confronting youth such as the higher incidence of unemployment, alienation, suicide, drug use, and HIV/AIDS. The focus of these studies reflects the researcher’s underlying assumption that youth is a metaphor for ‘problem’. This as a starting point for the research may say more about the researcher than the subject matter.

The second definitional issue which confounds comparative studies of youth is the boundaries of the category. For convenience, most studies define youth using age definitions but there is no consistency between countries. The age definition of youth varies from 10-15, 15-24, or 10-35 years. Different cultural assumptions underpin the definition of youth in particular countries and are often based on the average age for rights of passage: marriage, parenthood, employment or voting. The assumption is that age defines the boundaries of a group which exhibits some homogeneity of attitudes.

Diversity within the category

The assumption of consistency of attitudes within an age category is clearly an overgeneralization. Youth attitudes and challenges diverge around variables such as culture, class, gender, marital status, parenthood, employment, geographic location and across time. By definition, the characteristics and attitudes of youth will change continuously as they transit through the category. Where this overgeneralization becomes problematic is in the implementation of youth policy. Youth policy is often built on the assumption that youth are the embodiment of problems such as unemployment, sexual promiscuity and delinquent behaviour which is set against the ideal of scholastic, respectful and disciplined. By default, government policy often focuses on the disadvantaged to the exclusion of those able to respond more positively to life challenges.

Importance of demography

Not only do the definitions of youth age categories vary from country to country, the demographic profile of these countries within the region also vary markedly. The distribution of the population across various age cohorts imbues particular generations with either strength or impotence.

Countries such as Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam are still experiencing rapid birth rates which create an ever-increasing pressure from youth in the demand for resources, services and jobs. Other countries which have experienced rapid economic growth have moved through the demographic transition to a point where birth rates have declined sharply. As a consequence, a youth bulge has appeared in which over 35 percent of the population is aged between 20-39 years as in Korea and China. With these numbers comes power especially in democratic societies. Other countries have moved from industrial to post-industrial societies with a prolonged period of lower birth rates. The population pyramid thus takes on a coffin shape and the power rests with the more numerous older generation as is the case in Japan where power rests with the more conservative gerontocracy. As the numbers and power swell in the older generation, political inertia sets in and in some cases transfer their costs to the younger generation. For example, medical costs may be subsidized through taxes whereas education becomes fee paying.

Issues confronting youth

The impact of globalization on the youth in Asia is having a profound effect. A major impact is the extension of the period in which people are defined as youth. With economic development, young people spend longer in education, marry later, have fewer children, and more women work. Of greater concern to the older generation is the apparent erosion of traditional values especially those which define the family such as filial piety, chastity for women, patriarchy and the extended family as an economic unit.

With increased globalization and economic development, the problems confronting youth shift. The more modern problems for youth arise from social alienation due to the demise of the support provided by the family. The focus of youth has shifted from the family and friends to the 'me too' generation. Youth are no longer satisfied to watch drama on television, they want to be in the drama; they no longer want to study literature they want to write.

Youth are more mobile than the older generation both geographically and socially and mobility often brings dislocation. Youth are more likely to move to cities in order to gain economic opportunity and as a consequence the residents of cities are on average younger than in the countryside. Competition for jobs is felt most

acutely in countries with rapidly growing populations. For those of the middle class and more highly developed economies, this challenge is interpreted as youth unemployment - a middle class luxury.

Gender bias within Asia is still pronounced in many of societies. Countries such as India, China and Vietnam still have a male child preference which is reflected in the gender imbalance of children. Male preference is also evident in many aspects of life including access to education and employment. Many young women are still caught between the roles of paid employment and domestic responsibilities. In the more economically developed countries such as Japan and Korea, women are voting with their feet. They shy away from marriage and childbearing; they live at home with their parents and follow their careers.

Creation of new public space for youth

Youth have always attempted to distinguish themselves from the older generation. Various techniques are employed including new language, music and clothing signatures. Contemporary generations of youth in Asia as well as other parts of the world have gone further to create a new public space for themselves in cyberspace through the creation and use of the internet and new media. What is profound about this new space is that the technology allows young people to modify their identities and to create new and multiple virtual identities.

Policy outcomes for youth

The challenge for governments in the region is to identify the issues faced by youth and to create policy which is well targeted and appropriate. States are beginning to move away from interventionist approaches where they dictate ideals and develop policies which reinforce these ideals. The trend now is to ease control and develop policies which address the diverse profile of youth and support them to reach their maximum potential.

The problem with policy in general is that it is crude in that one size is expected to fit all. Governments need to identify the diversity of needs of youth and develop more sophisticated policy which can accommodate this diversity. For example education policy which impacts on school curriculum needs to take account of diversity in ability, personal preference and labour market demands. Not every student needs an education which prepares them for university entrance rather, policy can nurture those who are orientated to business or the trades.

Future research on youth

Although the prominence of youth in the Asia region varies numerically with the demographic transition, youth will remain a critical component of societal change.

They generate the innovation within society – socially, politically and technologically. In order to foreshadow change in these spheres, one must understand the drivers of the younger generation.

To date, most research on youth in the region has been conducted by older academics. As a consequence, the tendency is for this research to be impressionistic, confined within disciplinary boundaries and lacking insight into the issues which confront youth. An argument can be made for youth to speak for themselves in the formulation of future research.

PART I

Youth in transition:
Changing concepts of youth

2

Youth in Asia: An overview

Yogesh Atal

Founder and first Secretary-General of AASSREC

Youth constitute an important segment of society. Yet, not much attention was paid to them until the 1960s. Very little by way of research was done, and the interest in them in the 1960s was aroused because they stirred a near revolution in the West.

It may be recalled that the 1960s witnessed widespread student unrest in Europe, which caused worry and drew the attention of the governments. Immediate steps were taken to resolve the crisis that was threatening to engulf the entire world. Treating the West as the reference group, student groups in other continents, including Asia and the Pacific region, also joined the protest movement against the political system, first to show their solidarity with the youth of the West, and then to express their disenchantment with the outcome of development exercises within their respective countries that failed to improve the social development profile, in particular improving the prospects for meaningful employment. Faced with such angry protests, international agencies were forced to put youth on their priority agenda.

It is interesting that while the movement of the sixties in the West was confined to the students, the governments and the international agencies developed programmes for the general category of youth. This must have been for two reasons: (i) in the West, where literacy rates were, and are, in the top decile, the categories of youth and student are almost synonymous; and (ii) youth was a neutral category compared to the students who were spearheading the protests. The

leaders of society felt the need to stem the growing alienation among them. Programmes were devised to involve the youth in development and to channel their energies in constructive work. Development programmes for the youth meant both: those addressed to the problems of youth, and those that involved the youth in development projects of the society. Care was taken to emphasise, however, that the youth were not a problem but a potential force that needed to be tapped. Quite naturally, all programmes were action-oriented. They showed the concern of the non-youth, and had a hidden patronising agenda, in the same manner as programmes related to poverty elimination, which are designed by the non-poor for the poor, the latter being at the receiving end.

While the programmes relative to youth were designed by the international agencies mainly in response to youth unrest in the West, they were implemented worldwide. Youth became a major target group for all developmental work. In Asia, a major spurt was given to Youth activities when UNESCO¹ convened the first regional meeting in 1978 in Kathmandu, Nepal, on youth Mobilization for Development. UNESCO also carried out a survey on the situation of youth that was published as *Youth Prospects in the 1980s*. This publication painted a very bleak picture. The world was then facing the crisis of chronic economic uncertainty, prevailing poverty, and growing scarcity of resources. The survey warned that these would adversely affect the youth and corrective actions should be taken to prevent further deterioration of the situation. An investment in youth was regarded as an investment in future.

When the United Nations announced the year 1985 as the International Youth Year (IYY) it gave further push to the youth agenda. Preparatory to the IYY, UNESCO Programme on Youth for Asia-Pacific region developed with three components:

1. Research on Youth related Problems and Issues;
2. Collection and Dissemination of Information regarding Youth; and
3. Assistance to Member-States in the formulation of Youth Policies.

Preparatory to the IYY, UNESCO joined hands with AASSREC² in assessing the situation of youth in Asia, focussing particularly on the problem of unemployment. In addition to commissioning a study on “Youth unemployment in Asia”, AASSREC organised a series of national symposia on “Youth and Future”, culminating in a regional symposium in conjunction with the 1985 biennial Conference of AASSREC, held in Bali, Indonesia. The outcome of this exercise was published in AASSREC publication titled *Youth in Asia* (1988). That was a landmark study.

* * *

Youth is a demographic concept that has both biological and sociological aspects. It relates to an age group that is transiting between childhood and adulthood. But,

sociologically it is a category, not a group. And this category may consist of several groups. As a category, represented by certain biological attributes, this is found in all societies, but the roles and expectations associated with it differ from culture to culture. The region of Asia and the Pacific is so vast and so culturally diverse that no generalizations can be made at the regional level without stating their limitations. Countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Japan, also Singapore and the Republic of Korea, resemble in their youth profiles the countries of Europe and North America, with high rates of literacy and, thus, “youth” and “students” becoming overlapping categories. But other countries with low literacy rates and high percentage of population still residing in the rural areas have relatively small percentage of the student population compared to illiterate and the rural youth. People in this category did not, in fact could not, treat the students of the West as reference group; and thus were not party to the student unrest movement of the 1960s. But that did not mean that the non-student youth in Asia or Africa did not have their own quota of problems. The campaign for the eradication of poverty and Universalization of Primary Education (UPE) that was initiated under UNESCO’s APPEAL (Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All) had the youth also as one of the target audiences.

The point I wish to emphasise is that youth in Asia is not a homogeneous group. Problems of the youth in developing and developed countries within the Asia-Pacific region are also widely different. The dissimilarities in the youth situation within the region can be related to different social, political and economic structures of the countries. In the countries where, for example, filial piety and joint family are the guiding principles of family and kinship organizations, the socialization of the young is of a different order compared to societies where the nuclear family is the norm. In the latter societies, the young leave their families of orientation to live separately and, thus, attain relative freedom from parental care and control. But in the South Asian countries where the joint family norm prevails, the family of orientation meets the obligation of providing the young with financial support for education and during the period of their unemployment. In such societies, the functional joint-ness, even where there is physical separation, offers a kind of social security net. Thus, unemployment in such societies has a different implication than the societies where nuclear family norm prevails.

In contrast, the multi-ethnic character, and presence of large number of students from other Asian and European countries in Australia pose peculiar problems. The 1985 study on Australia, carried out by J.J. Smolicz (1988) and published in the AASSREC monograph on *Youth in Asia*, tells us that the age-structure of the population in Australia was not steady, and the migration of people of all ages in that country caused an overall decline in its youth population. Youth here were concerned more with the problem of setting up their own houses, and were preoccupied with problems connected with employment, socio-economic advancement, and education. New Zealand, on the other hand, was preoccupied

with the problem of ethnic inequalities. The Republic of Korea faced the problem of militant student movement, but this was generated by factors other than those that caused student unrest in Europe in the 1960s; Korean students were protesting against the dictatorial regime and for the introduction of democracy.

These illustrations suggest that the problems encountered by the youth in these different social settings are very different. The dissimilarities in the problem profiles of youth in the countries are caused by the differential impact of the processes of modernization and globalization, and by the differences in economic and political structures. To mount workable programmes for youth development, it is essential to focus on the national variations rather than on commonality of the youth status.

A major difficulty in comparing the countries in terms of their youth profile is caused by the differences in the definition of youth. While the United Nations treats the age group of 15-24 as the core of the youth category, there are wide range variations. Nepal, for example, has set the lower limit at 10 for this age group, and India has stretched the upper limit to 35. Obviously, the people between the ages 10 to 15, and between the ages 24 to 35 have different problems compared to the core group. Even the core group can be subdivided between 15-20, and 20-24. The first subgroup of the core consists of those new entrants who are in the process of being recognised as youth and struggling to train themselves for their eventual entry into the adulthood with participation in the economy, and establishing their own family of procreation. The 10-15 age group should be seen as consisting of those preparing to enter the youth category and experiencing major physiological changes, such as menarche in the case of girls. Similarly, the 24-35 age group may contain people who are already out of the education system and are either waiting to be absorbed by the economy, or already in it, with different degrees of satisfaction.

For drawing up dependable youth profiles one also needs information on a set of indicators. Like the differences in the definition of youth, difficulties are also encountered in the identification and use of other indicators. Some work in this area has also been done in Asia. In November 1980, an Expert Group met, under ESCAP³ auspices, to develop a scheme of Youth Related Indicators. The meeting was titled: Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Country efforts for promoting Youth's role in Development. The scheme proposed by the Expert Group suggested following eight areas: Population, Health and Nutrition, Housing and Environment, Education, Employment and Manpower Development, Public Order and Safety, Community Development and Participation, and Culture, Leisure and Recreation. More than 450 items were recommended in these categories for the collection of statistical data. That was an over-ambitious list, and perhaps ideal if all such information could be collected. But no one was sure whether that was possible. To test its applicability, UNESCO⁴ converted the itemised list into a

questionnaire that was despatched to experts in nine countries of the region. For each of the indicators the expert was asked to answer the following questions: are statistics available on this indicator? If yes, then what is the source? And whether this indicator is relevant? If relevant, and statistics not available, then how such data can be generated. A meeting was convened in Sri Lanka in 1983, under UNESCO auspices, to review the results of this questionnaire and shorten the list of indicators in the light of the responses, while organising them in a more meaningful manner. This was reported in the UNESCO-RUSHSAP (Atal, 1980) publication from Bangkok under the title *Youth Related Indicators*. Using these indicators UNESCO got two country profiles prepared for India and Thailand and published them in the RUSHSAP Series of Occasional Monographs⁵. It was hoped that other countries would find the scheme useful and carry out similar studies.

Over the past few years the profile of youth in Asia has undergone dramatic changes. Today youth constitutes not only a sizable population but also a very high percentage of the literate and educated group in most of the developing countries. In the developed countries, of course, illiteracy among the youth was never a problem. Exposure to education has not only provided them with skills and information, it has also raised their expectations and facilitated the articulation of demands. It is important that the 1960s that saw student protests do not get repeated. If the rising discontent among them can be detected through our intellectual radars, and the observatory of indicators, timely action can be planned to avert such a calamity. It is a happy augury that the youth today are not seen as a problem group but as a potential resource for the country's development. Increasingly, governments are getting involved in programmes that are directed towards youth – for the betterment of their position and for the utilization of their skills. The youth are also no longer passive recipients of favours and privileges; they are busy carving out a role for themselves in the country's development process. It is in this changing context that we should evaluate the situation of youth in this region.

In the context of our region, youth aged 15 to 24 years today constitute nearly 17.4 per cent of our population. This percentage has come down from 20.6 in 1990, and is expected to settle at 15.4 by the year 2025. In terms of numbers, people in the core category of 15-24, were 258 million in the 1950s; in 1980, this number went up to 494 million, and touched the figure of 631 million in 1990. According to UN estimates, the youth population in this region today stands at 618,591,685. Of course, it may be noted that these figures are for 44 countries that are now included in this region. The new countries that are included were formerly parts of the USSR, namely, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The youth population in these additional countries stands at 25.63 million; the youth population for the rest of the region is 592,954 million. In terms of percentage of the youth population to the total population, the lowest is to be found in Tuvalu (11.9%), but its total population is less than 16,000.

Other low percentage countries are Australia (13.5%), Japan (12.8%), New Zealand (13.9%), and Singapore (12.3%). The highest ratio in mainland Asia is to be found in Bangladesh (23.5%) followed by Mongolia (20.7%), Iran (20.3%), and Vietnam (20.2%). Youth in India, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, and Sri Lanka constitute around 19 per cent of their respective populations. China, the most populous country, has only 15.5 per cent in this category, so is the case of North Korea (14.6%). It is interesting that all the Pacific Island countries, save Tuvalu, have youth populations ranging between 20% (Vanuatu) and 31% (Tonga).

An idea of the future size of the youth population can be had from the present percentage of population in the below 15 category. The South and Central Asia has 37 per cent in this age group, compared to 32 per cent in South East Asia, and 22 per cent in East Asia. The figures for Australia, New Zealand and Japan are 20%, 23% and 14% respectively (Population Reference Bureau, 2002).

All these figures indicate that growth patterns are different and there are different problems relative to youth. Larger size youth populations would require larger infrastructure for their training and a wider job market. We know that many Pacific island countries have witnessed higher suicide rates among the youth. But it still remains to be found whether such incidence is caused by their larger size, or lack of opportunities, or any other psychological factors.

One point is obvious. People in the youth category today in the Asia-Pacific region are as many as the total population of India in the year 1971. Just as the huge population of India is pluricultural – that is diverse in terms of several socio-economic and cultural indicators – so is the youth population spread in the various countries of this region. Just as no single policy can be formulated for India's youth, so is the case for the youth in Asia and the Pacific. It is also significant to mention that the youth constitute today nearly one-fifth of the world population, but only 3 to 4 per cent are to be found in the developed world and the remainder 16 to 18 per cent youth are located in the developing world of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This fact alone signifies that the problem profile of youth of the developed world is less relevant for the majority of youth. We need, a more comprehensive and detailed study of the youth of the countries in the developing world to formulate suitable strategies for their development. With such a heterogeneity that characterises the category of youth, it is not possible to think of a single recipe, or a single package of activities for all those who belong to this transient group. We must admit that this category goes on continually renewing itself, unlike the category, say of women, whose entry or exit from the category is caused only by birth or death. That is why youth profiles of yesterday are no longer valid for today. We need to continually update them because of fast rates of entries and exits from the category. For example, in the years to come, more and more people in this category are expected to be literate and educated, leading to a

convergence of student and youth status. Also it would mean a gradual rise in the number of educated unemployed compared to the uneducated unemployed. It may also show migration of the educated young from the rural areas to the urban centres.

Both the significant rise in their numbers and the problems the youth cause—ranging from demands for education to demands for employment, and occasional deviant behaviour – the youth deserve to be carefully studied. The demographic transition from high to low fertility has given rise to a youth bulge, which may return to its pre-transitional stage in 30 years after the onset of fertility decline, and then it may take several decades to stabilise at 12 per cent level, as is the case with New Zealand, Australia, and Japan. Such growth of the youth bulge implies delayed marriages and rising demands for school and college enrolment in the lower end sub group of 15-19. This may also affect composition of the labour force. Planning for schooling, for health care, and for provision of employment opportunities are all likely to be affected by the dramatic demographic changes in the Asian region.

Education and employment are the two areas that deserve careful attention while developing programmes and policies for youth. In today's world it has become extremely important to develop a culture of learning. The educational institutions are required to change their conservative role of reproducing social structures. In the midst of change they are supposed to equip their clientele in coping with it rather than follow the trodden path unquestioningly. They also have now new competitors in the form of surrogate schools, and mass media to inform, educate, and prepare the young for the society of the future. The role of surrogate schools in the training of youth in the developing countries deserves to be studied.

When the students of the industrialised world openly revolted against the education system in the early 1960s, it shook the complacency of those in positions of power, and those who administered the system of education. It was a clear indication of the failure of the education system to gauge the coming waves of change and suitably modify their curricula to prepare their students for the new set of challenges. This caused, and continues to cause, mismatch between supply and demand of manpower. It created what Thorstein Veblen (1928) had called “trained incapacities”, and it generated so much frustration with the prevailing system (see Merton, 1964: 197-198).

With some betterment in the system of education, a relatively higher percentage of the young today is literate and educated; although in absolute terms the number of illiterates is still continually rising, and most of these numbers come from the young and the developing countries. The existing educational infrastructure cannot accommodate all those who are eligible and willing to go to school, and the

economy is finding it difficult to provide the kind of employment that the educated young are seeking.

World Employment Report 1998-99 (ILO, 2000) tells that unemployment for young people remains at high levels; in some countries of Asia unemployment rates for the young people reach over 30 per cent in urban areas. These high rates are attributed to structural adjustment and privatisation programmes. The Report notes:

As new labour market entrants, poor economic growth places young workers especially at risk of unemployment. Employers initially adjust to signs of poor demand in the economy by cutting back on hiring new workers. And because skill levels tend to rise with work experience and access to in-firm training opportunities, young workers enter the labour market at a particular disadvantage when the demand for high skills is rising.

Unemployment is said to lower the household income and block the crucial development of skills that comes from work experience and on-the-job training. It is regarded as an obstacle to a smooth transition from adolescence to adulthood. Many analysts link joblessness to crime, drug abuse, social unrest and conflict. It is hazardous, in my view, to accept these hypotheses as proven facts. In my earlier essays on poverty I have questioned the link between poverty and unemployment, and education and poverty (Atal, 2002). I have argued that education alone is no solution to poverty as one finds the declining rates of illiteracy and rising rates of poverty; there are many who are educated and yet poor. If unemployment is said to cause poverty, then many educated unemployed should belong to the category of the poor. In the societies that have strong family ties, this assumption needs to be empirically tested. I believe that unemployment is a luxury of the middle class. A poor person cannot afford to remain unemployed. He may be misemployed, poorly paid, and be tortured to work for longer hours, or forced to push his school-going children to enter the job market (child labour), but this will not qualify him to be unemployed. On the other hand, a young person from the middle class family prefers to wait until till he gets the right kind of job, and not just any job, certainly not a menial one. He is able to do this because he has the family to support his unemployment; of course, this may add burden to the family, or delay the lessening of the burden of the family, but certainly not render the family poor. The instances of crime in which the young people are involved are certainly the unemployed in a large number of cases but they do not come from the poor class. This is not to deny the prevalence of crime among the poor; it is only to dissociate the link between unemployment, poverty and crime.

I know that Western societies may differ from such characterization, because of the prevalence of the nuclear family norm in which the young prefer to lead an independent life rather than be a burden on the parents. For them, employment is the main route through which to set up their own households. Also the day-to-day

changing scenario of employment in the Western countries is the result of higher degree of privatisation where hiring and firing depends on market conditions. But in the societies where privatisation has just begun, and jobs came from the public sector, persons do not lose their jobs once they are employed. Therefore, the unemployment statistics of such countries, as for example India, are not strictly comparable to statistics of countries such as Australia or the United Kingdom, or the United States. This, to my mind, is an interesting area for research particularly in the context of developing countries. Apart from analysis of secondary data relative to unemployment, which incidentally are not very reliable, there is need to research the unemployed to find out their class background, their skill profile, and the source of their support. It will equally be interesting to know how they use, or misuse, their period of unemployment and what efforts they make to enter the economy. The study of the informal sector, and the rise of the private sector with the arrival of multinationals in liberalizing economies have opened new opportunities for the educated and skilled persons. The IT skills are a new addition, and the young are in an advantageous position to cash in on them. IT linked employment in country-based companies, and the so-called “brain-drain” as “techies” (some call them “technological Coolies”) to developed countries has greatly influenced the employment profile, but it has not been studied. As a result, commentaries on unemployment remain couched in the vocabulary of discourse that has lost its relevance.

One common complaint is about growing alienation among youth seen in terms of breakdown of traditional values, family ties, and adoption of Western style. We are fed with the common criticism day in and day out that exposure to the Western media is uprooting our young who are losing touch with their culture and leaving their motherland for much greener pastures abroad. Such criticism is palatable and yet questionable. Research on migration supervised by me during my UNESCO days falsified many of these assumptions. Rather than focussing attention on what damage migration was causing to the place of arrival, the research in a few Asian countries tried to assess the impact of these on the places of departure. Quite unexpectedly, it was found that migrations to the urban centres by the youth, or to the Middle East, brought back modern culture to the migrants’ places of origin. Not only this, traditions got reinforced as family visits coincided with the celebration of a religious festival or a family function such as wedding. The repatriated money became a source for the improvement of the home and the habitat.

If one were to see the life-style of the so-called NRIs – the non-resident Indians living in distant lands – one would find that they have become carriers of Indian tradition, rather than fully lost to the alien world. The revolution in information technology has facilitated their links with the country of their origin. Watching cable TV telecast from India or other site brings India into their drawing rooms. The TV serials of the old mythological stories have reintroduced them to their

glorious cultural past and reinforced their attachment to the values of their parent culture. Even in India, Western media have difficulty in reaching the masses who have preferences for Indian programmes. Even English channels are developing a mixed tongue combining words and phrases of the vernacular. In such a context, it is worthwhile to study the attitudes, behaviour patterns, and values of the young before dismissing them as lost cases.

To substantiate my point, let me quote from two newspaper reports – one from Singapore and the other from India. In March 2003 issue of *Lycos Asia*, Shobha Tsering Bhalla talks of Generation Y who, she admits, “seek gratification like their Western counterparts, but differ in an important area – they have strong family ties”. Referring to favourable attitudes towards divorce or premarital sex found among 45% of the young surveyed, Bhalla says: “...such findings are always interesting for brand managers, the advertising industry, armchair behavioural scientists... and the like, the survey in question merely revisits an area that has been reconnoitred before but does little to plumb the depths of our youth”. She further says, “What makes more interesting reading and merits deeper discussion is the survey’s finding about the spiritual side of these young people. Buried within the newspaper report was this interesting nugget: ‘They are more enthusiastic about feeding their soul. Nearly half of those surveyed attended religious services at least once a month, while four in five take time out to ponder the meaning of just. When the general worldwide perception is growing of Generation Y as hopelessly self-interested and materialistic, it comes as a pleasant surprise – nay, an epiphany – that a significant number of Singaporean youth is inclined toward spiritual.’”

In India, *The Hindustan Times* – a leading daily – commissioned Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS) Mode to conduct a survey of the young between the ages 16 and 24 in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore and Chandigarh, and in some adjacent rural areas. The report of the survey published in the paper of 2nd February 2003 says this about the Generation NOW: “No matter what you read or hear about teenage rebellion, young people in India think highly of their parents. Cutting across gender, cities, and the rural-urban divide, young people bond well with their parents and don’t feel alienated or antagonistic towards them”. Even when the young choose their own spouses as many as 78 per cent of interviewees said that it was very important for them that their family accepts their decision. More important is the datum that 72% of girls and 52% of boys said that they would be happy to leave the decision to their parents. In terms of media exposure the report says: “Contrary to perception, international music channels like MTV and Channel V are only the third most-watched channels amongst urban Indians after National Geographic, Discovery, and Animal Planet”. Family entertainment channels were found to be the most favoured. There is also a striking similarity between Singaporeans and Indians when it comes to religion. The report notes: “Generation now believes deeply in religion and practices it in various ways – by

praying at home and at places of worship, by observing fasts and by celebrating festivals.”

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All over the world, there is a growing recognition of the need to involve youth in the process of development and to curb the tendencies towards alienation and frustration growing among the youth. It is a late, but welcome realization that the future belongs to them, and that the society should do everything possible to ensure a better future. Student demonstrations and youth protest movements contributed, no doubt, to enhance the urgency of the matter. They forced the world community to realise that it is perilous to ignore the youth. It has received the message that the present is not inherited from the past but is borrowed from the future. It is in the shaping of the future world that the countries are now eager to utilize the enormous youth potential, and the youth themselves are preparing to perform that role. We must realize that the future belongs to them. It is they, not we, who should decide the kind of future they want. It is they, not we, who would reject what they do not like in our heritage and the prevailing norms of behaviour. It is they, not we, who must make choices and fabricate innovations to suit the new scenario. We adults have to redefine our roles as co-partners with youth, rather than playing the proxy role as planners and decision-makers. We have to regard the youth not only as passive recipients of whatever the society offers but as creative individuals capable of fashioning their future.

The new perspective is to see the youth not as a problem group, but as a potential force, and that programmes be designed to utilize them for the good of the society. For this, it is important that we develop a good research agenda. At present, there is so much talk, but very little by way of research. We think of action and research when a situation becomes critical. That is a fire-fighting approach, and not a constructive one. Also when philanthropy and well-intentioned patronage guide our action there are chances of misplaced emphases and costly failures. They are not, and cannot, be substitutes for solid research, which provides a dependable basis for planning and evaluation. Close cooperation is needed between people of action and the research-minded social scientists. We need both independent studies on the various aspects of youth as well as critical evaluation of existing programmes and activities carried out by the governments and the NGOs.

NOTES

1. UNESCO stands for United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization.
2. AASSREC stands for the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils.

3. ESCAP stands for Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Its headquarters are at Bangkok, Thailand.
4. I took this initiative as UNESCO's Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, based in Bangkok, Thailand.
5. I served as the General Editor of the Series.

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3

Youth, cultures and societies in transition: The challenges of growing up in a globalized world

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Young people have always had to make the transition from childhood and adolescence to adulthood, in all places and all times. It is an inherent part of human development, to reach puberty, develop full physical and sexual maturity, and enter into full adult status. Virtually every society has some way of recognizing the transition to adulthood, sometimes with a formal ritual expressly for that purpose, sometimes by designating marriage or the birth of the first child as the defining marker of adult status, sometimes by making legal distinctions that mark a certain age as the dividing line between childhood and adulthood (Arnett, 1998; Arnett, in press).

What is different about our time, worldwide, is that today, almost everywhere, the transition of the individual from youth to adulthood intersects with the transition of the world toward a more integrated, more interdependent, more globalized society. Youth today are in transition not just from childhood to adulthood but in transition between two different ways of life.

Globalization is perhaps the word that best portrays the condition of the world in the early 21st century. Everywhere, but especially in developing countries, youth are growing up in a world much different than the one their parents and grandparents entered a generation or two ago (Arnett, 2002; Schlegel, 2001). There is today virtually no part of the world that has been left untouched by globalization, no culture that has been left untouched by globalization's long and relentless reach.

In this chapter I will present a general overview of the transition to a global society as it is being experienced by youth worldwide. First I will discuss some of the features of this transition that are common across societies, both positive features and negative ones. Then I will make some remarks about what I believe the future is likely to hold for youth in a globalized world.

Common features of the global youth transition

The central feature of the transition that youth worldwide are undergoing today is that it results in transformations in identity, i.e., in how people think about themselves in relation to the social environment. There are four aspects of identity that stand out as issues related to youth in transition in a globalizing world. First, as a consequence of globalization most youth in the world now develop a *bicultural identity*, one rooted in their local culture and the other stemming from an awareness of their relation to the global culture. Second, the pervasiveness of *identity confusion* may be increasing among young people in non-Western cultures. As their local culture changes in response to globalization, some youth find themselves at home in neither the local culture nor the global culture. Third, in every society there are youth who choose to join *self-selected* cultures with like-minded persons who wish to have an identity that will be untainted by the global culture and its values. Fourth, identity explorations in love and work are increasingly stretching beyond the adolescent years (roughly 10-18) into a post-adolescent period of *emerging adulthood*, roughly ages 18-29.

Bicultural identities

Several of the most prominent writers on globalization have argued that many youth now grow up with a global consciousness (Giddens, 1991; Robertson, 1992; Tomlinson, 1999). This consequence of globalization can be usefully conceptualized in terms of bicultural identities. The concept of bicultural identities has so far been discussed only in relation to the identity developed by immigrants and members of ethnic minority groups (e.g., Berry, 1993, 1997; Phinney, 1990; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997), but it can also be applied to youth in transition to a globalized world. What it means in this context is that in addition to their local identity young people develop a global identity that gives them a sense of belonging to a worldwide culture and includes an awareness of the events, practices, styles, and information that are part of the global culture. Their global identity allows them to communicate with people from diverse places when they travel from home, when others travel to where they live, and when they communicate with people in other places via media technology (such as e-mail). Television has been crucial in the process of promoting a global identity in youth, as it provides exposure to people, events, and information from all over the world. However, for future generations of youth the Internet is likely to be even more

important, because it allows direct communication with other people worldwide (in e-mail “chat rooms,” for example, or interactive computer games) and provides direct access to information about every part of the world.

Alongside their global identity youth continue to develop a local identity as well, based on the local circumstances, local environment, and local traditions of the place they grow up. This is the identity they are likely to use most in their daily interactions with family, friends, and community members. For example, India has a growing, vigorous high-tech economic sector, led largely by young people. However, even the better-educated youth, who have become full-fledged members of the global economy, still mostly prefer to have an arranged marriage, in accordance with Indian tradition (Verma & Saraswathi, 2002). They also generally expect to care for their parents in old age, again in accord with Indian tradition. Thus they have one identity for participating in the global economy and succeeding in the fast-paced world of high technology, and another identity, rooted in Indian tradition, that they maintain with respect to their families and their personal lives.

Although developing a bicultural identity means that a local identity is retained alongside a global identity, there is no doubt that local cultures are being modified by globalization, specifically by the introduction of global media, free market economics, democratic institutions, increased length of formal schooling, and delayed entry into marriage and parenthood. These changes greatly alter traditional cultural practices and beliefs. Such changes may lead less to a bicultural identity than to a *hybrid identity*, combining local culture and elements of the global culture (see Hermans & Kempen, 1998).

Increasing immigration has been specified as one of the forces promoting globalization (Hermans & Kempen, 1998), and identities become even more complicated for immigrants (Berry, 1993, 1997). They may develop identities that combine their native culture, the local culture to which they have immigrated, and the global culture, along with various hybrids, leading to a multicultural identity or a complex hybrid identity (a similar situation may be experienced by people who are members of cultural minorities but are not immigrants). Furthermore, people living in a culture to which immigrants have come may incorporate aspects of the immigrants’ culture into their own identities. Thus for an increasing number of the world’s people, as Hermans & Kempen (1998) observe, “Different and contrasting cultures can be part of a repertoire of collective voices playing their part in a multivoiced self” (p. 1118).

Identity confusion

As local cultures change in response to globalization, most youth manage to adapt to the changes and develop a bicultural or hybrid identity that provides the basis for living in their local culture and also participating in the global culture. However, for some youth adapting to the rapid changes taking place in their

cultures is more difficult. The images, values, and opportunities they perceive as being part of the global culture undermine their belief in the value of local cultural practices. At the same time, the ways of the global culture seem out of reach to them, too foreign to everything they know from their direct experience. Rather than becoming bicultural, they may experience themselves as excluded from both their local culture and the global culture, truly belonging to neither.

In terms of Erikson's (1950, 1968) theory of identity formation, we could say that in facing the issue of identity vs. identity confusion in adolescence, globalization increases the proportion of young people in non-Western cultures who experience a state of identity confusion rather than successfully forming an identity. Erikson's idea of identity confusion has been mostly ignored in identity research in favor of Marcia's (1994) identity status paradigm, but it is worth reviving for application to the psychology of globalization.

In rapidly changing cultures, youth may conclude that the worldview that was part of their cultural tradition is irrelevant to the new global society they are entering. Worldviews are based on ways of life; as traditional ways of life change in response to globalization, traditional worldviews may lack compelling emotional and ideological power for young people. The decline in the power of collectivism for young Japanese and Chinese is a good example of this (Naito & Guillen, 2002; Stevenson & Zusho, 2002; White, 1993). At the same time, some youth may have trouble finding meaning in the worldview that is the basis of the global culture, with its values of individualism and consumerism. This new worldview is not indigenous to their culture, and in fact may directly contradict their cultural traditions.

Identity confusion among young people may be reflected in problems such as depression, suicide, and substance use. A variety of cultures have experienced a sharp increase in suicide and substance use among their young people since their rapid move toward joining the global culture (e.g., Burbank, 1988; Condon, 1988; Dasen, 2000; Liechty, 1995). For example, three investigators in Ivory Coast studied changes in problems among young people aged 16-20 during the period 1980-91 (Delafosse, Fouraste & Gbobouo, 1993). Using clinical interviews and data from police and social workers, they reported an increase over this period in suicide, drug abuse, armed aggression, and male and female prostitution. The authors of the study attributed the increase in problems to the conflict young people experienced between the values of their traditional cultures and the values of the West.

Self-selected cultures

The values of the global culture are based on individualism, free market economics, and democracy, and include freedom of choice, individual rights,

openness to change, and tolerance of differences (Friedman, 2000; Giddens, 2000). These values dominate the global culture in part because they are the values that prevail in the countries that provide the driving energy behind globalization, i.e., the West, especially the United States. Also, because the global culture crosses so many cultural and national boundaries, in order to unify people across these boundaries the values of the global culture necessarily emphasize tolerating and even celebrating differences. This means that the values of the global culture are defined in part by what they are *not*: they are not dogmatic; they are not exclusionary; they do not suppress people or groups who have a point of view or a way of life that is different than the majority.

For most youth worldwide, what the global culture has to offer is appealing. Except where nondemocratic governments have assiduously attempted to prevent their citizens from adopting the practices of the global culture – countries such as Saudi Arabia, North Korea, and Cuba – people all over the world – especially youth – have demonstrated that they will embrace the global culture if given the chance (Friedman, 2000). Indeed, one of the most vehement criticisms of globalization is that it threatens to create one homogeneous worldwide culture in which all children grow up wanting to be like the latest pop music star, eat Big Macs, vacation at Disney World, and wear blue jeans, baseball caps, and Nikes.

However, this dire forecast is unlikely to come completely to pass, and not just because most youth are likely to develop a bicultural identity that includes a local identity alongside their global identity, as described above. The other way that cultural diversity will continue to exist is that some youth will choose to become part of a self-selected culture that provides more meaning and structure than the global culture. Most youth jump with enthusiasm onto the global bandwagon, but there will always be those who will seek deliberately to mark themselves off as different, as people who refuse to join the herd. Some do this by joining a self-selected culture of fellow dissenters.

Often these self-selected cultures have a religious basis. The global culture is relentlessly secular. Mostly, religious issues are ignored in favor of consumerism, entertainment, and the pursuit of individual enjoyment. To the extent that religious issues exist at all in the global culture, they do so only in the form of the value of tolerance, the idea that religious beliefs should not be a source of discrimination or conflict. But for some people, such not-values fail to provide the structure and meaning they need. They turn instead to religious systems that reject secular values and promise eternal, transcendent truths.

One example of a religiously-based self-selected culture is found in the work of Debra Kaufman (1991), who described “newly-Orthodox Jewish women.” These are women who grew up in secular Jewish homes in the United States, but in their youth they concluded that the secular values they were raised with provided an

inadequate foundation for living. They turned instead to Orthodox Judaism, converting in their teens or early twenties. Despite the strict sex roles of Orthodox Judaism and the limitations it places on women, they embraced it because it offered them the structure of a definite place in the world, the meaning conferred by Orthodox Jewish theology, and the roots of a long, durable tradition.

Orthodox Jews are a relatively small group, but fundamentalist movements of various stripes have been observed worldwide, in both Western and non-Western societies (Marty & Appleby, 1993). Many of these movements arose in the late 20th century as a direct response to the changes taking place as a consequence of globalization (Giddens, 2000; Marty & Appleby, 1993). Usually, fundamentalists are a minority culture within their society, composed of persons who have chosen to reject social changes in search of unchanging, eternal truths. Although fundamentalist movements differ in many ways, they have in common an adherence to a rigorous code of conduct; a belief in a sacred past superior to the present; a sense of being besieged by the rest of the world; and a belief in a hierarchy of authority, with men over women, adults over children, and God over all (Marty & Appleby, 1993).

Self-selected cultures may also be nonreligious. For example, one type of self-selected culture defines itself explicitly against globalization. Vigorous organized protests against the perceived globalization efforts of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have taken place in recent years, mostly by youth, for example university students in Latin America (Welti, 2002). Although the number of people involved in such protests thus far has been small, the number may grow if the perception grows that globalization leads to cultural disenfranchisement, political and economic instability, and an increasing gap between rich and poor (Larson, 2002; Saraswathi and Larson, 2002).

In a related development, ethnic, religious, and national identities have become more salient and explicit in many places in recent years – in places as diverse as Russia (Stetsenko, 2002), Latin America (Welti, 2002), and the Arab world (Booth, 2002) – as a direct and conscious counter-response to the homogenizing force of globalization (Larson, 2002; Guillen, 2001). For example, in Samoa there has been a recent revival of the traditional rite of passage of decorating the bodies of male youth with tattoos in elaborate geometric patterns from the midsection to the knees (Arnett, 2004; Côté, 1994). Previously this ritual was considered essential to sexual attractiveness and was necessary for being accepted as a legitimate candidate for adult status, but now it is seen as part of an explicit attempt by youth to resist the total absorption of their indigenous culture into the global culture (Côté, 1994). Thus aspects of identity that may have been assimilated without reflection in previous generations have become consciously self-selected as the pressure of globalization has grown.

The spread of emerging adulthood

Another worldwide change promoted by globalization is evident in the timing of the transitions to adult roles such as work, marriage, and parenthood. The timing of these transitions is occurring later for youth in every part of the world. The global economy is highly technological and information-based, which means that the amount of education required in order for young people to prepare for the best jobs is stretching steadily longer. As they pursue education for longer, they postpone transitions into adult roles. Also, as traditional hierarchies of authority weaken under the pressure of globalization and young people increasingly gain control over their own lives, they generally choose to wait longer to enter marriage and parenthood. By now the median ages for these transitions are in the late twenties in every industrialized society, and rising rapidly in developing countries (Arnett, 2000; Arnett, in press).

The fact that transitions into adult roles have become so delayed and stretched out by now in many societies has led to the spread of a new period of life, *emerging adulthood*, that extends from the late teens to the mid-twenties and is characterized by self-focused exploration of possibilities in love, work, and worldviews (Arnett, 2000; Arnett, in press). Instability is also a characteristic of emerging adulthood, because of the many changes that take place during these years in residence, love partners, and jobs. This period now exists for most young people in industrialized societies and is growing in prevalence for young people in developing countries. It is possible that as a result of globalization, emerging adulthood will eventually be a normative period of life for young people worldwide.

The spread of emerging adulthood is related to issues of identity. Where a period of emerging adulthood is present, youth have a longer period for identity explorations in love and work before committing themselves to long-term choices. By experiencing different love relationships, different educational possibilities, and different jobs, they learn more about themselves and they clarify their preferences and abilities.

Globalization spreads emerging adulthood because globalization promotes economic development (if unevenly and sometimes with abrupt reversals), and a high level of economic development is necessary in order for a period of emerging adulthood to exist. Emerging adulthood is possible only in societies where economic development is high enough that the labor of young people is not urgently needed. They are allowed to spend their late teens and early-to-mid-twenties exploring possibilities for self-development because there is no pressing need for them to contribute to the economic well-being of their family. Economic development also expands the range of occupations that exist in a society. This provides emerging adults with enhanced opportunities to find a job they believe fits well with their developing identity. However, in some regions the number of

university graduates is increasing more rapidly than the available jobs, so that many of them find themselves unemployed after graduation (e.g., Booth, 2002; Nsamang, 2002). Even in countries where jobs are plentiful, as the number of possible jobs expands emerging adults face the challenge of sorting through a sometimes daunting range of options in the search for one that matches their interests and abilities. This prolonged search may be a source of identity confusion for some young people in industrialized societies.

For young people in developing countries emerging adulthood exists only for the wealthier segment of society, mainly in urban areas, whereas the rural poor have no emerging adulthood and may even have no adolescence because they enter adult-like work at an early age and also begin marriage and parenthood relatively early. Youth who are poor and/or rural are more likely to suffer from what Amartya Sen (1999) has called the “unfreedoms” of poverty, lack of education, and restricted economic opportunities. As Saraswathi and Larson (2002) observe, “In many ways, the lives of middle-class youth in India, South East Asia, and Europe have more in common with each other than they do with those of poor youth in their own countries.” However, as globalization proceeds, and economic development along with it, the proportion of youth who experience the emerging adulthood now normative in the middle-class is likely to increase as the middle-class expands.

Youth and the future of globalization

What will be the future of globalization for today’s youth? Although I have argued that most youth now develop a bicultural identity that includes both a global identity and a local identity, globalization is clearly intensifying and the pressure on local cultures to move toward the global norm is growing (Friedman, 2000; Giddens, 2000). Will the entire world ultimately be integrated into a single global culture, offering youth only one possible solution to “the problem of being” (Latouche, 1996), except for those who choose to join a self-selected culture? None of us can say for sure. Certainly, the pace of globalization in recent decades has been striking and remarkable; there is not a single corner of the world that remains untouched and unaltered by it.

Even if cultures continue to maintain their diversity, it seems indisputable that the diversity will not be as great as it was prior to globalization. All cultures are moving toward certain common characteristics that they did not have in common in the past: a market economy based mainly on technology and information; representative democracy; formal education for all youth through secondary school, at minimum; diverse media, from all over the world; and an ethic of tolerance for differences in behavior and belief.

However, this does not mean that globalization will continue unabated until it succeeds in grinding the tremendous diversity of the world's cultures into a "global mush," as Thomas Friedman (2000) puts it. Despite the homogenizing tendencies of globalization, cultures will continue to vary even as they share this common base. One of the key reasons for continued cultural variety will be *psychological*, in the different psychological satisfactions offered by individualism and collectivism.

All cultures have elements of both individualism and collectivism, but the balance between them, and the relative importance of them, varies widely (Triandis, 1995). Youth growing up today among the Inuit or the Australian Aborigines learn a different balance of individualism and collectivism than children and adolescents in the United States. The balance is different yet again in Tokyo, Lagos, or Buenos Aires, and still different in the rural areas of these countries.

Currently, differences between cultures in the balance of individualism and collectivism are based to a large extent on economics. Collectivist values tend to be characteristic of cultures that possess little technology, in part because without technology survival is often precarious and everyone benefits from an ethic of mutual assistance when the necessities for survival are scarce (Schlegel & Barry, 1991). Individualistic values tend to be characteristic of cultures in industrialized countries with free-market economies, because such economies reward individual initiative and individual striving.

As globalization proceeds and cultures worldwide are integrated further into the global economy, previously collectivistic cultures are likely to become more individualistic because the global economy is to a large extent a free-market economy. Also, as cultures with little or no technology develop economically and gain access to current technologies, survival becomes less of a daily struggle and there is less need for the collectivistic values that were necessary when survival was more problematic. However, this does not mean that all cultures will eventually adopt the same balance of individualism and collectivism. What it means is that with increased economic development, the basis for the balance of individualism and collectivism that is chosen in any culture becomes less economic and more psychological.

Individualism and collectivism offer different *psychological goods*. Individualism offers self-esteem, self-expression, the freedom to express one's individual uniqueness rather than suppressing it in order to comply with cultural norms. Collectivism offers the stability of mutual obligation, and the security of being part of a network of persons who have enduring obligations to one another. Individualism and collectivism also carry different psychological liabilities. Individualism can result in loneliness, nihilism, anomie. Collectivism can be stifling, oppressive, intolerant of individual needs and desires.

There is an inherent tension between individualism and collectivism; more of one usually means less of the other. Youth may possess both individualistic and collectivistic values – i.e., they may desire the psychological goods offered by both ideologies – but in practice the two are difficult to reconcile. It is impossible for youth to be independent and do as they like, and simultaneously place duty to others as their first priority. Each ideological system has psychological goods to offer, but the psychological goods they offer are competing. Consequently, cultural groups must choose their balance between individualism and collectivism with an awareness that to the extent they pursue the goods of individualism they lose the goods of collectivism, and to the extent they pursue the goods of collectivism they lose the goods of individualism. Likewise, to the extent they avoid the psychological liabilities of individualism they lose the psychological goods of individualism, and to the extent they avoid the psychological liabilities of collectivism they also lose its goods. Choosing any balance between individualism and collectivism offers both benefits and costs, and this means that no single answer to balancing them will ever persuade all youth in all cultures.

Different balances of individualism and collectivism are reflected in the practices of the world's most highly developed economies: the United States, Canada, the countries of Western Europe, and Japan. The United States has chosen the balance with the strongest tilt toward individualism. Americans support individual initiative through a system of relatively low taxation, a relatively weak regulatory system, and a relatively weak system of social services, even at the cost of having a high rate of poverty. Canada, the countries of Western Europe, and Japan are all free-market economies like the United States, but their more limited individualism is reflected in higher taxation, stricter regulations, and extensive social services, even at the cost of lower economic vitality. Japan is the most collectivistic of the developed countries, and the Japanese have maintained their system of intensive government involvement in the economy despite over a decade of economic stagnation, because of their belief that maintaining stability and security for all is a greater good than encouraging individual initiative.

Developing countries will likewise choose different balances of individualism and collectivism as they industrialize and become more integrated into the global economy. All of them will become more individualistic as a consequence of globalization, but that does not mean that their youth will become as individualistic as the United States or even Western Europe. For example, Kagitcibasi (1990, 1997) describes how in Turkey, rapid economic and social changes are taking place. The country's economy is developing rapidly, and many adjustments are being made to enhance the country's economic and social integration with the global economy. Nevertheless, the traditional "culture of relatedness" that has long been the typical pattern in Turkish families remains strong. Collectivistic family values have been maintained in today's Turkish youth despite the many influences of globalization on Turkish life.

Conclusion

Globalization is likely to be one of the dominant forces in the psychological development of the youth of the 21st century. In some ways it has been going on for centuries: cultures have long influenced each other through trade, migration, and war. In other ways, it is just beginning: in many cultures today, people who are middle aged or older can remember a time when their culture was firmly grounded in enduring traditions, barely touched by anything global, Western, or American. However, few young people growing up today will have such memories in the decades to come. Youth in every part of the world are affected by globalization; nearly all of them are aware, though to varying degrees, of a global culture that exists beyond their local culture. Those who are growing up in traditional cultures know that the future that awaits them is certain to be very different from the life their grandparents knew.

As a consequence of globalization, the challenges of creating a viable identity are perhaps greater for today's youth than they have been in the past. When globalization alters and erodes traditional ways, as Giddens (2000) observes, identity "has to be created and recreated on a more active basis than before" (p. 65). Identity becomes based less on prescribed social roles and more on individual choices, on decisions that each person makes about what values to embrace and what paths to pursue in love and work. Some youth respond to this responsibility with identity confusion or seek refuge in a self-selected culture that offers more structure and takes over some decisions.

Nevertheless, most youth embrace the opportunity to make such decisions for themselves. When youth are allowed to make their own choices about values, love, and work, the likelihood may be enhanced that they will find a match between these choices and their individual desires and abilities that is psychologically rewarding. Globalization will gradually expand the number and proportion of the world's youth that have a wide range of identity choices. At the same time, cultural diversity will continue to exist as local cultures adapt global influences to local circumstances (Hermans & Kempen, 1998) and as people continue to create self-selected cultures distinct from and sometimes in opposition to the global culture. For today's youth, diversity of identity will only grow as globalization results in increasingly complex bicultural, multicultural, and hybrid identities.

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4

Global cultural change and young people's wellbeing

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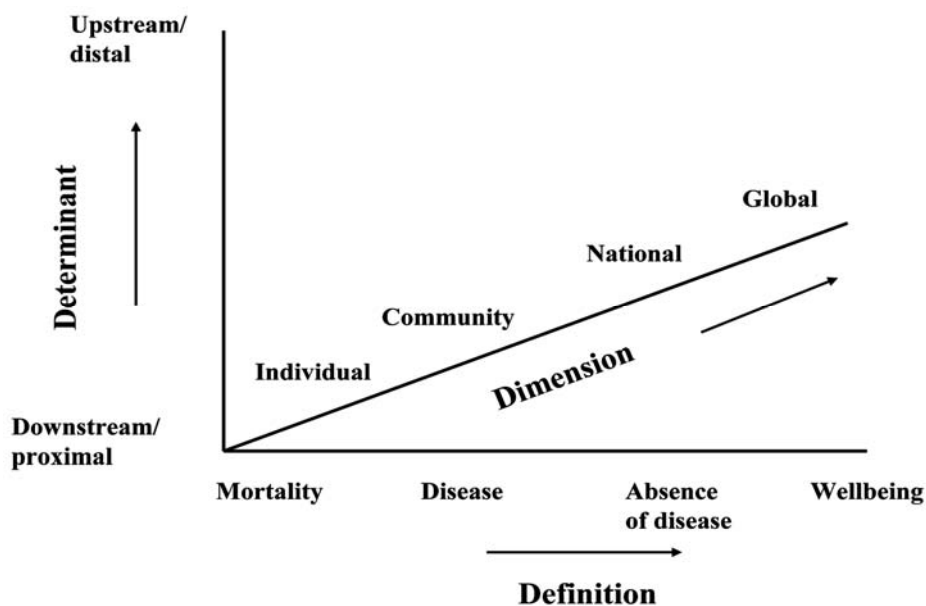
Introduction

A popular metaphor in talking about health is the cliff over which people fall and are hurt. The question is whether, in order to improve health, we need more ambulances at the base of the cliff to care for the injured or a fence at the top to prevent them falling in the first place. I want to go back even further in the chain of events to discuss why the fence is necessary. Someone lies gravely injured at the bottom of the cliff. Why? Because he fell. Why? Because there was no fence at the top to prevent him falling. But why was he there, so close to the edge? This is where the social sciences have most to offer in understanding and improving health.

The relationships between different approaches to health can be represented in a three-dimensional diagram depicting the determinants, dimensions and definitions of health as three axes (Figure 1). Almost all the health research and health care dollar is spent at or near the junction of the three axes – addressing individual cases of death and disease and the proximal or immediate factors that cause or contribute to them. This is the domain of clinical or curative medicine. As we move out along the three axes we pass through, generally speaking, the domains of traditional epidemiology, with its emphasis on population patterns of mortality and morbidity,

but with a focus still on individual risk factors, and the ‘new’ epidemiology, which is taking greater interest in the more distal determinants, to the social sciences, with their broader concerns with social conditions and the human situation.

Figure 1: A three-dimensional representation of health and wellbeing.



An important point in the context of my paper is that as you move from the proximal determinants of individual problems – exposure to a pathogen or toxin, family violence or abuse, or lifestyle and behavioural risks – to the distal determinants of population patterns of health problems – the social, economic and cultural conditions of a society – the science becomes fuzzier and the politics sharper. We are, after all, dealing with complex systems comprising many different entities, most of which are more or less weakly interacting in often diffuse and non-linear ways.

It is also worth commenting on the population distribution along the definitional axis from illness to wellness (excluding, of course, those who die), as this is also relevant to my arguments. A striking example is a large study of Americans aged 25-74, which examined mental health not just as the absence of mental illness but as ‘a syndrome of symptoms of positive feelings and positive functioning in life’ (Keyes, 2002). It found that only 17 per cent of people were ‘flourishing’ – that is, they enjoyed good mental health; 57 per cent were moderately mentally healthy – neither mentally ill nor fully mentally healthy; and 26 per cent were either ‘languishing’, depressed, or both – that is, mentally unhealthy.

There are other important features of a population health approach that can be expressed in several principles or observations, which build on the work of Rose (1992):

1. The primary determinants of health are mainly social, economic and cultural; therefore health issues need to be addressed from these perspectives.
2. There is a positive relation between the population mean of a characteristic and the prevalence of deviance; put another way, prevalence is inversely related to severity.
3. Explanations for health differences between individuals may be different from those for differences between populations; that is, causes of cases may differ from causes of incidence.
4. A small reduction in risk in a large, low-risk population will usually improve health more than a large reduction in a small, high-risk group.
5. Prevention, where possible, is better than cure.

All bear on the topic of this paper and this symposium, but the first three are particularly pertinent. The paper's focus, in examining youth in transition, is on the broad cultural determinants of young people's psychosocial wellbeing in Australia and other developed, Western nations. I will not attempt to define the global relevance of this analysis, especially its applicability to developing, Asian nations. Others with greater expertise in what is happening in these societies can judge this for themselves. I will simply note that media reports in recent years suggest many Asian countries are now experiencing the increases among youth in problems such as drug abuse, delinquency and suicide that have characterised Western nations since the 1950s.

The miners' canaries

If we want to assess the state of society, a good place to begin is with young people and how well they are faring. There is growing evidence that developmental stages and transition points in life, from before birth and early childhood to adolescence and early adulthood, are crucial to adult health and wellbeing. What happens at these times matters for life, and it makes the young susceptible to the effects of social failing and disruption. What are emerging from the scientific research into wellbeing are the subtleties, complexities and depths of the human psyche, and of the personal, social and spiritual ties that lie behind our health and happiness. At the same time, science is straining to define and differentiate these things. Our politics and economics have barely begun to come to grips with them.

The overall picture of young people's situation can be characterised by two marine metaphors: are troubled youth 'an island of misery in a ocean of happiness', or 'the tip of an iceberg of suffering' (Eckersley and Dear 2002; Eckersley, 2004)? The 'island of misery' hypothesis holds that the seriously disturbed are a small, discrete minority clearly segregated from the vast majority – perhaps 90 per cent - who are happy, healthy and satisfied with life. From this perspective, even rising rates of youth suicide can be interpreted as evidence that life for most is getting better. According to the 'tip of the iceberg' hypothesis, the most serious problems represent one end of a spectrum or gradient of distress that includes a large minority of young people today – perhaps even a majority at some time in their lives. The rising prevalence of these problems indicates increasing social adversity. I will argue in favour of this view, looking especially at cultural factors.

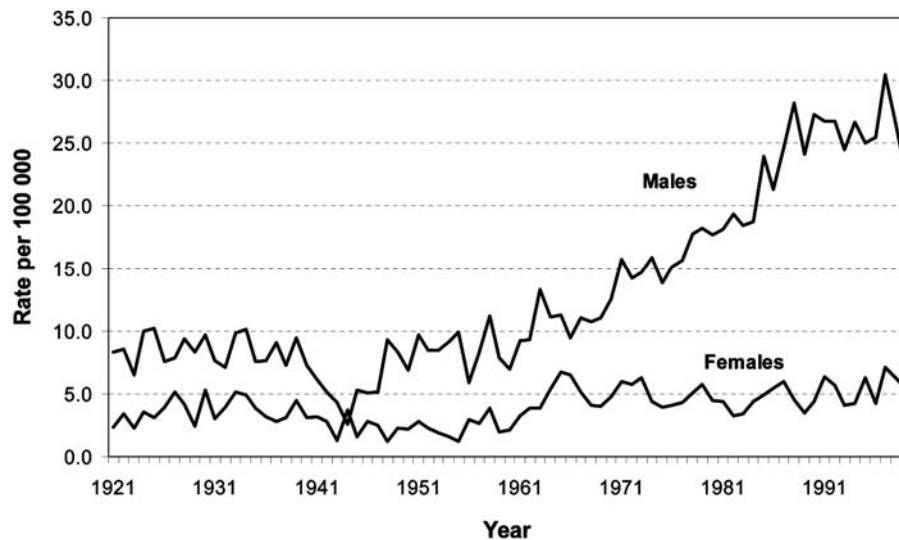
Stanley (2001: 30) states that many indicators of developmental health and wellbeing in children and adolescents are showing adverse trends, which are linked to the 'dramatic social changes for families and communities over the past 30 years' in Australia and most other developed nations. 'Rising rates are being observed for low birth weight, neurodevelopmental disorders, asthma, type 1 diabetes, inflammatory bowel disease, autism, mental health morbidities, child abuse and neglect, adolescent suicide, obesity, eating disorders, learning disabilities, behavioural disorders, aggressive behaviours and violence, school drop out and truancy, juvenile crime, illicit drug and alcohol use, teenage births.'

The rise in youth suicide, especially among males, is one of the more striking and unequivocal indicators of the trends in young people's psychosocial wellbeing. Suicide rates among males aged 15-24 have risen in most developed countries over recent decades and trebled or more in several, including Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States (for the Australian trend, see Figure 2) (Eckersley and Dear, 2002). Rates among young women have also increased in these countries, although the rise has been smaller and less sustained; in Australia the female rate in the 1990s was about twice that in the 1950s.

Recent research adds a disturbing dimension to these trends. The increase in suicide is not – now – confined to the young. There appears to be a cohort effect, at least for males, in which successive generations carry the heightened suicide risk during youth into later years (Steenkamp and Harrison, 2000). Suicide rates for each birth cohort or group born between the end of World War II and the 1980s shows a successively steeper rise to a higher level with increasing age, before levelling off as the men reach their thirties or forties (Figure 3). One consequence of this pattern is a dramatic age shift in suicide's toll. Earlier last century, suicide rates among young men were a fraction of those for men aged over 40. Now, rates

are similar for teenage males, and substantially higher for men aged 20-39 (declining rates among older men have also contributed to this pattern).

Figure 2: *Suicide among Australians age 15-24, 1921-1999.*



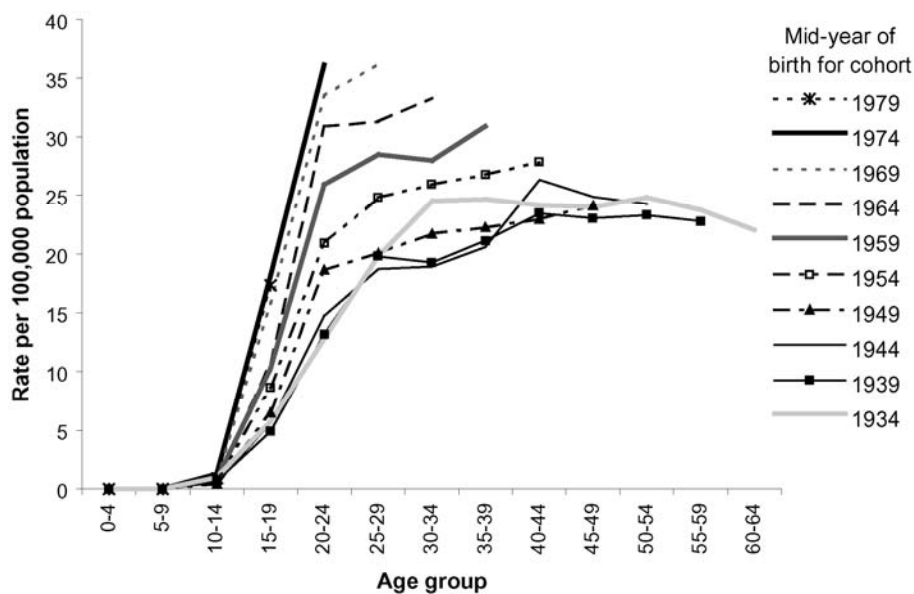
Source: Research Centre for Injury Studies, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Whatever the trends, suicide remains a very rare event. To what extent, then, can we use suicide rates as an indicator of changing social conditions? A study of Australian university undergraduates (Schweitzer *et al.*, 1995) demonstrates graphically the gradients of distress associated with suicide and just how far into the youth population this gradient extends. The study found that almost two thirds of the students, with an average age of 22, admitted to some degree of suicidal ideation or behaviour - broadly defined - in the previous twelve months. Based on the most extreme statements with which students agreed, 21 per cent revealed minimum ideation, saying they had felt that 'life just isn't worth living', or that 'life is so bad I feel like giving up'; another 19 per cent revealed high ideation, agreeing they had wished 'my life would end', or that they had been 'thinking of ways to kill myself'; a further 15 per cent showed suicide-related behaviour, saying they had 'told someone I want to kill myself', or had 'come close to taking my own life'; and 7 per cent said they had 'made attempts to kill myself'. Another study found 27 per cent of a sample of university students indicated suicidal ideation, also broadly defined, in 'the past few weeks' (Hamilton and Schweitzer, 2000).

A large study of adult Australians' mental health and wellbeing found that those aged 18-24 had the highest prevalence of mental disorders during the twelve

months prior to the survey - 27 per cent - with prevalence declining with age to 6 per cent among those 65 and over (Figure 4) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998). The survey covered anxiety disorders, affective disorders such as depression, and substance-use disorders. The study notes that because the survey did not cover all forms of mental health problems, it may underestimate the extent of mental disorder in Australia. A similar survey of children and adolescents (aged 4-17) found 14 per cent had experienced mental problems in the previous six months (Sawyer *et al.*, 2000).

Figure 3: Male suicide by age and birth cohort, Australia.

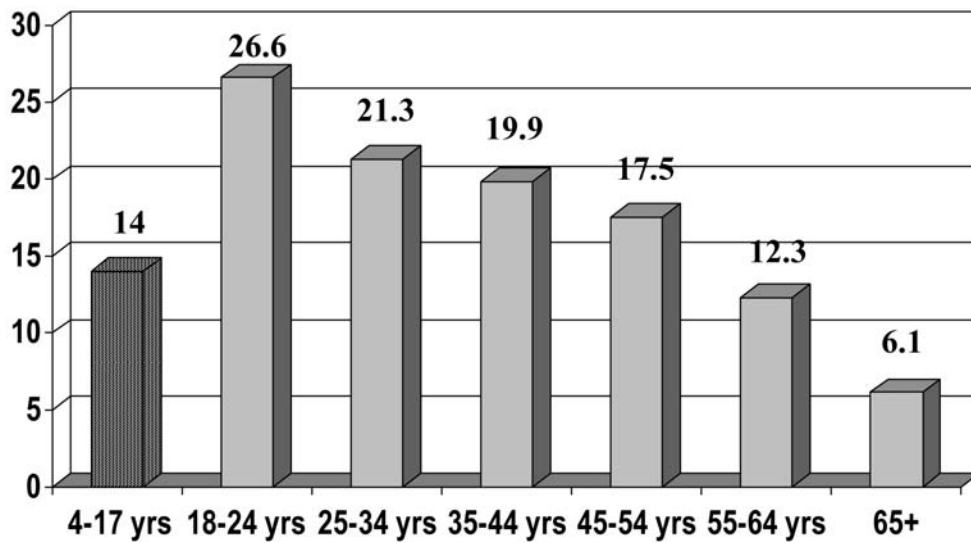


Source: Steenkamp and Harrison, 2000.

As well as increases in youth suicide over recent decades, we have also seen adverse changes in the prevalence of less severe, more common ailments and also in happiness. For example, a recent large American survey of major depressive disorder (Kessler *et al.*, 2003) reveals a cohort pattern similar to that already noted for male suicide in Australia: successive birth cohorts show steeper increases with age to higher levels in lifetime prevalence (Figure 5). Such surveys have their flaws in charting the trends over time in depression (relying on recall of past episodes, for example), and probably exaggerate the extent of the increase in depression. However, the results probably do reflect a real rise in depression among young people, as is also implied by the suicide trends. Putnam (2000: 263-5) reports American survey data on headaches, indigestion and sleeplessness –

which taken together he terms ‘malaise’ – that reveal a widening generation gap over recent decades (Figure 6). In the mid-1970s, there was little difference in malaise between age groups. Since then, the proportion of those over sixty who ranked high on symptoms of malaise has gone from 33 to 30 per cent; for those aged 18-29 the fraction rose from 31 to 45 per cent. Putnam also notes that while surveys in the 1940s and 1950s found younger people were happier than older people, by the end of the century the reverse was true.

Figure 4: Prevalence of mental health problems among Australian, by age.



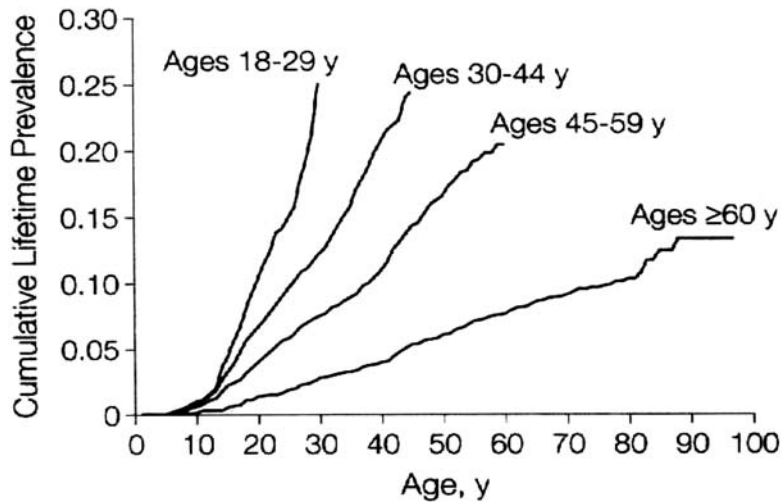
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998; Sawyer et al., 2000.

Causes and correlates of youth problems

What are the causes of these problems? Broadly speaking, we can think of the causes as a combination of, and interaction between, general social conditions, personal circumstances and experiences, and individual genetics. In a major international review, Rutter and Smith (1995: 782-808) say that, to a large extent, finding causal explanations of the increases in psychosocial problems in youth, including suicide and suicidal behaviour, drug abuse, depression and crime, ‘remains a project for the future’ (p. 782). However, they regard as unlikely several popular explanations for the trends, such as social disadvantage, inequality, and unemployment. Other reviews include these as risk factors for the problems, but this doesn’t necessarily mean they explain the trends over time. More likely explanations, they say, include: family conflict and break-up; increased expectations and individualism; and changes in adolescent transitions (in

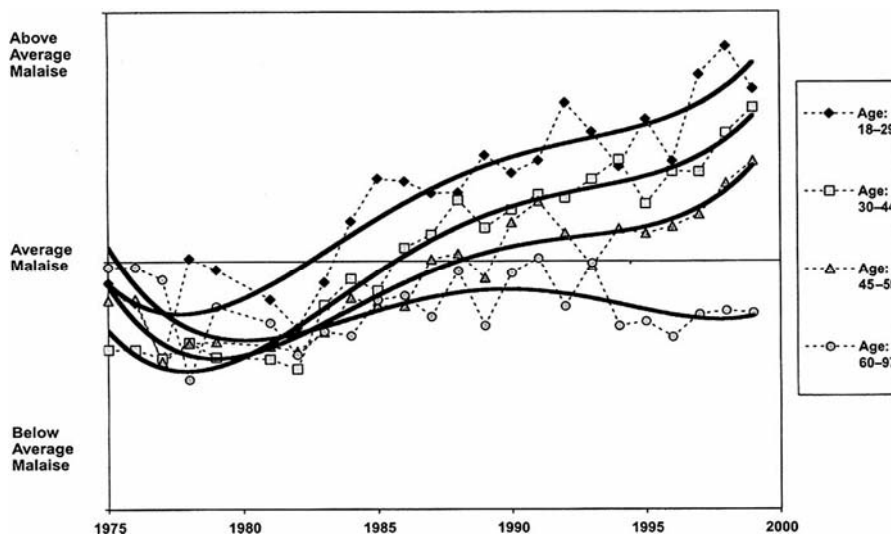
particular, the emergence of a youth culture that isolates young people from adults and increases peer group influence, more tension between dependence and autonomy, and more relationship breakdowns among young couples living together).

Figure 5: Lifetime prevalence of major depression among Americans, by birth cohort, USA.



Source: Kessler et al., 2003.

Figure 6: The growing generation gap in malaise, USA, 1975-1999.



Source: Putnam, 2000.

With regard to the broad cultural factors, Rutter and Smith (p. 807) call for further investigation of the theory that shifts in moral concepts and values are among the causes of increased psychosocial disorder. They note, in particular, ‘the shift towards individualistic values, the increasing emphasis on self-realisation and fulfilment, and the consequent rise in expectations’. In my own writing on psychosocial problems among young people, I also have focused on their possible cultural sources, including rising individualism, and young people’s particular vulnerability to the failure of modern Western culture to do well what cultures are supposed to do: provide webs of meaning that shape the way people see the world, locate themselves within it, and behave in it (Eckersley, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004).

The psychological literature suggests powerful effects of culture on psychological wellbeing. Take materialism – attaching importance to money and possessions – which underpins our consumption-based economy. Materialism breeds not happiness but dissatisfaction, depression, anxiety, anger, isolation and alienation (Kasser, 2002). Materialistic values go hand in hand with poor psychological health. Human needs for security and safety, competence and self-esteem, connectedness to others, and autonomy and authenticity are relatively unsatisfied when materialistic values predominate. People for whom ‘extrinsic goals’ such as fame, fortune and glamour are a priority in life tend to experience more anxiety and depression and lower overall wellbeing than people oriented towards ‘intrinsic goals’ of close relationships, self-knowledge and acceptance, and contributing to the community. People with extrinsic goals tend to have shorter relationships with friends and lovers, and relationships characterised more by jealousy and less by trust and caring. In other words, our materialistic culture seems to promote what is detrimental to mental health.

Individualism – placing the individual at the centre of a framework of values, norms and beliefs – is another cultural quality with profound significance for wellbeing, as I’ve already noted, but here the evidence is contradictory. Wellbeing is associated with several qualities that individualism should encourage, notably self-esteem and personal control. However, recent research is turning up some intriguing possibilities that challenge this view, and suggests two mechanisms by which individualism may actually diminish control. The first is that a lack of control over one’s life can be part of a defensive strategy to maintain self-esteem (Twenge *et al.*, in press). The modern individual displays extraordinarily high self-esteem and one way to maintain that high self-esteem is to believe that the things that threaten it are beyond one’s control. Furthermore, the role of self-esteem in wellbeing, once seen as pivotal, is now being contested (Myers, 2001: 164-9).

The second mechanism is that individualism confuses autonomy, which is good for wellbeing, with independence, or separateness, which is bad. Autonomy is a matter of volition, the ability to act according to our internalised values and desires (Chirkov *et al.*, 2003). Its opposite is not dependence, but heteronomy, where we feel our actions are controlled by external forces and regardless of our own values and interests. Confusing autonomy with independence is likely to affect other human needs such as relatedness and, ultimately, autonomy itself (Eckersley, 2004). It could lead to greater heteronomy because there is less perceived congruence or connection between the self and others, between our values and theirs. The more narrowly and separately the self is defined, the greater the likelihood that the social forces acting on us are experienced as external and alien.

These possible effects of individualism are supported by recent suicide research. A study of the association between suicide and deprivation and social fragmentation in British parliamentary constituencies (Whitely *et al.*, 1999) found suicide was more strongly associated with fragmentation than with poverty; other causes of death were also related to fragmentation, but more strongly to deprivation. Fragmentation was measured with indicators of renting, single-person households, unmarried people and mobility, so suggesting at least some influence of individualism. In a recent cross-country analysis of youth suicide, a colleague and I (Eckersley and Dear, 2002) found strong and positive correlations between youth suicide (especially among males) and several different subjective measures of individualism; there were no such associations between suicide and socio-economic factors including poverty, youth unemployment, inequality and divorce.

The findings are consistent with Durkheim's observation in his seminal study of suicide a century ago that a crucial function of social institutions such as the family and religion was to bind individuals to society, to keep 'a firmer grip' on them and to draw them out of their 'state of moral isolation' (Durkheim, 1897: 361-92). 'Man cannot become attached to higher aims and submit to a rule if he sees nothing above him to which he belongs', he wrote (p. 389). 'To free him from all social pressure is to abandon him to himself and demoralise him.' Culture, I believe, serves a similar role, both through its effects on social institutions but also directly.

An important means by which cultural qualities such as individualism and materialism affect wellbeing is through their influence on values (Eckersley, 2004). Values provide the framework for deciding what is important, true, right and good, and so have a central role in defining relationships and meanings. Most societies have tended to reinforce values that emphasise social obligations and self-restraint and discourage those that promote self-indulgence and anti-social behaviour. 'We define virtue almost exclusively as pro-social behaviour, and vice as anti-social behaviour', Ridley (1996: 6) observes in his analysis of human nature and society,

The Origins of Virtue. Social virtues serve to maintain a balance – always dynamic, always shifting – between individual needs and freedom, and social stability and order. The thirteenth-century theologian St Thomas Aquinas listed the seven deadly sins as pride (hubris, self-centredness), envy, avarice (greed), wrath (anger, violence), gluttony, sloth (laziness, apathy) and lust; the seven cardinal virtues as faith, hope, charity (compassion), prudence (good sense), temperance (moderation), fortitude (courage, perseverance) and religion (spirituality). Other values widely regarded as virtues include humility, honesty, fidelity, generosity, simplicity and tolerance. Virtues, then, are concerned with building and maintaining strong, harmonious personal relationships and social attachments, and the strength to endure adversity. Vices, on the other hand, are about the unrestrained satisfaction of individual wants and desires, or the capitulation to human weaknesses. Modern Western culture undermines, even reverses, universal values.

A similar picture emerges from reading what the wise and famous have said about happiness through the centuries. A couple of common themes stand out. One is that happiness is not a goal but a consequence: it is not something to be sought or pursued, but a result of how we live; related to this, it is not found by focusing on ourselves, but on others. A second theme is that happiness comes from balancing wants and means, from being content with what we have. Generally speaking, the research evidence backs this sage advice. But it is not reflected in our materialistic, individualistic culture.

One piece of good news in recent years is that male youth suicide rates seem to have peaked in the 1990s and are now dropping in countries that have seen the biggest rises - including Australia, New Zealand, United States and Canada. How does my analysis fit this development? It is too soon to be sure about the significance of these trends and the reasons behind them. One suggestion is that better anti-depressants and declining drug abuse explain the American trend. I believe a more likely explanation is the greater public awareness and recognition of the problem, with the result that suicidal young men feel less isolated and more likely to seek help, and parents, teachers and friends are more alert to their needs. As a 19-year-old told Reach Out!, an award-winning on-line youth suicide prevention service (www.reachout.com.au): ‘Reach Out! made me realise that other people go through what I’m going through and somehow that makes it easier to cope’. Another site visitor wrote: ‘I really enjoyed reading the stories of others who have been through hard times. It made aware I wasn’t alone... I feel more in touch with people my own age... It just makes me feel good to be alive.’ These comments suggest this increased awareness is a problem-specific response or counter to the wider social context of individualism and the social isolation to which it gives rise.

Conclusion

Let me be clear about what I am saying. It is not to give the impression of universal, serious pathology among young people, or to deny that many of them are doing fine. Nor is it to 'medicalise' or 'problematise' common human emotions and experiences. It is about 'politicising' these issues. It is to show that there are links between even extreme personal distress and more prevalent, but less serious, suffering, and that the sources of these conditions can be traced to defining qualities of our societies. In other words, these sources are social and pervasive as well as personal and specific, and the problems must be addressed at both levels. The relationships between cultural qualities such as materialism and individualism and psychosocial problems in young people expose what amounts to cultural fraud: the projection and promotion of cultural images and ideals, especially through the mass media, that neither meet psychological needs nor reflect social realities. These 'fraudulent' images and ideals are embedded in our worldview, a dominant feature of which is the belief in material progress.

Material progress regards progress as a pipeline: pump more wealth in one end, and more welfare flows out the other. Economic growth is paramount. It creates the wealth necessary to raise material living standards, to widen our choices, and to address social and environmental problems such as unemployment, poverty, crime, pollution, land degradation and global warming. Governments explicitly frame their goals in these terms. 'The overriding aim of our agenda is to deliver Australia an annual (economic) growth rate of over four per cent on average during the decade to 2010,' the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard (1998), declared in a speech to a World Economic Forum dinner in Melbourne in 1998.

Material progress is increasingly being challenged by a new view of the world centred on sustainable development (Eckersley, 2004). Sustainable development does not accord economic growth 'overriding' priority. Instead, it seeks a better balance and integration of social, environmental and economic goals and objectives to produce a high, equitable and enduring quality of life. A common theme is the perceived need to shift from *quantity* to *quality* in our way of life and our measurements. The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987: 8) described sustainable development as development that 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The World Conservation Union, the United Nations Environment Program and the World Wide Fund for Nature (1991) have defined it as 'improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems'. Sustainable development acknowledges the dynamic relationship between the goals of improving wellbeing and ensuring that improvements are compatible with a healthy natural environment. Our growing

understanding of the social basis of health and wellbeing can make an important contribution to working towards sustainability. It provides a means of integrating different priorities by allowing them to be measured against a common goal – improving human wellbeing. While human health is not the only consideration here, it is critical to achieving a real political commitment to sustainable development.

Recent projects to develop global scenarios of the future emphasise the values shifts necessary to achieve sustainability. The Stockholm Environment Institute's influential report, *Great Transition*, for example, says this transition is being galvanised by the search for a deeper basis for human happiness and fulfilment (Raskin *et al.*, 2002: 41-43). While sustainability is the imperative that pushes the new agenda, desire for a rich quality of life, strong human ties and a resonant connection to nature is the lure that pulls it towards the future. The 'Great Transition' pathway moves beyond solving the economic problem of scarcity into a 'post-scarcity world' where all can enjoy a decent standard of living. It acknowledges the reality of a 'fulfilment curve', which shows that past a certain point increased consumption fails to increase fulfilment. 'Additional costs exceed the marginal satisfaction of additional luxuries as we work to pay for them, learn to use them, maintain and repair them, dispose of them and perhaps feel guilty about having them when others have so little. Profligate consumption sacrifices the cultivation of other aspects of a good life – relationships, creativity, community, nature and spirituality – that can increase fulfilment.'

So at the most fundamental, cultural level, the wellbeing of young Australians, and young people elsewhere in the world, depends on whether or not, and when, we make a transition in worldviews from material progress to sustainable development. There is some evidence from public surveys that this shift is happening (Eckersley, 2004). But that is another story.

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5

Globalization and an epidemic: The consequences of HIV/AIDS for young people

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The topic of the symposium that was the genesis of this volume, youth in transition, might lead readers to expect the views of an economist or a policy analyst or a demographer or even a cultural theorist. In this chapter, however, the lens through which this particular aspect of young people's lived experience is viewed is one that stems from a focus on public health. Here, the global phenomenon of the HIV/AIDS epidemic is used to illustrate some profound shifts in the lives of young people, shifts that reflect significant deviations from adolescence as experienced by earlier generations.

We talk a lot about globalization and when we toss this word around in talking about young people, we usually mean Coca-Cola, McDonalds, music, clothes, magazines – all aspects of what seems now like a homogeneous youth culture. Globalization, it has been argued, has resulted in young people from one country being indistinguishable, in many of the ways that define adolescence, from those in any other country. But one less benign aspect of globalization has been the HIV epidemic and the way in which it has changed how we need to think about the world that many young people inhabit now and will inhabit in the future. HIV/AIDS, as an example of 'globalization' in its most lethal form, is a key stepping off point into consideration of at least some of the transitions faced by young people today.

Some daunting facts and figures will provide a perspective into the scope of the epidemic and its unprecedented impact on young people. Worldwide, young people between the ages of 15 and 24 account for more than 50% of new HIV infections, with nearly 6000 young people in this age group becoming infected every day (WHO, 2003). At the end of 2002, in sub-Saharan Africa there were nearly 10 million young people between ages of 15 and 24 and nearly three million children under age 15 living with HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that, at existing levels of infection, one in five South African women currently aged 20-24 years will die of AIDS. More than 11 million children under the age of 15 years in sub-Saharan Africa have lost at least one parent to HIV/AIDS. More than half of those orphaned by HIV/AIDS are between ages of 10 and 15 years (WHO, 2003).

Turning closer to home, South Asia, despite generally low prevalence levels, is the most affected region in the world after sub-Saharan Africa, in terms of numbers of people living with HIV/AIDS. As in many other parts of the world, it is the region's young people, on whom the future depends, who are particularly vulnerable to the disease (UNAIDS/UNICEF, 2003). In other parts of Asia, children and young people are facing unprecedented risks from HIV/AIDS. In the Asia and Pacific region, it is estimated that about 2.1 million young people aged 15-24 years are living with HIV, with widening epidemics in many countries in the region (UNAIDS/UNICEF, 2003).

In Australia, by contrast, by the late 90s there was a total of about 500 cases of HIV infection among 13-19 year-olds (representing 2.4% of the total number of infections), and 7122 among 20-29-year-olds (34.6% of the total number of infections) (National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, 1999). These numbers reflect only a tiny proportion of the population in this age range.

So why is HIV/AIDS relevant to the topic of youth in transition? This epidemic has been a wake-up call. It is now clear to those of us concerned about their well-being that if we do not recognise and understand the contexts that shape young people's sexual practices in this changing and challenging world, we stand to lose too many more of this generation.

Many writers point to the increasing commonalities between experiences of young people across the globe – a global youth culture – often accompanied by a shift to Western individualism, a point taken up in the chapter by Eckersley (this volume). While this may be superficially so, in terms of outward trappings of the youth culture, a close look at the social and cultural environments in which young people develop makes it clear that this claim is only partly true. There is still great diversity in family forms (including single-parent, de facto marriages, extended families, and, as a result of AIDS, child-headed families), in economic and political circumstances, in religious and cultural values, and in access to schooling and to health care, to name only a few examples.

Nowhere are the effects of these differences more clearly exemplified than in the ways in which the challenge to young people's health of HIV infection and AIDS has been met. This epidemic – or the potential for an epidemic – has opened up concerns about risk for young people and has forced governments, parents, teachers, health educators and young people themselves to confront head on the reality of adolescent sexuality. In doing so, we have had to grapple with intimate, sensitive and stigmatized, often taboo topics, including homosexuality and drug use. How this gets played out in practice is a function of social and cultural norms AND political will. These will vary across countries with differing consequences for young people in each country.

If we are to understand the contribution of these contextual factors, we have to recognise that sexual health is affected not only by health-related factors but by many other forces as well. These may be cultural, economic, religious, ideological and political, alone or in combination. For example, we know that ideas about gender have a profound impact on young people's sexual lives and that these are culturally specific. There is now considerable evidence to show that gender inequalities make young women in many countries sexually vulnerable (Brown, Larsen & Saraswathi, 2002; Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999; Dowsett, Aggleton & Abega, S-C, *et al.*, 1998; Family Care International, 1999; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993). We know that in many (most?) countries, young men are seen to be sexual beings and young women are not. This belief is implicated in double standards regarding virginity and has important implications in regard to sexual coercion and sexual exploitation. We know, in Australia and other western countries, that young women and girls are vulnerable to concerns about reputation and to being coerced into unwanted sex. In either case, protection against disease is often foregone, either willingly or through inability to demand that protection is used (Kirkman, Rosenthal & Smith, 1998; Lindsay, Smith & Rosenthal, 1999). We know, for example, that one million children, mostly girls, are forced into the sex trade every year and that sex workers in all countries start working when they are young. We know that sexual abuse and rape are experienced commonly by young and not-so-young women in many countries.

A different example can be drawn from the expectation that young people should not engage in sex. Negative attitudes towards young people as sexual beings often bring in their wake laws and policies that aim to delay or control sexual expression rather than promote a notion of sexual health as a primary concern. This can be illustrated through the example of sex education. Establishing widespread and broadly based sex education curricula has been a relatively easy task in countries like Australia, where prevention of HIV/AIDS was recognized early on as an urgent public health problem, where there was an evidence base that demonstrated that young people were sexually active, and where relatively liberal attitudes to sexuality existed – aided and reinforced by TV, magazines, films, music. In other countries and other cultures where talk of sex is taboo, where premarital sex is

culturally unacceptable, AND where HIV/AIDS, for some time at least, remained an unspoken epidemic, the task has proved to be exceptionally difficult. But whether easy or difficult, talking about sexual matters, educating about sexual matters, has become a hot issue for young people in the 90s and beyond.

There is now a plethora of research in Western countries that consistently shows a large number of young people are sexually active, use condoms inconsistently or not at all, and that a substantial number engage in practices that put themselves at risk of HIV (Rosenthal, Smith & Lindsay, 1998; Smith, 2003). This is particularly true of marginalised groups such as homeless young people and those identifying as homosexual where the evidence shows extremely high rates of risky practices (Bailey, Camlin & Ennett, 1998; Greene, Ennett & Ringwalt, 1997; Kral, Molnar, Booth, *et al.*, 1997; Rosenthal, Moore & Buzwell, 1994; Smith, Lindsay & Rosenthal, 1999). We know a great deal about Western adolescents.

On the other hand, the picture is less clear when it comes to young people in other countries in our region. We do know that premarital sex is culturally unacceptable in Asian countries and that there is no open discussion about sexual matters, certainly in the family setting. And yet, the few studies of young people's sexual practices in a number of Asian countries (India, The Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan) suggest that premarital sex among adolescents is not as rare a phenomenon as adults may wish to believe (Brown, Larsen & Saraswathi, 2002). While the age of first intercourse may be later in these countries than, say, in Australia, it is clear that a substantial minority of these young people are sexually active prior to marriage.

These data about sexual practices, coupled with the high rates of HIV infection among young people in our region, are powerful evidence of the need for effective education programs. In Australia, we have been fortunate that early HIV prevention strategies were founded on a harm reduction approach that took a realistic view of young people's actual behaviours, be they sex- or drug-related, and endorsed education programs that were designed to minimise the potential for harm associated with these behaviours. There is no doubt that these programs, mostly but not entirely school-based, have been remarkably successful.

On the other hand, other countries in our region have yet to initiate comprehensive sex education programs in spite of young people's expressed wishes (e.g., 92% of young women and 90% of young men polled in a study in China). The desperate need for comprehensive sex education programs was forcefully expressed at a Youth Forum that was part of the 5th International Conference on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1999, where young people from different Asian countries were imploring their governments to introduce sex education in schools. This cry for a realistic approach to sex education was repeated among young Pacific Islanders in Vanuatu during a UNICEF workshop

on the development of a life-skills curriculum for Pacific Island young people in Fiji in 2000.

So, relative to their counterparts in the region, Australian young people have been fortunate to have been provided with education programs that have focused on sexuality and sexual health. But we need to highlight here the role of the political context and political will. In Australia, we had a government and an opposition party who, together, endorsed the policy of harm reduction and who ensured that continuing funds were provided to support these programs. Just how fragile this support is can be shown by what has happened recently in the United States of America.

The USA has the highest rates of teen pregnancies in the world (50 live births per 1000 among 15-19-year-olds compared with The Netherlands – 4 live births per 1000, and Australia 20 live births per 1000) and they have even higher proportions of sexual active young people than in Australia (Hay, 2001). In spite of these facts, there have been few, if any, national campaigns targeting young people, HIV and sexual activity. Worse is the steadfast and expensive commitment (through formal policies at federal, state and school district level) to abstinence-only education, in spite of continuing failure to produce evidence about the effectiveness of these programs.

The current President has consistently supported the view that sex education should teach abstinence only and not include information on other ways to avoid sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancy. This ‘advice’ flies in the face of practice reality and a great deal of evidence that sex education enables young people to make responsible sexual decisions (see, for example, UNAIDS, 1997). But there is more to this campaign than advice. A recent US House of Representatives report shows that the Bush administration has consistently distorted evidence about what works and what does not. So outcome measures of behaviours introduced in the previous administration to measure success or failure of programs, have been dropped in favour of ‘soft’ (and inaccurate) measures of knowledge and attitudes, in spite of the fact that considerable research has shown that neither knowledge nor attitudes are good predictors of behaviour (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993; Moore, Rosenthal & Mitchell, 1996). Since George W. Bush’s appointment, Congress has appropriated over \$100 million in grants to organizations that sponsor abstinence-only education. Funding for abstinence-only education increased by nearly 3000% from 1996-2001.

There are many other examples, but the point is that political forces have a profound impact. But these forces are only one among many and we know that they are open to change (as the change in US President has shown). Social, political, and economic opportunities, norms about sexuality and gender, all these shift over time; they are not static phenomena. In a rapidly changing world,

cultural beliefs and practices are subject to change. A recent UNAIDS study of seven developing countries (Dowsett & Aggleton, 1999) found that modernization and urbanization was having a profound impact on sexual expectations and practices. The specific ways in which this is occurring in each culture are less important for the purposes of this paper than the fact that we recognise that those factors that determine sexual activity are not fixed and immutable. Instead, they are dynamic, constantly changing rather than homogeneous and stable.

If we look to the forces for change, the most common transmitter of ideas, information and values, both traditional and new, is the mass media. The media provides a powerful forum where cultural constructions of gender and sexuality are negotiated and spelled out in our increasingly globalised world. In combination with other forces, the mass media play a significant role in forming young people's understandings of themselves as sexual beings. But there are subtle shifts in the ways in which Western ideas of sexuality and sexual expression are played out, with sexual practices and meanings adapted to local circumstances and traditions.

All this is well and good and tells us how young people's sexuality gets shaped in harmony – more or less – with the prevailing norms and values of the local community, the environment – defined in its broadest sense – in which they live. One of the interesting questions is what happens when geographical and cultural boundaries are crossed. This is a particularly salient issue for a country like Australia that has put considerable effort into attracting young people from the region to study here. We are aware that there are a substantial number of distressed female students coming from countries where norms about sexual behaviour are less liberal than those they encounter here. Confronted by expectations of 'appropriate' sexual behaviour that are very different from those they have experienced at home, many of these young women are extremely vulnerable and very conflicted about engaging in sex. Others become pregnant – with disturbing impact on their lives and those of their families. For some of the male students, coming out as 'gay' while in the (generally) accepting climate of Australia leaves them caught in a cultural bind in terms of what is acceptable and what is not.

These sorts of cross-cultural encounters are increasing. A recent study (Bennett, 2002) examined how Western youth culture has been incorporated into the lives of local young people in Mataram, a tourist area of Lombok, with a distinct youth culture emerging. Away from parental supervision, these young people occupy 'youth spaces' – in tourist areas, on the beach, and in boarding houses for young people. Clearly this has consequences for the ways in which sexuality is played out among these young people, with opportunities for sexual exploration occurring in these spaces that exclude adults. As others report, the global flow of Western youth culture (in its many forms) has led to the spread of what has been referred to as a new kind of sexual infrastructure in the forms of bars, discotheques and other venues. The UNAIDS seven-country study referred to earlier (Dowsett &

Aggleton, 1999) reported that these venues are not restricted to urban settings. In the villages of PNG, dance halls were rarely policed and often provided opportunities for sex for cash or favours, group sex and rape and practices that either inflict sexual harm or increase vulnerability to HIV/AIDS or other STIs or unwanted pregnancy.

To conclude, then, the transition for young people that has been opened up by HIV/AIDS has to do with possibilities around sexuality and sexual health. It has to do with understanding that the social, political and cultural contexts in which young people's sexuality is expressed both impact on, and are impacted by, this epidemic. The survival, let alone the wellbeing, of many of our young people depends on our recognizing and acting on this understanding.

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6

A demographic view of changing youth in Asia

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Introduction

Asia¹ has experienced dramatic social, economic and cultural transformation in the last two decades. These transformations have impinged especially forcefully on Asia's youth who, in many respects, have been a bridging generation between the old and the new. They differ greatly from earlier generations in a myriad of ways including having grown up in the post colonial era, been strongly influenced by globalisation and been the first generation experiencing near universal education. The present chapter views Asian youth through a demographic perspective. It begins by examining the rapid recent growth of the Asian youth population² and assesses the outlook for future change in the numbers and distribution of young people in the region. It then moves on to an examination of the changing demographic behaviour of Asian youth and finally, discusses some of the implications of these changes for Asian young people and the region as a whole.

Asia is not only the largest of the world's major regions, with 57.5 percent of the world's total population and 57.7 percent of the world's youth population in 2000, but it is also highly diverse. Countries in the region range from tiny Brunei (300,000 people) and Maldives (300,000) to China (1.3 billion), India (1.01 billion) and Indonesia (212 million), which are three of the world's four largest countries³ and account for more than 40 percent of the globe's inhabitants. It has

some of the world's poorest nations such as Nepal (Gross Domestic Product Per Capita in 2001 of US\$1,310), Bangladesh (US\$1,610), Pakistan (US\$1,890), Myanmar (US\$1,027), and Laos (US\$1,620) to wealthy nations such as Japan (US\$25,130), Hong Kong-China (US\$24,850) and Singapore (US\$22,680). There are vast nations such as India and China and tiny countries which are virtual city-states such as Singapore. Inevitably, in this chapter, there will be generalisation across the region but it must be borne in mind that there is huge variation between countries and also within nations.

Demographic change in Asia

Asia has experienced substantial demographic change as both a cause and consequence of the social and economic transformation of the region. Table 1 reflects the scale of these changes. Since 1970 the population of the region has almost doubled but it will be noticed that the annual growth rate of the population has almost halved over that period.

Table 1: ESCAP region:¹ Major demographic changes, 1970-2003.

Demographic Variable	1970	2003	Percent Change 1970-2003
Total Population (m)	2041.2	3669	+79.7
Percent of World Population	55.2	58.1	+5.3
Annual Growth Rate ³	2.2	1.2	-45.5
Percent Urban ³	24	40	+66.7
Percent Aged 0-14 ³	40	28	-30.0
Percent Aged 65+ ³	4	6	+50.0
Dependency Ratio ³	80	52	-35.0
Total Fertility Rate ^{2,3}	5.4	2.4	-55.6
Expectancy of Life at Birth – Males ³	52	66	+26.9
Expectancy of Life at Birth – Females ³	54	70	+29.6

Source: UNESCAP 1984, 2003. ¹ The data exclude the countries of Central Asia which were not part of the ESCAP region in 1970 and 1980. ² TFR and Life Expectancies refer to the average of the five years prior to 1970 and 1980. ³ Includes Central Asia in 2003.

This has been due to a remarkable decline in fertility which has seen the average number of children borne by Asian women more than halve from 5.4 in 1970 to 2.4 in 2003. This decline was not predicted by contemporary commentators of the 1970s and has been associated with substantial social and economic change. The average life expectancy of Asian men and women has increased by around 15 years over the same period. As a result of these two processes there has been a shift in the age structure of the region so that the proportion aged under 15 years has declined from 40 percent to 29 percent. There also has been a growth of the older population with the proportion aged 65 years or more increasing from 4 to 6 percent. There also has been a major shift in the distribution of the population. In

1970 more than three quarters of Asians lived in rural areas. But by 2003 this had been reduced to 60 percent, and within the next two decades a majority of Asians will become urban based.

Again, it is important to stress the variation between Asian countries in examining demographic change. Nevertheless population growth rates have declined in most Asian countries. The main exceptions are countries which had previously been influenced by war (Cambodia, Laos) and others which are currently experiencing significant immigration (Singapore, Afghanistan). All nations recorded a significant fertility decline although it has been much greater in some countries than others but all of the very large countries in the region experienced a substantial decline in fertility. All too have increased the expectation of life. Change has been greatest in East Asia and least in South Asia with Southeast Asia being intermediate.

The drivers of these massive changes are complex and cannot be discussed in detail here. Undoubtedly rapid economic growth has been influential, although the widespread impact of the Asian economic crisis of the late 1990s affected several countries in the region, especially Indonesia. The fact that primary education now reaches almost all children in the region has been crucial. However, one of the most striking and significant changes has been those in the basic unit of social organisation in the region – the family.

Asian families have shifted from being predominantly extended, to becoming increasingly nuclear. Whereas in the past people's overwhelmingly predominant loyalties were to parents, there has been a reversal so that they are now toward children and partners. This is reflected in a rapid transition from arranged marriage to people selecting their partners themselves. Relationships between generations have changed. The role and status of women is shifting in many Asian countries away from totally family based activities toward working outside the home. Patriarchal (and in a few places matriarchal) dominance has been eroded. With the family being much less the unit of economic (as opposed to social) organisation and production, with the shift away from agriculture and increasing urbanisation, the control able to be exerted by elders over younger family members has been reduced. Hence, the functioning of families has changed dramatically in Asia and this has impinged substantially on demographic change.

Asia's "youth bulge"

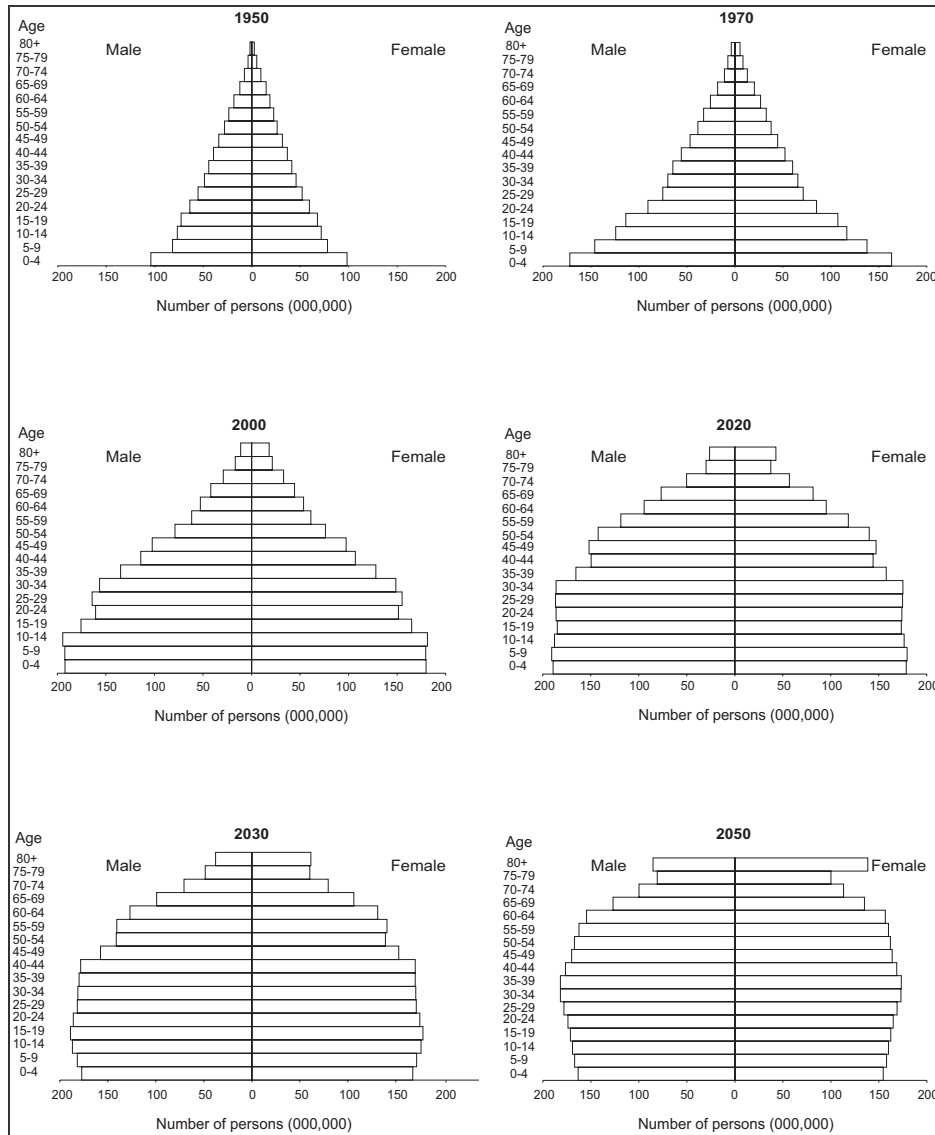
The changes in fertility and mortality have produced major shifts in Asia's age structure. Moreover, as Figure 1 indicates, the age composition will undergo profound shifts in the next half century. For much of the last half century, Asia's age pyramid has been dominated by the child age groups due to a regime of high fertility and relatively high mortality. However, the onset of fertility decline has

made the younger age groups less dominant. Indeed, by 2000 some undercutting of the age pyramid was in evidence so that the numbers in the 10-14 age group were greater than those in the 5-9 and 0-4 cohorts. It will be noted that Asia's age pyramid will increasingly become an age "pillar" over the next half century as the falling fertility and increasing life expectancy have their effects. Hence, the 65+ population will continue to increase its share of the Asian population while that aged under 15 will reduce.

In this context, it is important to examine the trajectory of the growth of the youth population. Table 2 depicts the changes in the 15-24 age group, which have occurred, and are anticipated to occur, between 1960 and 2040. This depicts the passage of what has been called the "Asian Youth Bulge" (Fuller and Hoch, 1998; Westley and Choe, 2002). As Westley and Choe (2002, 57) point out, the "youth bulge"... "is the result of a transition from high to low fertility about 15 years earlier. The youth bulge consists of large numbers of adolescents and young adults who were born when fertility was high followed by declining numbers of children born after fertility declined". Table 2 indicates that in 1960, Asia's youth population numbered 284 million and comprised 17 percent of the total population. However, over the next two decades they grew very rapidly and by 1985 they had more than doubled in number and reached a peak of 21 percent of the total population. Subsequently, the growth of the age group has been lower as the effects of the decline in fertility have been felt. Hence, in 2000 the Asian youth population had reached 615 million but their proportion of the population declined to 18 percent. The outlook for the future is for the youth population to increase slowly to 658 million in 2040 when they would make up 14 percent of the total population.

The youth bulge phenomena has occurred in most Asian nations. Most show rapid increases over the last half century and project slower growth or even small decline in the next 30 years. For example, Figure 2 depicts the proportion of the national population of six countries made up by 15-24 year olds over the 1950-2050 period. In Japan, fertility decline began in the 1950s so that the proportion aged 15-24 peaked in 1965 then declined dramatically. In Korea, fertility decline commenced in the 1960s so that the youth peak occurred in 1980. In India and Indonesia, fertility decline began in the 1970s so the youth peak was in 1990. In Laos, fertility decline did not begin until much later so it is anticipated that the peak will occur in 2010. East Timor, on the other hand, has experienced massive disruption and mortality in its population in recent decades so it has experienced fluctuations in the proportion made up by the youth population. Despite these variations, Westley and Choe (2002, 57) has pointed out between... "1960 and 2000, the number of adolescents and young adults doubled or more than doubled in nearly every country in Asia. The only exceptions were China, Japan, North Korea and Kazakhstan."

Figure 1: Asia: Age-sex structure of population 1950, 1970, 1995 and 2000 and projected population 2020, 2030 and 2050.



Source: United Nation, 2003b.

There are some substantial differences between the three main sub regions of Asia. This is apparent in Table 3, which fixes 1995 as 100 and relates the number of persons aged 15-24 over the 1970-2020 period to that level. In East Asia, the youth peak will occur in 1990 and will decline over the first twenty years of the twenty first century. In Southeast and South Central Asia, the peak numbers will not occur until 2020 although the growth will be more rapid in South Central Asia.

Table 2: Asian population aged 15-24, 1960-2000 and projected 2020 and 2040.

Year	Population Aged 15-24		Annual Percentage Growth Per Annum
	Number ('000)	Percent	
1960	283539	17.34	
1980	489013	19.43	2.76
1985	565195	20.52	2.94
1990	610458	20.25	1.55
2000	615201	17.64	0.08
2020	669315	15.60	0.42
2040	653518	13.79	-0.12

Source: United Nations, 2003b (Note: Excludes Western Asia).

Table 3: Growth and decline of adolescent populations, ESCAP subregions, 1970-2020.

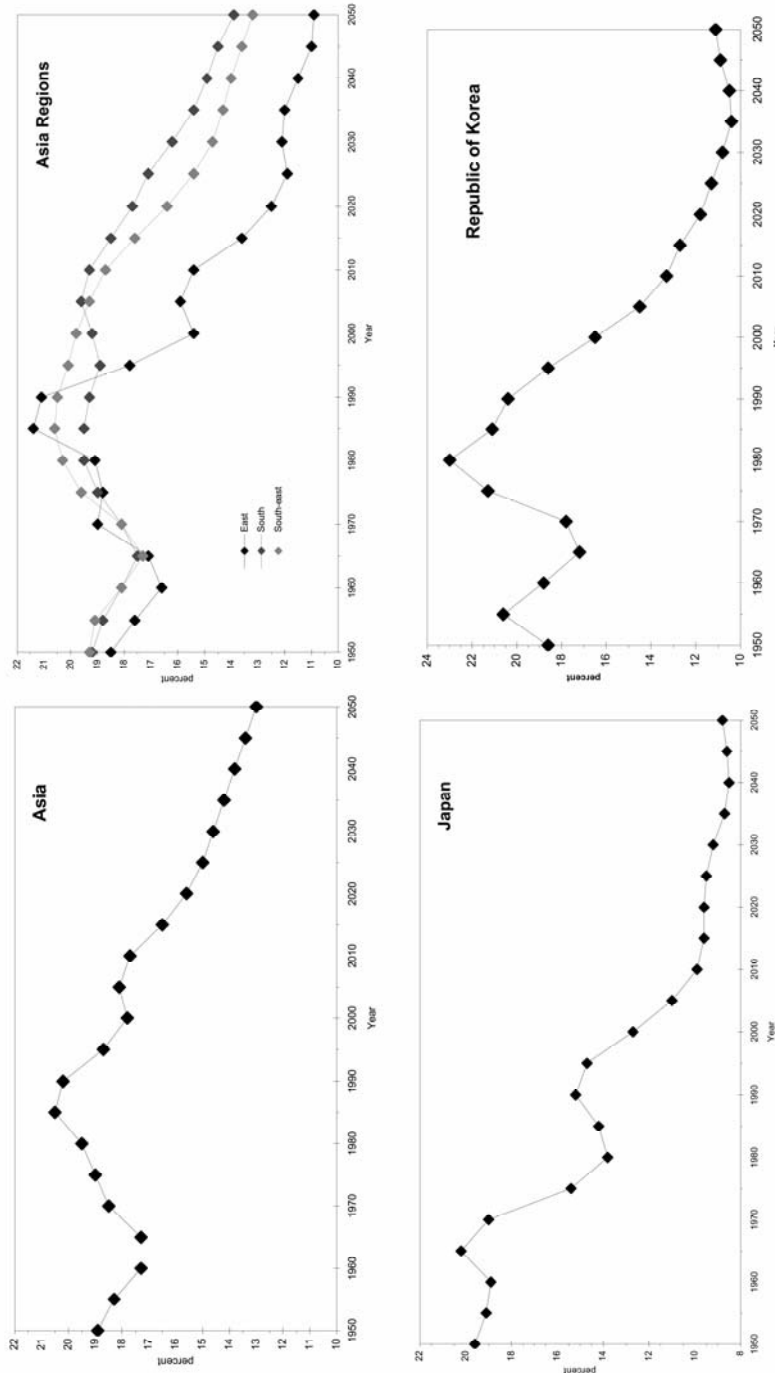
1995 = 100	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2010	2020
<i>East Asia</i>							
10-14	90.0	128.8	99.5	100	113.9	102.4	97.7
15-19	93.1	109.5	125.1	100	100.6	103.0	96.7
20-24	58.1	72.0	103.6	100	80.0	91.7	82.6
Total 10-24	78.8	101.1	108.9	100	96.8	98.5	91.6
<i>South-Central Asia</i>							
10-14	59.4	74.8	88.1	100	107.1	118.6	121.6
15-19	56.8	75.7	93.5	100	113.9	130.0	138.5
20-24	50.4	70.9	90.6	100	107.2	131.4	146.1
Total 10-24	55.9	73.9	90.6	100	109.3	126.2	134.5
<i>South-East Asia</i>							
10-14	67.3	84.6	95.0	100	104.2	110.9	107.5
15-19	58.1	77.9	96.0	100	105.4	113.7	117.2
20-24	48.4	72.1	92.4	100	104.3	115.1	123.1
Total 10-24	58.3	78.4	94.5	100	104.6	113.1	115.7

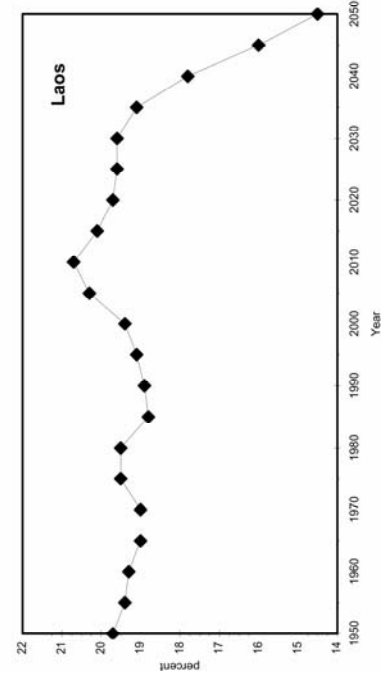
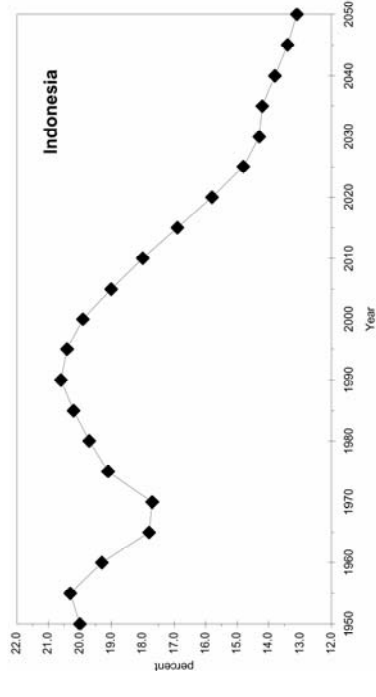
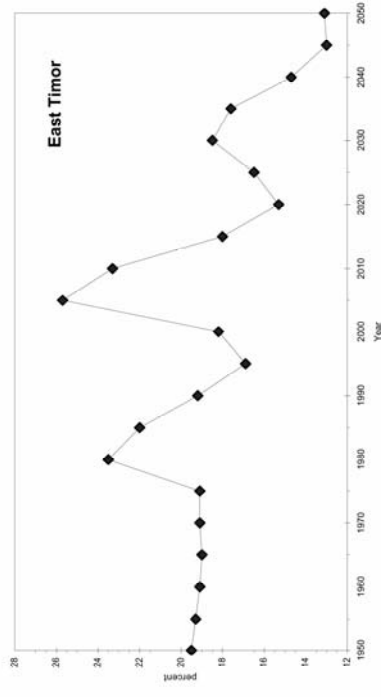
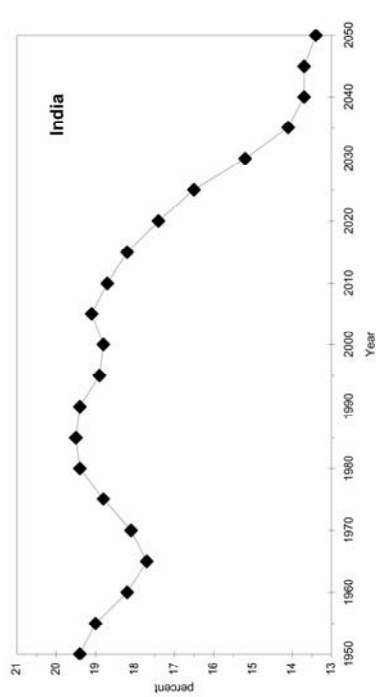
Source: Jones, 1997.

Xenos, Kabamalan and Westley (1999, 2) point out that the pattern of growth of the youth population varies with the peak and magnitude of fertility decline experienced by a nation ... “The youth bulge tends to be large in countries where fertility drops quickly from a very high to a very low level, for instance in China. The speed of the transition also varies widely – from less than 20 years in Japan, Taiwan and South Korea to more than 50 years in the Philippines, where the youth share of the total population has remained near its peak of 20 percent for two decades.” They point out that in China, the youth population grew 2.5 times between 1950 and 1990, but in the Philippines, it grew by 3.3 times over the same period.

Figure 2: Selected Asian countries: Proportion of the population aged 15-24, 1950-2000 (actual) and 2010-2040 (projected).

Source: United Nations, 2003b.





Some writers have defined “youth bulge” as a situation in which at least 20 percent of a national population are aged 15-24 and a “youth deficit” occurs when the proportion falls below 15 percent. Writers have ascribed particular problems to societies experiencing these bulges and deficits. On the one hand, countries experiencing youth bulges are considered to be more volatile since the large numbers of young people coming into the labour market may be frustrated by the status quo (Fuller and Hoch, 1998). On the other hand, where there are youth deficits there may be problems of labour shortage (Xenos, 2001).

Fuller and Hoch (1998) have expanded upon the youth bulge hypothesis. They have calculated a youth bulge index for the main regions of Asia. It is the total number of youth bulge years (the sum of countries with growth bulges) in each five years divided by the number of countries. The index is highest (3.22) in Southeast Asia and lowest in South Asia (2.29) with East Asia (3) falling in between. They show how in individual countries the incidence of the youth bulge coincides with political unrest in those countries. In addition, they demonstrate how this can occur at the sub national level in regions of Asian countries.

The passage of the youth bulge in an individual country is depicted in a single country (Vietnam) in Figure 3. This shows that the decline in fertility in Vietnam over the last decade will see the numbers aged 10-14 decline from 9 to 7 million over the first decade of the twenty first century. Similar declines in those aged 15-19 and 20-24 will occur subsequently.

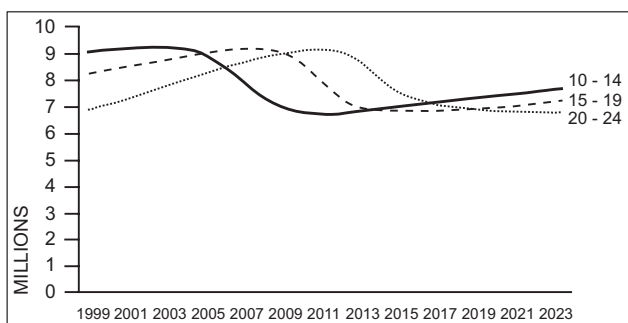


Figure 3: Vietnam:
Projections of adolescents & youth population, 1999-2024.

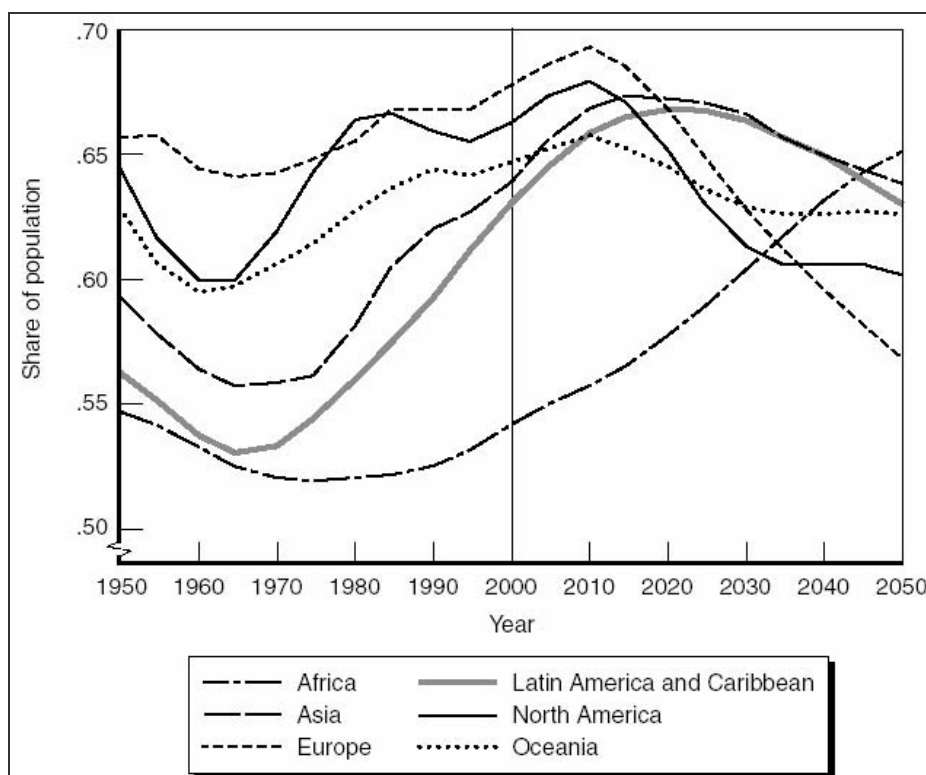
Source: Haub and Huong, 2003: 12.

The demographic dividend

The Asian youth bulge represents “a ‘boom’ generation – a generation that is larger than those immediately before and after it – that is gradually working its way through nations’ age structure” (Bloom, Canning and Sevilla, 2003: xii). The passage of this bulge through the age structure can produce a “demographic dividend” of economic growth when the bulge passes into the working age groups, and as a result, the workforce grows faster than the overall population. This increases the proportion of the national population within the working ages, and as

Bloom, Canning and Sevilla (2003: xi) point out... “assuming that policies to take advantage of this are in place. In fact the combined effect of this large working age population and health, family, labour, financial and human capital policies can effect virtuous cycles of wealth creation.” Figure 4 shows that the share of population in working ages has varied and will vary in the future between different world regions. It indicates that Asia’s demographic dividend will continue to increase for the next decade or so but will begin to decline in the late 2020s.

Figure 4: Share of population in working ages by world region, actual 1950-2000 and projected 2010-2050.



Source: Bloom, Canning and Sevilla, 2003.

The demographic dividend is delivered primarily through three mechanisms (Bloom, Canning and Sevilla 2003, 39).

- Labour supply – the numbers available to work are larger. Also women are more likely to enter the workforce as family size decreases, hence, since the Asian youth bulge is associated with low fertility, female workforce participation is likely to be high while the young and the old consume more than they produce.

- Savings – working age people tend to have a higher level of output and also a higher level of savings.
- Human capital investments – with smaller numbers of children and cultural changes there will be greater investment in education, health, etc. Hence, primary and secondary enrolment ratios are increased.

However, as Bloom, Canning and Sevilla (2003: 42) indicate, for these mechanisms to be effective there needs to be a favourable policy environment. Moreover, the decline in economic growth rates following the Asian economic crisis of 1997-98 threatens to reduce the favourable economic impact of the demographic dividend in Asia.

Asia's youth and mobility

One of the most dramatic changes in Asia's population in recent decades has been an exponential increase in personal mobility. While the immobility of Asians has always been a myth, the extent to which people in Asia move on both permanent and non-permanent bases has multiplied. Perhaps the most universal feature of population mobility is that it is selective of young adults. In assessing their life chances, most Asian young people are no longer confined to the opportunities in their local area. For example, Figure 5 shows the age-sex pattern of inter provincial migration in Indonesia and it is apparent that peak migration occurs in the adolescent ages. However, in Asia it is non-permanent circulation within nations which is of increasing significance and in this movement too, youth is predominant.

One of the major elements in population mobility in Asia has been that from rural to urban areas. This is evident in Figure 6, which shows the median age specific rates of rural outmigration of a sample of countries in three major world regions over the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. This shows the concentration in the young adult age groups and this points to Asian cities having considerably younger age structures than rural areas. A number of things follow from this, such as the increasing problem in some rural areas where aged parents are not able to receive assistance in old age from children as much as used to be the case because the children have moved to the city.

In the city, however, there are large concentrations of young adults placing considerable pressure on education services but also on the labour market to continue to be able to absorb each year large numbers of people entering the labour market for the first time. This concentration of the young also tends to be selective in that it tends to be the more highly educated youth population which moves to the city and these tend to have relatively high levels of unemployment. In Asian cities, unemployment levels are low by European standards because the poor cannot

afford to be unemployed where there is no formal social security system. Accordingly, they have to take on any work regardless of its status, remuneration etc. Hence, unemployment in such contexts tends to be concentrated in the more educated groups whose family can afford to support them until they are able to get work, commensurate with their aspirations and level of qualifications.

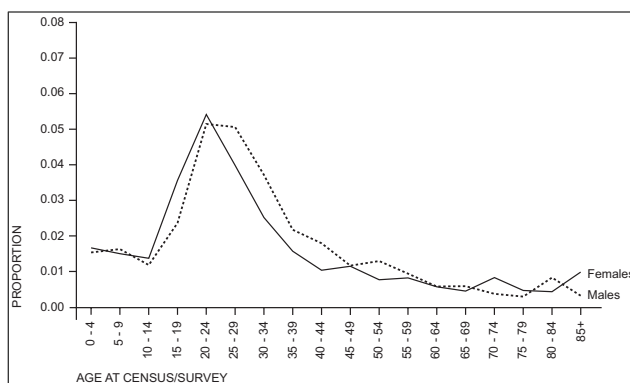


Figure 5: Indonesia: proportion of recent migrants by age and sex, 1990 to 1995.

Source: Muhidin, 2002.

Figure 7 compares the age distributions of urban and rural populations in Thailand at the 2000 census. It will be noted that the widest differential is in the 20-29 age category who comprise 20 percent of urban dwellers but only 16 percent of rural populations.

Hence, Asian cities not only have disproportionate concentrations of young people, those young people are disproportionately highly educated and often have very high levels of unemployment. Some have argued that this can lead to the development of a large disaffected group who feel disenfranchised and not able to get good jobs in manifestly expanding areas of the economy. When this is allied to a perception of corruption and nepotism at high levels in some nations, it can lead to discontent, protest and opposition to the status quo. Hence, the conflicts against authority in some Asian countries tend to be started by young urban based people.

It is important to see the mobility of young people as more than a redistribution of the Asian youth population. It is both caused by, and a factor in initiating, social and economic change. Mobility often involves separation from traditional authority structures, exposure to new and different ideas and ways of doing things, it is often associated with greater independence in earning and in other areas and the young migrants are often able to mix with a much greater range of people than they did in their home communities.

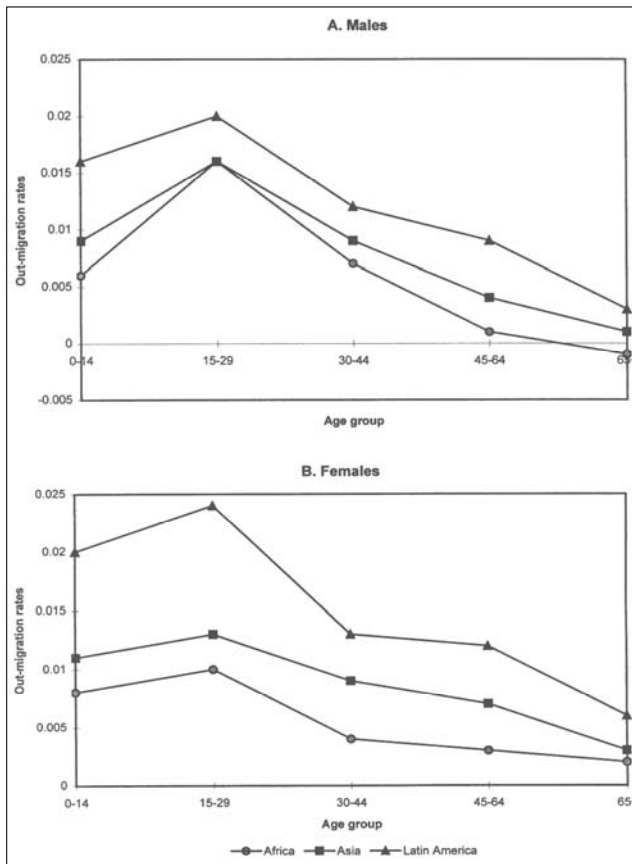


Figure 6: Median age specific rural outmigration rates by region and sex, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

Source: United Nations 2001: 47.

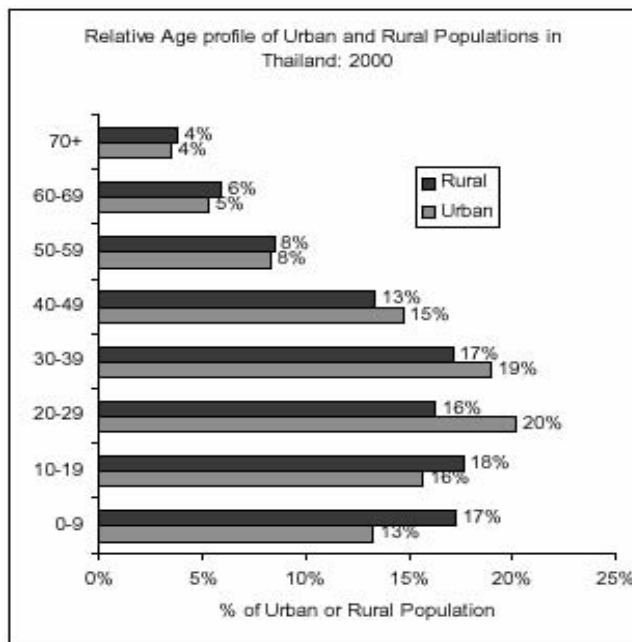


Figure 7: Comparative age profile of urban and rural populations: Thailand 2000.

Source: Asian Demographics Ltd, 18 October 2003.

In Asia too, a distinctive feature of internal mobility in recent decades has been the increasing involvement of women. This comprises women across a range of occupations. They include women both in the formal sector, especially women working in the proliferating factories, but also in the informal sector with an especially large number engaged in domestic service jobs. The complex inter-relationship between improvement in women's status and population mobility remains little understood. The significance of young migrant women in urban areas in Asia is reflected in Table 4. This presents data from a large number of DHS (Demographic and Health Survey) country surveys. It shows that the proportion of all urban women in the young childbearing ages who are migrants is substantially higher in Asia than in other world regions.

Table 4: *Percentage of urban women of reproductive age who are recent migrants.*

DHS Surveys in Region	N ^a	All Women	Women of Ages						
			15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49
North Africa	3	20.7	44.6	39.6	28.5	20.4	13.7	10.1	7.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	25	29.4	35.3	38.7	31.9	24.7	18.5	14.1	10.9
Southeast Asia	3	24.2	45.5	42.2	32.8	22.6	16.3	12.5	10.7
South Central, West Asia	10	23.2	47.5	41.8	27.3	17.8	13.5	9.9	6.9
Latin America	11	15.6	21.2	21.3	16.8	13.2	9.5	8.4	8.0
TOTAL	52	24.5	35.8	35.9	27.7	20.6	15.2	11.8	9.3

Source: Jones, 1997.

NOTE: The age-specific entries are summaries of predicted values from a probit model. The table gives the average value of proportions estimated separately from each DHS survey with migration information. Estimates from countries with more than one such survey were downweighted in proportion to the number of surveys fielded in the country.

^a Number of countries with DHS survey information on migration.

Perhaps the greatest change in mobility in Asia over the last two decades has been the growth of international population movement. In the early postwar decades there was little international migration in and out of Asian nations but now almost all Asian countries are influenced in a significant way by that movement. Migration between countries takes many forms – there is a big flow to OECD nations as well as within Asia, circular as well as permanent flows, legal as well as undocumented migration, forced as well as voluntary movement. As with internal migration, it is young adults who dominate in the accelerated migration. The predominance of young adults in international migration is evident, for example in Table 5, which shows Asian born migrants in Australia at the 2001 census who had arrived in Australia in the five years before the census. Similarly, Figure 8 shows that among returning female overseas contract workers (OCWs) in Indonesia (predominantly domestic workers), the 20-24 age group are predominant. One specific type of youth international migration, which is strongly influencing Asia, is the growing tide of student migration. Asia is the predominant global source of

international students. Figure 9 shows the massive growth of Asian students in Australia, one of the world's major destinations of student migrants.

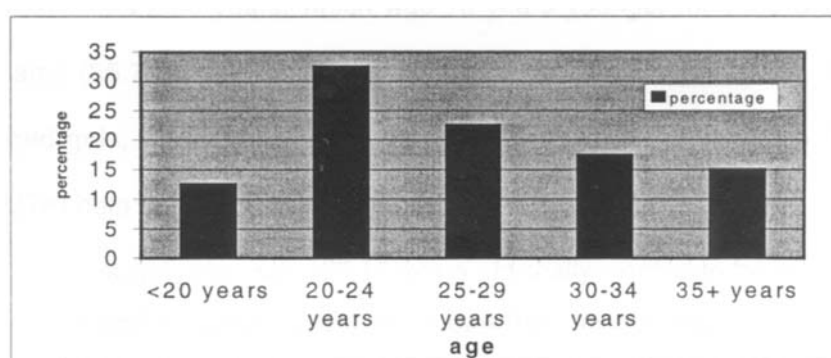
The increasing scale and diversity of international migration has opened a vast range of new possibilities to Asian youth. In some countries such as the Philippines and Sri Lanka, it is common place for young people to aspire to work, study and, in some cases, settle in foreign nations. A recent United Nations (2000) study has pointed to the increasing labour force age deficits that European countries will face over the next few decades so that, undoubtedly, there will be an increase in the number of opportunities for Asian youth in OECD nations. Moreover, the proliferation of migration networks and the developing international migration industry are increasingly facilitating international youth migration. However, international migration also is creating a number of challenges for Asian youth and their home countries. The increasing involvement of criminal groups and the growth of trafficking and undocumented migration targets predominantly young people and especially women. Migrants are often open to exploitation in destinations. Some Asian nations are suffering substantial outflows of their most qualified and brightest young people although there is increasing debate about whether this results only in brain drain effects with remittances, return migration and other positive developmental effects being identified (Hugo, 2003).

Table 5: Australia: migrants from Asia arriving between 1996 and 2001.

Birthplace	Number Aged 15-24	% Aged 15-24	Total Migrants
South-East Asia	36,434	37.2	97,914
North-East Asia	28,452	29.2	97,526
Southern and Central Asia	12,069	21.9	55,163
Total Asia	76,955	30.7	250,603

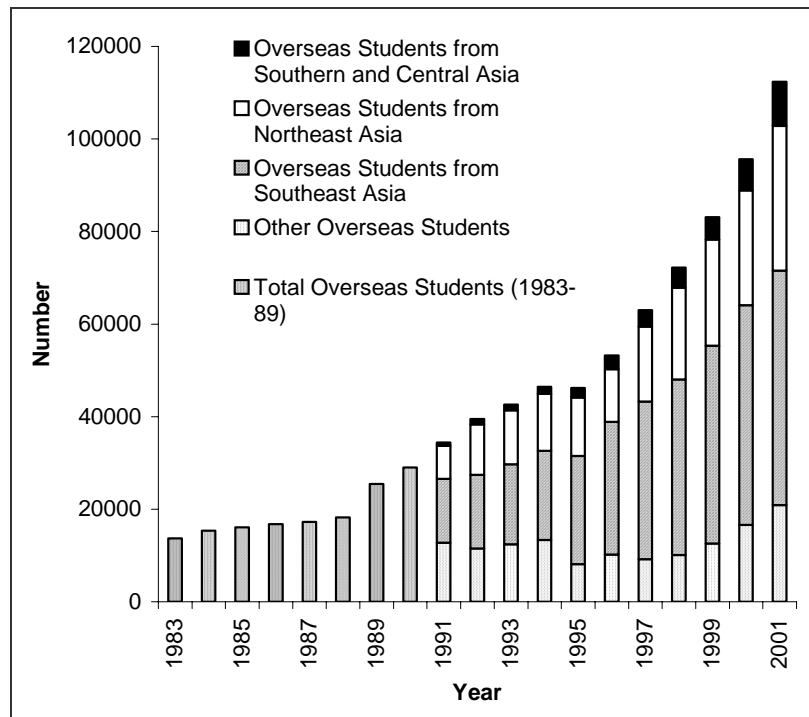
Source: ABS 2001 Census.

Figure 8: Indonesia: Age distribution of a sample of returning female OCWs in 1999.



Source: Pujiastuti, 2000.

Figure 9: Overseas students in Australian universities, 1983 to 2001.



Source: DETYA Selected Higher Education Student Statistics, various issues.

Demographic behavior of Asian youth

The youth stage of the life cycle is of pivotal significance not only from the perspective of individuals but also in terms of national development. This is a crucial period for human resource development since it is the time when people make key decisions influencing their lifetime of work and they make the transition from education to work. It is also the time when they make key social decisions in terms of their living arrangements, partnering and family formation. The present generation of Asian youth differ greatly from previous cohorts in the way in which they make those key transitions.

One of the major ways in which young Asians differ from their parents is in the whole area of family formation. Marriage patterns have changed dramatically as is clearly apparent from Table 6, which compares women aged 40-44 with those aged 20-24 at the time of survey in several countries and shows the proportion married by ages 15, 18 and 20. There has clearly been a transformation in the two decades separating the two cohorts. In Indonesia, for example, whereas half of the older women had been married by age 18, some 29.1 percent of the younger group had. The least change is evident in Vietnam where the age at marriage has been older

for a long period. It will be noted that in South Asia, while the age at marriage has increased, the proportion marrying at younger ages is still high reflecting the continued lower status of many women in that sub-region. Since the levels of cohabitation are still relatively low throughout most of Asia, the increasing age at marriage reflects the fact that Asians are commencing family formation at an older age than in the past.

Table 6: Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 and 40 to 44 who married by ages 15, 18 and 20, by country and year of survey.

Country	Year of Survey	20 to 24			40 to 44		
		Percent Married by Age			Percent Married by Age		
		15	18	20	15	18	20
Bangladesh	1996/97	46.8	68.5	77.1	73.5	93.6	96.7
India	1992/93	26.1	54.2	71.4	40.8	72.4	85.3
Indonesia	1997	5.8	29.6	47.0	18.2	49.1	67.2
Lao People's Democratic Republic	2000	7.3	26.0*	49.5**	6.0	23.3*	48.8**
Mongolia	1998	0.2	10.4	36.7	0.4	17.7	44.8
Nepal	1996	19.1	60.3	75.7	36.5	75.0	87.1
Pakistan	1990/91	11.4	31.6	48.9	18.0	44.8	60.9
Philippines	1998	2.0	14.6	27.5	3.3	20.2	36.8
Sri Lanka	1993	1.1	13.7	27.8	8.0	26.3	40.5
Thailand	1987	2.4	20.5	37.0	3.1	24.4	47.4
Turkey	1998	4.2	23.0	42.8	10.8	43.0	66.2
Vietnam	1997	0.9	12.4	35.9	1.3	13.2	34.6

Source: Gubhaju 2002. * By age 17. ** By age 19.

Another related area of change, which has impinged upon Asian youth, is education. Table 7 shows that the proportion of Asians aged 15-24 who are in education changed dramatically between 1950 and 1990. It will be noted that the extent of change varies considerably between sub regions. The proportions are highest in East Asia and lowest in South Asia. The male-female differential has been reduced although it remains substantial in South Asia. The implications of this change are considerable. Not only are a large proportion of young adults still in education institutions at an age where previous generations would have been married, had families and been working, but it means that the majority of the new generation of Asian youth have been exposed to a wider range of ideas than earlier generations.

Similarly, the work patterns of the new generation of Asian youth are different to earlier generations. They are much more likely to be working in non-agricultural activities. Structural change in Asia has seen the proportion of workers in agriculture decline and the average age of agricultural workers to be much greater than for workers in other jobs. Moreover, they are more likely than earlier generations to be working in a formal sector working situation. They are less likely

to be involved in a family business and more likely to be earning a regular independent salary than previous generations. Young women are much more likely to be working outside of the home. Young people are more likely to be working in a location which is distant from where they grew up and where their parents currently live.

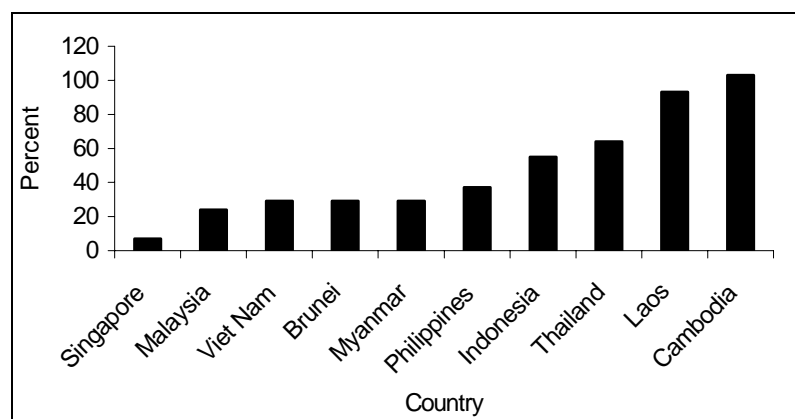
Table 7: Asia: percent in school by sex and age group 1950-1990.

	Male		Female	
	1950	1990	1950	1990
<i>Aged 15-19</i>				
Asia	22.9	38.9	13.6	25.6
East Asia	36.8	73.3	36.2	74.2
Southeast Asia	18.7	39.2	12.3	33.9
South Asia	20.7	33.9	8.2	15.6
<i>Aged 20-24</i>				
Asia	6.0	12.5	2.0	6.2
East Asia	9.1	21.6	2.3	15.4
Southeast Asia	5.4	12.5	3.4	11.0
South Asia	5.5	11.1	1.5	3.0

Source: Xenos, 2001.

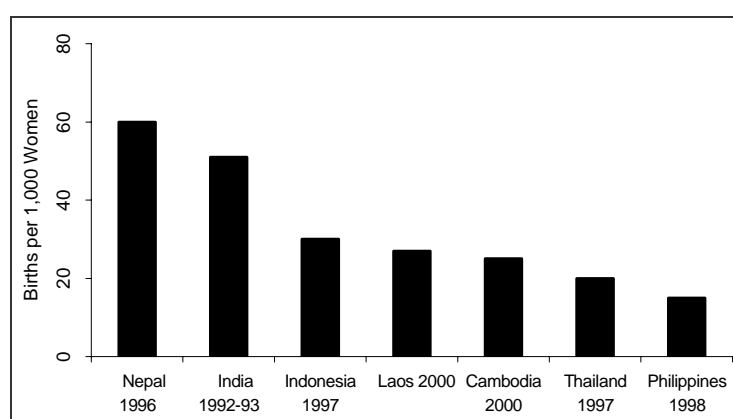
One of the features of the demographic behaviour of contemporary Asian youth which has been identified by commentators (Xenos and Kabamalan, 1998; *et al.* 2001; Westley and Choe, 2002; Gubhaju, 2002) is increasing level of risk behaviour among them compared to previous generations. One important area is in sexual risk taking (Westley and Choe, 2002: 61) although Asia differs significantly from Sub Saharan Africa in the incidence of premarital sex. Gubhaju (2002: 104-5) has shown that pre marital sex is clearly on the rise in Asia despite strong traditional norms opposing it in many nations. Moreover, the risky sexual behaviours of adolescents are compounded by a widespread sexual double standard, which accepts, or even encourages, promiscuity among men but strictly restricts women's sexual behaviour. Figure 10 presents data drawn from national surveys indicating the proportion of women in their early 20s who had sex by the time they were 18. This indicates that while early marriage is a factor, it is apparent that pre marital sex is of significance in Asia. Teenage pregnancy has reduced in Asia with the increase in the age at marriage and increased contraceptive prevalence but Figure 11 shows that even in Southeast Asia there is considerable variation. It is apparent that teenage births put both mother and child at greater risk on average than births to older women. Hence, Table 8 shows that infant mortality rates in several Asian countries are significantly higher than for births to mothers aged less than 20 than for women aged 20-29.

Figure 10: Percent of women aged 20-24 who had sex by age 18, selected Asian countries.



Source: Haub and Huong, 2003.

Figure 11: Births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 in Southeast Asian countries.



Source: Haub and Huong, 2003.

Although teenage birth rates are generally falling in Asia, there is evidence that, levels of sexual risk taking among young people is increasing (Westley and Choe, 2002: 61). This has increased concern about contracting HIV and other STDs. Gubhaju (2002: 107-9) has identified the following factors which are leading to an increase in risky health related behaviour among adolescents, especially unmarried adolescents:

- Limited access to information regarding the risks of sexual activity and contraception.
- peer pressure.

- inadequate access to youth-friendly health services.
- economic constraints.

Table 8: Infant mortality (deaths per 1,000 live births) for children of mothers under age 20 compared with children of mother age 20-29: Various countries in Asia.

Country and year	Deaths per 1,000 live births	
	Mother less than 20	Mother 20-29
Bangladesh 1999/2000	103	70
India 1998/99	93	63
Indonesia 1997	63	47
Nepal 1996	120	80
Pakistan 1990/91	121	91
Philippines 1998	41	33
Sri Lanka 1987	35	33
Thailand 1987	41	34
Vietnam 1997	46	34

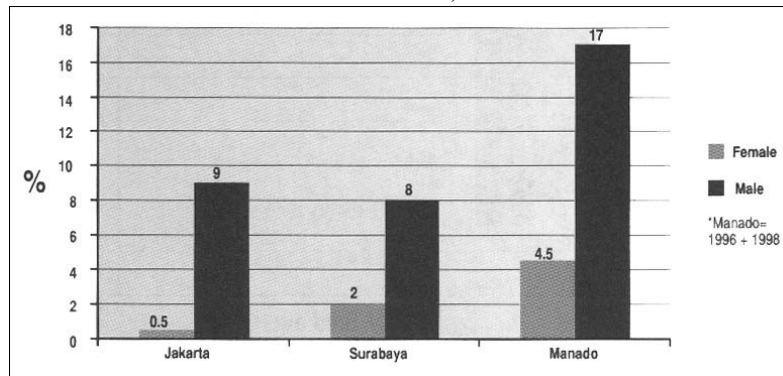
Source: Westley and Choe, 2002.

Note: Infant mortality is expressed as the number of deaths before age 1 year per 1,000 live births. Women who give birth in their teens are likely to come disproportionately from disadvantaged socio-economic groups where infant mortality tends to be high for a variety of reasons. Yet the relationship between mother's age at birth and infant mortality holds up even after controlling for relevant socio-economic variables.

In Indonesia not a great deal is known about the sexual behaviour of youth, but Figure 12 shows rates of sexual intercourse among high school students in three cities. It is apparent rates are much higher among males than females. Figure 13 shows that the peak incidence of HIV infection in Indonesia is in the 20s age group and there are significant numbers in the 15-19 age group. It is important to point out that there is low use of condoms among sexually active youth in Asia. This is apparent, for example in Indonesia (Hugo, 2002). Westley and Choe (2002: 62) found that there were disturbingly low levels of condom use among sexually active young people in Asia. They do point out, however, that there is some good news in the Thailand case where intensive policy interventions have seen a spectacular increase in condom use and a decline in incidence of sexually transmitted infections. An interesting study of youth in Vietnam (Haub and Huong, 2003) says that although data are limited, there is evidence of increasing STD incidence among young people and youth are an increasingly important group in the rapidly growing HIV infected population. They also point out that sexual abuse of female teenagers now poses a serious problem in Vietnam as does teenage rape and an increase in the proportion of sex workers who were under 25 years of age. They explain that young Vietnamese, especially rural youth have little access to information on reproductive health. Despite the longstanding family planning

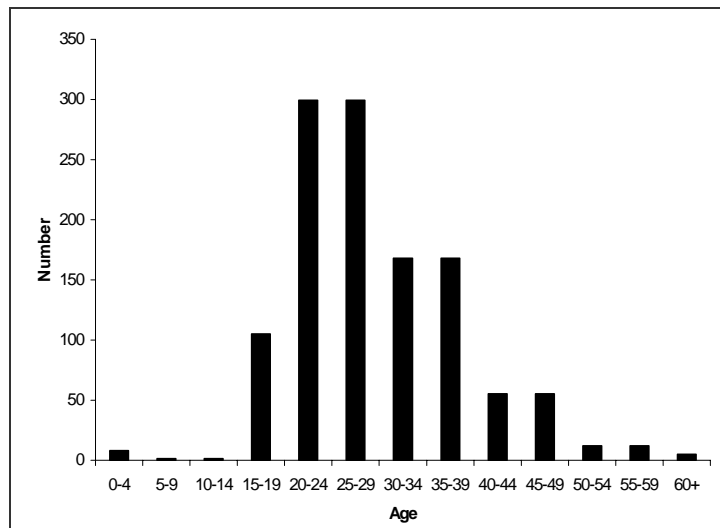
program, young people have limited knowledge of contraception. Indeed, throughout Asia, the family planning programs, messages and information are often targeted to, and almost entirely focussed on married people, especially married women.

Figure 12: Indonesian cities: Sexual intercourse among high school students, 1997.



Source: Kaldor et al., 2000.

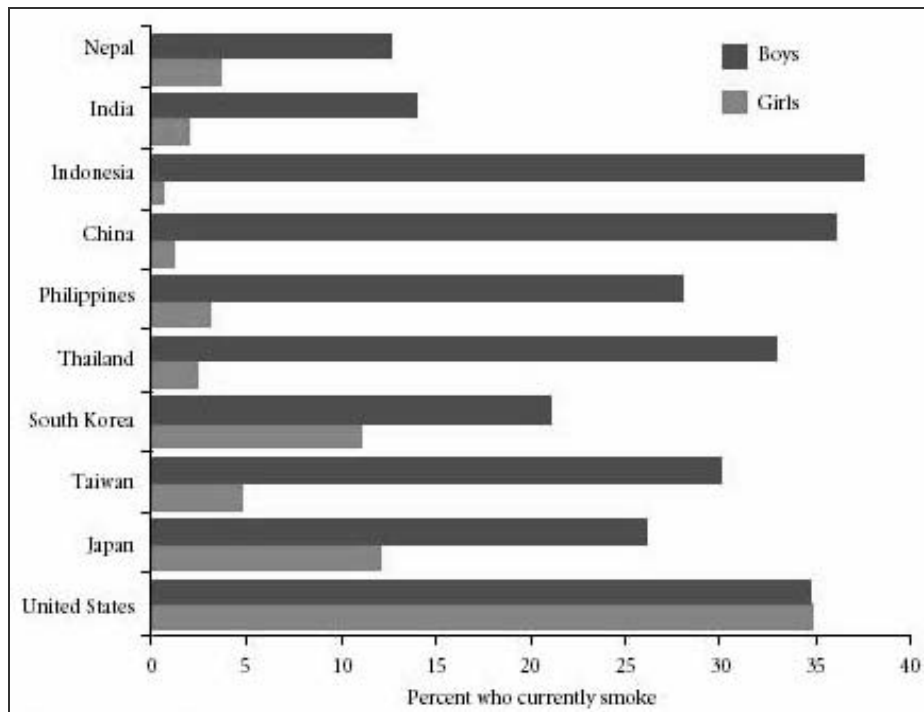
Figure 13: Indonesia: Age structure of the population reported with HIV infection, November 2000.



Source: Directorate General CDC and EH Ministry of Health Republic of Indonesia, 2001.

Other areas of risk behaviour among Asian youth, which are increasing, are smoking, drinking and drug use. As Westley and Choe (2002: 61-2) point out: “Young men are much more likely than young women to drink, smoke or use drugs. They are also likely to start these risk behaviours at younger ages than women.” Taking smoking for example, Figure 14 shows that only in Indonesia and China is the proportion of young males who smoke larger than in the United States. In both nations smoking is clearly a major health problem among young people. It will be noted that in each of the selected countries the incidence of young women smoking is much lower than in the United States.

Figure 14: Percentage of boys and girls age 15-19 years who currently smoke in nine countries of Asia and the United States.



Source: Westley and Choe, 2002.

Table 9 shows the incidence of drinking, smoking and drug use among youth in selected Asian countries. These are low reported rates of drug use but such data are extremely difficult to collect. There can be no doubt that drug use is increasing in significance especially in urban areas. In Indonesia one estimate of drug users puts it at 2 percent of the population (4 million people) and the number in Jakarta at 1.3 million (Utomo *et al.*, 2001). There has been an upsurge in young people with drug overdoses being reported in hospitals in the Indonesian capital. A surveillance survey of 400 intravenous drug users (IDUs) in Jakarta (Utomo *et al.*, 2001) found

that 90 percent were male and 95 percent aged less than 30. Almost half were in some form of education and most were unmarried. Some 62 percent of males and 50 percent of females reused needles. More than a half of respondents were sexually active with 50 percent with casual partners, 35 percent commercial partners and 15 percent with regular partners and use of condoms were low.

Table 9: Percentage of boys and girls age 15-19 who currently drink, smoke, or use drugs: various countries in Asia.

Country and year	Drink		Smoke		Use Drugs	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
China 2000	37	9	36	1	na	na
India 1998/99	2	1	14 ^a	2 ^a	na	na
Indonesia 1988	2	0	38	1	1	0
Japan 2000 ^b	39	31	26	12	na	na
Nepal 2000	21	11	12	4	na	na
Philippines 1994	47	12	28	3	2	0
South Korea 2000	46	51	21	11	3	3
Taiwan 1994	na	na	30	5	na	na
Thailand 1994	43	16	33	2	6	1

Source: Westley and Choe, 2002. na - information not available. ^a Includes chewing tobacco. ^b For ages 15-18 only.

Alcohol use varies considerably with culture and religion. Table 9 shows that among males aged 15-19, the proportions who drink alcohol in India and Indonesia are very small. This is a reflection of the impact of religion reinforced by culture, although in some community studies it would seem that the use of alcohol among youth, even in these areas, is increasing. On the other hand, in Philippines, South Korea and Thailand, almost a half of young males drink alcohol. The pattern among girls is generally lower and also shows wide variation. Only in South Korea are young women more likely to drink alcohol than young men. There is less variation between countries in smoking, although the gender differences are greater. Girls tend to smoke more in the more developed countries than in the poorer nations. Westley and Choe (2002: 63) point out that in Asia, parents tend to be more permissive with their sons than their daughters, which helps to explain why risk behaviour is much more common among boys than girls.

As has been explained earlier, the work situation of Asian youth has been transformed, and in some cases, this has exposed young Asians, especially women, to a higher degree of risk of exploitation than was the case in the past. To take the example of young women, there are a number of work contexts, which have emerged, in recent years with a significant degree of risk. These include:

- One feature in many Asian cities has been the high level of foreign and domestic investment in labour intensive manufacturing to take advantage of the

cheap malleable labour force in countries like Indonesia, Bangladesh, Vietnam, etc. Many of the jobs created are targeted at young women who are seen to be more amenable to control, nimble fingered and cheaper than male counterparts. In many such contexts, young women are exploited through long hours of work, poor conditions, low levels of pay, low security (many are discharged if they marry, get pregnant or at older ages) and are exposed to sexual exploitation.

- The so called entertainment industry has expanded exponentially in the region and while it is incorrect to portray all or even most young women involved to be victims (Lim, 1998), there is considerable exploitation in the area.
- Women in the region have become increasingly involved in international labour migration of various types, which also can involve some exploitation. This exploitation occurs at the recruitment stage, in the travel phase and at the destination. One particularly vulnerable group are the millions of women from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh, etc. who work in foreign nations as domestic workers. Since they work in the homes of their employers and hence are often not subject to the labour laws of the countries they work in they are often vulnerable to being overworked, mistreatment, having poor working conditions and sexual interference. The incidence of exploitation of young labour migrants, especially women, varies between birthplace groups and destination areas. It is certainly high among Indonesian women who go to Middle East destinations (Hugo, 2004).

Perhaps the most dramatic reflection of problems among youth is the incidence of suicide. Indeed, the increasing incidence of suicide among youth in more developed contexts is one of the most pressing problems in some such societies. Table 10 presents data on youth suicide for several Asian nations and compares them with the situation in some developed countries. It is clear that there are wide differences with culture, economic and social situations, but several patterns are interesting. For most of the Asian countries represented, male youth suicide is lower in Asia than in more developed nations. Only Sri Lanka, among the countries listed, has a level of male youth suicide above the levels in Australia and New Zealand. However it will be noted that the situation is quite different for young women. Indeed, in each of the countries listed, female youth suicide is greater than is the case in Australia. Again rates are highest in Sri Lanka.

Some of the best data on suicide in Asia has been collected in the Matlab field station surveillance project which has been carried out continuously in Bangladesh over several decades. Table 11 show the suicide data for the surveyed communities over the 1980-1996 period. It will be noted that the peak age group for suicide of both men and women is clearly in the 20-29 category. Indeed, the rates are substantially higher than for other age groups. In other nations (e.g. Singapore,

Hong Kong and Korea), suicide rates increase with age while in others (e.g. Sri Lanka) there is a “U” shaped incidence pattern with high suicide in the youth and elderly ages is evident (Ruzicka, 1998).

Table 10: Suicide mortality of young adults aged 15-24 in selected countries and areas.

Country/area in ESCAP Region	Year	Suicides per 100,000		Male to Female Ratio
		Males	Females	
Bangladesh	1980-1996	9.3	19.6	0.5
China (rural)	1992	17.4	36.7	0.5
China (urban)	1992	5.6	10.6	0.5
Hong Kong	1994	9.5	8.7	1.1
Singapore	1994	11.7	10.2	1.1
Sri Lanka	1986	77.0	48.0	1.6
Republic of Korea	1994	11.0	5.9	1.9
Japan	1994	12.0	5.1	2.4
Australia	1990-1992	26.0	5.0	5.0
New Zealand	1990-1993	39.0	6.0	6.0
<i>Highest suicide rates in countries of Europe:</i>				
Russian Federation	1994	49.0	9.0	5.0
Lithuania	1994	46.0	12.0	4.0
Finland	1994	46.0	8.0	6.0
Latvia	1994	40.0	4.0	10.0
Estonia	1994	38.0	10.0	4.0

Source: Ruzicka, 1998.

Table 11: Suicide mortality in the Matlab Field Station of the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B): 1980-1996 annual rates per 100,000.

Age	Male Suicides	Average Annual Rate	Female Suicides	Average Annual Rate	Male to Female Ratio
10-19	15	3.6	38	9.7	0.37
20-29	38	15.6	48	18.5	0.84
30-39	8	4.6	7	3.4	1.35
40-49	6	4.5	5	3.6	1.25
50-59	9	8.7	4	3.6	2.41
60+	7	6.1	2	1.9	3.21
All ages	83	7.0	104	8.6	0.81

Source: Ruzicka, 1998.

One of the major ways in which the contemporary youth generation in Asia differs significantly from earlier generations has been in the exposure to mass media. Table 12 shows the pattern of daily exposure to various media among the urban

youth in one of the least developed nations of Asia, Nepal. It will be noticed that the rates are very high for electronic media and even in this poor nation there are significant rates of internet usage.

Table 12: Daily exposure to television, radio and newspapers among urban youth (ages 14 to 22), by sex and marital status: Nepal, 2000 (percentage).

Media Type	Male		Female		Total
	Single	Married	Single	Married	
Television	98.8	94.7	99.3	92.4	97.8
Radio	95.7	90.3	94.0	84.9	93.2
Newspaper	87.6	64.6	83.9	37.3	77.4
Internet	25.7	6.1	19.4	6.0	21.8
Any one	99.9	98.2	99.4	96.5	88.1
All except the Internet	86.1	63.7	81.5	35.3	75.5
All four	16.7	1.8	11.4	0.9	11.7

Source: Thapa and Mishra, 2003.

Conclusion

It is difficult to exaggerate the demographic significance of Asia's contemporary youth generation. They differ substantially from earlier generations in a myriad of respects and they have to make the crucial transitions from childhood to adulthood, from education to work, from dependence to independence and to separate household and family formation in dramatically different contexts to earlier generations. The present paper has addressed only a few of the demographic dimensions of Asian youth. It is important to stress again the enormous diversity, both between, and within Asian countries. Inevitably, this paper has oversimplified and over-generalised the situation with respect to Asian youth and it must be remembered that Asian youth are as differentiated as any age cohort in Asia.

The contemporary youth in Asia have been the first to experience near universality of primary education, electronic media, forces of globalisation and dominance of the agricultural job market. They are the largest youth generation that the world has seen and is likely to see. They are of crucial significance in the "cashing in" of the "demographic dividend" which involves an unprecedentedly large proportion of the population being in the working age groups. In a globalising world, a higher proportion than ever before know about opportunities not only throughout their own nation but in other nations as well. Moreover, the existence of widespread social networks and a cheapening and quickening of transport has made greater mobility possible. However, along with an expansion in opportunities has come an increase in challenges which Asian youth face. The large size of the generation is creating great pressures on labour markets to productively absorb the burgeoning workforce. Traditional structures are under threat everywhere. While the reduction

in patriarchal power can have benefits for youth, it can also remove long valued and reliable support systems. The pace of change will continue to be rapid and this will create new pressures.

Much demographic commentary in the contemporary world points to issues of ageing. Every nation in Asia is experiencing a demographic ageing involving the older population growing more rapidly than any other age cohort and their share of the total population is increasing. This has correctly drawn attention to the increasing needs of older population. However, it also, in some cases, may be diverting attention away from other groups with important needs. The youth population are especially significant here. We need to understand the dynamics of this large, diverse group who are both key actors in Asia's rapid economic and social change and strongly influenced by that change. There is also a danger in considering youth to see them as being classless. We need to know more about disadvantage among youth in Asia and to develop policies to ameliorate this disadvantage and maximise the chances for them to develop their potential.

NOTES

1. Asia is defined here as the countries extending from Afghanistan in the west and Japan in the east.
2. The United Nations define youth as persons aged between 15 and 24.
3. Asia has 6 of the largest 10 countries.

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7

Generational change and cyberpolitics in Asia

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Introduction

In South Korea, youth spend hours entranced by *avator*, in which they create a virtual identity on the web. The speed of the connection breaks down barriers between their real and virtual identity. In Japan, over one million boys lock themselves in their rooms for years at a time and only engage with the real world via cyberspace, a condition known as *hikikomori*. In sexually repressed Singapore, sex sites per capita are higher than any other country in the world. So what is going on with youth in Asia and is it important?

The pace of socio-economic change in Asia is unprecedented and as a consequence, generations are piling up in virtual ‘rear collisions’. These changes are propelled by rapid economic growth and technological change, in which cultural transformation is struggling to keep up and political change has been left far behind. The younger generation in Asia is struggling to cope.

Youth in Asia has been subject to more rapid change than their Western counterparts moving from traditional to post-industrial societies often within a single generation. The catching up of Asian youth may be interpreted, superficially at least, as resulting in cultural convergence of generations in Asia and the West. The apparent convergence extends to the reaction of the older

generations in both cultures who tend to cynically discount youth as the lost 'credit-card generation'.

In the West, youth has reportedly disengaged from the formal political process, a trend also identified in Asia. Membership of political parties, political activism and voter turnout is declining. Youth claim that politicians are not dealing with the long term issues that concern them: lack of employment opportunities, generational debt and environmental damage (Halstead, 1999). The declining birth rate means these generations are losing the power of numbers to initiate change through the democratic process. There is the added indignity of dependency on their parents to pay for education and subsidise their entry into the property market.

It is argued in this paper that youth in Asia are not disengaged from politics. However, rather than concern for the political agenda prescribed by political parties, the younger generation challenges issues closer to home: patriarchy, gender alignment and filial piety, as well as more macro issues of nationalism. They do so within a new public sphere fashioned to allude the older generation and government regulation. It is a space where anyone with the physical access and user ability can expose every aspect of themselves. This new sphere is traversed via the internet and text messaging.

Changing youth culture and new media in Asia

Research on generational change in politics and the role of new media in Asia is limited and the quality of the information is difficult to verify. Netizens (those who surf the net) who contribute to on-line newspapers and website postings tend to recount vignettes to illustrate more general opposition to state censorship and express outrage over single issues. However, it is also clear that this group has effectively used new media to launch major campaigns to depose or elect leaders such as Suharto in Indonesia, Estrada in Philippines and Roh in South Korea or to report on events muffled by the established media such as the prosecution of Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Imbrahim. Youth and its use of new media in political change cannot be ignored.

For the past 20 years, market research firms such as McCann Erikson, O and M and MTV have also produced data on youth in Asia – since they were recognized as a separate and cashed-up market. Their surveys not only cover consumer preferences but changes in attitudes, beliefs and values and expectations. Broad-based data collection is crucial to relationship marketing which is prevalent over the internet and mobile phones.

Even though countries of Asia are culturally diverse and historically unique, the young middle class throughout the region share a great deal: they are commonly educated overseas and are cosmopolitan and confident; and they are technologically savvy regularly communicating with each other and new found friends through chatrooms, *blogs* (personal websites), MSN (Microsoft Network)

on the internet, SMS (short message service) on a mobile phone and MMS (multi media message service) on mobiles.

Primarily those who surf the internet are fun seeking. They may engage in five conversations simultaneously, occasionally with forbidden ‘internet boyfriends/girlfriends’; they engage in conversation with a ‘virtual friend’ (e.g. www.oliverbot.com) or send photographs, videos and mini-clip downloads to real friends; English or variants thereof is used to communicate about issues with international cache. Small screens and the urgency for communication reduces language to more cryptic forms which are largely unintelligible to the older generation: *great* becomes *gr8* and *see you later* becomes *c u l8r*. International brands such as United Colours of Benneton, Adidas, Diesel are individualised; globalization has created jobs in call centers, the design industry, finance and in business and in developing countries their income exceeds that of their parents. Most of them live at home and benefit from parental subsidy of living costs – parents who chose work over leisure and community-good over individual freedom.

Academics are missing something quite important in Asia. To date, academic research on generational change and cyberpolitics in Asia is limited (Butcher, 2003; Hill and Sen, 2000; and Song, 2003). Understanding the changes in attitude of the young and how these are translated into political and social change will enhance our understanding of future tendencies in the region. The younger generation is changing and fast and this will have significant implications for the future of the region. Although these changes are limited to the emerging middle class and the elite, nevertheless, it is this group which will lead their generation in the 21st century. Will the next generation lead their countries toward political pluralism or increased nationalism? Will the apparent growth in anti-Americanism among the young in Korea and Japan give rise to a more politically powerful China globally? How will youth’s dissatisfaction with authoritarian governments as well as corrupt political parties in the new democracies play out?

Generational change impacts on economic architecture and international security. One should not assume that the current tensions within the region will dissipate with the next generation. The post Second World War political tensions survive in Asia albeit in different guises and new tensions are emerging over the disproportionate pace of economic development. For example, the tension between Chinese and Japanese students may mirror those expressed by their parents’ generation regarding the Nanjing Massacre but the young articulate it differently. For young Koreans, the indebtedness to the US felt by the older generation is replaced by a contradictory tendency to mimic the economic growth of the US but at the same time reject American bases. Radical young Muslims within the region are increasingly influenced by those involved in the resistance in the Middle East (Bunt, 2000).

The young are challenging points of authority at several levels within the family, the workplace and internationally. Through chat rooms they challenge parental authority, they realign gender relations, and they express cultural and political tensions. The new political agenda for youth include: challenges to obligation and patriarchy within the family and workplace; engagement with and responses to globalization; and tendencies toward nationalism, anti-Americanism and democracy.

Generational changes of leaders in the Asia region

Throughout Asia there is a trend to elect younger leaders but whether this is being driven by the electorate's preference or merely a consequence of the change over of long-serving leaders is not so clear. In South East Asia, during the post war period, the average age of leaders continued to increase as leaders stayed in power for more than 20 years, often staying on into their 70s (Table 1). Similarly, the leadership in North East Asia were those in their 60s and 70s even though their tenure was shorter. This tendency is consistent with assumptions about Asian values which suggest that age begets wisdom (Table 2). In North East Asia, the leadership has changed more frequently especially in Japan and most were in their 60s when they took office. This compares with the People's Republic of China which has fewer leaders but they were in their 60s to 80s when they came to power.

Table 1: Post war leaders in selected South East Asian countries.

Country	Name of Leader	Years in Power	Age When Became Leader	Total Years of Leadership	Age of leaving office
<i>Malaysia</i>	Mahathir Mohammad	1981-2003	56	22	78
<i>Singapore</i>	Lee Kwan Yew	1959-1990	36	31	67
<i>Vietnam (Prime Ministers)</i>	Ho Chi Minh	1954-1955	64	15	79
	Pham Van Dong	1955-1987	49	32	81
	Pham Hung	1987-1988	75	1	76
	Do Muoi	1988-1991	71	3	74
	Vo Van Kiet	1991-1997	69	6	75
<i>Philippines (Presidents)</i>	Ferdinand Marcos	1965-1986	48	21	69
	Maria Corazon Cojuangco Aquino	1986-1992	53	6	59
	Fidel Valdez Ramos	1992-1998	65	3	68
	Joseph Marcelo Ejercito Estrada	1998-2001	61	3	64
<i>Indonesia</i>	Sukarno	1945-1966	44	21	65
	Suharto	1966-1998	45	32	77
	Bacharuddin Jusef Habibie	1998-1999	62	1	63
	Abdurrahman Wahid	1999-2001	59	2	61

Asian values support the appointment of older leaders but in revolutionary times, it is often the young who have the energy and vision to challenge. Table 1 indicates that many of the leaders who grabbed power in the politically turbulent post war years were in the 40s. Lee Kwan Yew was in fact only 36.

Table 2: Selected post war leaders in North East Asia.

Country	Name of Leader	Years in Power	Age When Became Leader	Total Years of Leadership	Age of Leaving Office
Japan	Zenko Suzuki	1980-1982	69	2	71
	Yasuhiro Nakasone	1982-1987	64	5	69
	Noburo Takeshita	1987-1989	63	2	65
	Susuke Uno	1989	67	1	68
	Toshiki Kaifu	1989-1991	58	2	60
	Kiichi Miyazawa	1991-1993	70	2	72
	Morihiro Hosokawa	1993-1994	55	1	56
	Hata Tsutomu	1994	59	1	59
	Murayama Tomiichii	1994-1996	70	2	72
People's Republic of China	Obuchi Keizo	1998-2000	61	2	63
	Mori Yoshiro	2000-2001	63	1	64
	Li Xiannian	1983-1988 (+ 1992)	81	6	87
South Korea	Yang Shangkun	1988-1993 (+1998)	81	6	87
	Jiang Zemin	1993-2003	67	7	74
	Chun Doo Hwan	1980-1988	49	8	57
Taiwan	Roh Tae Woo	1988-1993	56	5	61
	Kim Young Sam	1993-1998	66	5	71
	Kim Dae Jung	1998-2003	74	5	79
Taiwan	Chiang Ching-kuo	1978-1988	69	10	79
	Lee Teng-hui	1988-2000	65	12	77

Table 3: Current leaders in Asia.

Country	Name of the Leader	Year Appointed	Age when became leader
Malaysia	Abdullah Badawi	2003	64
Singapore	Goh Chok Tong	1990	49
Philippine	Gloria Macapagal Arroyo	2001	54
Vietnam	Phan Van Khai	1997	64
Indonesia	Megawati Soekarnoputri	2001	54
Korea	Roh Moo-Hyun	2003	56
Japan	Koizumi Junichiro	2001	59
China	Hu Jintao	2003	61

The current leadership in both South East and North East Asia is much younger than in the past. Table 3 indicates most took office in their 50s with the exception of Badawi from Malaysia who is 63 years. However, if Anwar had progressed from

Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia as expected, he would have been only 56 in 2003.

The ‘dewrinkling’ of the leadership in Asia is more obvious with Cabinet Ministers and Heads of Committees. For example in Singapore, of the 19 current Cabinet Ministers, six are aged in their 40s and another eight in their 50s. Similarly in Vietnam, 11 per cent of the current National Assembly is aged under 40 (Thayer, 2003) and an even higher percentage is in their 40s and 50s. Generational conversion is even more apparent in the senior membership of the communist party and state apparatus (Sidel, 1997).

But who is putting the younger generation into power and why? It’s not occurring through revolution as in the past but by design. As countries of the region become more globally engaged, leaders must act on the world stage: they must speak English, and understand and keep pace with global changes. For example, with the election of President Kim Dae Jung in South Korea in 1997, the electorate was looking for a world leader, who was educated, could speak English and a reformist. Unfortunately this constituency was increasingly disappointed as his tenure continued. The young electorate responded to the perceived failure of President Kim in the 2002 election in a manner which shocked the establishment.

The impact of generational change on cyberpolitics in Asia

The profile of the younger generation and the way they engage in the political process varies across the region. Case studies reveal some similarities between youth but also some major differences. Important themes for this research which emerge include the impact of demographic profiles, the degree of economic development and access to technology, and the diverse political systems (Table 4).

Republic of Korea

In South Korea’s 2002 Presidential Election, youth successfully propelled Roh Moo Hyun to power on the back of an internet and mobile phone campaign. Two factors contributed to their success: South Korea is a world leader in the take up of broadband and mobile phone communication (62% internet penetration) (Table 4) and the younger generation had the numbers due to the Asian youth bulge in their demographic profile. In South Korea, 48.3 per cent of potential voters were aged between 20-39 and of the total number who actually voted, 42.4 percent came from this cohort (Government of Republic of Korea, 2003). The demographic profile for 2000 shows 35.5 per cent of the population aged between 20-39 years and 34.9 per cent are aged 40 years and over (US Census Bureau, 2000) (Figure 1).

The political system in South Korea has shifted from one of military dictatorship in the post war period to democratic elections in 1987. Under both regimes, the economy prospered, but at the same time suffered from institutions and rules

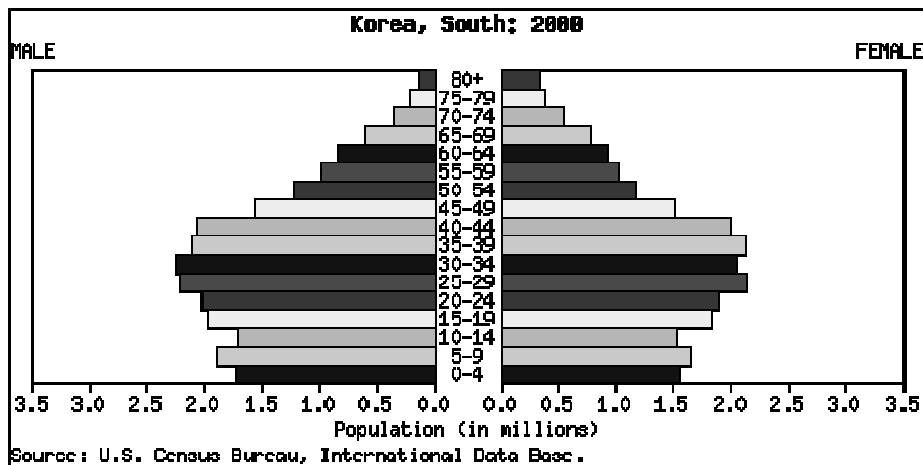
inherited from a period of high-speed growth. The election in 1997 of President Kim Dae Jung, who drew credibility for his reform agenda from his years as a political prisoner, was an attempt to rid the system of corruption and self serving politicians. However, the electorate was largely disappointed by his lack of reform and that his sons were imprisoned for corruption.

Table 4: Internet usage in Asia.

Country	Internet Users (latest data)	% Use Growth (2000-2004)	% Population (Penetration)
China	79,500,000	253.3	6.0
Hong Kong	4,661,589	104.2	63.0
India	18,481,000	269.6	1.7
Indonesia	8,000,000	300.0	3.6
Japan	64,537,437	37.1	50.4
South Korea	29,220,000	53.5	62.0
Malaysia	8,692,100	134.9	35.3
Nepal	80,000	60.0	0.3
Pakistan	1,500,000	1020.2	1.0
Philippines	3,500,000	75.0	4.2
Singapore	2,100,000	75.0	60.0
Sri Lanka	200,000	64.6	1.0
Taiwan	11,602,523	85.3	50.3
Thailand	6,031,300	162.2	9.4
Vietnam	3,500,000	1650.0	4.2

Source: Internet World Stats, 2004.

Figure 1: Population pyramid for South Korea, 2000.



For Korean politics, the 2002 Presidential Election was a watershed created by generational change and an ideological shift to a progressive position in politics and society (Song, 2003: 8). The electorate was steeled in their resolve to rid the state and business of corruption, and the remnants of authoritarianism and the Cold War which still clouded their relationship with Japan, China and North Korea. In the wake of the 'IMF crisis' (Asian financial crisis), anxiety emerged around the long-term implications of 'growth first policies' of past regimes and anti-Americanism was openly voiced. The conduct and outcome of these elections illustrate the power of a generation when the demographics are right, the political culture is conducive to political engagement and dissatisfaction is running high enough to mobilize the young.

In the run up to the election, the front runners were a Roh Moo Hyun-Chung Mong Jun reformist coalition and Lee Hoi Chang, the conservative candidate. On the surface, Roh was an unlikely President. He did not fit the profile: he did not attend Kyonggi High School and Seoul National University (K-S mark), he represented a region which did not produce successful candidates and he had little political success over the past 20 years. What distinguished Roh was his unswerving life time commitment to social reform and anti-corruption. His vision captured the support of young bright people in their twenties to early forties, some of them former student activists and now professionals. This generation is referred to as the 386 generation: those aged in their 30s, at college in the 1980s, and born in the 1960s.

The 386 generation took advantage of new communication technologies grown by government in the post financial crisis period. Government installed the physical infrastructure conducive to high rise living, and introduced pricing and deregulation policies which fostered the rapid adoption of new communication technologies. In a country of 48 million people, 12 million broadband lines pump data 40 to 400 times faster than the 56k dial-up modem connection over a copper wire telephone line. Over 73 per cent of Korean households have broadband which is four times the broadband take up of the US. South Koreans are also one of the world's leaders in internet access (Shameen, 2004: 22) and downloads of video and movie on demand; 68 per cent of stock trading takes place on the net compared to 25 per cent in US; 12 per cent of retail sales take place on the net which has replaced home-shopping channels on cable; 75-80 per cent of South Koreans have mobile phones many of which are third generation technology.

During the election campaign the 386 generation used their creativity to produce television advertising and cartoons which they recycled on internet websites. By extending the life of their advertising to the net, the Roh camp overcame a major limitation in campaign funds. The Lee camp dominated the three big right wing newspapers - *Chosum*, *Joong Ang* and *Donga*. The younger generation who distrusted the objectivity of the established newspapers, consulted the net. They watched campaign cartoons, engaged in chat rooms and contributed funds and

watched the campaign war-chest grow daily. The websites had over 500,000 hits and 7,000 new postings per day. Money was collected at about 3 million won per day but 25 October (pay day) following the defection of Kim Min Seok to the conservatives, they collected 500 million won (Unna Huh, *pers. comm.* 12 May, 2004).

The day of the election was high drama. On the evening before, Chung Mong Jun, a multimillionaire politician who had unified a single candidacy with Roh broke the alliance. Lee supporters assumed that this would split the Roh-Chung vote as it occurred after the media blackout. But the younger generation outraged by Chung's late withdrawal sent messages via the internet in code and with connotation; they sent mass SMS messages by mobile to their cohort to vote. Roh achieved a marginal victory of 2.2 per cent and the older generation was stunned.

Exit poll data indicated that Lee was in front until lunchtime but by the time the messages started to penetrate in the afternoon, Roh took the lead. Voter turnout for the election was 70.8 per cent. Roh was advantaged by demography: the 'youth bulge' generated a greater number of potential voters in the younger generations (20-39 years), the majority of whom favoured Roh (Figure 1). This counteracted the impact of the higher voting ratio among the older conservative generations (over 50). Those in their 40s were evenly divided (Table 5).

Table 5: Voter distribution by age.

Age group	Vote for Roh		Vote for Lee		Voting ratio
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
20-29	2,704,142	59.0%	1,599,569	34.9%	56.5%
30-39	3,514,129	59.3%	2,026,698	34.2%	67.4%
40-49	2,879,174	48.1%	2,867,203	47.9%	76.3%
50-59	1,518,608	40.1%	2,192,704	57.9%	83.7%
60+	1,571,474	34.9%	2,859,273	63.5%	78.7%

Source: Government of Republic of Korea, 2003, MBC-KRC exit poll data of 60,000 sample.

Curiously, the vote also split on education grounds with those who only reached middle school voting overwhelmingly for Lee whereas those who attended high school and college/university voted for Roh (Song, 2003: 10).

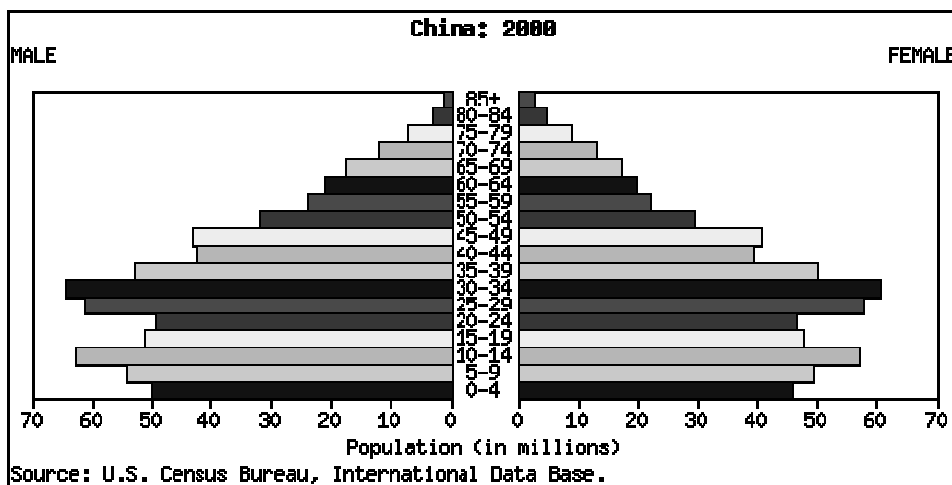
Roh's supporters successfully used new technologies as a tool to broadcast information which impassioned and mobilized the younger generation to vote, to implement radical change. The younger generation created a new political sphere in cyberspace - however ephemeral - which was largely inaccessible to the older generation (Hague and Uhm, 2003: 212-5). In the more recent National Assembly elections the same technologies were taken up, but the contagion of political

passion among youth was not so palpable.

People's Republic of China

The impact of youth in Chinese politics is less visible than the recent situation in South Korea. Even though China also has a youth bulge (35% aged between 20-39 years) (US Census Bureau, 2000) (Figure 2), their influence is muted by government. Nevertheless, changes are underway among the younger generations of China.

Figure 2: Population pyramid for People's Republic of China, 2000.



Urban youth from the more developed coastal areas have entered the globalised world through television, the internet and in some cases overseas education. Marketing and consumption of overseas products has also become pervasive. Internet cafes and mobile phones are integral to their changing lives. For example, a recent promotion campaign, 'Coke cool summer', encouraged youth to guess the highest daily temperature for Beijing in a particular month using SMS. Four million messages were recorded in 35 days.

Although internet penetration in China is relatively low at about 6 per cent (Table 4), 80 per cent of users are aged between 18 and 24 years (United Nations Development Programme, 2001: 40). As is the case in most parts of the world, there is a male gender bias in the profile of users (Tong, 2003). The usual activities on the internet are in chat rooms, online games, emailing and surfing the net. But within these seemingly superficial activities urban youth are using the anonymity of the net to challenge various points of authority in China including sexual freedom, patriarchy, and filial piety (Yardley, 2003).

The internet has become the site for more open political expression in China and the quandary for government is how to effectively police this activity. Self-censorship of personal websites is encouraged by issuing warnings to individuals 'to be more sensitive' and rebuking Internet Service Providers (ISP) and Internet Content Providers (ICP). For more serious political activity, such as Falung Gong and the Free Tibet movement, the Government maintains firewalls. Because they slow down access and impede international business activity, firewalls have been reduced and replaced by intermittent blocks to foreign news websites such as CNN, BBC and CBS as well as religious sites and NGOs. According to Ben Edelman (2002), at the Berkman Centre for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School, the government still blocks about 10 per cent of all websites around the world. The Shanghai Government has a central monitoring system which sends out an alert if someone tries to log on to a banned site. In 2004, a number of websites were blocked, including Geocities 2001, Blogspot 2003, Blogbus and Blogcn 2004, for publishing an open letter from dissident Jiang Yanyong. According to Yan Sham-Shackleton (2004), a former producer of English language sites for CIC (China Internet Corporation, partly owned by *Xin Hua*, the Chinese Government News Agency), a filtering system on message boards and chat rooms is in place which searches for words such as '4 June 1989', 'Tiananmen Massacre', 'Student Protests', and 'tanks'. Further, Reporters without Borders claim that in May 2004, 61 cyber-dissidents were in prison in China (Reporters without Borders, 2004). They acknowledge that the number is small and that these high profile arrests are symbolic and not presumed to control the net.

As a pressure valve, people express their dissatisfaction with government through sanctioned sites such as Strong Power Forum (www.qglt.com) hosted by the government's *China People's Daily*. Postings on this site periodically include calls for democracy and sentiments which are anti-American, anti-NATO, and anti-government. For example, following the execution of the Deputy Governor of Jiangxi Province for taking bribes, comments were posted such as 'Bad luck! Everyone else is still alive!' Another comment about corruption was more provocative 'There is only one way to deal with corruption – democracy! Democratic elections!' (*Time International*, 2000: 18).

The post-Tiananmen Square generation has become more nationalist. On websites, the younger generation are not fixated on democracy, rather they express dissatisfaction with government for not protecting China against humiliations from foreigners: the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, and the spy plane that went down of Hainan Island. Younger people known as *hongke* (patriotic hackers) retaliate by attacking US government websites and openly criticising government for being too weak.

The younger generation does not appear to be as pragmatic as their predecessors. They see a contradiction between accepting Japanese capital while at the same time disputing ownership of Diaoyu Islands. This attitude sheds light on their attitude to

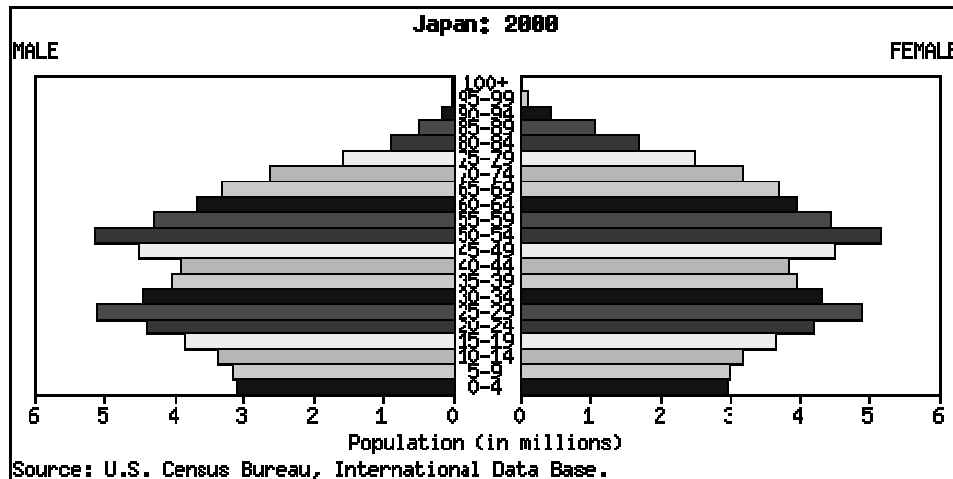
the military intervention in Taiwan, Mongolia, or Spratley, Diaoyu and Paracel Islands.

Website postings also portray an anxiety about the Japanese. They accuse the Japanese of being arrogant and lacking in moral fibre. A recent Japanese student performance in a north western Chinese university which included nudity was interpreted as disrespectful and brought protests from Chinese students. Tensions spill over in Chinese-Japanese football matches.

Japan

Japan provides a stark contrast to both South Korea and China. It is less youthful with only 27.9 per cent of the population aged between 20 and 39 and this generation is dominated by those over 40 who comprise 51.3 per cent of the population (US Census Bureau, 2000) (Figure 3). The younger generation feels disenfranchised and unable to challenge the political system due to a number of reasons: their demographic under representation, their geographical concentration in the urban areas exacerbated by the gerimander in the rural electorates, the inherent ageism of the society, the concentration of wealth in the hands to the older and more conservative generations, and the dominance of the public service which cannot be easily changed through the ballot box.

Figure 3: Population pyramid for Japan, 2000.



Youth in Japan are challenging points of authority but do not follow the formal political agenda *Kikokushijo* or international youth who have lived overseas are increasing in number (Goodman, 1990). and their behaviour more closely reflects their counterparts in the United States and Australia: they are assertive, engaged in high consumer spending and are heavy users of the internet and mobile phones. However, there are major points of departure between Japanese and Western youth

(Kawasaki, 1994:185-204). In the West, youth are separated by class whereas, Japan is more homogeneous. Employment opportunities for youth in Japan still outstrip those of the West which results in greater economic security and less deviant behaviour. However, in recent times the behaviour of some Japanese youth has been notorious, take for example the planned execution of their parents by young lovers and the beheadings conducted by school children.

The penetration of the internet in Japan is around 50 per cent but the rate of increase is the slowest in the region (Table 4). This possibly reflects the declining percentage of youth within the population. Internet usage of youth is similar to that of South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan, however curious behaviour has emerged in Japan such as *hikikomori*, which is the self-imposed isolation of young boys who apparently cannot cope with life's pressures. They only communicate with the outside world via the internet. Also, some youth have organised group suicide through contacts established for that purpose through the internet.

South East Asia

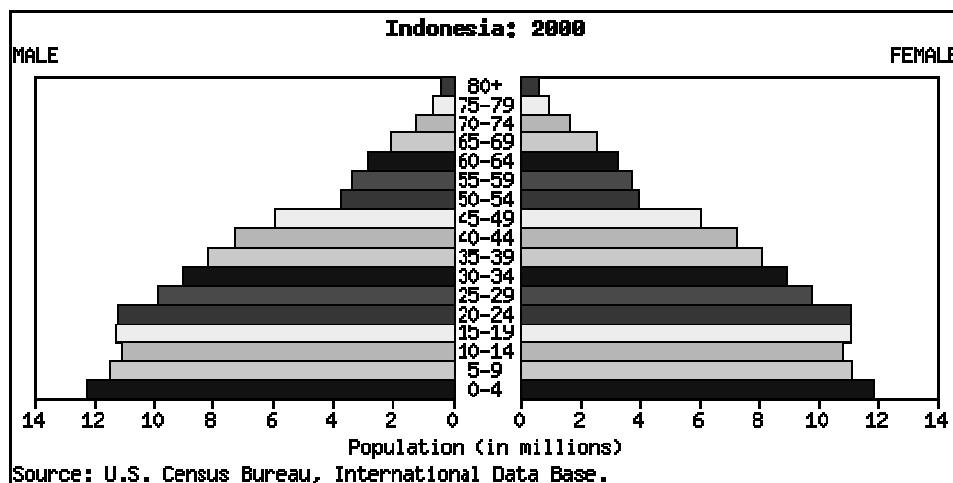
Some youth in South East Asia are politically active but this tends to be limited to urban elite. And of this group their use of new media is also less than their counterparts in North East Asia due to the limited penetration of the internet and mobile phones (Table 4). Nevertheless, dramatic political events of the region owe much to the role of new media. A unifying theme in the region is that the internet is influential when political passion runs high, but, in periods of relative calm the internet has less profound political influence. In countries such as Indonesia and Philippines, youth conspired to depose Suharto and Estrada using the internet and mobile phones to organize. In Malaysia the internet provided alternative sources of information were available in Malaysia following the arrest of Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister.

In Indonesia, the power of the younger generations is palpable. Thirty four per cent of the population is aged between 20 and 39 years, and this is bolstered by another 40.6 per cent aged less than 20 years. This is in dramatic contrast to the proportion of the population aged less than 20 years in South Korea (29.2%), China (33.1%) and Japan (20.7%) (Figure 4).

Mainstream political activity of the younger generation in Indonesia is limited mainly to student and NGO activities in the urban areas. This group brought down the Suharto regime in 1998 aided by email, the web and mailing lists (Hill and Sen, 2000). The websites in Indonesia and overseas were used to counter official reports in the government-controlled media. The low cost of entry to the internet made it possible for these groups to engage in the political process. Curiously, in the first freely contested election in 1999 following the fall of Suharto, of the 48 parties which contested the election, the Democratic People's Party (PRD) with its base in the radical student movement, did not win a seat although the internet had an

impact on public scrutiny of the election and thus the legitimacy of the results (Hill and Sen, 2000: 131-2).

Figure 4: Population pyramid for Indonesia, 2000.



In the Philippines political change is the norm and youth have played an ongoing role. The Philippines is one of the most youthful populations in Asia with 31.4 per cent aged between 20-39 and an overwhelming 47.7 per cent aged less than 20 years (Figure 5).

Youth as well as the older generation became politically engaged bringing about the fall of Estrada and the rise to power of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in January 2001. In a public demonstration, Filipinos converged *en masse* on EDSA Boulevard intersection to protest against then president Estrada. They sent SMS messages to each other saying ‘Go to the EDSA shrine to protest. Pls pass’. An estimated 10 million text messages were sent to create this mass protest – a technology not limited to the young.

In Malaysia, although the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohammed, imposed strict press censorship, he left cyberspace alone on the assumption that newspapers and TV are more powerful mediums. He had a vision to make Malaysia an advanced country by 2020 and the multimedia super-corridor was the center piece. However, the surprise sacking and imprisonment of his Deputy Anwar Imbrahim gave rise to a myriad of websites which posted alternative information on the sacking to that provided by official sources. These sites received more than 800,000 hits within the month.

The Singapore Government faces similar challenges to Malaysia: government-driven high level of penetration of the internet (60%), a politically constrained

population and a youth population which is starting to challenge points of authority including sexuality, familial piety and gender (Rodan, 1998).

Figure 5: Population pyramid for Philippines, 2000.

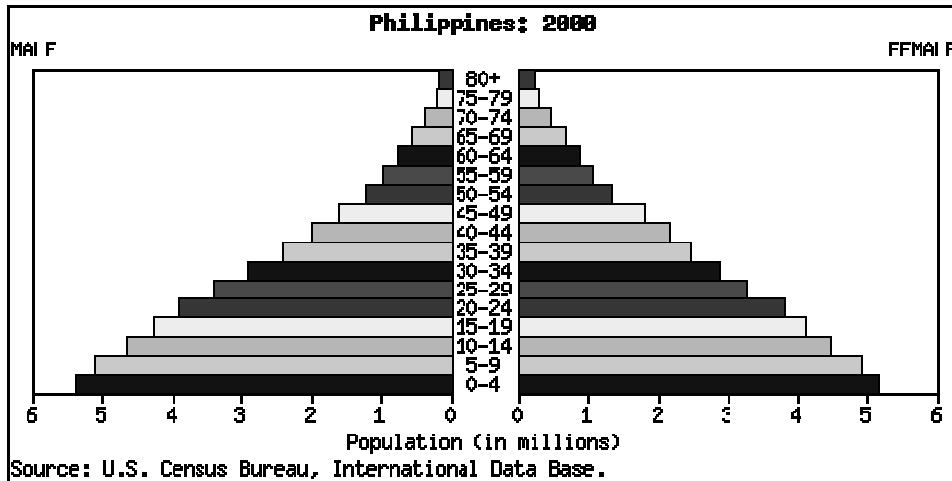
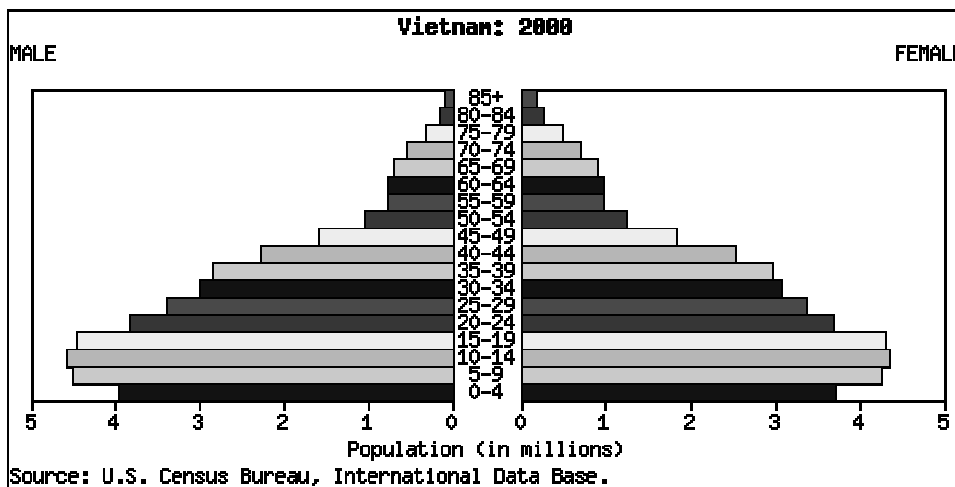


Figure 6: Population pyramid for Vietnam, 2000.



Political engagement of youth in Vietnam's cyberspace resembles that of China. It is a youthful population with 33.3 per cent aged between 20-39 and 43.5 per cent aged below 20 years (Figure 6). The Vietnamese Communist Party employs firewalls to curb access to controversial sites. In May 2004, the government cracked down on 'bad and poisonous information' which circulated through the

internet (*South China Morning Post*, 15 June, 2004). But with only 4.2 per cent of Vietnam's population which is able to surf the web, its influence at this stage is limited.

New media and the political process

From these case studies, it is possible to draw some general conclusions about youth's engagement in the political process and the role of new media in the emergence of democracy. Characteristics of the internet are that it involves costless reproduction, is decentralized, and instantaneous dissemination of information. Several points can be drawn about its role in politics among youth in the region:

Firstly, people turn to the internet when they require alternative sources of information and usually in a perceived crisis situation when the established media is not providing unbiased information.

Secondly, new media can remove economic barriers which exist with established mediums of television and news print media. This increases the potential for youth and minority group engagement in the political endeavour. Interestingly, however, much of what appears on the internet during a political campaign tends to be re-broadcast material prepared for other media.

Thirdly, access to the internet and mobile phones is not uniform throughout the region or even within particular nation states. A digital divide exists caused by differentials in income, age and gender. If new media becomes the major form of political engagement, this may further disenfranchise the poorer and older groups and perhaps women within society rather than contributing to enhanced political participation (Wilhelm, 2000).

Lastly, the internet has facilitated transnational engagement of the diaspora in political change. They may support political change through providing alternative sources of information or by relaying information through overseas ISP which are outside the jurisdiction of government. This creates a broad definition of the political constituency which is more difficult for authoritarian governments to control.

From the late 1990s, the internet together with SMS has revolutionised political activity in Asia because it allows for two way communication between citizens and politicians unlike television and to a lesser extent radio (Grossman, 1995). There is some evidence from the case studies to show that the electorate has more direct access to politicians especially through SMS and the internet which allows politicians to respond more directly to the impulse of the electorate.

It is not clear where the increased use of new media actually fosters Democracy in Asia. Coleman (2000: 9), the world's first professor of e-democracy at Oxford University, argues that the democratic process is served by more people joining in as deliberators and agenda setters and not simply as voters however chat rooms

often have people of like-mind engaged in short lived conversations. Furthermore, the immediacy and anonymity of communication using these new technologies may actually discourage deliberation.

It may be that the internet will create a new form of democracy in Asia. The internet is more than just a tool, it is a new social space with new relations within that space. The internet does not only speed up communication in the public sphere but changes the dimension of the public sphere as well as the structure.

Rapid changes are occurring in Asia with the younger generation. Understanding these changes is critical to understanding future trends in the region. The anonymity of the internet creates greater space for the expression of extreme views, especially of nationalism and anti-American, anti-Japanese sentiments, sentiments which may be a destructive force in international relations rather than a positive force for democracy.

The young leaders are those who are benefiting from globalization but one cannot ignore the potential for tension to grow around the divide which is emerging, a divide which is keenly felt throughout the region as the gaps between the rich and the poor increase. It is not the rich who are protesting in the streets against corrupt officials and perceived increased gaps between the haves and the have nots.

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PART II

Youth in transition:
Case studies of Asian youth

8

Indigenous Australian young peoples – The winds of change

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I would like to pay my respects to the *Ngunnawal* Peoples who are the traditional owners of the land where we are meeting, and thank them for their custodianship and love of the land.

I am Gregory Phillips from the *Waanyi* Peoples in north-west Queensland.

My intention today is to briefly look at the role young people have played in Aboriginal cultures historically, and then to use some case studies to illustrate the situation today and the issues they imply.

For the benefit of the overseas colleagues in the audience, I would like to briefly cover the history of Indigenous peoples in this country.

While we may try to describe and summarise history from particular scholarly, political or militarized (winners) vantage points, history is, I think, primarily something we experience as intensely personal.

My maternal grandfather was stolen from his *Djaru* mother at age six and sent to work on a station in the Kimberleys, and my maternal grandmother's mother grew up near a place called Massacre Inlet, near Borroloola in the Northern Territory. Their experience tells you something about our family's contact with history.

My oldest brother was also illegally fostered out when a Sister in a Christian convent in Brisbane suggested my mother adopt him out, as it was “not right” for young Aboriginal girls to have children as a single parent. He was never adopted and he was never returned to her either.

Pre-contact history

Aboriginal people have lived in this land for 60,000 years or more, and came from approximately 230 different language groups at the time of invasion. We were organised into autonomous, individual nations, and people were often multi-lingual – able to converse with neighbouring tribes. We have unique skin and totemic social and familial relations, and while there are differences in the expression of culture across Australia, we often share a close affinity with and spirituality based on connections with land and natural environments (Jonas and Langton, 1994).

Contact history

Official government policy moved from extermination in Queensland prior to 1897, to protectionism where reserves were created to ‘sooth the pillow of a dying race’ circa 1910, to assimilation and the beginnings of removal of children from their families soon after. WEH Stanner referred to the Great Australian Silence (Stanner, 1969) where assimilation was the accepted order of the day and Aboriginal people were routinely left out of Australian public debate and life - some may argue such practice continued well into the 1960s.

The 1960s and 1970s saw the advent of ‘welfare colonialism’, where government policy and loss of work in the cattle and mining industries conspired to create dependence on welfare among Aboriginal people. In the 1980s the policy became self-determination, though always as defined by western society. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw Aboriginal people for the first time negotiating our place in Australian public debate and life (Jonas and Langton, 1994). The Royal Commission Into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Johnson, 1991) heralded a new area where Indigenous disadvantage finally begun to be seen as unacceptable. Prime Minister Keating introduced the reconciliation decade in 1993, though again, it was what white people wanted, not something conceptualized or planned by Indigenous peoples. The present Prime Minister says he believes in ‘practical reconciliation’, yet as recent research shows, on almost every social indicator, Indigenous Australians have fared worse since he came to power, particularly in education and health (Hunter and Schwab, 2003).

So what did Aboriginal Peoples want during all those years of imposed policies? Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have consistently said that we want

recognition of sovereignty. This remains our focus, while also addressing social and economic concerns.

Current situation

As a people, we now are dealing with our demons in terms of alcohol, social dislocation, sexual abuse and effects of welfare. While it is politically useful for the current conservative government to view and portray such issues as inherent to our Aboriginality, we choose to take ownership of these issues and begin resolving them and looking to healing and change. We also believe governments and academia have a role to support, rather than impose their views on this process.

It is a lie to say Indigenous people have not been attempting to address these issues at all before they came to national attention. It is just that finally our work has broken through the denial and ignorance of whiteaustralia¹ – they have finally realized why we have been asking for help and saying that something was wrong. The current government seems to encourage a view that says we are to blame for the situation, instead of looking to their own actions for the root causes of such suffering and social dislocation.

Roles of young people

In traditional, pre-contact times, young men became adults upon initiation at around 13 years of age, and married later in life after going through ceremony for up to twenty years or more. Young women were married by arrangement around puberty, and developed their roles as women gradually during women's business and ongoing ceremonial life (Brady, 1992).

Since contact, however, young men were drawn into the market economy and worked in the cattle, sheep, mining, rail and sugar industries. Young women worked as domestic servants in houses, on stations, and in hospitals and mission dormitories. As mentioned before, as this work gradually decreased in availability, people became dependent on welfare.

Whether or not there was a concept of adolescence in Aboriginal society as there is in western society is a moot point; but certainly, roles and expectations of young people in pre-contact times are markedly different to those of western society and in contemporary Indigenous families. People in our societies and cultures today may often still be considered to be young in their 40s.

These changes gradually produced dislocation of social relationships through forced, 'wrong' marriages at the hands of missionaries; discontinuation of traditional parenting skills and introduction of alien values and practices (stolen generations); and gradual erosion of men's roles as providers and women's roles as

care-givers. Though we should not believe the separation between roles is that distinct – men were an integral part of education for example, whereas that is more so a female domain in many western societies.

Experience and roles of Indigenous young people now

Two-thirds of Indigenous Australia is now under the age of 25, (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001) a fact markedly contrasting with Australia's ageing general population. On all social indicators, Indigenous Australia fares poorly, and this includes low literacy, employment, and educational attainment. Health indicators for Indigenous Australians are extremely high in relation to mainstream Australia, and the youth suicide rate in particular is very disturbing (House of Representatives, 2002).

I will present here three case studies of change in the roles and expectations of young Indigenous people as a result of colonization.

The James Bay Cree, Quebec

Until 1980, the James Bay *Cree* lived a relatively traditional lifestyle by hunting and trapping for furs to sell. They were situated further north enough in a very cold climate, and thus, had little contact with the outside world. They had very little modern technology, with only a few cars and no television. In the 1970s, they were forced into negotiations with Hydro Quebec, a hydroelectricity company wanting to sell electricity to New York and other parts of the USA.

They negotiated Canada's and the world's first regional agreement, which gave the *Cree* autonomous rights and control to lands in certain areas, shared rights in other areas, and some land demarcated for exclusive use of Hydro Quebec and the government (Editeur Officiel du Quebec, 1976).

With this agreement came rapid social, economic and technological change. The royalties paid to the *Cree* were of such magnitude that they are able to fund their own education, health, communications, transport and construction services. Each member of the tribe also received individual royalty payments. The increases in personal income were such that the society went from no televisions in 1980 to almost every teenager having a snowmobile, car and/or computer in 1995, when I visited. The James Bay *Cree* had some of the most advanced telecommunications of the whole of Canada, able to receive television transmissions via satellite from Vancouver to New York.

The technological and economic changes during this time also produced rapid social and cultural change. The prevalence of alcoholism and violence slowly gave way to gambling and increased church attendance. One woman in her 50s told me:

...where people used to be drinking, now they're attending church or the gambling houses. The kids still suffer because they're still not getting quality time out of the parents. The church has become like an addiction for some of them too.

The result of this rapid change was such that in 1995, the youth suicide rate for James Bay *Cree* was extremely high. When I asked a young man in his twenties why he thought the rates were so high, he told me:

That's the end result of all this social change. Who said the young people wanted the regional agreement? The older people did not think of us when they signed the regional agreement. Who asked if it would have good impacts for young people? We're the ones suffering this youth suicide rate now.

Thus, similar to the Australian situation, but perhaps more marked, the values and roles of their traditional society have been eroded over a very short time period, and, alcohol, economic and technological change have contributed as catalysts to this change.

Big River, North Queensland

Big River (pseudonym) is an Aboriginal community with a population of approximately 500 people. The community is made up of people from two main tribes and some other Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Phillips, 2003).

Unlike other groups of Aboriginal people, the people of Big River were not moved wholesale off their lands. Instead, people from scattered camps were gradually coerced to come into a central mission site through offers of rations and work. People were told that if they came to the mission and married in Christian ceremonies, then they would get a house, and be guaranteed work and rations. Further, the 1940s-1970s period saw many younger locals being forced to marry because they might be talking to someone of the opposite sex, even if it was a platonic conversation. This meant that there were lots of forced marriages across clan and cultural boundaries – many “wrong marriages”. A counsellor in the community cited these marriages as a contributing factor to social and cultural dislocation and “humbug” in the community in contemporary times.

Another issue contributing to social dislocation is the issue of the stolen generations. While members of Big River were not removed in large numbers, many individuals were forcefully removed to other missions for “giving cheek” to the superintendent, or for missing days at work.

Further, working roles and expectations changed as people became co-opted into the missionary's sedentary way of life. Hunting and time spent working on the land was gradually eroded, and this changed young people's expectations of adulthood considerably. Young people were routinely sent to boarding schools down south,

and even today, many local young children attend a Christian boarding school in a nearby town.

Underlying all of the contact period between missionaries and local Aboriginal people is the tension between Christian and traditional Aboriginal cultural and spiritual values. Some local people nowadays believe that traditional medicine means “bad medicine” or witchcraft. They have been socialized by Christians to believe that their own spirituality and cultural values are evil or bad. This tension is particularly highlighted when considering issues of alcohol abuse. Some people believe to give up alcohol, one must be Christian, and that conversely, if one drinks, they are non-Christian. That is, some believe if one were to consider reviving ceremony and traditional cultural ceremonies in helping with recovery from alcohol abuse (re-building a stronger identity), then they may be considered ‘non-Christian’, dabbling in witchcraft, or even “evil.” Such confusion over identity, morals and values presents younger people in the community with a cultural chasm very difficult to be traversed, especially if peer pressure and a whole range of other contributing factors to young people’s uptake of alcohol is already present.

Young people in the community are rarely involved in decision-making, although a youth group operated briefly. Such exclusion of young people from public life and celebration makes it hard for young Indigenous people to stake out a legitimate social place for themselves other than as ‘school children’, ‘school drop-outs’, or ‘these young ones causing all this drinking problems’.

National Indigenous Youth Movement of Australia – NIYMA

NIYMA is a group of young Indigenous people who formed an association to support themselves and other young Indigenous people in career and life pursuits. They form what they call ‘safe spaces’, where young Indigenous people can get social, cultural and familial support outside of the regular environments they have come from. Most members of NIYMA are educated to at least high school senior certificate level, with a significant number also having completed university degrees.

Members report that while they might be achieving quite well in the western world, when they return home to their communities to work they are sometimes treated with contempt as ‘upstarts’ by their own community members, or with jealousy and subtle exclusionary tactics. They feel they are in a double bind of carrying the heavy weight of expectation to change social and political circumstance for their sisters and brothers, yet not always welcomed and supported to develop as young leaders.

Another concern members express is being marginalized as young Indigenous peoples as always ‘at risk’. They say this makes them feel incapable and as if they have nothing to contribute to the situation. They say it implies an inability to change one’s own situation or to even care, and that they must be ‘helped’ or ‘controlled’ from outside with apparatus of legislation, economic and social pressures to ‘hold down a job’ and ‘be productive’. Members say they sometimes find that some in the helping profession will start at the point of acknowledging the young person’s marginalisation but not their abilities and gifts, and that this is inherently problematic.

However, members actively seek the guidance of Elders and community members who understand their place and are willing to support them. They choose to celebrate successes of the membership and all Indigenous peoples, while making small changes by extending the network of support and safe space to other young Indigenous peoples. NIYMA members say they do not choose to see things as ‘Elders versus young people’ any more, but rather, as Elders and young people working together in mutually respectful ways for the advancement of their peoples.

Conclusion

From drawing on the historical record, the current social and political situation, and the three case studies presented above, we can see how the roles and situations of young Indigenous people have changed markedly over the last two centuries. Young Indigenous peoples nowadays feel they are caught between ‘a rock and a hard place’ – meaning they feel either marginalized as ‘at risk’ on the one hand, or over-burdened with responsibility at very young ages on the other.

The contemporary place of young Indigenous people in their cultures and societies, however, is one that is ripe with opportunities. The good news is that many are continuing to become educated or proficient in the arts, sports and politics. The challenge young and other Indigenous peoples have acknowledged now is to heal and rebuild shattered families and social dysfunction. Young Indigenous peoples have had a crucial role in calling for critical change in this area.

‘New’ realities and roles must be forged for young Indigenous peoples where they work in conjunction with supportive Elders, leaders and community members, where their realities about their social situations and feelings are validated and included in spiritual and cultural expression, and where coping and leadership skills are regularly encouraged and developed. In fact the example of an Elder sitting in the background overseeing a young Indigenous person out front speaking gives us an example of an ‘old’ practice’ which can still have relevance in the development of these ‘new’ roles.

Yet beyond all this, there may be something simple that we are missing. This something can't be measured or defined, only shared.

Professor Wiltshire in his paper given at this symposium said that “we must invest in the minds of young people to find answers to war”, but I believe we must also invest in their hearts.

Uncle Tom Congoo, and Elder of the *Bar-Barrum* people of North Queensland, said:

When you work with young people from broken homes and bring them out here into the bush, you realise that they just need love. Beyond all their worries and problems, they just need love.

Thus, maybe the answers to questions about the role of young Indigenous peoples are simpler than we might think. Young people need love and acceptance and freedom, and we ought to re-orientate our services and sciences towards love if we are to make changes certainly for Indigenous Australian young people, but I suspect, also for non-Indigenous young people here and abroad.

NOTES

1. Whiteaustralia is a term coined by Cliff Watego meaning the collective institutions and practices that make up non-Indigenous Australian society.

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9

Are youths moving forward? A Bangladesh perspective

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The definition

In our country, the National Youth Policy declared by the government in the 1980s defined youth from the biological point of view as an age group spanning the years between 15 to 30. Very recently the National Youth Policy 2003 has declared that the population belonging to the age group of 18-35 should be regarded as youth. Interestingly our government has also pinpointed the 15-19 age bracket as adolescent. It means that the definition of youth is absolutely based on a single biological variable and is rather incomplete. I would, however, prefer to identify youth as a stage in life that begins at the moment of transition from childhood, marked by the first signs of oncoming sexual maturity, and ends with entry into adulthood, with its attendant rights and duties.

The situation

Youth constitutes the bulk of the Bangladeshi Population with nearly 18% within the age group of 15-24 and 14.23% belonging to the age bracket of 25-35 (Table 1). Accordingly, with a total Bangladeshi population of 130 million, around one third can be identified as youth. In statistical terms, Bangladesh is certainly enjoying the privilege of a ‘demographic bonus’. But the moot question is how far

is Bangladesh going to utilize these young energetic forces in the process of national development? The likely negative answer to this question is the limited scope for involvement or participation of youth in the process of national development.

Table 1: Distribution of youth population.

Youth Population	15-24		25-34		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
M	10781	17.19	8629	13.76	19410	30.95
F	10516	17.70	8745	14.72	19261	32.42
Total	21297	17.44	17374	14.23	38671	31.67

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2004, Government of Bangladesh.

Still we can boast of the heroic roles our youths played in the 1950s to establish Bangla. Their mother tongue as a national language (probably Bangladesh is the only nation whose people had to shed their blood for establishment of this fundamental human right). They also played the key-role in the nationalist and revolutionary movement which surfaced in the 1960s. More than 10 million youths took up the arms and fought against the occupying army in the liberation struggle of 1970. They also played a valiant role in the consolidation and sustenance of democracy in the 1990s. Today, however, it seems that youth is no longer perceived as a driving force behind social change and has lost much of its relevance to the current political agenda. Youths today are stigmatized, even criminalized, and at the same time are on the frontlines of transformative social and political actions. More than 80% of youths live in rural areas in abject poverty. They are deprived of a minimum level of education, training and employment. At least 66% are either employed or under-employed. High levels of illiteracy, half-literacy and unemployment also exist amongst youths who reside in urban areas. According to a recent estimate, between 40-44 percent of the urban educated youth of Bangladesh are without gainful employment.

It is widely held that the country's traditional educational system does not provide youth with adequate training. The ill adapted traditional educational system to the world of work continues to be a major issue in our country. Educational institutions once seen as the panacea for the ills of social inequality, continue to be criticized for their role in creating barriers between: the privileged and the poor, the world of learning and the world of work, and intellectual work and manual work. Here, many of the critiques formulated in the 1980s retain their validity and their currency.

We are confronted with many problems inherent in existing school and university systems. We possess many interesting proposals for reform. Change, however, has been visualised to be very negative. During the last decade there has been a proliferation of privately run universities. Education is gradually emerging as a

purchasable commodity. Dhaka metropolitan city has currently more than 60 private universities alone, whereas there was not a single university before 1995. Rich and the privileged parents can easily get their children admitted into these private universities in exchange for paying huge amount of tuition/term fees. These universities are not interested in promoting creative arts or social studies, rather they are creating temptation among the youths towards business administration, computer technology, and various technical and vocational education. Whatever they learn is absolutely aimed at earning money. This type of education is giving birth to an elite group of working youths who hardly feel any responsibility towards humanity and the overall development of society. Thus profound changes are taking place in the sense of values and consumption of youths as well as in their way of life. The key words in the experience of young people are 'pragmatism', 'self-interest', 'self-complacent', 'self-defense', and self-revelation'. This type of norms and values are gradually grasping the very fabrics of our society.

Due to an 'open sky' policy, youngsters are now running the risk of forgetting their own games, folklore and festivals. There has also been a continual flow of foreign cultural products which run counter to the cultural values and the moral norms of the nation and which extol to the extreme the value of money, considering it the ultimate end of human activity. This has exerted a negative impact on the thinking habits and the lifestyle of youths. The decline of moral norms can be best seen in the rise of crime rate, especially corruption, prostitution, drug addiction, robbery, rape and superstition. For instance, the estimate of total drug abusers in the country range from 10,00,000 to 20,00,000, but the irony is that more than 80% of drug addicts are youths and more than 80% are male. When arrested, many offenders confess to having seen many sexual and violent films, which they wanted to imitate. Many gangsters said that they were motivated not by poverty or famine, but chiefly by the desire to quench their thirst for adventure and also to have money to squander in dissipation and deprivation.

Policy and programs for youth development

Youth being the most energetic, creative, dynamic and innovative segment of the labour force, however, was not considered in the past as a special group for which the government could plan employment promotion programmes for sustained development. In 1978, the Government of Bangladesh set up a new ministry, the Ministry of Youth Development, which was later merged with the Ministry of Sports. The Department of Youth Development (DYD) was established in December 1980 and it started functioning in March 1981.

The youth development programmes of the government, especially those organised by the DYD, provide vocational education and training to underemployed and unemployed youths for their gainful employment and enhanced opportunities for

income generation. The Government of Bangladesh implemented a number of skill training and credit programmes to prepare youths for self-employment. The government has declared the following strategies for an overall development of youth:

- i. expand training, credit and necessary input supply programmes to facilitate self-employment projects by youth in rural and urban areas;
- ii. emphasise modern training and use of existing training facilities and creating new facilities for enhancing training standards;
- iii. encourage educated youths to change the present trend to job dependence and involvement in self-employment projects;
- iv. ensure community participation and involve different local government organizations in all youth related activities;
- v. promote the formation of youth organizations at the grass roots levels and ensuring their involvement in participatory development;
- vi. motivate youth to participate in different socio-economic development programmes, including literacy, disaster management, nutrition awareness, primary health care, immunization, family welfare, prevention of HIV/AIDS and STDs, environmental improvement, resource conservation and awareness raising against anti-social activities like drug-abuse, crime against women, terrorism, etc.;
- vii. establish close co-ordination among all relevant government and non-government agencies engaged in youth development;
- viii. ensure at least 50 percent participation of women in all skill development training, credit and self-employment programmes;
- ix. emphasize overall mental and physical development of youths through promotion of healthy recreation like games and sports, debates, literacy competitions and various cultural activities;
- x. help in the transfer of modern technology through the participation of foreign youth volunteers from organisations like the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), Peace Corps, Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA), Korea International Co-operation Agency (KOICA), etc.;
- xi. encourage NGOs and private sector participation not only to supplement but also to undertake pragmatic and innovative programmes in youth development; and
- xii. inculcate character, discipline, confidence, punctuality and tolerance in the youth through seminars and other means of advocacy.

At present, a total of 2,152 NGOs are working in Bangladesh. Their activities are multifarious:

- a) establishment of effective participation processes in development at the grassroots level;
- b) poverty alleviation;
- c) women's rights;
- d) education;
- e) youth development;
- f) health and family planning; and
- g) environment.

How far youths are moving ahead

The foregoing narrative quite clearly demonstrates that an institutional and policy making framework now exists in this country in that there is an awareness about improving the status of youths and integrating them into the development process. However, elements of many policies and programmes appear to be somewhat ad hoc and fragmentary, although certainly very useful. However, for sustained progress, policy formulation must be based on a comprehensive view of the realities, needs and prospects.

In respect of employment, it is observed that apart from self-employment, efforts by the government and NGOs, in terms of credit and other services and training at promoting youth employment, are heavily concentrated on traditional crafts and cottage type activities such as handicrafts (jute grass, cane and bamboo works), weaving, sewing, knitting, poultry and cattle raising etc. Stereo-typed thinking has thus preponderated and innovativeness has received little attention. While some of the activities promoted may provide an immediate source of income to poor youths, in many cases there is limited scope for sustained expansion and income growth. Moreover, there can be no justification for associating youth in general with such activities. Given proper training and necessary support services, they can perform well in many fields, and if the objective is to raise their social status only, the income generating activities are not enough. On the question of technology, the state policy has also paid little attention. In this respect rural youths have usually been suffering the rougher edge. Little technological improvement has taken place in agricultural activities, which is the major sector for employment of rural youths.

The agricultural policies of the Government of Bangladesh have always stressed the importance of supporting the larger more efficient farmers and have made very

little contribution to improving the position of small peasant farmers. This agricultural sector includes the majority of youths engaged in agricultural production and processing. The main contradiction within the state policy could be found when less than 1% allocation is made to youth development in the Annual Development Programme (ADP). In a globalised world, Bangladesh has made significant progress. In the garment industry, 1.8 million youths are now working (Table 2). Although 80% of the workers are female, their average monthly income is only BDT.886/- (less than US\$15/-). Thus young workers are inhumanly oppressed by the multinational corporations. These young workers feel that both work and society are offering them a bad deal. While performing essential productive tasks, they often feel that their age and their jobs give them little but insecurity and stigma.

Table 2: Labour force in garment sector.

Labour Force in Garment Sector	1.8m
Civilian Labour Force	60.3
%	3% Approx.
Female Labour % Total Garment Labour	80%
Average of Female Labour	19 Years
Can sign name only	22.2%
Education level class V	27.1%
VI-X	31.7%
SSC and above	18% Approx.
Illiterate	Negligible
Av. Earning	886 Tk/ Month
Av. Working hours/ day	8+3=11

Source: Report of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers' Association, 2004, Dhaka.

While the lack of jobs for youths will be the major issue of the new millennium, the search for work and the nature of work itself will be a problem of almost equal significance for the next generation of youths. One of the corollaries of unemployment, after all, is underemployment: the acceptance of jobs and salaries below one's level of training and skill simply to survive. Another obvious effect of unemployment and underemployment is that young people migrate to areas that seem to offer more promise. Meanwhile, more than 1 million youths have already migrated to Middle Eastern countries, Southern African countries, USA, Canada, Japan, Korea, South Asian countries, Latin America, Brunei, etc., to explore the possibility of finding new job opportunities. As migrants, newcomers, foreigners and also as youth, they are usually the first victims of lay-offs, long-term unemployment and material want at the onset of an economic crisis. Far from family and friends, and without local roots, they have few resources to fall back on in order to weather a crisis. Usually less educated and less skilled than their urban

peers, they have become a floating, helpless, desperate marginal population (see Table 3 & 4).

Table 3: Employment Projection During 1997-2002.

Year	Wage Employment	Self-employment within the Country	Foreign Employment
1997/98	1,170	30	265
1998/99	1,194	35	270
1999/2000	1,228	30	275
2000/2001	1,259	30	250
2001/2002	1,334	35	225
Total	6,185	160	1,285

Source: Statistical year Book of Bangladesh-2000, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Government of Bangladesh.

Table 4: Manpower export projections during 1997-2002.

Year	Overseas employment (in thousand)	Remittances to be earned though Wage Earner's Schemes (in million)
1997/98	265	67,252.50
1998/99	270	70,252.50
1999/2000	275	74,084.50
2000/2001	250	77,927.50
2001/2002	225	81,770.50
Total	1,285	3,71,703.50

Source: Statistical year Book of Bangladesh-2000, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Government of Bangladesh.

Young people are losing their confidence in the goals and ideologies of the political parties and their political systems of governance. They find little reflection of those goals of social progress and justice in the day-to-day workings of governments and political parties. Within the country, a variety of undemocratic leaders are rising up and holding power by force and propaganda. Internationally, huge armies are being maintained by developed nations in the name of peace while the poor are starving in the name of underdevelopment. All this and more is seen and understood. Overall, the national as well as international political systems remain in the grip of a seeming paralysis, forever talking, but seemly powerless to act except sometimes to preserve wrong. Keeping behind this gloomy scenario how far the youths would be able to move forward remains to be seen (see Table 5).

Table 5: *Percentage distribution of students' action for and against political affairs, educational issues etc: A survey of the report of a national daily.*

Students Action	Affairs/ Issues			
	Political	Educational	Other	Total
Strike, Procession	20.84	2.08	-	22.92
Clash and Violence among the Students	14.58	-	10.41	24.99
Students Agitation against	7.29	5.21	2.09	14.59
Meeting/ Condolence Meeting etc.	25.00	5.21	7.29	37.05
Total	67.71	12.50	19.79	100
N	65	12	19	96

Source: Calculated from report published in the Daily Ittefaq, Dhaka, Bangladesh-2003.

Government policies and programs for youth development in India

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Introduction

India is the largest democracy in the world with one billion people second only to China in terms of population. Nevertheless, it has the largest youth population in the world. Youth has been identified as a very important and separate segment of the population and at the central Government level a separate Ministry to look after youth affairs was created in the year 2000. The ministry is headed by a cabinet minister. This status is an indicator of the commitment and seriousness the government gives to this important segment of the population. There are two very large government supported youth movements in the country, one is National Service Scheme (NSS) for student youth and the other is Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) for the non student youth of the country. The problems faced by young people differ on the basis of sex (male-female), economic status (rich-poor), residence (rural-urban), education (educated-uneducated), physically and mentally challenged youth, youth living in difficult and specific conditions (e.g. homeless, orphans, HIV positive). Policies and programs of the government are designed to cater to the needs of these sections of the young population. Government policies and programs also encourage various non-government Organisations (NGOs) to work for youth development in India.

Youth profile in India

The United Nations defines youth as those aged between 15-24 years. However, the India Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, which is the nodal ministry for

different activities relating to youth affairs, defines youth as the population in the age group of 15-35 years.

The ratio of youth population to total population in India is increasing (Table 1).

Table 1: Changing youth population in India.

YEAR	YOUTH POPULATION (IN 000)			SEX	PROPORTION OF POPULATION		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	RATIO	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1971	85499	82138	167637	961	30.1	31.1	30.6
1981	113433	107235	220668	945	32.1	32.5	32.2
1991	146036	138966	285002	952	33.1	34.0	33.6
1996	161207	153403	314610	952	33.3	34.1	33.7
2001	184278	171650	355928	931	35.2	35.1	35.2
2006	209203	192312	401515	919	37.1	36.4	36.8
2011	225842	208166	434008	922	37.3	36.4	36.7
2016	231582	216496	448078	935	35.7	35.1	35.5

Source: Government of India, Office of the Registrar General (1999).

The share of the youth population in total population has been continuously increasing from the level of 30.6 percent in 1971 and is likely to increase until 2006 when it will reach the level of 36.8 percent. It is projected to decline after this and will be 35.5 percent by 2016. The share of female youth to total female was higher until 1996 as compared to male youth to male population. However, after 1996 the ratio was higher for men. In summary, at any point of time in the near future, about one third of the total population, representing the most prominent population group will be youth. In terms of absolute numbers total population of youth will increase from 167.64 million in 1971 to 448.08 million in 2016. At the turn of the century the number of youth was 355.93 million.

Youth policy genesis

There was no youth policy prior to 1987; however even in the absence of a youth policy the Government of India was always serious about the development of youth and its importance to the process of nation building. It was the firm commitment of the government that lead to the initiation of well organized youth programs like National Cadet Corps (NCC), National Service Scheme (NSS) and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) immediately after the independence.

It was during the International Year of Youth (1985) that a separate Department of Youth Affairs and Sports was created and this new department undertook the initiative to formulate the First National Youth Policy of India. Wide ranging consultations with all the stakeholders including NGOs were held. The draft of the Youth Policy was also discussed in a conference of State Ministers in charge of

Youth Affairs and Sports and National Advisory Committee. The First National Youth Policy was finally adopted by the Government in 1988. The objectives of the National Youth Policy were:

- i. To instill in youth a deep awareness of and respect for the principles and values enshrined in the constitution and a willingness to further the rule of law, with an abiding commitment to national integration, non-violence, secularism and socialism.
- ii. To promote among youth the awareness of historical and cultural heritage and inculcate a spirit of pride and national identity, together with a deep commitment towards their preservation, as well as the enrichment of the environment and ecology.
- iii. To help develop in youth qualities of discipline, self reliance, justice and fair play, a burning concern for public welfare, sporting spirit and above all a scientific temper in their modes of thinking and action which, *inter alia*, will enable them to combat superstition, obscurantism and the numerous social ills that beset the nation.
- iv. To provide youth with maximum access to education which, in addition to developing their all-round personality, imparts appropriate professional and vocational training with a view to enabling them to avail themselves of employment and self employment opportunities towards the aim of removal of unemployment; and
- v. To make youth aware of international issues and involve them in promoting world peace and a just international economic order.

Over a period of time need was felt for the National Youth Policy to adjust to the fast changing socio-economic scenario in the country, region and the world. The needs and concerns of youth have also undergone change as a result of new developments particularly, the technological advancement and the emergence of the concept of globalization. It is therefore felt that comprehensive new youth policy, which not only caters to the present day needs and aspirations of youth, but also addresses future concerns of the youth, needs to be drafted. Youth in the future are bound to be affected and influenced by the rapid pace of urbanization, migration, industrialization, consumerism, and changes in the structure and the role of the family. It is felt therefore that the new youth policy should have provisions for inter-linkages between the range of policies and schemes of various ministries and departments concerning youth and should also reflect the international developments on the subject. With this in mind the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in the Government of India has initiated the process of drafting a comprehensive new national youth policy. The process of consultation with various stakeholders is already over. All organizations and individuals involved in the youth development programs have been consulted and draft was circulated to all the ministries of the Government of India. A draft of the policy was discussed

with the youth wing of all the national level political parties and consultative committee of the parliament. The new policy is now in the final stages of approval by the government and has a specified set of priorities, key sectors and target groups (Table 2).

Table 2: Priorities, sectors and target groups of the new youth policy.

Priorities	Key sectors	Target groups
Youth empowerment	Education	Rural and tribal youth
Gender justice	Training and employment	Out-of-school youth
Inter-sectoral approach	Health and family welfare	Adolescents particularly females
Information and research network	Preservation of ecology environment and wild life	Youth with disabilities
	Recreation and sports	Youth living under difficult circumstances like victims of trafficking, orphans and street children
	Arts and culture	
	Science and technology	
	Civics and good citizenship	

Youth issues

With the changing times particularly with respect to new economic order, the coming of the WTO regime, regional grouping of countries (as against a bipolar world), quantum jump in information technology, free access to all unclassified information over the internet and the developing concept of global village, the challenges faced by young people today are totally different from those of their parents. There are four major issues, related to young people, which should be taken into consideration while designing and drafting any programs for youth development. These include unemployment, gender justice, health and family issues and youth empowerment. Stakeholders in youth empowerment include young men and women, government (Ministry of Youth Affairs) and the public sector, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Other institutions outside government include IGOs (e.g. UN, Commonwealth, SAARC and regional organisations), educational and other institutions, civil society (e.g. family, kinship and community networks) and the private sector and media.

Unemployment amongst youth

In a country like India, although the percentage of youth within the total population is comparable to other countries and will average out to about 35 – 40 percent, in absolute terms the number at present is near 400 million young people which is more than the population of many sovereign states in the world.

Providing gainful employment opportunities to such a large number is an enormous challenge for the nation. Currently the growth rate of employment is only 2 percent and 90 percent of the work force operates in the informal sector. So the first question is whether all young people are employable and if not how can they be prepared for gainful employment? Once they have acquired the appropriate skill set, the next big question is how to generate sufficient employment opportunities. So far in India, government (both in the government and through public sector) is the largest formal employer and the young men particularly the educated youth prefer white collar jobs either with the government or the public sector. However, government has now realized that it should not be present every where and is gradually pulling out of many sectors. Disinvestment is the new trend and it is anticipated that government will remain in the core sectors only.

At the same time the share of the service sector both as employment provider and to the Gross Domestic Product is increasing (Table 3). Appropriate training for this growth area is different from that require for government and the public sector. Under these changing circumstances there is need to handle the challenges of unemployment in a different ways.

The government, in close association with NGOs and some intergovernmental organizations, has developed many schemes and programs for skill training among the young generation. The government runs the Swarnajayanti Gramin Swarozgar Yojana for those within both rural and urban areas. These schemes focus on self employment through vocational training and entrepreneurship development. The majority of the beneficiaries are youth. A large number of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and even upper secondary schools are providing vocational training courses to young people both in schools and also to the dropouts from the formal education system. Once they acquire skills to earn their livelihood they are provided with training to start a small business. In some cases micro-credit at reasonable lending rate is also provided along with week/fortnight/month long training in entrepreneurship development. In collaboration with the Commonwealth Youth Program (CYP) Asia Centre, one such institute is implementing the Commonwealth Micro-credit Initiative in Gujarat State. The program was evaluated and it has been found to be successful. CYP Asia Centre is receiving requests from other member countries to start such an initiative in their countries. There are many schemes and programs run by the government where small self help groups are formed to provide credit for starting small business both

in the urban and rural areas. Such initiatives are proving successful and have changed the lives of many individuals and families living below the poverty line.

Table 3: Increase in service sector as a proportion of GDP in India and other countries.

	1980	1995
India	36	41
Pakistan	46	50
Bangladesh	34	52
Sri Lanka	43	52
Latin America	51	55
Sub-Saharan Africa	38	48

Source: World Bank, World Development Report, 1995.

Apart from this, the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports also gives grants to NGOs, NYKS and NSS to run vocational training and entrepreneurship development programs for youth. Furthermore, the District Industries Centres, ITIs, Jan Shiksha Sansthan and Rural Polytechnics impart vocational training for self employment.

Gender justice

In spite of these great advances, women around the world and particularly in Asian countries (including India) continue to live in an unequal environment. In 1901, there were 1072 women in India for every 1000 men, however, currently the figures stand at 927 females to every 1000 males and in some states of the India, the sex ratio has reached an alarming level where it has fallen below 870 per 1000 men. The sex ratio in selected states of India are depicted in Table 4.

There are certain visible manifestations of gender injustice such as lower levels of women's literacy, exploitation, economic dependency, early marriage, wife beating, and dowry demands. There are also less visible aspects like gender injustice such as stereotyped roles, lack of professional and technical education and employment opportunities, gender oppressive practices like male child preferences and dowry exchange which also require redress by deliberate and practical interventions at the national, institutional and individual levels.

Legislation has been enacted to remove gender imbalances from the society even at the stage of the conception of female child. Sex determination before birth has been made illegal and the government in close collaboration with NGOs is fighting against female feticide, female infanticide and male child preference in the society.

Table 4: Sex ratio of selected States in India, 1991-2001.

	Indian States Union Territories	Sex ratio - Number of Females per 1000 Males	
		1991	2001
	All India	927	933
1	Jammu & Kashmir	896	900
2	Himachal Pradesh	976	970
3	Punjab	882	874
4	Chandigarh	790	773
5	Uttaranchal	936	964
6	Haryana	865	861
7	Delhi	827	821
8	Rajasthan	910	922
9	Uttar Pradesh	876	898
10	Bihar	907	921
11	Sikkim	878	875
12	Arunachal Pradesh	859	901
13	Nagaland	886	909
14	Manipur	958	978
15	Mizoram	921	938
16	Tripura	945	950
17	Meghalaya	955	975
18	Assam	923	932
19	West Bengal	917	934
20	Jharkhand	922	941
21	Orissa	971	972
22	Chhatisgarh	985	990
23	Madhya Pradesh	912	920
24	Gujarat	934	921
25	Daman & Diu	969	709
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	952	811
27	Maharashtra	934	922
28	Andhra Pradesh	972	978
29	Karnataka	960	964
30	Goa	967	960
31	Lakshadweep	943	947
32	Kerala	1036	1058
33	Tamil Nadu	974	986
34	Pondicherry	979	1001
35	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	818	846

Source:

- 1 Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2000 (Dagar, 2002).
- 2 Provisional Population Totals, Paper - 1 of 2001 (Dagar, 2002).

Though the situation is changing, there is a need to enhance the pace of this change.

Health and family issues

In the past the family system was strong and problems of young people were taken care within the family itself. The advice of elders, the companionship of friends and the respect and love of children were available at no cost within the family. However, with increasing migration from rural to urban areas and the desire to acquire more wealth the extended family system has given way to the nuclear family with limited emotional support from parents and close relatives. The breaking down of the family system is leading to stress and abnormal behaviour within the younger generation.

Diseases like HIV/AIDS are also threatening the younger generation much more than any other age group on account of their high risk sexual behaviour and drug abuse. Of the 4 million or so HIV positive people in India, 2.28 million (approximately 50 percent) are young individuals aged between 15-35 years (National AIDS Control Organisation).

The Government of India is aware of its responsibility with regard to the health of young people and the importance of the family system. Separate schemes and programs for promoting healthy lifestyles and disease awareness campaigns are being implemented through government agencies and also through the NGOs. Many multilateral agencies such as the UN, the Commonwealth and SAARC are contributing the efforts made by the government.

Youth empowerment

In recognition of the Commonwealth Youth Minister's meeting in Port of Spain in 1995, the Commonwealth Head of Governments in 1997 (Edinburgh) endorsed the promotion of youth empowerment through the development of a "Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment to the Year 2005". Youth are empowered if they participate in decision making, are capable of earning their own livelihood, and have the knowledge, information, skills, education and training to make their own decisions. Furthermore, they are daring enough to accept the responsibility for their own decisions which may result in success or failure. Young people are the leaders, decision makers, business people and parents of tomorrow, and therefore need the skills to empower them. It is the challenge for government to provide the enabling environment which includes the economic and moral base, political will, resources, legal and administrative framework, equality, democracy and peace, knowledge, information, skills and values.

The Government of India is in the final stages of drafting a comprehensive new youth policy which will create the enabling environment for youth empowerment.

Once the policies are in position, detailed action plans will be drafted to pursue every objective of the policy.

The Government of India has recognised that youth empowerment cannot be achieved by government efforts alone and has recognised young men and women, the government and public sector, multilateral agencies, educational and other institutions, civil society (e.g. family, kinship and community networks), NGOs, private sectors and media as stakeholders in the process of youth empowerment. These stakeholders were consulted from the conception of the policy framework to the implementation of the plan of action.

Youth participation

Involving youth in various activities means involving 40 percent of the population and ignoring this section will certainly mean failure of any program. Young people in India are encouraged to participate at all level of policy making and implementation of various programs.

Very recently the Government of India through the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports launched a National Reconstruction Corp Scheme in 120 districts of the country on a pilot basis. The scheme is headed at a district level by a project officer (young men recruited for limited period) and a team of 100 volunteers. These volunteers participate in the implementation of various programs in various sectors including the environment and forestry, health and family welfare, and agriculture and rural development. Youth representatives are members of the committees and sub committees set up by the Government to formulate plans and policies for each sector.

Young people's participation is also facilitated by many institutional arrangements. The major political parties in India have their own youth wings, young people are representatives on the senates and governing councils of universities and young people have their own chamber of commerce.

Government intervention

In order to help young people in their transition from childhood to adulthood and from dependency to independent, the Government of India has initiated many programs through the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports which is the nodal ministry of youth development in India. The various programs which are currently in operation are discussed below.

National Service Scheme

National Service Scheme (NSS) was launched by the Government of India in the year, 1969, in 37 universities, involving 40,000 students, with its primary focus on the "Development of Personality of the Students through Community Service".

(National Service Scheme Manual). Today, NSS has over 2 million student volunteers spread over 176 universities and 22 senior secondary school councils. From its inception, more than 25 million students from universities, colleges and institutions of higher learning have benefited from NSS activities (Government of India, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Annual Reports).

The NSS has two programs undertaken by its volunteers: regular activities and special camping programs. Under regular activities, students are expected to work as volunteers for a continuous period of two years, rendering community service for a minimum of 120 hours per annum. The activities include improvement of campuses, tree plantation, construction work in adopted villages and slums, work in welfare institutions, blood donation, adult and non formal education, health, nutrition, family welfare, and AIDS awareness campaign. Under the special camping program, a 10 day camp is conducted every year in the adopted villages/areas on specific themes like such as youth for afforestation and tree plantation, youth for mass literacy, youth for rural reconstruction, youth for development, youth for social harmony, and 'Youth for Haryali' (Youth for Afforestation). The theme for the current year is 'Youth for Jal Samvardhan' (Youth for Water Conservation).

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), an autonomous organisation of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, has its offices in 500 districts of the country. It has become one of the largest grass-root level organisations in the world, catering to the needs of more than eight million non-student rural youth enrolled in 19 million village based youth clubs. These youth clubs work in the areas covering education and training, awareness generation, skill development and self employment, entrepreneurial development, thrift and co-operation, besides development of the body through sports and adventure, and mind through sustained exposure to new ideas and development strategies. For implementation of the programs, every district NYK has a network of trained cadre of district youth coordinators, national service volunteers and youth leaders.

NYKS accomplishes its task through two categories of programs: regular programs (eg. youth club development, vocational training, work camp, awareness generation, cultural program, sports promotion, adventure promotion, seminars and workshops and celebration of national and international days/weeks) and other schemes entrusted to it by the Ministry for implementation (e.g. National Reconstruction Corps).

National Service Volunteer Scheme

The objective of the scheme is to provide opportunities for graduated students to involve themselves on a fulltime voluntary basis in nation-building activities for a

specific period. Any person, who has completed his or her degree course and is below 25 years of age may enroll himself/herself as a National Service Volunteer for one to two years.

Promotion of youth activities and training

Recognizing the importance of providing vocational training, a scheme focuses on financial assistance for promotion of youth activities and training was launched during 2002-2003. A version of the scheme existed earlier but the current scheme being implemented through NGOs includes vocational training, entrepreneurship development and exhibitions.

Scouting and Guiding

Scouting and guiding is a worldwide movement, which provides opportunities to young boys and girls to develop their character, inculcate in them a spirit of patriotism, and make them responsible citizens of the country. Under this program, financial assistance is provided for various activities such as, organization of training camps, skill development programs and holding jamborees. Various organizations involved in scouting and guiding conduct their activities in the areas of adult literacy, environment conservation, hygiene and sanitation.

Promotion of adventure

The scheme fosters in youth the spirit of risk-taking, endurance, cooperative team work and encouraging quick and effective reflexes in challenging situations. It includes an exhaustive list of adventure activities, such as, trekking, hiking, camping, rock climbing, mountaineering, skiing, cycling, rafting, kayaking and canoeing, water skiing, jet boating, long distance swimming, wind surfing, long distance sailing, diving including scuba diving, gliding, hang gliding, ballooning, parachuting, para sailing/para gliding, micro light flying and power gliding, for which financial assistance is provided to State Governments/Union Territory administrations, NYKS, educational institutions, voluntary organizations, public trusts, individuals and group of individuals. The scheme also provides financial assistance to some recognized mountaineering institutes.

Promotion of national integration

The scheme for the promotion of national integration provides the framework for greater exchange and understanding among the youth belonging to different regions of the country. Under this scheme, central assistance is provided for different types of youth programs, which foster national integration and communal harmony. To ensure greater involvement of voluntary agencies in the task of national integration, funds are also channeled through NGOs under this scheme.

The main programs covered under this scheme are national integration camps, inter-state youth exchange programs, national youth festival and national youth day and national youth awards.

Youth hostels

Youth hostels are built to promote youth travel and to enable youth to experience the rich cultural heritage of our country. The scheme of youth hostels has been conceived of as a joint venture of the central and state governments. While the central government bears the cost of construction, the state governments provide developed plot of land, equipped with water, electricity and approach roads. After completion, youth hostels are handed over to the state governments for management. At the end of 2002, 63 youth hostels were functional and 20 were under construction.

Establishment of national and state youth centres

A new central sector scheme for establishment of national and state youth centres has been proposed. These centres will be used to hold events for youth including youth parliament, and national and state youth festivals.

Role of non-government organisations

Because of the enormity of the youth challenge in India, government has developed an alliance with the NGO sector. Most government interventions are implemented through NGOs with the support of government institutions. Government support for NGOs in the youth field is by way of funding, building NGO capacity, recognising the efforts made by various NGOs making awards for excellent work in the field of youth development.

Conclusion

The Government of India has realized the enormous challenge in supporting youth in their transition from childhood to youth through adolescence. Government together with NGOs and many international organisations, multilateral and world bodies are implementing various programs and plans of action throughout India to ensure that a direction is given to the energies and capabilities of young people for developing into excellent future citizens and managers.

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Youth migration and change in Indonesia

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Introduction

The Indonesian population is the third largest in Asia, after China and India and the largest in Southeast Asia. In 2000 there were about 201.2 million people living in Indonesia, about 22 million more than the population of 10 years before (1990) even though the rate of population growth decreased during the previous 30 years, from 2.37 per cent annually in 1971-1980 to 1.16 per cent in 1990-2000. There were differences in the rate of population growth between urban and rural areas. The urban population increased more rapidly in comparison to the rural population and also in comparison with the total population (Table 1). Higher rate of population growth in urban comparing to rural areas in Indonesia indicated that increases in total population in urban areas was not merely a result of natural increase but also due to rural-urban migration, while changes in urban and rural definitions have also to be taken into consideration. During 1980-1985, about one-third (35.2 per cent) of the urban population growth in Indonesia was due to natural increase, and the remaining 64.8 per cent was due to migration and reclassification (ESCAP, 1993: II-16).

The age structure of the Indonesian population shows that in 2000, 20.08 per cent were youth (aged 15-24). The rate of growth of the population in this age group was 2.13 per cent in 1980-1990 and 1.42 per cent in 1990-2000. The youth

population in Indonesia increased from 1971 but it is projected to decrease, in number and proportion to the total population, from 2000 onward. Temporary increase in the proportion of young people in a population is called a “youth bulge”, described as a situation in which 20 per cent or more of a population is in the age group 15-24 years (Huntington, 1996). In urban areas, the “youth bulge” can also be affected by rural-urban migration because migrant populations typically include a large number of young adults. The high proportion of the youth population in the total population creates some policy concerns about how to cope with those conditions. Comparing urban and rural areas, the rate of growth of the youth population in Indonesia was also higher for urban areas for the 1980-1990 and 1990-2000 periods (Table 1), indicates that rural-urban migration made an important contribution to the rate of growth of the youth population in urban areas. This situation also indicates that urban areas will face more problems regarding the high proportion of the youth population arising from a high rate of rural-urban migration, when compared with rural areas.

Table 1: Rate of population growth: Indonesia total and aged 15-24 by urban-rural location, 1980-1990 and 1990-2000 (per cent annually).

Age group	Rate of population growth					
	1980 - 1990			1990 - 2000		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All age groups						
Urban	5.21	5.25	5.23	4.35	4.29	4.31
Rural	0.88	0.79	0.83	-0.59	-0.74	-0.66
Urban + Rural	2.04	1.97	1.99	1.22	1.10	1.16
Age 15-24						
Urban	5.08	5.32	5.20	3.92	3.83	3.87
Rural	1.06	0.38	0.71	-0.18	-0.47	-0.33
Urban + Rural	2.34	1.93	2.13	1.51	1.34	1.42

Source: Calculations based on published data, Population Censuses 1980, 1990 and 2000.

This paper examines Indonesian youth migration with emphasis on rural-urban migration and the socio-cultural changes involved. Based on the data available, migrants in the Indonesian census are categorized as people crossing provincial boundaries. The 1995 Intercensal Survey (CBS, 1996) is the only data available at the national level to examine rural-urban migration in Indonesia at the present time and will be used as the main data source to analyse youth rural-urban migration in this paper. More understanding on the sociocultural changes involved in this movement will be drawn from indepth interviews with some migrants in Cimanggis Sub-district, in Depok District, West Java. Cimanggis sub-district is

known as an industrial area close to Jakarta which has attracted many young migrants from rural areas especially from Central Java.

Youth rural to urban migration in Indonesia

Migration is a selective process affecting individuals with certain economic, social, educational and demographic characteristics, so that the relative influence of economic and non-economic factors may vary not only between nations and regions but also within defined areas and populations (Lee, 1966; Todaro, 1976; Connell *et al.*, 1976; Brown and Sanders, 1981). One attempt to explain the selectivity in the migration process is the “Human Capital Model”. This model assumes migration as an investment that will be undertaken if benefits exceed the cost (Sjaastad, 1962; Corner, 1981; DaVanzo, 1981). It helps to explain a number of facts about migration, including individual characteristics of the people who migrate. The young, single and better educated are more likely to migrate. Being young, people tend to have a smaller average annual income in the place of origin (giving them lower opportunity costs in terms of income foregone), and have less place attachment to their place of origin with fewer family ties, which reduces their psychological cost (Corner, 1981: 12). In addition, they are less risk averse because they have longer time to enjoy the benefits of migration, compared with older people (Corner, 1981: 12; DaVanzo, 1981: 91-92). Migrants tend to be single because there are no dependents and few personal possessions to be moved, thus reducing the direct cost of moving as well as the psychological cost. Finally, migrants tend to be better educated because they can then expect a higher wage rate in the urban sector, and a higher probability of employment. The Human Capital Model also can be used to explain rural-urban migration based on income differential, that is, the difference between the expected urban income (the benefit of migration) and the expected rural income plus the migration cost, expected rural income being an opportunity cost (Corner, 1981: 13).

The importance of youth rural-urban migration

The high propensity of the young adult age group, 15-24 years, to migrate was found in some studies in several developing countries (Connell *et al.*, 1976: 39; Todaro, 1976: 27; Suharso, *et al.*, 1976: 25; Simmons *et al.*, 1977: 54; Aswatini and Tjitroesmi, 1993: 287). Most of the Indonesian population mobility conforms to this pattern, while there are variations between different types of movement. The 1995 Indonesian intercensal survey and the 2000 census data indicate that more than 35 per cent of recent migrants in both urban and rural areas were of the 15-24 age groups and that this age selectivity was also more marked among migrants to urban areas. Regardless their other demographic characteristics, females also outnumbered males in the migration stream to urban areas (Table 2).

Analysis of youth rural-urban migration in this paper is based on recent migration (people whose district of residence 5 years previously was different from their current district of residence) under the assumption that this movement is more likely to influence the changes related to migration, rather than a lifetime movement. Table 2 shows that the proportion of rural-urban migrants aged 15-24 was more than 60 per cent of total migrants aged 15-24 in urban areas, indicating the importance of youth rural-urban migration in Indonesia. Comparing males and females, the proportion of female rural-urban youth migrants was higher, although it is generally understood from various studies that males dominate the migration stream to urban areas (Koentjaraningrat, 1975: 111; Suharso and Speare, 1981: 302; Suharso et al., 1981: 6; Oberai, 1983: 34; Kantor Menteri Negara Kependudukan/BKKBN and LD-UI, 1997: 17). The higher proportion of female rural-urban migrants, compared with males, besides being influenced by more employment opportunities in urban areas, might be an indication of some changes in migration behaviour resulting from changes in social values influencing the migration decision of young women in rural areas.

Table 2: Recent migrants aged 15-24 in Indonesia living in rural and urban areas, 1995 and 2000 (per cent).¹

Migrant and Urban/Rural	Year	
	1995	2000
Percentage of migrants aged 15-24 to total migrants² in		
Urban areas	41.42	38.18
Rural areas	30.02	28.48
Urban + Rural areas	37.38	35.11
Percentage of male migrants aged 15-24 to total migrants aged 15-24 in		
Urban areas	48.24	48.54
Rural areas	52.80	52.69
Urban+Rural areas	49.86	49.86
Percentage of rural-urban migrants aged 15-24 in total migrants aged 15-24 in urban areas	60.72	Data not available
Percentage of male migrants aged 15-24 in total rural urban migrants aged 15-24	39.75	Data not available

Source: Supas (1995) and Census 2000, specially requested tables.

¹ Migrant is defined as a person whose district of residence 5 years previously was different from the current district of residence. ² Total migrants aged 5 years and above.

Demographic, social and economic characteristics

Table 3 shows some demographic, social and economic characteristics of rural-urban recent migrants aged 15-24 in Indonesia in 1995. The data on marital status

reveals that the majority of migrants were single but the proportion of male single migrants was higher than of female migrants. A high proportion of married women might indicate that women moved to urban areas to accompany their husbands or, as suggested by Thadani and Todaro (1978), besides the expected urban-rural income differential, females move from rural to urban areas expecting to meet eligible men to marry, so they were more likely to marry earlier than men, while male movement was more influenced by economic factors.

Education has a clear relationship to migration, in that migrants are more likely to be better educated than non-migrants. With regard to educational attainment, the majority of recent youth rural-urban migrants in Indonesia in 1995 had an educational level of less than senior high school, quite similar to the educational level of the total youth population in urban areas but more educated when compared with total youth population in rural areas in 1995. Female migrants as well as the total female population in urban areas relatively had lower educational levels than males. However, the difference was more marked among recent migrants than in the total population. This situation suggests that education selectivity was most pronounced among male and least among female rural-urban migrants. It is also suggested that male migration is likely to be influenced primarily by 'push' rather than 'pull' factors. The social values that place males as breadwinners place more pressure on them to find a job in urban areas while on females the pressure is less. Since for well educated people, the possibility of getting a job appropriate to their education is higher in urban areas, the lack of job opportunities could be the 'push' factor causing them to migrate to urban areas.

Relationship of migrant to household head indicates that most migrants have families or relatives living in the same house in urban areas. Higher percentage of female youth migrants who were spouses, children, children in law and grandchildren compared to males suggests that female migration was more likely to be closely related to family migration. Among male migrants almost 20 per cent lived with others who had no family ties with them or lived with friends, while among female migrants, only about 10 per cent did so. However, a quite high percentage of female migrants (20.53 per cent, Table 3) worked as household helpers, which means that they were also not living with their families or relatives.

Economic characteristics of youth migrants were drawn from activities during the previous week and the main industry of their jobs, for those migrants who worked. Table 3 shows that the highest percentage of youth rural-urban migrants was employed during the previous week (of Supas 1995 interview). Comparing male and female, a quite high percentage of male migrants were attending school while female migrants were housekeeping. This suggests that male youth migration was more influenced by motivation to further education while female migration was closely related to family migration, and they ended up only doing housekeeping.

Table 3: Recent rural-urban migrants aged 15-24 by individual demographic, social and economic characteristics and sex 1995 (per cent).

Individual characteristics	Sex		
	Male	Female	Male + Female
Marital status			
Not married/single	87.55	67.94	75.74
Married	12.45	30.73	23.46
Widowed/Divorced	0.00	1.33	0.80
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663
Education			
Primary or less than Primary School graduate	28.71	43.30	37.50
Junior High School	31.34	27.80	29.21
Senior High School	38.48	27.62	31.94
Academy/University	1.46	1.28	1.35
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663
Relationship to household head			
Head	26.93	11.09	17.38
Spouse	0.00	25.21	15.19
Children	10.17	6.66	8.06
Children in law/ grandchildren	2.95	3.84	3.48
Brother/sister	12.83	7.55	9.65
Other relatives	24.99	14.44	18.63
No relation/friend	19.93	10.67	14.35
Household helper	2.20	20.53	13.24
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663
Activity in the previous week			
Employed	59.20	47.63	52.23
Looking for a job	7.75	7.49	7.59
Attending school	31.46	18.05	23.38
Housekeeping	0.43	25.05	15.25
Other	1.16	1.81	1.55
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663
Employed migrants by main industry			
Agriculture	3.72	0.61	2.01
Manufacturing industry	31.41	32.09	31.78
Construction	7.53	0.13	3.46
Trade/sales	33.90	15.68	23.88
Service	17.86	50.14 ¹	35.60
Other	5.58	1.35	3.27
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	350,047	426,925	776,972

Source: Supas (1995). Specially requested table.

Note: ¹ More than 85 per cent worked as housekeepers.

Household characteristics

Household characteristics of youth rural-urban migrants can be identified from: number of household members, number of family members living in the same household, housing type and ownership of the house (Table 4). Data on number of household members show that the highest percentage of rural-urban young migrants lived in households with more than five members while only about 6 per cent lived alone. Male migrants were more likely to live alone compared to females which gives more supporting reason to conclude that female migration was likely to be related to family migration. However, more than 80 per cent of migrants lived in one family household and there was almost no difference between male and female migrants. The number of families living in the same house indicated that many migrants did not live with their nuclear families (spouse and children) but in an extended family in one household. More than 80 per cent of youth migrants in urban areas also lived in a household consisting of only one family.

The housing type might be an indication on how close the youth migrant's relationship is with his/her neighbours. The data in Table 4 shows that most young migrants lived in single living quarters, even though the proportion who lived in multi living quarters was also quite high (almost 25 per cent). In some urban industrial areas, it is a common pattern that young migrants working in factories who do not have housing facilities provided by their employers, live in a multi living quarter house, close to their working place, on a rent or contract basis, alone or with some friends. This type of house increases the possibility of a close relationship among the tenants compared with those who live in single living quarters. A high percentage of young migrants lived in a single living quarter perhaps those who lived with their families or relatives. Regarding the status of the house, the highest percentage of youth migrants lived in contracted or rented houses. The percentage of migrants who owned the house (including those still being paid off) was higher for females compared with males. This is probably related to higher proportion of youth female migrants as spouse, children, children in-law and grandchildren in the household.

Reasons for moving

Migration may occur as a reaction to a situation, whether in the place of origin or in the destination. Supas (1995) questioned the reason for migration as follows: What is the main reason for moving from the place of residence five years ago? Migration may occur as a result of an intolerable social, economic or political situation that acts as 'push' factor. Since there was no specific question asked on the reason for choosing a destination, to indicate the relative attraction of 'pull' factor from destination place, the data can only indicate the rationale for the reason or motivation to migrate, among rural-urban youth migrants.

Table 4: Recent rural-urban migrants aged 15-24 by household characteristics and sex 1995 (per cent).

Household characteristics	Sex		
	Male	Female	Male + Female
Number of household members			
One	9.15	4.49	6.34
Two	18.27	16.77	17.37
Three	15.90	21.48	19.26
Four	12.41	14.11	13.44
Five or more	44.27	43.14	43.59
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663
Number of families living in the same house			
One family	82.56	82.52	82.54
Two families	5.89	6.25	6.10
More than two families	11.55	11.23	11.36
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663
Housing type			
Single living quarter	66.41	66.53	66.48
Two living quarters	9.05	9.48	9.31
More than two living quarters	24.54	23.99	24.21
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663
Ownership status of the house			
Self-owned	27.39	35.87	32.50
On installment	1.97	2.04	2.00
Contracted	32.53	26.99	29.19
Rented (monthly basis)	27.32	24.97	25.91
Official	3.98	3.81	3.88
Other	6.81	6.32	6.51
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663

Source: Supas (1995). Specially requested table.

The data in Table 5 on reasons for migration shows that youth rural-urban migration in Indonesia was much influenced by work related reasons (work transfer and looking for work). For males, another important reason was education while for females it was following spouse/parent. Census 2000 data on reasons for migration among youth migrants in urban areas (from rural and urban place of origin) also shows similar reasons for migration, with the highest percentage of migrants giving work related reasons followed by education for males and following spouse/parent for females. For both periods, 1995 and 2000, the data shows that the proportion of female migrants who moved to follow their spouses or parents was without a doubt bigger than of male migrants. This is probably related to the fact that the proportion of female migrants married at the time of enumeration, was also more than double the proportion of married male migrants

(Table 3). When female movement is part of family migration, it is difficult to determine the main reason for migration since women might not be the decision makers or only 'passive migrants'. Therefore, women might not have specific reasons for migration. They moved as a result of family migration which in many cases represented the male decision related to the labour allocation of the family members.

Table 5: Reason for moving by sex of migrants aged 15-24, 1995 and 2000 (per cent).

Reason for moving	Sex and year					
	1995 ¹			2000 ²		
	Male	Female	Male + Female	Male	Female	Male + Female
Occupation	21.23	20.52	20.80	14.23	13.99	14.09
Looking for work	29.74	22.52	25.39	23.83	22.94	23.31
Education	29.20	17.50	22.15	30.58	18.95	23.75
Marriage	0.78	2.65	1.91	0.89	1.65	1.33
Following spouse/parents	10.18	27.63	20.70	16.52	32.37	25.82
Following brother/sister/ other relative	7.70	7.77	7.74	10.75	8.15	9.23
Housing	0.39	0.26	0.31	0.43	0.43	0.43
Security	-	-	-	0.61	0.20	0.37
Other	0.77	1.14	0.99	2.16	1.33	1.67
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	591,332	896,331	1,487,663	775,223	1,101,468	1,876,691

Source: Supas (1995) and Indonesian Population Census 2000. Specially requested table.

Note: ¹ Recent rural-urban migrants. ² Recent migrants in urban areas.

Youth migration and change

Some questions might be asked concerning changes on young migrant life resulting from their migration from rural to urban areas, such as their activity/job, with whom are they living and what their housing environment is. To understand these changes on rural-urban young migrant life, the data on youth rural to rural migrations is used as a comparison.

Data on the activity status shows that more than 60 per cent of male youth rural-urban migrants in Indonesia were employed (see Table 3), while among youth rural-rural migrants it was about 68 per cent (Table 6). However, the percentage of male youth rural-urban migrants who were still at school was higher compared to those rural-rural migrants. This fact indicated that movement to urban areas among male youth was related to chances in their education. When male youth stayed at rural areas, they were likely to enter the labour force, while those who moved to

urban areas were more likely to continue their education. Women were, as expected, likely to do housekeeping. The percentage of rural-rural youth female migrants who were housekeepers (Table 6) was higher than among rural-urban migrants (see Table 3). However, the percentage of female migrants who were employed was higher among rural-urban migrants compared to rural-rural migrants. This indicated that movement to urban areas for young women was likely resulted in changes on their activity from housekeeping to market work. As can be expected, rural-urban migration will also be followed by changing in the migrant's employment from the agricultural sector. For male youth rural-urban migration, the shift was from agricultural to trade/sales sectors while for females it was from the agricultural to the service sector dominated by housekeeping. Manufacturing industry is an important sector of employment for young people in rural as well as in urban areas. This might be due to the development of rural-based industry especially in Java.

Changes in these main activities also led to changes in marriage patterns among migrants by increasing the age of marriage. This is more marked among females. In 1995, more than 50 per cent of the population aged 10-54 who lived in rural areas got married for the first time between the ages of 16-19 and only about 20.4 per cent got married at below 16 (CBS, 1996: Table 25.2), the legal minimum age of marriage. Most youth rural-urban migrants (87.55 males and 67.94 females) in 1995 were single while only about 54 per cent of rural-rural migrants (73.94 males and 38.54 females) were still single. From in-depth interviews in one industrial area in Cimanggis, Depok District, it was found that most of them were still single until the age of 25. Six (three men and three women) migrants aged between 26 and 27 years interviewed, were migrants from rural areas in Central Java and still single. All of them had finished senior high school when they moved to the city. They said that most of their friends, of the same age in their villages of origin, had already got married and had children, some as many as three. It seemed that by moving to urban area it is more likely for them to delaying their marriage. Jones (2002) has shown that there has been a rising age at marriage of the women in the big cities in Indonesia. This tendency is more likely seen among more educated women, who emphasise more a career, independent life style and freedom from arranged married.

Relationship of youth migrants to the household head indicates that rural-urban youth migrants tended to live as non-nuclear family members¹ in urban areas compared to those rural-rural migrants (see Table 3 and Table 6). Change in household composition was more marked among male compared with female migrants (see Table 4 and Table 7). Changing household composition of youth rural-urban migrants is also related to their employment. It is common for young migrants in urban areas who work in manufacturing industries to rent accommodation with their friends or by themselves. They paid a rent of between Rp. 150.000,- and Rp. 200.000,- per month², depending on the condition of the

Table 6: Recent rural-rural migrants aged 15-24 by individual demographic, social and economic characteristics and sex 1995 (per cent).

Individual characteristics	Sex		
	Male	Female	Male+Female
Marital status			
Not married/single	73.94	38.54	54.43
Married	25.29	59.84	44.33
Widowed/Divorced	0.77	1.62	1.24
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	256,975	315,261	572,236
Education			
Primary or less than Primary School graduate	48.90	55.08	52.31
Junior High School	29.67	25.94	27.62
Senior High School	20.59	18.09	19.21
Academy/University	0.84	0.88	0.86
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	256,975	315,261	572,236
Relationship to household head			
Head	22.19	4.60	12.49
Spouse	0.00	39.17	21.58
Child	32.00	21.86	26.42
Child in law/ grandchild	10.72	14.34	12.72
Brother/sister	6.52	3.17	4.67
Other relatives	14.67	8.14	11.07
No relation/friend	12.74	6.10	9.10
Household helper	1.15	2.65	1.98
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	256,975	315,261	572,236
Activity in the previous week			
Employed	67.78	36.75	50.68
Looking for a job	6.64	8.10	7.44
Attending school	20.96	9.93	14.88
Housekeeping	0.81	42.91	24.00
Other	3.81	2.32	2.99
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	256,975	315,261	572,236
Employed migrant by main industry			
Agriculture	43.17	31.57	38.54
Manufacturing industry	20.29	30.47	24.36
Construction	8.19	0.06	4.94
Trade/sales	13.00	19.77	15.71
Service	9.87	17.16	12.79
Other	5.48	0.97	3.66
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	174,181	115,845	290,026

Source: Supas (1995). Specially requested table.

¹ More than 40 per cent worked as housekeepers.

house. This amount is about 10 per cent of salary of those who have about 6 to 7 years work experience in a factory. In addition to the rent, they had to pay for electricity. Supas 1995 data shows that about 24 per cent of both male and female youth rural-urban migrants lived in this type of accommodation (Table 4). This is also a quite significant change, since among rural-rural migrants, only about 9 per cent lived in this type of accommodation (Table 7). Jones (2002) suggests that this pattern of accommodation among young people, indicate changes from the conventional pattern and contributed to the decline in the household size in Indonesia.

In-depth interviews with six young rural-urban migrants in Cimanggis revealed that all of them lived in a rented one-bedroom house. This house consists of more than two living quarters known by the Indonesian term of *rumah bedeng*. The living pattern of youth rural-urban migrants, as indicated by their economic activity and employment, family type, with whom they lived, and their housing type seemed to lead to changes in social life and social values. The study in Cimanggis sub district revealed that youth migrants who worked in the manufacturing industry, did not have much time to become involved in social life such as in attending religious meetings (*pengajian*), wedding celebrations or other activities, apart from their work. Their lives seemed to be more individual, as explained by two of them:

We are busy working so we are lazy to participate in social activities. We start work at 7 o'clock in the morning until 15.00 hours in the afternoon. Sometimes we do overtime (*lembur*) until 18.00 hours, sometimes until 20.00 hours. Coming back home, we are too tired and go to bed, no time for chatting with neighbours/friends, because tomorrow morning we have to go back to work (some of them also worked overtime during week ends).

When we lived in the village (in Central Java), we had to participate in many social activities. For example, if our neighbour celebrated a wedding, we had to go otherwise the whole village would talk about us. Here... we live by ourselves, nobody will bother if we do not come. This life style makes our lives easier, since we are all busy with our work.

Some of them consider their work as 'entertainment', so they prefer to do overtime during the week ends, explained as follows:

During week ends, if we stay at home, sometime we have problems that make us feel bored at home. Watching TV at home will help but... it is better for us to do overtime work, to make our lives more lively, meeting friends, and also getting extra money, to save.

However, many of them also have the responsibility to support their families at home, especially the education of their younger brothers or sisters. Therefore, overtime work also means that they get extra money and can save some to send back home. Their economic responsibilities to their families in the village seem

also related to their delayed age of marriage. One female migrant explained her economic responsibility to her family in the village:

My parents live in difficulties. I am the eldest and the only one who can help. I have one younger brother and a sister still in Senior High School. Even though I do not send money regularly every month, If my parents need it I have to send it. So, I have to have some savings. Probably, after my brother finishes STM (Technical High School), I will think about getting married.

Table 7: Recent rural-rural migrants aged 15-24 by household characteristics and sex 1995 (per cent).

Household characteristics	Sex		
	Male	Female	Male+Female
Number of household member			
One	3.74	1.75	2.65
Two	12.59	11.48	11.98
Three	13.99	25.29	20.22
Four	16.17	16.42	16.31
Five or more	53.50	45.05	48.84
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	256,975	315,261	572,236
Number of families living in the same house			
One family	88.58	88.60	88.59
Two families	6.23	7.71	7.05
More than two families	5.19	3.69	4.36
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	256,975	315,261	572,236
Housing type			
Single living quarter	87.12	85.85	86.41
Two living quarters	4.43	6.26	5.44
More than two living quarters	8.45	7.88	9.15
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	256,975	315,261	572,236
Ownership status of the house			
Self-owned	62.57	65.83	64.37
On installment	0.28	1.22	0.80
Contracted	3.96	4.00	3.98
Rented (monthly basis)	14.76	10.61	12.48
Official	3.74	4.31	4.06
Other	14.68	14.01	14.32
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Number	256,975	315,261	572,236

Source: Supas (1995). Specially requested table.

Life in an urban area, without family, which makes them self supporting (*mandiri*) and independent, also means that there is less social control from society as expressed by young male and female migrants during interviews:

Myself... When I moved here from the village I missed my friends in the village. But we then learned to be self supporting (*mandiri*), living without parents, we have to be *mandiri*. In the village, we could still depend on our parents, here automatically we have to take care of ourselves, cooking, washing, and cleaning the house...we do it by ourselves. Even, when I was sick, nobody knew, except, maybe, my friends in the work place, since I did not go to work.

We live at our own risk. If we do something wrong, we are responsible for ourselves. Sometimes we feel there is no control from our neighbours. Probably from our landlord, but since some of the landlords also do not live here, it is unlikely that he/she can control us. Some neighbours maybe will talk about us if we have guests (of different sex) until late at night, but they will not come to warn us. Our landlord, probably, if he/she hears something bad about us, will come to warn us.

The living conditions described by young migrants above show that they exposed to the opportunity of free life including sexuality and relationships among opposite sexes. However, as Jones (2002) noted, unlike their Western counterpart, the Indonesian young people have not been provided with sex education and access to information.

Youth migrants in urban areas also seemed to have less support when they faced many problems. Besides relatives, for those who have relatives live close to them, friends are the most important social network that they have that can help them when they face difficulties. They can talk to their friends when they have financial problems as well as other personal problems. Their working place does not provide them with counseling programs for their personal problems. The only support available is the one we know as “Labour Association” (*Serikat Pekerja*), dealing only with problems related to their work, especially relationships between employers and employees. Interviewees said it would be better if the government or their employers could provide counseling programs to help them with their personal problems since these could affect their productivity at work.

Regarding financial problems, there is cooperative credit in their work places but they can only become members after a certain period of working for the company. Therefore they also have informal cooperatives among workers that can lend them money when they are in need. They have to pay it back monthly, by having it deducted directly from their salaries. Regarding health facilities, all young migrant workers interviewed explained that they were provided with medical clinics at their work places. The workers were also provided work insurance (*Jamsostek*) but there is also a limit to this service. They also have to follow a certain procedure in order to get the benefits of these programs.

All six young migrants interviewed said that they do not intend to go back to their villages as long as there is work available for them in the city. For females,

probably if they meet somebody when they visit their villages they will get married and stay in the village. However, since they are now working in the city, they expect that they will meet their future husbands in the city. They also said that the chance to meet their future husbands is greater in the city compared to their own villages, as explained by one female migrant:

I think, since I live in the city now, I expect to meet my future husband here. In the village, the choice is limited; those who are left are already old, young people in the village have mostly already got married or migrated to the city.

Conclusion and recommendations

Youth rural-urban migration is an important phenomenon in Indonesia. This movement leads to some changes in living patterns including in activities and employment, family or household compositions and living environments. These changes also lead to changes in the migrants' social lives as well as social values. Migration from rural to urban areas requires youth migrants to be more self supporting and independent. However, their living environments and working conditions seemed to draw them back from the kind of social life that they used to live when they were still living in their villages. They are closely tied to their work, because of their economic responsibility for their lives as well as, for many of them, for their families in the villages. Besides the quite heavy burden of living in the city, they lacked support when they faced financial or personal problems. These could affect their future lives, since this life cycle period is an important transitional period towards adult life.

Until now, the government program relating to youth population is mainly focused on the more general and macro problems related to increasing their education and skills with no special attention to the youth migrant population in urban areas. Some efforts are needed to help youth rural-urban migrants to pass through this life cycle stage:

- To help youth migrants with their personal problems, government or employers need to develop counseling programs. The programs would help youth migrants to deal with some personal problems they face in the city since they usually do not have any 'older people' close to them to help. Even though friends give much help, since they are also of the same age, they also might face problems. Lack of moral support for youth migrants in the city might lead them to live with drugs, narcotics, free sex, even turn to crime, since their living patterns increase the possibility of being involved in this life style.
- Companies where youth migrants work should have an 'economic support system' to help employees with their financial problems, regardless of the

duration of their employment in the company, since financial problems that they face might also lead youth migrants to crime.

- Companies where youth migrants work also need to develop programs to increase their skills. Besides increasing their skills, this activity would also divert youth from perhaps doing something useless to fill their spare time. As explained by some migrants, sometimes they feel bored only watching TV at home so they prefer to do overtime work.
- Where youth migrants live, the formal and informal local leaders should be encouraged to pay more attention to the social problems in their areas because of the great influx of youth migrants living in their areas with some problems. Youth migrants should be encouraged to be more involved in social life around their living arrangements, so they do not feel excluded from their environments.
- Landlords need to be made aware to not only benefit (in terms of renting their houses), but that they are also responsible for 'what happens' to the youth renting their houses, by regularly visiting them. This may develop a feeling among youth migrants that they still have 'older people' in *loco parentis* who pay attention to them. It hopefully will protect youth migrants from misbehaviour.
- For youth female migrants, since many of them are likely to get married at quite late ages, they need to be supplied with information related to reproductive health, since older single women seem to face more problems related to their reproductive health compared with younger women.

NOTES

1. Non-nuclear family members include children in law, grandchildren, brother/sister, and other relatives.
2. US \$1 in 2003 equal to approximately Rp. 8500, - to Rp 9.000,-

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12

Youth in the Japanese society

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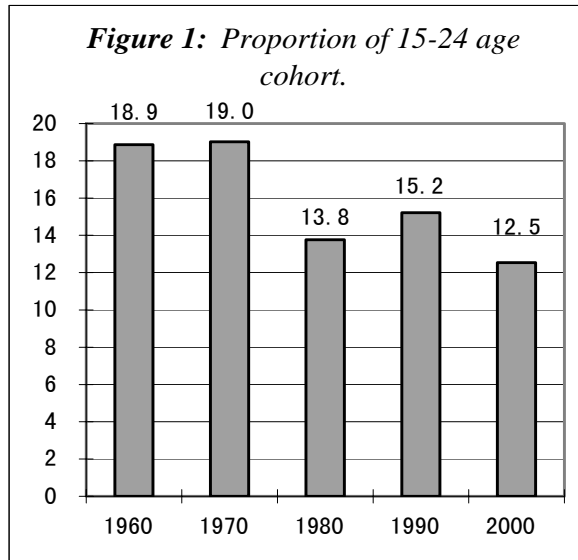
Introduction

The number of youths aged 15 to 24 years is rapidly decreasing in Japan. In 1960, this age group comprised 19 percent of the total population but by 2000 it had decreased to only 13 percent (Figure 1) because of the decline in the number of births since 1973, and the consequent decline in the number of children (Figure 2). Fortunately and in contrast to some other countries which experience a dramatic decline in birth rate, the male-female ratio is not in any way affected. The reason behind the decline in the number of births is that the youth nowadays refuse to settle down or are not interested in starting a family. Why do they refuse to settle down? Why are they not interested in starting a family? What are the things they consider to be of higher priority? The answers to those questions are closely related to the changes in the Japanese society. Discussed below are the factors contributing to the modernization of the Japanese society and the positioning of the Japanese youth in the society.

Youth in a compressed modernization

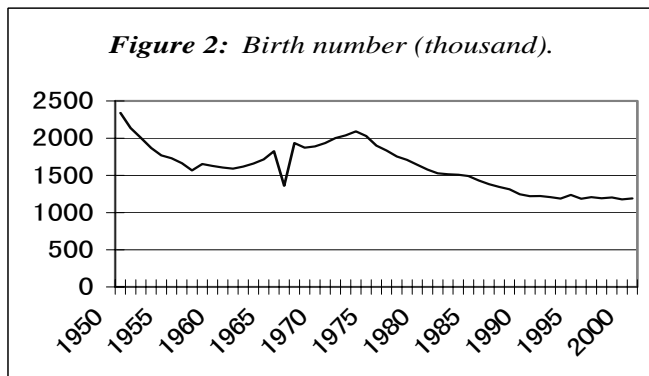
The modernization of Japan is called “compressed modernization.” The Japanese society underwent rapid transformation in the past 100 years; it was only a century

ago when most Japanese were farmers. In the course of modernization, many farmers chose to become factory workers and some of them became businessmen.



The biggest changes were seen after 1945. In 1960, 17 percent of the nation's workforce belonged to the agricultural sector, but that declined to 5 percent in 2000. In 1960, 29 percent of the nation's workforce was working in the secondary industry that included the manufacturing and construction sectors. The percentage peaked at 34.1 percent in 1975 and started to decline thereafter (Figure 3). The reason for the decline was the transfer of a large number

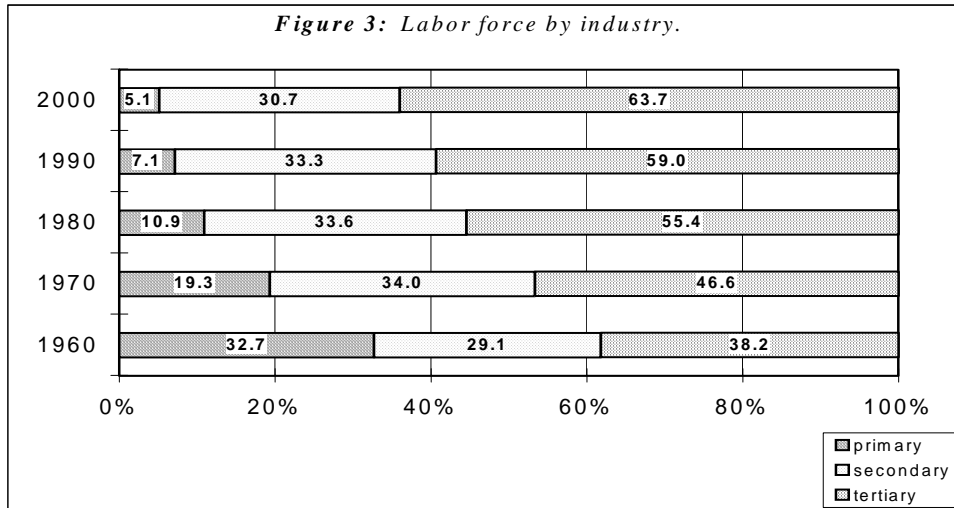
of manufacturing plants overseas and the consequent job losses in the Japanese manufacturing sector. This led to the 'de-industrialization' of Japan in the 1980s and 1990s, where the largest mass of the nation's workforce moved to the tertiary industry instead of the secondary industry. The number of workers in the service industry including commerce, finance, and information has rapidly increased in recent years to bring the percentage of workers in this sector to 64 percent of the total workforce today.



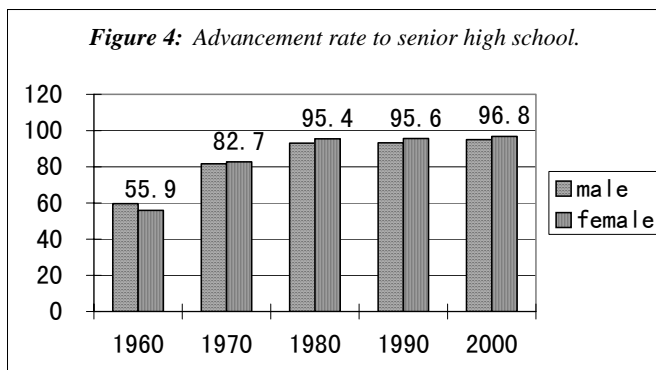
Such changes of the Japanese society have strongly affected the way the youth set goals for their lives. In the past, when most Japanese were farmers, the ambition of the youth was restricted to one of only two: either to remain in the agricultural

village with their parents and practice farming, or to leave the village, farming, and their parents' home and move to the city to become a factory worker or an employee in a more modern sector. In Japan, many youth indeed left farming and moved to the city. Because of this, the urban population increased and the percentages of secondary - and tertiary-industry workers increased as well. This phenomenon was observed in most of the countries that underwent modernization;

however, the transformation was so rapid in Japan that the Japanese modernization is described as a compressed modernization.

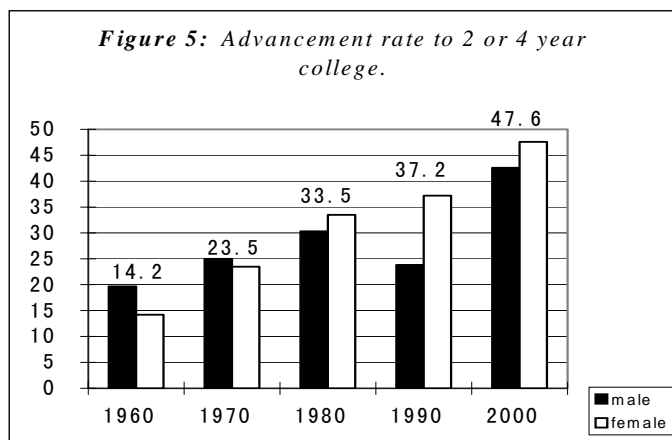


Youth in the expanding educational opportunities



How did the nation’s youth change during the processes of “de-industrialization” and “de-modernization” that started in the 1960s? Firstly, during those processes, the income levels of most households in Japan went up and the

disparity of wealth became small. Thus, the youth no longer needed to join the workforce early in their lives. This, in turn, led to increases in both senior high school and college entrance rates. The Japanese educational system is composed of 6 year primary, 3 year junior secondary, 3 year senior high, 2 year junior college, and 4 year university. In 1960, 57.7 percent of the youth entered senior high school, whereas in 1974, this had increased to more than 90 percent (Figure 4). In 1960, only 17.2 percent of the same age group entered college (including junior college), whereas in 1973, this had increased to more than 30 percent. In 2000, 45 percent of the nation’s youth entered college (Figure 5). In the past, many youth started working in the agricultural or manufacturing sector immediately after the end of compulsory education, but nowadays, the youth stay on at school.



Of particular interest is the advancement of girls' education. In 1960, boys' senior high school and college entrance rates were higher than those of girls', but in 1970, girls' senior high school entrance rate exceeded that of boys', and in 1980, girls' college/ junior college

entrance rate also exceeded that of boys'. In the past, a commonly held opinion was that girls do not need higher education; however, this way of thinking has been completely eliminated. Today, women willingly receive higher education and their parents as well as the society support such an attitude.

The expansion of the educational system as described above has a positive effect on the society in the sense that more youth are provided with various learning opportunities. The 21st century is called "the century of knowledge" and the rise in the educational level of a society as a whole has a positive effect on the society in the century of knowledge. However, there are issues suggesting that the expansion of educational opportunities should not be welcomed unconditionally. One issue is the increase in the number of students whose study objectives are unclear upon entering senior high school or college. Moreover, those students are often unclear about their goals in life. In recent years, spiritual and psychological homelessness is more commonly observed than physical homelessness. The kind of homelessness that we are seeing may instead be called "goal-less-ness."

Youth in de-industrialization

Currently, there are only a few employment opportunities for 15-year-olds who have just finished compulsory education. In the past, the agricultural and manufacturing sectors would employ them *en masse*, but that type of employment opportunity almost completely disappeared around 1970. This meant that many youth after compulsory education would enter senior high school and prepare themselves for work that would start three years later. This was the reason why the senior high school entrance rate exceeded 90 percent in the mid 1970s, as mentioned earlier.

Eighteen-year-old senior high school graduates had many employment opportunities to choose from until around 1990. However, in the process of 'de-

industrialization' of Japan (i.e., the transfer of manufacturing plants overseas), their employment opportunities started to diminish. Particularly after the burst of the bubble economy in 1991, the Japanese job market rapidly deteriorated and with this was the significant reduction of employment opportunities for senior high school graduates. As a result, the percentage of senior high school graduates who have chosen to neither enter college nor start working has reached 10 percent (or 130,000 in number). This has become a serious social and political problem.

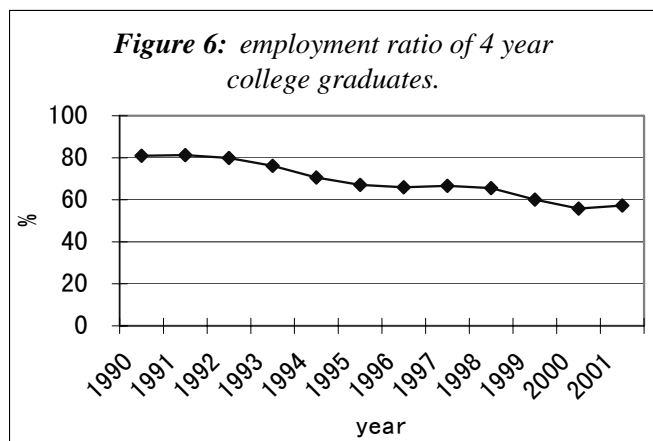
With the increase in the senior high school entrance rate was the increase in the dropout rate as more youths found themselves unable to adapt to senior high school life. In 1960, when the senior high school entrance rate was 58 percent, only a few students dropped out, but in 2000, when the senior high school entrance rate was 96 percent, the dropout rate had risen to 2.6 percent, meaning that 109,000 senior high school students dropped out of school each year.

Therefore, today, most of the youths receive senior high school education and due to the decrease in the number of employment opportunities for them, the college entrance rate is on the rise as well. As mentioned earlier, nearly 50 percent of senior high school graduates advance to higher education. The problem, however, lies in how they define their goals in life. Some of the students in higher education have strong motivation for learning, and others lack such motivation. Some college students originally planned to work after senior high school but reluctantly entered college after realizing that there were no employment opportunities for them. Others had no particular plans to work and no interest in studies either but entered college nevertheless for lack of somewhere to go. Yet others do not have any goals in the future and plan to find one during their four years of college life. College students in recent years comprise such types of students.

The Cabinet Office, in their time-series study entitled "The Basic Study of Youth," found that today's youth spend less time studying, have low moral awareness, and have difficulty adjusting to school life (Cabinet Office of Government, Life and Consciousness of Japanese Youth, 2001). For example, in terms of the time spent studying, the number of students who do not study at all outside school is increasing on every educational level. The percentage of such students in junior high school was 13.1 percent in 1995 and had increased to 19.9 percent in 2000. The same percentage among senior high school students was 30.6 percent in 1995 and 39.7 percent in 2000. Among undergraduate/postgraduate students, it was 38.5 percent in 1995 and 47.5 percent in 2000. The reasons for dissatisfaction with school life among senior high school students are typically "related to teachers" (14.4 percent of the respondents in 1995, 21.1 percent in 2000). The dissatisfaction "related to the contents and methods of teaching" is on the rise as well. Those statistics indicate that although educational opportunities are available, the youth have not adapted well to school life.

Marginalization of youth and their new lifestyles

Most college students find their goals during their four years of college education and become members of the society after graduation. However, the number of college graduates who neither work nor proceed to graduate school is increasing. The employment rate of four-year college graduates peaked at 81 percent in 1990 when the Japanese economy was enjoying a boom. The same rate, however, rapidly plummeted to 56 percent in 2000 (Figure 6). At the same time, the percentage of graduates who did not find full-time employment or pursue further



studies increased to 22% percent (120,000 in number) in 2000. In the same manner as that of some senior high school graduates, some college graduates are not taken in by employment or schools and are becoming marginalized.

Moreover, even after finding employment after graduation from

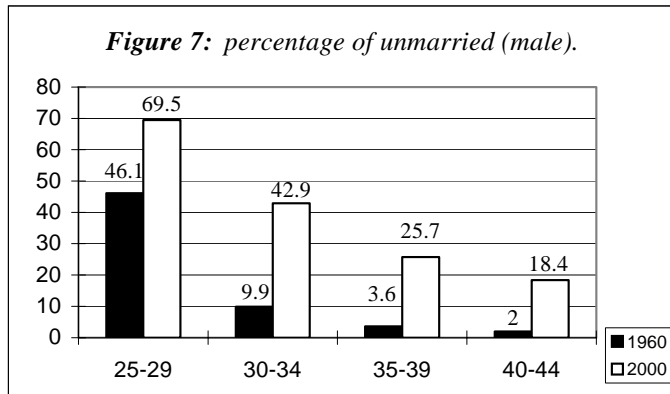
senior high school or college, the stability of these employees is decreasing. Forty-seven percent of senior high school graduates change jobs within three years, and 32 percent of college graduates change jobs within three years. In the past, it was common to work in only one company for life, but today, this kind of loyalty to the employer is not seen among the younger generation.

There is no doubt that the recession, the de-industrialization of the nation, and the resulting decrease in employment opportunities are factors that have marginalized the youth. However, it is not appropriate to categorize them as “unemployed.” They do not want to work under conventional full-time working conditions where one works from 9 am to 5 pm. Most marginalized youths are not unemployed as they have part-time jobs. It is their lifestyle to work as much as they want and use the rest of their time for what they want to do.

Needless to say, the income of such part-timers is usually not sufficient for self-support, and thus they remain financially dependent on their parents. These youths who enjoy being single and are dependent on their parents are called “parasite singles.” On the other hand, many Japanese enterprises that are under severe recession have cut down their workforce and have become increasingly dependent on part-time workers. The increasing demand for part-time workers from the industry is actually supporting the marginalized youth.

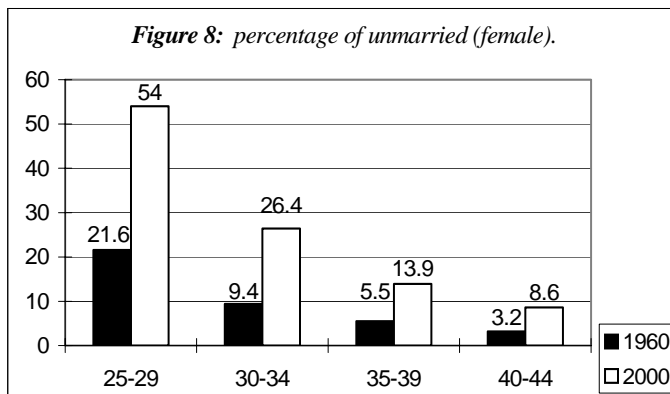
Changes in marital values

The emergence of “parasite singles” is a reflection of the changes in marital values of the younger generation. Today, more and more youths are unmarried in Japan. This tendency is evident in the rise of the age at first marriage. Looking at the trend of the median age at first marriage after World War II, we find that the male



median age steadily rose from 25.9 years in 1950 to 29.0 years in 2000, whereas the female median age rose from 23.0 years in 1950 to 27.2 years in 2000 (Cabinet Office of the Government, Report of National Census, 1952, 2002). Census data show that

the percentage of unmarried women in fiscal year 2000 was 54.0 percent for the 25-29 age group, 26.4 percent for the 30-34 age group, 13.9 percent for the 35-39 age group, and 8.6 percent for the 40-44 age group. The percentage of unmarried men in fiscal year



2000 was 69.5 percent for the 25-29 age group, 42.9 percent for the 30-34 age group, 25.7 percent for the 35-39 age group, and 18.4 percent for the 40-44 age group. Compared to the data collected in 1960, the percentage of

unmarried population is clearly increasing. In 1960, the percentage of unmarried women was 21.6 percent for the 25-29 age group, 9.4 percent for the 30-34 age group, 5.5 percent for the 35-39 age group, and 3.2 percent for the 40-44 age group (Figure 7 & 8). The percentage of unmarried men in 1960 was 46.1 percent for the 25-29 age group, 9.9 percent for the 30-34 age group, 3.6 percent for the 35-39 age group, and 2.0 percent for the 40-44 age group. In particular, the percentages of unmarried 30- to 34-year-olds increased by 33 percentage points and 21 percentage points for men and women, respectively (Cabinet Office of the Government, Report of National Census, 1962 and 2002).

Some of the reasons for the declining marriage rate among the youth are as follows: married life is perceived as a form of constraint instead of joy; enjoying one's free time is more highly regarded than having a family and being deprived of one's freedom; and it is now more socially acceptable to have love relationships and partnership without marriage. The tendency to postpone marriage is a direct cause of the dwindling number of births, which declined by a remarkable 40 percent from the level of 1973 (2.09 million) in 2000.

If this decline in the number of births continues, the percentage of the younger generation in the total population will drop to a level that makes support for the increasing number of aged population difficult. It is for this reason that the national government is taking measures to encourage young people to marry. There is strong opposition to such a policy of the government from those who believe that marriage is a personal matter and governmental interference is unacceptable.

Substance abuse and sexual behaviour

So far, the Japanese society has been free from large-scale penetration of stimulant drugs and marijuana. This is true for the youth and the adult population. Thanks largely to its geographical location, Japan, an island nation, has been quite successful in controlling the influx of narcotics from airports and seaports. There have been sporadic attempts at smuggling huge amounts of narcotics at those ports, suggesting that substance abuse is occurring in places unknown to law enforcers. Nevertheless, the problem is still considered to be of a small scale and it is not yet a nationwide social problem. The number of minors arrested for substance abuse in fiscal year 2001 was as follows: 946 stimulant drug offenders, 176 marijuana abusers, and 3,071 paint thinner abusers. Those numbers are considered to be extremely low (Cabinet Office of Government, Police White Paper, 2001).

With regards to prostitution, prostitution and similar acts by female senior high school students have become phenomenal since the 1990s. This is called *enjo kosai* (teen prostitution for material support), and some surveys have revealed it to be fairly widespread. To solve this problem, in 1999, the national government enforced a law that penalizes an adult who engages in a sexual relationship with a minor 18 years of age or under in exchange for money or other material form of payment.

The number of minors who came under protection and guidance due to sexual misconduct in fiscal year 2001 was 4,354, a 5.4 percent increase from the previous year. Senior high school students constitute the largest percentage among them, accounting for 39.7 percent, followed by junior high school students and unemployed minors that accounted for 31.6 percent and 20.6 percent respectively.

The mobile phone and the internet have become extremely popular among the youth, providing them with the means to contact strangers. In some cases, exchanges on the internet and mobile phones lead to sexual relationships. Most of the sexual encounters with total strangers, such as those called *enjo kosai*, are made possible through the internet and the mobile phone.

Changes in sexual behaviour have increased the probability of transmission of sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS. However, the percentage of people who are HIV-positive among the total population is not as high as imagined. According to available statistics, the percentage of HIV-positive persons is estimated to be only 0.0023 percent of the total population in 2001. More than 80 percent of those HIV-positive persons are male. In terms of age, many male carriers are 25 years old or over. There are 24 reported cases of male carriers below the age of 20, which comprise approximately one percent of the total (2,187 cases). There are 23 cases of female carriers under the age of 20, which comprise approximately seven percent of the total (333 cases) (Ministry of Health and Welfare, 2001).

The Japanese Association for Sexual Education (2001) conduct a national survey of youth sexual behaviour periodically. This highly reliable time-series survey canvasses the opinions and behaviour regarding sexual experience of approximately 5,500 subjects consisting of junior high school, senior high school, and college students. The survey reveals that the number of minors who have had sexual experience is on the rise. The fiscal year 2000 survey found that for the first time in the nation's history, more than 50 percent of female college students have had sexual experience. The percentage of female college students who have had sexual experience is steadily increasing from 27 percent in 1987 to 43 percent in 1993 and to 50 percent in 1999. Among female senior high school students, the percentage was 9 percent in 1987, 16 percent in 1993, and 24 percent in 1999, indicating that the percentage of female senior high school and college students who have had sexual experience is steadily growing.

Sexual discrimination

Before World War II, Japanese society had many forms of sexual discrimination. Due to this, the education system both at home and at school emphasized the inculcation of manliness and femininity. The new Constitution that was promulgated after World War II advocates equality between men and women. There are many activities in the home, school, and society as a whole that do not promote gender differences. This position, called "gender-free education," became the mainstream by the 1990s.

In the past, girls were not welcome to higher educational institutions and many families sent them to senior high schools or two-year junior colleges at the maximum. In the 1980s, however, supporters of this way of thinking had become a minority and the four-year college entrance rate of female students rapidly increased. After graduation from college, more and more female graduates sought employment with private enterprises and governmental bodies. Today, many young females seek to find the meaning of life in their career and not their marriage. In the second survey on youth conducted by the Cabinet Office of the Government (2001) in 2000, 29.3 percent of female respondents aged 15 to 24 thought that “women should become more active in society.” Nineteen percent of male respondents of the same age group agreed. In addition, 44.8 percent of female respondents agreed with the statement, “Marriage and raising kids are not the only joys in life.” Of the male respondents, 34.3 percent agreed with the same statement.

In the Equal Employment Opportunity Law enacted in 1985, the employer is obliged to treat male and female employees equally in terms of recruitment, hiring, job assignment, and promotion. Also, the same law prohibits discriminative arrangements in terms of education and training, welfare and benefits, retirement, resignation, and dismissal.

The promotion of equality between the sexes has affected crime statistics as well. In Japan, girls were traditionally less likely to show delinquent conduct. This was probably due to parental and social restrictions imposed on girls’ activities from when they were very young. In recent years, however, the percentage of girls among the delinquent children is increasing. The statistics on delinquent children show that the percentage of delinquent females, which was less than 10 percent in 1950, has now exceeded 20 percent. Between 1992 and 2001, the number of female under-age penal code offenders increased 1.28 times, whereas the number of males decreased by 0.98 (Cabinet Office of the Government, Police White Paper, 2002).

Crimes committed by youth

Since 1995, there have been frequent media reports of aggravation of problematic behaviour among the youth. However, a detailed study has revealed that the problematic behaviour of the nation’s youth is not really becoming aggravated. Crime and delinquency statistics tell us that there were 369 murders committed by minors in 1950, 438 in 1960, and 198 in 1970. After 1980, the number of such murder cases has mostly been below 100 per year, and it remains at the same level today. Therefore, it is not true that murders committed by minors are on the rise.

However, it is true that the society has been shocked by spontaneous and bizarre murder cases for which no particular motives could be established. For example, it was only recently that a 12-year-old boy murdered a 4-year-old boy and this case

shocked the nation from its foundations. The profile of under-age murderers is distinctively different from the stereotype of a past delinquent child. Many tend to have a high level of intelligence and maturity and well versed in philosophy, literature, and history.

These unexplained and spontaneous murder cases have triggered the move to partially revise the Juvenile Law in November 2000. By this revision, the penal code, which was previously applicable to minors 16 years of age or over, became applicable to minors 14 years of age or over in cases of serious offences including murder. In response to the serious crimes committed by younger minors, the Central Council for Education and the National Commission for Educational Reform have repeatedly had discussions on the possible revision of the Basic Law on Education and the introduction of compulsory social services for minors. We would like to point out, however, that the occurrence of these shocking crimes is only one in 100,000, and that they should be considered exceptional. The total number of murders committed by minors per year remains at less than 100 and it has been greatly reduced from the levels in the 1940s and 1950s.

Taking a look at suicide statistics, we find that in the past, Japan was a nation plagued by suicidal tendencies, a large number of which were teenage suicides. Among developed nations, Japan was unique in the sense that the suicide rate of youth was higher than that of any other age group. However, in the 1990s, the youth ceased to be the most suicidal age group. One reason could be the rise in the senior high school and college entrance rates.

Today's Japanese youth culture is characterized by lifestyle changes promoted by the abundance of information available on the internet and other information networks, emphasis on individual rather than public interests, abandonment of ambition, emphasis on personal rather than social life, and preference for pleasure rather than idealism and knowledge. These characteristics are not uniquely Japanese but rather universal. The Sixth World Youth Opinion Survey (Cabinet Office of the Government, 1998) asked youth respondents from twelve countries when they "felt fulfilled." Japanese respondents chose "when I am with friends" (74.0%) and "when I am engaged in sports or my favorite pastime" (50.6%). The youth in the U.S., Germany, U.K., France, and Sweden showed the same tendency. In all the countries surveyed, only a few youths chose "when I am working hard" or "when I am doing something useful for the society."

Government's response

The Japanese Government is currently making efforts to increase the birth rate, youth employment opportunities, and extracurricular activities for school children. In July 2003, the so-called "Birth Rate Boosting Measures Law" was enacted to cope with the declining birth rate. The objective of this law is to create a society that is more supportive of couples who choose to have and raise children. More

specifically, the government shall ask the private sector for cooperation in extending child care leave to both male and female employees in an effort to support workers in pursuing both family life and professional career at the same time. The background of the enactment of this law is the grim prospect of the nation's demography. With the current birth rate, the Japanese population is expected to peak at 128 million in 2007 and to decline thereafter. The population in 2050 is estimated to be 101 million. If this tendency is not thwarted, the elderly population aged 65 years or over will account for more than 20 percent of the national population in 2006, and one in three Japanese will be elderly in 2050. This will make it very difficult for the country to sustain the elderly generation.

In order to improve employment prospects for youth, the government is trying to promote a cooperative relationship between private enterprises and senior high schools and colleges. The government hopes to increase the number of opportunities for senior high school and college students to visit workplaces or work as interns in order to know more specifically what jobs are available in the society and what they entail. In order to enhance the extracurricular activities of school children, participation in volunteer and other group activities and a national campaign to "have a talk with kids" are now being promoted.

Conclusion

Japan has changed quickly from an agricultural society into post-industrial society. In the agricultural society, family was a key agency to guide and decide the future orientation of youth. However, in the post-industrial society family ties have been weakened and every member of the family is more individualized. Throughout this change, youth have obtained more freedom in choosing their future way of life. However, youth seem bewildered by too many choices which appears very commonly within advanced countries, and Japan is no exception.

Education has expanded quickly and almost all youth remain in the school and college until 25 years old. This prolonged youth period provides more opportunities for education, but at the same time isolates youth from real work and real society. This isolation seems to become one of causes of youth's difficulty of finding clear goals for their future life.

The government is now emphasizing "career education" from primary school level. Many colleges are introducing internships and cooperating with enterprises. This project is an attempt of restore closer relationships between education and work, and to give youth more contact with real world.

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Malaysian youth: From government policies to grassroots aspirations

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Introduction

Any country which is concerned with its development will focus on its human resources. The development of human resources calls for the deployment of programs that will produce skilled labour in various capacities for numerous sectors. One of the targeted groups will be the youth of the nation. As a rapidly developing country, Malaysia is no exception. The government recognizes the need to harness the potential creative energy of the youth. As such, policies and programs have been designed to engage youth in national development. The goal of the country is to become a developed nation by 2020.

From another perspective, youth of today face many more new challenges. They also have more choices and information. Generally, they enjoy a higher level of affluence and tend to be technologically savvy. However, while this profile may fit the urban youth, there is a large segment of rural youth in Asia whose basic needs are not met. The problems of drug and substance abuse, human trafficking, and pornography are closely associated with youth, both in the urban and rural areas. The transition faced by youth is a concern to many actors, especially governments and non-governmental organizations. However, to handle these problems, it is important to know the aspiration of youth.

In order to shed light on Malaysian youth in transition, this paper takes a two-fold approach. First, it seeks to identify policies and programs initiated by the Malaysian Government for the development of youth based on secondary sources; and second, to hear narratives of youth leaders with regards to their aspirations for their future.

Malaysian backdrop

Malaysia is a country that has a multiethnic composition. In peninsula Malaysia, the three main ethnic groups are the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians. In East Malaysia, the major ethnic groups are the Iban, Kadazan, Chinese, Malays, and the Bidayuh. These groups profess different religions and cultural beliefs. The existence of the diverse cultural and religious beliefs poses a challenge for the Malaysian Government to maintain peace and stability in order to develop the country. From 1957 to 1969, the country experienced teething problems in nation building. An ethnic riot took place in 1969 due to the socio-economic imbalances between Malays and Chinese. The government of the day had to rethink their development strategy in order to cater for the needs of a multiethnic society and alleviate the growing income disparity.

In order to address the problem, the New Economic Policy (1971-1990) was introduced with two main objectives: to eradicate poverty, and to restructure society in order to remove the identification of the ethnic groups with certain economic functions. This twenty-year plan envisaged the redistribution of wealth based on growth where the indigenous people or the “Bumiputra” would own 30 percent of equity shares by the year 1990. The restructuring of society includes affirmative action on behalf of the deprived indigenous Malays. Examples of these preferences are access to education, employment and economic subsidies in some sectors. Realizing that the development of a country depends largely on the need to have a good work force, emphasis was given to education. The basic thrust of this policy remains until today. Despite its shortcomings, the policy has contributed positively to national unity and economic prosperity in the last 30 years.

One group of citizens who have been singled out by the government is the youth of Malaysia. In Malaysia, organizations define youth as young Malaysians aged 15-40 years old, comprises 42.3 percent of the 25 million people. However, in the National Youth Policy which was formulated in 1985 and revised in 1995, the main target of its programs are youth in the age bracket of 15-25 years old.

National programs for youth

According to INFOSOC Malaysia 2003, there are more than one billion young men and women in the world today and this number will increase to 1.2 billion in the next decade. Furthermore, apart from Singapore, ASEAN countries have a high proportion of youth (18.9%). In Malaysia, there are 4.37 million such youth and

the youth population is expected to increase 2.6 percent per annum. Unfortunately, youth comprise 67.5 percent of the unemployed in Malaysia in the year 2000 (National Census, 2000). Further demographic detail shows that 60 percent of Malaysian youth live in the rural areas. They tend to be handicapped by limited access to education and ICT facilities, and lack in job and employment opportunities. To add to the situation, at least 100,000 youth leave school annually and enter the labour force. The economy is unable to absorb these new entrants to the labour force who are less skilled and experienced and this explains why there is a high preponderance of youth among the unemployed. However, given the economic growth of the country, their unemployment is often transitional.

In order to develop the potential for youth, the Malaysian Government has embarked on a multidimensional approach to youth development. Cohesion across the approach to youth is built by introducing a national ideology, called *Rukun Negara*, the creation of the National Education Policy, and the emphasis on multilevel social interactive programs within the context of the National Youth Policy.

Rukun Negara consists of five principles that are meant to guide the citizens in their interaction with one another and with the state. The five principles include belief in God, loyalty to King and country, supremacy of the Constitution, the rule of the Law, and good morality and ethics. These five principles form the basis of Malaysian core values. These core values link the interaction between the state and citizens, and among citizens of the country. These principles are established so as to instill a sense of belonging and loyalty among the diverse ethnic groups, especially the younger generation of Malaysians.

As for the education system, prior to Independence in 1957, there were three systems of education: the vernacular Malay, Chinese and Indian school system, the English school (public and private) and the religious schools. The differences in terms of objectives, curriculum, and emphasis did not lead toward greater unity among the people. Therefore, upon Independence, the Ministry of Education addressed the situation and made several recommendations. Based on the Razak Report (1956) and Rahman Report (1961), the National Education Policy was formulated. The salient items within this policy which have a direct bearing on creating unity among the younger generation are: the usage of the Malay language as the medium of instruction; the utilization of a standard curriculum for all schools; and the provision of facilities for all students to continue schooling up to secondary level.

The implementation of Malay language as the national language brought forth many debates. On one hand, the government sees the language as a unifying factor for all communication among the citizens. On the other hand, some sections of society see the move as denying the growth of different cultures and languages in the society. Despite differences in opinion, the policy has been implemented for

over 20 years. Malay has grown into a language which is widely used not only for day to day communications but also within the professional and business circles. However, the government also recognizes the need to foster usage of different languages especially the English language. Furthermore, the Chinese and Tamil schools still continue with their operation. At present, there are also private schools, colleges and universities. Since the cost of education has risen, the government has established the National Education Fund to be accessed by students from all ethnic groups. In 2003, a total of RM2 billion was allocated for the Fund.

For the young people in schools, there are many co-curriculum activities, promoted either through the school system or by many non-governmental organizations. Activities such as cross country running, camping, and playing various sports are seen as venues to promote cohesion and an active lifestyle among the youth. Many organizations such as the boy scouts, girl guides, Red Cross and St. John Ambulance have members from diverse ethnic backgrounds. As for the older youth (age 26-40), many join sports and welfare organizations. The recent campaign to stop the war against Iraq was made possible by active participation of NGOs of all ethnic groups across the nation. The media plays a very important role in promoting youth activities in Malaysia. As a source of information for the public, the media (both electronic and print) actively promotes inquiry among youth on internal and foreign news.

The National Youth Policy

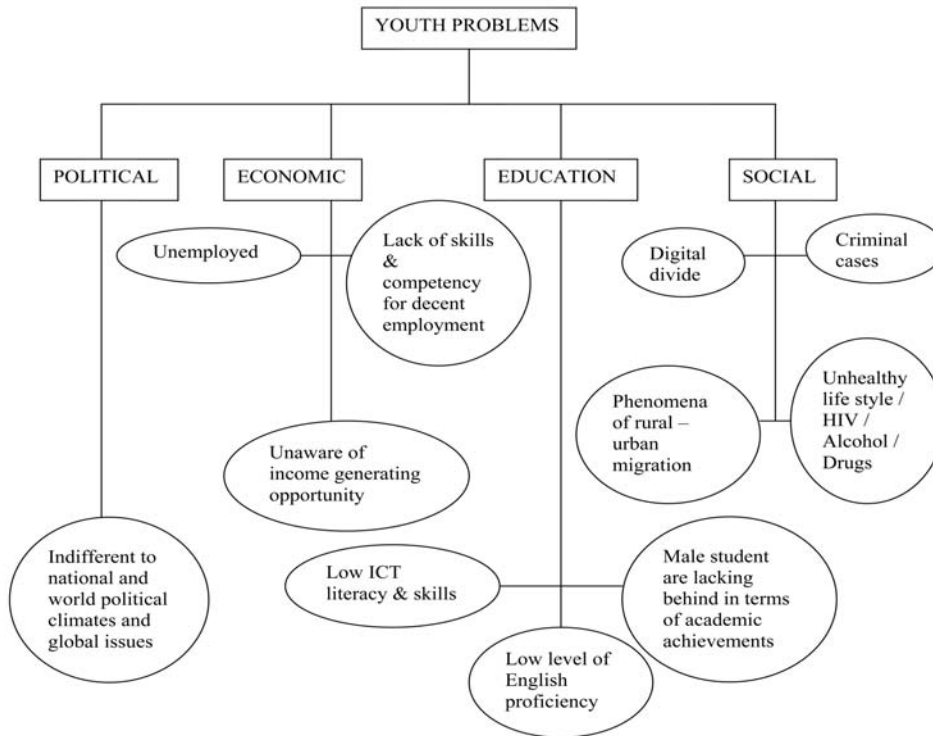
The National Youth Policy was first introduced in 1985. It was replaced by the Youth Development Policy in 1997 following a study on youth problems commissioned by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 1994. Under this policy, six strategies were utilized:

- To increase effort toward knowledge accumulation.
- To instill appropriate values and positive attitude.
- To equip youth with vocational skills and entrepreneurial spirit.
- To increase physical infrastructure.
- To encourage healthy social interaction.
- To build cooperation between youth groups and government agencies.

The reason for such strategies is to address the problems faced by Malaysian youth.

Figure 1 depicts the various problems faced by Malaysian youth. These problems need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner. There has to be cooperation between the various ministries, NGOs, youth organizations, educational institutions and parents/guardians.

Figure 1: Categorization of youth problems in Malaysia.



Source: www.cornerstone-msc.net/infosoc2003/main_print.cfm

Between 1995 and 2000, the 15-24 years cohort has increased by 1.6 percent to a total of 4.37 million or 17.5 percent of the country’s population. The 8th Malaysian Plan indicates that while 2.3 million youth have joined the workforce, there is an estimated 7.8 percent who are unemployed. Some may be temporarily unemployed (in between employment), while others may be waiting for the commencement of an academic program either in a local or private institution.

Within the sectors that are employing the Malaysian youth, there has been a shift towards professional, technical and managerial sectors compared to the agricultural and related fields. The percentage of youth working in the sales and service sectors has increased from 10.5 percent and 9.1 percent in 1995 to 10.5 percent and 11 percent in 2000 respectively. There is a slightly higher percentage of youth working the in the urban areas (52.4%) compared to the rural areas (47.6%), because there are more job opportunities in the urban areas. The government is also establishing community colleges for youth who want to further their education while working. Furthermore, there is also a trend of increasing mechanization on agricultural land, thus requiring less manual labour. In order to address the problem of youth unemployment, the government has created programs where young

graduates could register with government appointed agencies or training centres in order to enable them to learn complementary skills. Furthermore, they are given a small monthly allowance of RM500 (USD120) while they are completing their programs or courses in these centres.

In order to further realize the National Youth Policy, the Malaysian Government has initiated many programs such as the National Social Service Program. This program attempts to combine leadership training and recreational activities. A total of 3,100 youth had participated in the program by 2000. Another program called *Jalur Gemilang* program involved 22,000 youth. The organizers of this program invited well-known speakers to give motivational talks to enhance patriotism among the youth. Another program is called the *Program Bela Negara* (National Defence Program). This program was created in order to educate the youth on the issue of the financial crisis that had hit the Southeast Asia region in 1997. The goal was to empower the Malaysian youth with information and national pride that would allow them to enhance their productivity and usage of local products. Other programs initiated by the Malaysian Government focus on the development of skills entrepreneurship, a healthy lifestyle, and sports activities.

The latest program is called the National Service Program. It was endorsed by the cabinet in 2002. This program is different from the National Social Service Program and the National Service Program established in Thailand and Singapore. This program has three objectives: to inculcate patriotism; to overcome racial polarization; and to instill character building.

This program is scheduled for implementation beginning February 2004. There will be seven intakes which will coincide with the availability of venues at universities and teacher training colleges. The program duration is for 3 months. Approximately 100,000 participants (new school leavers) will take part in the program which is estimated to cost RM600 million. The curriculum is divided into three parts: one month of military training, one month of civic consciousness and character building, and the final month on community services. The program is meant to be fun, culturally sensitive, and not overly religious. The selection will be reflective of the racial composition – Malay 53 percent, other Bumiputra and others 13 percent, Chinese 26 percent and Indian 7 percent. Furthermore, it will also be reflective of gender – male 50.5 percent, and female 49.5 percent. All states and districts will also be represented in the program (SEDAR, 2003). The selection will be done randomly by computers at the Department of Registration. The program will impact on new school leavers who may be looking for employment, or those who are considering post secondary education.

Many actors such as activists, commentators as well as policy makers have raised concerns about the program. First, many questioned whether a three months stint will be sufficient to achieve the three objectives stated earlier. Second, opposition parties expressed their concern on the courses of patriotism. They indicated that

patriotism should not be equated with supporting the incumbent government. Non-Muslim parents also expressed fear that the religious component will turn out to be emphasis on Islam. The third major concern expressed by parents is the possible disruption of further studies to be undertaken by their children. Safety is also a concern especially if weapon's training is included in the curriculum. Finally, with regard to the selection process, there is question of the transparency of the selection process. Will those who have access to channels of power be 'exempted' from the program?

Another aspect of the Malaysian Government approach to youth development is to encourage the participation of youth at the international level. There have been various initiatives in fostering networks with Commonwealth states, ASEAN members, Japan and South Korea in order to create opportunities for youth to develop and upgrade their leadership skills. Exchange programmes such as Asia Youth Ship has been attended by at least 550 youth leaders. In relation to this, Malaysian Youth leaders have been elected to international youth bodies such as Asian Youth Council, World Assembly of Youth (WAY) and World Assembly of Muslim Youth. In fact in 1994, the presidency of WAY was held by a Malaysian for four years. An international presence is considered important especially in the current world of uncertainty. Youth interactions can bridge the gap caused by cultural and religious differences.

The Malaysian Government has placed special emphasis on the training of its youth. The numerous programs and the budget allocated for the programs are strong indications of the government's commitment toward developing the potential of the country's human resources.

View from the grassroots

A study was conducted by the author in 2003 in which 55 youth leaders were interviewed to ascertain their views on problems faced by youth in their community, the reasons for the problems and their aspirations as youth leaders. These intensive interviews were conducted between the months of July and September, 2003. Tapes were then transcribed. From the transcriptions, analysis was conducted to elucidate responses to the three main questions.

Youth leaders identified a number of problems faced by youth in their community. Some of the major problems are as follows: indifference to programs catered to their interest, involvement in drugs and illegal motorbike racing, too materialistic, aimlessness and irresponsibility. In most of the cases, the problems are related to the fact that youth are easily influenced by their peer group.

When asked as to the reasons, these youth leaders cited three main sources of problems. First, trouble youth tend to lack knowledge. They did not complete their education, and thus have limited job opportunities. Furthermore, they have not cultivated the love for knowledge or reading, rendering them limited information

on current events as well as training opportunities provided by many public or private organizations. Finally, for those who are economically well-off, they become too materialistic and not able to contribute constructively toward the development of the nation.

These youth leaders would like to see more youth participating in productive activities, regardless of who the organizers may be. They are concerned that youth may tend to shy away from activities organized by different government agencies. Second, they would like to see youth stay away from unhealthy lifestyles such as promiscuous activities, late night outings, and drug usage. Instead, they would like to see youth building themselves physically and mentally. Third, these youth leaders would like to see the digital divide between those living in the urban and rural areas addressed by the government. The disadvantages faced by the rural youth will increase if the digital divide, as well as the problem of rural-urban migration is not solved. Finally, youth leaders indicate that the various programs initiated by government are not reaching the intended target group.

The voices from the grassroots echo the problem identification listed by the United Nations Youth Agenda. Some of the problems are as follows:

- Limited resources available for funding youth programs and activities.
- Economic and social conditions.
- Gender discrimination.
- Insecure livelihoods.
- High levels of youth unemployment.
- Armed conflict and confrontation.
- Ethnic prejudice.
- Social ills and exclusion.
- Rejection of the values of adult society.
- Homelessness.
- Continuing deterioration of the global environment.
- Increasing incidence of disease, and substance abuse.
- Hunger and malnutrition; and
- Inadequate opportunity for education and training.

While the government has created a large number of programs, those programs may not be fulfilling the needs of the youth. As such, it is important to acknowledge the grassroots indications and aspirations as expressed by the youth leaders.

The role of ICT in the lives of Malaysian youth

At present, there is no national youth development strategy to tap the potential of the young technopreneurs/professional (20-30 years) for nation building. Therefore, this research project was initiated to explore the usage of ICT among urban youth.

Table 1 indicates that all respondents are in the productive age group. They are also those who will suffer from unemployment if there is an economic downturn.

Table 1: Age of respondents.

Age	Percentage
18-25	58.5
26-35	33.3
36-45	7.3
46 above	.8
Total	100.0

This is the target group that comprises the main bulk of Malaysia's human resources. The 18-25 age cohort is the group which is known to be ICT savvy.

This group of youth in the sample indicated that they use the computer to engage in word processing, surf the Internet for information, and to email to their colleagues. A smaller number of respondents use it for chatting and programming. A much smaller number also shop via the virtual media. Table 2 indicates the

percentage of users in each category related to the usage of the computer.

Table 2: Reasons related to usage of computer (%).

Activities	%
Word Processing	35.0
Graphic drawing	0.8
Surfing the Internet	39.0
Shopping	1.6
Chatting	3.3
E-mail	10.6
Programming	9.8
Total	100.0

Table 3: Usage Hours on Computer per week.

Hours per week	%
< 2 hours	13.8
2-5 hours	35.0
5-10 hours	18.7
> 10 hours	32.5
Total	100.0

Table 3 shows the amount of time youth spend in front of the computer. In this purposive sample, it is apparent that there is a bimodal situation where respondents tend to fall into two categories: those who use computers for 2-5 hours and those who use them for more than 10 hours. Considering the fact that the youth are college age individuals and young professionals, the usage of computers by these youth tends to be correlated to the activities such as surfing the Internet and word processing.

The medium represents a channel for information output as well as input. Tables 4 and 5 are results from a cross tabulation between two variables.

In Table 4, it is interesting to note that in the two most frequently cited activities there is an inverse relationship with age. Those in the younger age group tend to surf the Internet much longer in terms of usage hours compared to the older age cohort. The youth look for various kinds of information. Some may want to increase their knowledge in a field of interest. Some may be trying to purchase something that can be bought cheaper in a foreign land. The usage of credit card has allowed for virtual shopping to take place.

Table 4: Reason for computer usage and age group.

		Age				Total
		18-25	26-35	36-45	>46	
Reasons for Computer Usage	Programming	6.9%	17.1%			9.8%
	E-mail	12.5%	4.9%	22.2%		10.6%
	Chatting/Telephone	2.8%	4.9%			3.3%
	Shopping	1.4%	2.4%			1.6%
	Surfing INTERNET/Find Information	44.4%	34.1%	22.2%		39.0%
	Graphic work		2.4%			.8%
	Word processing	31.9%	34.1%	55.6%		35.0%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

On the other hand, those between 36-45 years old tend to spend time doing word processing. This group of young professionals is engrossed in trying to advance their career. An in-depth discussion with several of the respondents revealed that there is a need to complete job assignment in a multiple task situation. The usage of the computer for word processing purposes was indispensable to the respondents who work.

Results of cross tabulation between education level and computer usage time by youth reveals an expected trend (Table 5). With increased levels of education, computer usage also increases. Youth become more computer-dependent in completing their activities. An in-depth interview with a teacher revealed that computers have allowed her to have flexibility in her work schedule. The flexibility which comes in the form of emailing, allows her to work from the home while still be counted as present in her official work environment. This young professional can manage her career and her home with the assistance of technology. For the parents of youth, the advancement in telecommunications such as the SMS (Short Message System) has allowed parents to keep in touch with

their teenagers on a more frequent basis. As such, these gadgets can be regarded as a blessing in disguise despite the possible high cost of maintenance such as telephone bills, prepaid cards, prepaid internet cards, and other telecommunication services.

The third part of the questionnaire assesses the thoughts of youth on a number of issues such as the rural-urban divide, political leanings as well as the influence of the Internet. It is important to discover the thoughts of youth on this issue because youth are considered future leaders of the nation.

Table 5: Computer time usage and education.

		Education Level				Total
		SPM	STPM	Diploma	University	
Computer Usage Time per Week	> 10 hours	24.1%	4.8%	30.0%	49.1%	32.5%
	5<10 hours	24.1%	19.0%	20.0%	15.1%	18.7%
	2<5 hours	34.5%	47.6%	40.0%	28.3%	35.0%
	< 2 hours	17.2%	28.6%	10.0%	7.5%	13.8%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: SPM stands for Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia. This is a national exam equivalent to O Level. STPM stands for Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia, another national examination equivalent to A Level.

Table 6: Do you agree that the gap between the rich and the poor has widen because of Internet?

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	10	8.1
Disagree	46	37.4
Neutral	43	35.0
Agree	18	14.6
Strongly Agree	6	4.9
Total	123	100.0

Table 7: Do you agree that most information from the Internet is against our culture, beliefs and religion?

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.6
Disagree	58	47.2
Neutral	31	25.2
Agree	26	21.1
Strongly Agree	6	4.9
Total	123	100.0

Tables 6-10 are results based on a Likert scale answers. In Table 6, 19.5 percent indicate that they agree with the statement that the Internet has widened the gap between the rich and the poor. There is also a large group of respondents who are uncertain. One can interpret this finding by saying that the youth in urban Kuala Lumpur may not have enough knowledge of their rural counterparts' lifestyle. In

general, Malaysian youth who were born after 1970s grew up the period when the country enjoyed tremendous economic growth and political stability.

Results from Tables 7 and 8 indicate that the youth believe information obtained by using the Internet is helpful to them. The range of information can vary from sports, news, education, entertainment, religion and others. While few respondents agree that the information can be against their culture, beliefs and religion, others feel that such information will not have a negative impact on them. In fact, the diversity of information obtained from the Internet can assist a person in decision making. A total of 57.7 percent of the respondents believe that information from the Internet assists them in making decisions. However, upon further probing with

Table 8: Do you agree that information from Internet can assist you in making decisions?

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	4	3.3
Disagree	17	13.8
Neutral	31	25.2
Agree	63	51.2
Strongly Agree	8	6.5
Total	123	100.0

some of the respondents, major decisions such as preferred educational institutions are still made after consultation with people.

Finally, respondents believe that the time and money spent on using the Internet does not go to waste. In this regard, there are many service providers such as Maxis, Celcom, Digi, and Telnet that offer attractive telecommunication packages to lure customers especially youth. The variation of prepaid Internet packages has allowed parents to manage the ballooning costs of phone bills when the Internet was accessed through the fixed line.

Table 9: Do you agree that Internet usage is a waste of time and money?

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	24	19.5
Disagree	69	56.1
Neutral	12	9.8
Agree	11	8.9
Strongly Agree	7	5.7
Total	123	100.0

The purposive findings from this survey augers well with the aspiration of the National Information Technology Council (NITC) to develop the National Youth and Information Communication Technology for Development

(YnICT4D) Policy. The fact that youth spend a substantial amount of their time on the computer, and the fact that they tend to be technologically savvy are reassuring for policy makers who believe that the demand of the new global economy requires a large workforce of knowledge workers. In Malaysia, the main problems are categorized under: economic, education, social and political (InfoSoc, 2003).

Conclusion

In a period where the Southeast Asia region is experiencing growth but is yet under-developed, technological advancement occurs at the same time as increased digital divide, authoritarian regimes exist as well as democratic governments, cultural diversity is nurtured as well as religious intolerance, youth have to charter new courses in order to make their marks. In Malaysia, youth have the opportunities to reach their full potential. There is a multitude of programs available through the government and private sectors. However, the effectiveness of the programs is questionable. Despite these programs, youth in Malaysia are still facing a myriad of problems. The problems can be categorized as economic, political, social and education. Youth leaders at the grassroots suggest that the programs are not reaching the target audience. It is also clear the ICT is becoming an increasingly important aspect of work and play for youth yet there are no government programs which targets this area or aims to alleviate the growing digital divide between youth in rural and urban areas.

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14

The only-child generation: Chinese youth in a transformative era

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According to the general UN definition of youth (aged between 15-24 years), most of the Chinese youth today grow up as the only child of the family, namely the only-child generation. They enter a world which is transforming and face a multiple opportunities but also various challenges.

Profile of Chinese youth

The demographic structure of China has changed substantially since the introduction of the one child policy in the 1980s. Of the 1.24 billion people in China, young people of the 15-24 year old group comprise only about 197.6 million, 15.9 percent (Chinese Statistics Bureau, 2002).

In terms of gender balance there is a dominance of males. For Chinese people especially those in rural areas, a cultural bias of preference for sons rather than daughters is common. The preference for sons has become more pronounced since the introduction of the one child policy and the sex ratio at birth in China has risen sharply to 116 males to every 100 females. However, in the 15-24 year old group, the sex ratio is more evenly balanced with about 100.8 million males and 96.8 million females and a sex ratio of 104 males to 100 females (Chinese Statistics Bureau, 2002).

The socio-economic structure in China portrays a dualist hierarchy between rural and urban youth based on the *hukou* system (permanent residence registration). Regional differences are also evident especially between youth from the developed areas on the east coast and those from the underdeveloped inland western areas.

In China, there is a strong emphasis on education and every child is expected to complete 9 years of compulsory education. Besides primary and secondary education, various additional types and levels of education are available including higher education and vocational and technical but most institutions are located in the cities. More recently as population increases in the context of economic reform, private schools have been established alongside the public schools, but most private schools have very high tuition fees. So as access to education is becoming more competitive, youth from urban and/or rich families find it much easier to take advantage of educational opportunities. In contrast, those from rural and/or poor backgrounds are increasingly disadvantaged. The inequality in access to education is becoming more serious and universal in China.

Issues and problems faced by Chinese youth in social transformation

To understand the current situation of youth in China today one needs to be cognizant of two major and related changes which confront this generation: youth today belong to the only-child generation as they were born after the 1980's when the one-child policy was introduced in China. In addition, this generation is confronted by the challenges of China's transformation from a planned to market economy: from a closed to an open economy. A unique set of complex challenges face youth today which emanate either from the individual's life situation or from the changing social circumstance.

Characteristics and special situation as only-child

The only child in family is usually called "little emperor" or "little princess" in China. As the only child they receive unprecedented attention in most families which makes them self-centered both in thinking and in behaviour (Feng Xiaotian, 2000). Many of them lack a sense of responsibility and caring, and the ability to socialize. This makes them vulnerable both physically and psychologically. As the only child of the family, they are also under great pressure from their parents to be the best and their source of pride. Unrealistic parental expectations often cause serious strain between the two generations (Yang Xiong, 1999).

Absence of traditional faith and confusion of values

Born in the post-Mao period, this generation of Chinese youth is called a generation without faith. On the one hand, they no longer believe in the

Communist or any traditional ideal held by their parents; on the other hand, a new mainstream belief or value system has not been established. Although the official ideology still permeates the whole process of education, it no longer affects the belief system of youth. In addition, exposure to different values from all over the world, especially from the Western culture make Chinese youth confused (Transformation on Values of Contemporary Chinese Youth Group, 1993; Shan Guangnai & Lu Jianhua, 1994). Their world is changing rapidly and everything seems uncertain to them. So more and more young people are pursuing utilitarianism and believe that earning enough money is most important thing to bring them sense of security (Shen Jie, 2002).

Crisis of employment

In the past decade, deep economic reform has given rise to massive adjustment in the Chinese industrial and social structure. As a consequence, millions of people lost their jobs. In urban areas, even many college graduate students could not find a job, so many youth choose to go abroad to study and seek for better opportunities (Shen Jie, 2003). In the rural areas, increasingly young people have to leave their hometown and migrate to the urban areas to find work. As rural migrant workers, they usually take heavy, dirty and even dangerous work with low pay and long hours, and suffer from discrimination and exclusion from the local institution and local people. Some rural migrant girls have to resort to prostitution as their only way of making a living.

Disparity in income and education

Social stratification has become the most remarkable phenomena in China today. There is regional disparity, for example, the east coast area is rich and the west is poor; there is also rural-urban disparity, i.e., the urban is modernized and developed, but the rural is underdeveloped or even in poverty. So for young people living in different regions and with different identities (rural or urban residence), opportunities vary in terms of access to resources and public services, such as employment, social security, medical care and education, which has resulted in inequality and hierarchy within youth.

Conflict between the rigid model of education and the risky society full of competition

The current model of education, which is oriented by the national unified entrance examination, has been questioned by more and more Chinese people. Its emphasis is to increase students' knowledge which is imbued through a heavy burden of schoolwork for children and young people. But it neglects skills development

which leads to a low level of competence and limited capacity to adapt to the risky society. Some rich parents find alternative ways to educate their children: they send them abroad as early as middle school. This trend gives some adolescents broader study and life experienced however it may also bring some negative results.

New neo-human being as hedonist and rebel

There is a special term China which refers to the new generation: new neo-human being. They follow the global consumerist fashion and pop culture, embrace hedonism, resist any kinds of authority with the exception of deference to various stars, and regard themselves as rebels against the traditional doctrine and morality (Shen Jie, 2001). So there is a broad generation gap: between young people and their parents, and between youth and mainstream society (Yang Xiong, 1999). Sometimes this gap even leads to social conflict, adolescent delinquency or suicide. The latter is the most common cause of youth death in China. A common concern for parents is the lack of influence over their children's behaviour especially as fans and participating in casual sex. But for the young people, what they want most is to free themselves from the control of family and society, and pursue pleasure which at times may involve indulging in internet games, mobile pornographic messaging, tobacco or even drugs. In a competitive society such as China, universal psychological fragility due to stress has become a common problem of youth.

Pathways and solutions: Intervention from government and non political organisations (NPOs)

The issues and problems faced by youth do not originate from youth themselves, but from the rapidly changing world. Chinese youth who grow up in the age of globalization are quite different from the preceding generation who grew up in Mao's socialist time, so the pathways and solutions they need will be very different. The most obvious difference is their attitudes to politics. The introduction of the market economy has depoliticized the Chinese people (including the young) and made them market-oriented. Being influenced by Western culture, youth prefer individualism to collectivism and mass propaganda and ideological control are no longer effective. Intervention from the government and society can do nothing but provide support and assistance to youth both in institutions and culture.

Intervention policies from the government

In the past decade, the government has developed intervention policies and regulations to benefit youth. Concerning employment, the permanent residence

registration (*hukou* system) is gradually being loosened. Migration from the rural to the urban areas and from a city to another city is much freer. This presents more equal opportunity for young people from different regions in their access to the labor market. Some local governments have passed regulations to protect the rural migrant workers' interests and rights, and some have introduced programs to build support networks for college students' employment (Shen Jie, 2003).

Concerning education, the national education law has prescribed that every citizen has the right to 9 years of compulsory education. Some measures have been taken to ensure that rural migrant children can access this right. The education system is also undergoing reform in order to relieve the students' burden. And college students from poor areas can now apply for the national education-assistance loan from the bank.

Concerning social and cultural circumstances, according to government regulations, minors are prohibited from some entertainment sites such as video and game rooms, and bars. Young drug addicts are being forced to abandon drug habits collectively in special drug-relief reformatories supported by the government. In 1991, the Chinese government passed the Law of Protecting Minors which prescribes interests and rights of persons being under the legal age. But government intervention is met with significant challenges from interest groups within the market and the overwhelming influence of pop culture, so the impact is limited and sometimes creates unexpected complications.

Social support and assistance networks built by NPOs

In the past decade, various NPOs have successfully provided assistance and built support networks for youth. The most well-known scheme is Project Hope which was initiated by China Youth Development Foundation. This project enlists extensive support from home and abroad to assist dropout students and those at risk of dropping out to continue schooling in China's rural, poverty-stricken areas. As the most influential public welfare scheme undertaken in the 20th century, Project Hope has attracted enthusiastic participation from domestic audiences of all ages and those overseas, in not only funding students' continued schooling, but also improving educational conditions in rural areas including the construction of Hope primary schools and mini-libraries as well as teacher training.

By the end of 2002, Project Hope had raised over 2 billion RMB in donations, which had helped 2.47 million children and teenagers from poor families to continue their schooling and provided Stars of Hope Scholarships to altogether 111,672 students. Furthermore, Project Hope funded the construction of 9,508 Hope primary schools in poverty-stricken regions and donated 10,000 Hope mini-library sets. In addition, Project Hope funds had enabled over 19,135 village

primary school teachers to receive further training (see China Youth Development Foundation website).

Another well-known public welfare campaign is China Youth Volunteer Action initiated and organized by ACYF (All-China Youth Federation). Its mission is to encourage youth to develop spirits of dedication, friendship, interdependence, and progress through getting involved in social services and public welfare activities. It includes many programs and projects such as encouraging college graduate students to go to work in the western underdeveloped areas, the one-assist-one partner service project which offers long-term assistance to seniors, the disabled and the poor, supporting the poor in relays project which encourages youth volunteers to provide education, technology and health services in poor areas in relays, the green action encampment project which targets environment protection, eliminating of pollution, and tree planting, and also youth volunteer emergency services which provide service in emergency or disaster situation such as flood, earthquake, and SARS. In the past decade more and more young people have joined various volunteer groups or activities and a large national youth volunteer net has been formed. More than 24,000 youth volunteer community service stations and more than 100,000 volunteer service local groups have been established (see China Voluntary Service Net website). It has produced positive outcomes for youth in fostering their autonomy and participation consciousness, which implies that the only-child generation is not as selfish as people thought and they can take responsibilities for the society and for others.

But intervention from government and NPOs cannot solve completely the problems faced by contemporary youth. Basically the idea of the young people is different from what the school and family expect, and the information they get from the society is confused or contradictory. In China, youth are considered to be immature people who need to be guided or controlled. Failure to do so will result in unexpected consequence. At the same time, the globalized culture pressures youth to engage in the realities of life. They have to find their own way of living in the course of doubting everything their preceding generation believes.

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15

The Filipino youth today: Their strengths and the challenges they face

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More than a hundred years ago one of our country's national heroes, Dr. Jose Rizal, said that the youth is the "fair hope of the fatherland." Indeed, how well the country will fare decades from now will depend on the performance of its future leaders and citizens – today's youth. Whether they will turn out to be good and productive members of our society depends to a great extent on how competently they are managing their current affairs, the life-changing decisions they make now and will continue to make and the level of support society provides in this trying period of their lives.

Youth has been said to be the most challenging period in one's life. It is true that we continue to experience changes throughout the life cycle, but the relatively short period between childhood and adulthood would have to be the most challenging one when one stops to consider all the transformations that we have to deal with; from the dramatic changes in our physical make-up to the often times empowering but at times confusing changes in the way we think, feel, act and relate to other people. Exacerbating the difficulty of dealing with all these changes is the fact that the current social environment, the backdrop at which most young people will be negotiating their way to adulthood, is markedly different from the ones many adults and parents grew up in decades ago. This social milieu substantially altered by globalization and rapid changes in technology, places the

youth in a virtually new world that offers them little clues for effectively navigating it. It is no wonder then why many parents and adults can easily misunderstand the youth. The guideposts that parents have used in the past to successfully navigate their way to adulthood may not entirely work now in a virtually new world the youth are currently confronting.

Categorizing the Filipino youth

As with many societies, defining who the youth are is not an easy task. Depending on the purpose for classifying as well as in the criteria used the boundaries for the category change. Legally for example, youth apparently ends at the age of 21. Philippine legislation stipulates that only at the age of 21 can an individual enter marriage, have the right to enter into a business/legal contract or assume ownership of an estate/property without the consent of parents and guardians. Before it was lowered to 18 in 1973, the age requirement was set at 21 by the old 1935 Constitution. Likewise, individuals convicted of various offenses would be given suspended sentences and be placed in a different holding facility until they reached the age of 21 (PSSC, 2003). In terms of capabilities to financially support themselves, age 21 also appears to be an important marker since this is the age at which most young people in the country finish their university degrees and are consequently expected to start earning a living.

The age 21 marker, however, is not uniformly adopted by various government agencies in the country. These agencies adopt different age-groupings for the youth depending on the functions they serve. The Department of Health (DOH), for instance uses the age range 10 to 24 while the Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS) uses the range 7 to 30 (Cabigon, 1999). The National Youth Commission (NYC), which is an agency officially mandated to take care of youth's potential in nation-building, extends the marker when it adopted the age bracket 15 to 30 (RA 8044, 1995). Other government agencies on the other hand follow the UN convention of using 15 to 24 as the age range for the youth, namely the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Population Commission (POPCOM) (Cabigon, 1999).

Of the 76.5 million Filipinos in 2000, about twenty percent or one-fifth (or 15.1 million) are individuals belonging to the 15 to 24 age bracket – the country's youth population. There are 102 males for every 100 females indicating the absence of a very strong preference for a particular gender. This is probably because most couples in the country desire a family that has just the "right size with a proper combination of boys and girls" (Bulatao, 1975). There are even families who will try to keep on having children until they have at least one boy or girl in the family.

But if mothers would have their way, many of them would want to have daughters as they are perceived and expected to be of great help around the house (Bulatao, 1975 and 1978).

At a growth rate of 2.11% per year, the youth population is expected to double in about 33 years (NSO, 2000 cited in Ericta, 2003). This trend is something to think about considering the country's current economic performance and the fact that this proportion of the population are of reproductive age. The country's economic performance has always been wanting. Not enough quality jobs are being produced which will enable an ordinary family of four or five to live decently. Based on data gathered in 2000, around 28 percent of the families in the country are estimated to be living below the poverty line. This translates to about 4.3 million families or 26.5 million Filipinos living below the poverty line (NSCB, 2003).

The youth's inner strength and resources

A discussion on the challenges the youth are currently facing would not be complete without a presentation of their strengths and inner resources. Young people are not just passive players constantly at the mercy of outside influences.

High self-esteem, an important determinant of subjective well-being, counts among the many adaptive characteristics of the Filipino youth. About 7 in 10 Filipino youth are quite satisfied with their selves or feel they are capable of doing many good things or take a positive attitude towards the self (Raymundo, 2003; see also Puyat, 2003 and Youngblood, 1978). This appears to be a candid assessment of their general competencies and is probably different from mere bragging about their abilities. Young people who feel good about themselves tend to be less vulnerable to pressures from various sources to engage in high-risk behaviors. Achievement in school further elevates this general sense of self-worth, underscoring the importance of schooling in itself and a school environment that is conducive to the experience of success (Puyat, 2003; Miralao, 2003).

The Filipino youth nowadays also tend to be comfortable at construing themselves as individuals with unique characteristics, personal wishes and goals and also as individuals who value others' expectations and wishes (Puyat, 2003; Miralao, 2003). Most of them do not find that collectivistic goals are necessarily the antithesis of individualistic goals and vice versa. This is a definite advantage in contemporary societies where elements of collectivism and individualism are becoming equally popular. Likewise, the Filipino youth of today are able to continually fuse diverse and distinct roles and expectations into a coherent whole that defines who they are in their everyday interaction (Peña, 1998). A typical Filipino youth today tends to have a well-rounded personality and is able to seamlessly shift from one role to another (i.e. brother/sister, son/daughter, friend, student, leader, athlete, musician) depending on the demands of the situation.

A good sense of control over what is happening around them also characterizes the contemporary Filipino youth. Around 70 to 80% of the youth have a healthy sense that they can adequately control many outcomes in their lives (Puyat, 2003). Past studies have shown that low levels of perceived control are linked to apathy, depression and learned helplessness (Heckhausen & Schultz, 1995; Taylor, 1983; Seligman, 1975).

Even in the face of insurmountable difficulties where the apparent logical consequence is the development of apathy and helplessness, some youth are able to demonstrate robustness. A study, for example, which looks at the phenomenon of abuse in the eyes of the child, reveals that those who are as young as 8 years old are able to transcend the hurt and pain they are experiencing, allowing them to make sense of what is happening to them at a more complex level one would not generally expect from very young people (De la Cruz *et al.*, 2001). In another study on exploited and physically, emotionally and sexually abused children, it was clearly shown that children are not always passive, helpless actors in extremely difficult circumstances. Some of them are capable of mustering enough inner courage, strength and capacity for restoration that can keep them from breaking down (Bautista *et al.*, 2001). Such resilience, however, is not universal and definitely not inexhaustible.

Another source of strength among the youth today is their latent spirituality. Although the majority of the Filipino youth today would rather go to the malls than be in church halls to be nourished by the spiritual talk of their priests and ministers,¹ almost all of them (99.6%) profess believing in God or the Supreme Being. Though many of them are less familiar with the teachings of their church compared to their parents, most of them still believe that how they conduct their lives today would have a bearing on what would happen to them in the hereafter; in heaven or in hell (Raymundo, 2003). This belief in something higher than one's self is adaptive particularly among Asian countries. It may offer the youth some form of protection and comfort especially when they feel that things are not turning out exactly what they want them to be. Being able to change one's reaction to situations beyond one's power to control is just as important as the belief that one is still in control (Chang *et al.*, 1997; Weisz *et al.*, 1984).

Family matters a lot among the Filipino youth too. This is probably because many (83.2%) of them were raised by both parents living together (Raymundo, 2003). Their family relationships appear to be generally smooth. Most of them believe they have parents² and siblings³ who get along well and that their parents are both warm and affectionate (Raymundo, 2003). Even in families that have only the mother or the father (due to economic reasons)⁴ to supervise the household, adverse effects on the youth's socialization have not been reliably established. In many cases, the reason for a parent's absence and not the absence itself is more

determinative of whatever behavioral problem the youth may develop (PSSC, 2003).

Nevertheless, these strong family ties seldom get utilized to their full advantage by the youth in some problem areas such as in discussions about sex and sexuality. Only 15.6% or less than two out of ten among the contemporary youth discuss sex at home (Raymundo, 2003). Even though parents are reported to be viewed as authoritative sources of information pertaining to sex and sexuality, the Filipino youth are generally uncomfortable talking about it with their parents and siblings. Their reluctance to ask is most likely rooted in their fear of being accused of already engaging in sex or of being overly interested in the subject. Others feel they just do not know how to begin asking questions about the topic to their parents (Gastardo-Conaco *et al.*, 2003).

Because interest in sex and sexuality can not just simply be quelled, the youth's incessant wonderings usually lead them to turn to pornographic videos and materials for answers. More than 55% of Filipino youth have watched triple-X rated video and about 38% have read pornographic materials at some point in their lives (Raymundo, 2003). The sale of explicitly pornographic videos and materials, by the way, are prohibited in the Philippines but somehow the youth are able to access and use them in somebody else's house.

Next to their family as a valuable source of affirmation and support is the youth's peer groups or *barkada* which refers to a small informal group of people that usually spend time together doing all sorts of activities. It usually functions as a theatrical stage where various roles are acted out and modeled. Peer groups or *barkadas* are also an important source of information and misinformation for the young (Gastardo-Conaco *et al.*, 2003). Majority (97.5%) of the youth mentioned having had a *barkada* (Raymundo, 2003). What they frequently can not and do not discuss with their parents or siblings, for whatever reason, they usually bring to their *barkada's* attention.

All in all, it appears that the majority of contemporary Filipino youth have at their disposal a number of strengths and resources they can utilize to weather many storms. But some youth experience many more storms and stronger ones than others.

Preparing for the future

Several challenges confront the Filipino youth of today. Constraints in time will not permit me to discuss all of them so I will just focus on the following major areas: education, employment, sexuality and high-risk behaviors. I will be describing the issues after which I will mention some of the policies and actions that have been taken in the attempts to address them.

Education

Filipinos in general attach strong importance to education. It is considered to be one of the best, if not the only, means for building a good future. Filipino parents strongly believe that the best inheritance they can bequeath to their sons and daughters is a good education. Many parents who go abroad cite as their primary reason for doing so the desire to earn and save enough to pay for their children's education. This strong importance attached to education is shared by the youth, which they frequently show by trying to do well in school (Raymundo, 2003).

Basic education in the country consists of 6 years of instruction in elementary schools. Before, only parents who can afford to pay for their children's preschool do so because preschool fees are not cheap. However, with local government units' provisions for subsidized preschool education as well as the Department of Education's relatively recent implementation of a free preschool scheme in 5th and 6th class municipalities (DepEd, 2003), preschool is becoming less of a luxury.

Secondary education, otherwise known as high school, consists of four years of further education designed to prepare the youth for a university degree program or a technical/vocational course. High school education is seldom enough to land a good job in the country; even clerical jobs now require at least two more years of education beyond the secondary.

Basic and secondary education in the country is provided free by the government. Among the promise that the incumbent president made when she delivered her first State of the Nation Address in 2001 was to put up schools in every *baranggay*⁵ (Macapagal-Arroyo, July 2001). It appears that she has a long way to go as there are about 41,956 *baranggays* nationwide (DILG, 2002) whereas only 36,759 public elementary schools were reported to be in operation across the country (DepEd, 2003).

More serious than the lack of schools is the substandard facilities used as well as the shortage of textbooks that perennially plague public schools. Every start of the school year, reports about 50 to 60 students being cramped in old classrooms with inadequate school chairs abound. Some classes even have to be scheduled as early as 6:30am while others end as late as 6:30pm just so that the large number of enrollees could be accommodated in batches. Compounding the situation is the low pay that many public school teachers are receiving, forcing many of them to be heavily in debt or to engage in selling sausages, underwear garments, make-up kits and all sorts of stuffs to make ends meet.

Needless to say, all of these necessarily affect the quality of education the youth receive. Scores in standardized tests administered each year among elementary students reveal the dismal performance of our public schools. Only about 5 in 10 graduating students who took the National Elementary Assessment Test (NEAT) in

2001 obtained passing scores in Mathematics, Science and English. The passing rate remained just about the same for the last 5 years. Performance at the secondary level is equally disappointing. Passing rate in the National Secondary Assessment Test (NSAT) administered among graduating students in 2001 was just about 50% in Mathematics and English and 45% in Science (DepEd, 2003).

On a more positive note, however, the government's concern for quantity resulted in a considerably high level of literacy and participation rate. Simple literacy is reported to be at 93.9% in 1994, up from 89.8% in 1989 (NSCB Statistics, 2003). Functional literacy is reported to be at 88.29% in 1994 (FLEMMS, 1994 cited in Erieta, 2003). A significantly large number of students (96.8% of those who should be in school) likewise enter primary school⁶ though only about 66.13%⁷ of them are able to complete it. The same thing can not be said about secondary education, though. Less than 70% of the youth who should be in secondary schools are actually enrolled and only about 73% of them are able to complete it.

Tertiary education is supervised but not provided free by the government through its two separate agencies, namely the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). Enrollment in university degree programs steadily increased albeit at a very slow rate from 1994 to 2002⁸. Five of the most popular programs, ranked in order, are: business administration; education and teacher training; engineering and technology; mathematics and computer science; and medical and allied courses. Of those students who entered tertiary education less than half of them (46.48%) were able to earn their university degrees in 2001 (CHED, 2003).

Completion of a university degree is highly desirable among the youth because it grants them better chances of landing decent-paying jobs. Fortunately for some needy students, financial assistance from various universities in the form of tuition fee discounts or full scholarships are available. In 2001, CHED reported having 36,441 beneficiaries of its student financial assistance program. However, these assistance programs are in short supply and are highly competitive.

If the average passing rate in licensure examinations is any indication of the quality of tertiary education in the country, it can be said that the higher education currently provided to the youth is less than satisfactory. Data from CHED indicate that from 1995 to 2001, the national average for all the licensure examinations has always been below 50%. The good thing however is that for the period mentioned the national average shows an increasing trend (CHED, 2003).

The less than 20% participation of youth in tertiary education and the 70% participation in secondary education point to the existence of a large number of idle youth. Around 40% of the total youth population aged 15-30 are estimated to be unemployed and out-of-school (NYC, 1998). That translates to around six to eight million unproductive Filipino youth. Since the number of years of education

is linked strongly to better jobs and higher pay (Morada and Llaneta, 2000), a considerably high number of young individuals stand to have slimmer chances of earning a good living and consequently have little hope for a better future.

Employment

Only a little more than half (53.5% or 8.426 million) of the Filipino youth's population are actively working as of April 2003. Their number constitutes close to one-fourth of the entire 36.635 million Filipinos currently employed (BLES, 2003). This small number is to be expected since a sizeable number of the youth are still finishing school and are not actively job-hunting yet.

Filipino youth who are out looking for work but were not successful in finding any number around 4.217 million, representing the highest share (52.5%) in the total number of unemployed in the country⁹. Because most of these unemployed have not finished secondary or tertiary education and are relatively inexperienced, their occupational choices are extremely limited. Seeing their prospects for finding work to be bleak many of them are compelled to move to urban areas or to seek employment abroad. Those who remained unemployed for a very long time may also be lead to engage in criminal activities as data indicate that around 60% of petty crimes in the country are committed by unemployed youth (TUCP, 2002 cited in Lanuza, 2003).

As if inexperience and inadequate schooling are not enough to make life difficult for most young individuals seeking employment, discriminatory practices in hiring further complicate their situation. In spite of the enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunities Act (RA 6725) and the country being signatory to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, discriminatory practices abound and appear to be tolerated. Unequivocal evidence for this can be found in the job advertisements in the country's tabloids and broadsheets where gender and marital status are included to appear as important qualifications for various jobs. It would appear that one's chances of getting a job in any of the following categories are better if one is a male applicant: cook, driver, mechanic, messenger, engineer, manager, supervisor and security guard. Female applicants on the other hand appear to have better chances of being hired in any of the following job categories: waitress, sewer/weaver, nurse, teacher, secretary, household help, cashier and accountant (Morada and Santos, 1998).

Marriage, sexuality and risk behaviors

More and more Filipino youth are delaying their marriages. As of the year 2000, around 73% of males between the ages of 20 and 24 are still single. For females the proportion is about 57%. Ten years ago, the proportion of men who have never

been married is 63.3% whereas for women it is 45.5%. The figures are significantly smaller for women which indicate that the women in our country tend to marry much earlier than men. Twenty-one appears to be the average marrying age (Ericta, 2003).

A series of nationwide surveys, dubbed as the “Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study (YAFS),” conducted by the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) indicate that today’s youth are becoming more and more liberal with regards to their sexual attitudes and behavior.

In the most recent YAFS III (Raymundo *et al.*, 2003), it was found out that 18.3% of the youth agree to live-in arrangements while about 15% find pregnancy without marriage acceptable. Some 11% reported currently having live-in partners and about 23.5% admitted having had premarital sex. Of those who engaged in premarital sex, 11% said they did it with same-sex partners and 3.3% claimed they did it on their first single date. When asked how it happened, many said they either wanted it to happen (40.5%) or that it just happened and that it was not their plan for it to happen (31.6%). Most of them claimed doing it with their boyfriends/girlfriends (70%) and cited love, curiosity and uncontrollable urge as reasons for engaging in it. Many of those who engage in premarital sex do so while in high school. Asking around about contraception and actually buying contraceptive devices such as condoms will undoubtedly arouse parents’ or other adults’ curiosity and suspicion. Because of this, the majority of those who engaged in premarital sex do so without any form of protection. For the small percentage who claimed to have used some form of protection they cited withdrawal as among the more frequently employed method. Similarly, the proportion of young adults engaging in PMS as reported in YAFS I is 12% (Raymundo, 1984 cited in Ogena, 1999) whereas it is 18% as reported in YAFS II (Raymundo and Lusterio, 1995 cited in Ogena, 1999).

The Filipino youth’s high level of curiosity brings them to other explorations that are equally risky. Current YAFS III data (Raymundo *et al.*, 2003) reveal that over 90% of the youth surveyed believe that smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages and using illicit drugs are dangerous to one’s health. However, this belief does not appear to deter them from experimenting with these behaviors. Close to a half (46.4%) of the respondents, for example, have tried smoking and of this number about 45% continue the habit. Likewise about 70% have tried drinking while 11% have tried using prohibited drugs such as marijuana, *shabu* (crack) and the designer drug ecstasy. Even more distressing is the finding that the young adults who engage in one risk behavior are also the ones engaging in other high risk behaviors (Raymundo and Cruz, 2003). It seems that quite a number of young adults are allowing themselves to be exposed to multiple risks at the same time.

Government and community responses to the challenges

The deteriorating state of Philippine education has been the subject of various inquiries for two decades now. The most systematic and important of these investigations is perhaps the one carried out by the Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM) which proposed, among other things, the breaking down of the unwieldy department into three units, namely the Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). The creation of these units in aid of legislation happened sometime in 1994. Since this major reorganization is relatively recent we may have to wait for a couple of years more to appreciate its impact.

However, it takes more than institutional changes to effectively improve access to as well as quality of education. With the realization that government can only do so much, the private sector is now beginning to understand their share of the responsibility; after all they also stand to benefit from a community of fully developed and competent young individuals.

In January 2003, for instance, the Department of Education launched the Laya Adopt-a-School Program (DepEd Memo No. 15 S-2003), a program based on the concept of empowerment and community support. The program aims to help elementary and high schools in low-income municipalities. Among the first corporation to adopt a school was Toyota Motor Philippines when it recently adopted Pulong Sta. Cruz Elementary School in Laguna. Under the program, the adopting corporation agrees to provide the school with an assistance package designed to: 1) develop the skills and capabilities of the teachers, 2) provide for activities and support for the physical, emotional and cognitive development of the students, and 3) upgrade the facilities of the school making it more conducive to learning. The program should prove attractive to the business sector because they will receive a 150% tax incentive in exchange for participating in the program and in the long run access to a pool of well-developed and competent individuals. Toyota has a large factory/assembly plant located in Sta. Rosa, Laguna (DepEd, 2003).

On the issue of employment, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority or TESDA, has been actively providing free training and skills development courses for out-of-school youth. Some of the trainings it has conducted include training for technicians, clerks, service crew members, salesmanship, trade skills, farming, forestry and fishing courses (NYC, 1998). Most of these trainings however are not conducted in coordination with the private or business sectors; hence, there are still questions on whether these programs eventually help the youth find a job. It would have been desirable if many of the trainings or skills development seminars incorporated some form of on-the-job

trainings to provide trainees exposure to real-world situations which they can also count as job experience.

With regards to sexuality and risk behaviors, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) programs are among the many effective strategies that can be used for raising the awareness and shattering some of the misconceptions of the Filipino youth. In a study evaluating the effectiveness of IEC in the Cordillera Autonomous Region, Zablan (1999) observed that knowledge of sexuality, sex and sexually transmitted diseases noticeably increased after the delivery of IEC inputs. The IEC program, which was a multi-agency initiative involving at least five government agencies, entailed the conduct of youth symposia in public schools; Audio-Visual Van (AV) showings of films with RH-related messages; radio broadcasts of a program focusing on adolescent problems and views on sex, sexuality and reproductive health; conduct of speech and jingle-writing contests with RH themes in various elementary and high schools; the employment of local theater groups in disseminating RH messages; and the distribution of IEC printed materials on sexuality and related topics.

Conclusions

Youth is a transition period where individuals experience marked changes in the way they think, feel, act and interact with other people. Most Filipino youth today differ from their parents and other adults in that they have to deal with all of these changes in the context of a changing social environment heavily influenced by globalization and rapid technological progress. Far from being mere passive actors, the Filipino youth of today actively negotiate their way through maturity aided by internal resources that allow them to withstand frustration and make sense of what they are experiencing. Such resources however are not inexhaustible. Overly strained by thoughts about securing good education, landing decent-paying jobs, and their burgeoning sexuality, some of them may be tempted to engage in behaviors that put them at great risks, seriously marring their chances for a bright future. Because of this, parents may need to communicate more and explore better ways of reaching out to their young so that parents could be partners with their young in appreciating the complexities of growing up. Government agencies may need to cooperate and coordinate with each other more so that they could optimally deliver services geared towards the development of the youth's full potential. The community in general and private sector in particular may need to take a more active involvement in youth development as public funds are becoming more and more hard to come by. No less than a team effort is indeed necessary to take on this formidable task of facilitating the youth's transformation into capable and productive adult members of our society.

NOTES

1. 44% of the Filipino youth surveyed mentioned going to church at least once a week (YAFS, 2002).
2. 72% reported having parents that get along well (YAFS, 2002).
3. 77% reported having siblings that get along well (YAFS, 2002).
4. 1.06 million overseas Filipinos have been reported as of September 2002 (Survey of Overseas Filipinos, 2002).
5. *Baranggays* are the smallest local government units in the country.
6. Participation rate is reported to be 96.77% in 2001 (DepEd, 2003a).
7. Figure is based on 2002 DepEd report (DepEd, 2003a).
8. Participation rate in higher education or the ratio of pre-baccalaureate and baccalaureate students to the population of 16-21 youth increased steadily from 19.95% (or 1,871,647) in 1995 to 21.94% (2,466,056) in 2001 (CHED, 2003).
9. Of the 4.217 million unemployed Filipinos, 52.5%, 39.3% and 8.2% belong to the 15 to 29, 25 to 54, and 55 and above age groups, respectively.

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16

Youth culture in online game worlds: Emergence of cyber lifestyles in Korean society

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Introduction

Online multi-user dimension (MUD) games, so called MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Role Play Game) in Korea have become a major medium for cultural expression for youth since the rapid expansion of high speed internet infrastructure in the late 1990s. The online game users in Korea currently exceed 10 million of which youth is a major part. Cyber space has been serving as a whole new living space for youth, where they can carry on daily activities centered especially on social relationships and leisure activities. Through this study, the behaviors and lifestyles unique to online gamers in Korea have been explored in order to identify the emergence of youth culture and its characteristics in Korea. The study was based on interviews and surveys of gamers at “*Lineage*,” which is the most popular online game in Korea. Distinctive lifestyles of game players in the online game world were identified: single player-oriented, community-oriented and off-real-world-oriented. The three lifestyles showed distinct behavioral characteristics and desires of the players in cyber space. Online game players consider the game world not as a virtual world but as part of the real world. They carry out their daily social activities as a part of their life. Research is needed to establish a systematic model that represents the behavior of the real world of youth that has been shaped by their experiences in the online game world.

Emergence of new youth culture in game world

An online game refers to a game carried out within a computer network. In Korea, an online game is generally considered as MUD (multi-user dimension, or multi-user dungeon) game. MUD games were originally role-playing games set in a virtual world of 3-D simulation featuring knights, sorcerers and elves. When MUD activities take place through an internet network, this is referred to as massively multi-player online role playing game (MMORPG). By choosing the character of his or her choice, the participant controls his or her fate by engaging in diverse activities ranging from monster hunting, fighting, and practicing magic to making business transactions. This study aims to find the socio-psychological aspects of MMORPG players. Most of them are youth in Korea. PC rooms or internet cafés are youth centers for their access to cyber world. The existence of more than 25,000 PC rooms in the country, has enabled online based life to become a symbol of youth culture.

The most popular online game for Korean youth in the early days of PC rooms (about 1998) was *StarCraft*. According to the game producer Blizzard Entertainment, it sold 2.8 million copies in Korea, which was almost half of its global sales. *StarCraft's* popularity was soon replaced by *Lineage*, the biggest online game in Korea to feature role-playing. There is a good reason that MMORPGs, and not computer games, have spawned certain social phenomena related to online game culture. It is specifically that the game does not end in the virtual world but becomes a major part of youth activities in everyday life. Similar to the film Matrix, the online game world has even come to control human behavior, as it is reflected through gamers' life and behavior. The online game world in Korea has become a second living space with a way of living and culture of its own.

Online role-playing game and 'virtual society'

A typical image of Korean youth culture in cyberworld will be explored by the popular acceptance of a major online game, *Lineage* that is the most popular MMORPG in Korea. The number of paid Korean subscribers is estimated to exceed 1 million. The game players in the cyberworld are involved in hunting or combat. In addition, the players may fall in love, make friends and form communities that offer a sense of belonging and encourage them to take part in various economic activities (Whang L. S.M. & Chang GY. 2003; Yee, N. 2001). These tendencies show that the online game world and real world are very similar in that they both provide a place for people to carry on daily activities. Therefore, the cyber game world should not simply be considered as a temporary medium for playing games but as a social place where new types of life and human relations are formed.

The approach chosen here is from methods that are applied to psychological research studies on product development and marketing studies on consumers, a necessary process for learning what strategies are effective for the different lifestyles of a wide range of customers. It aims to establish the various lifestyles of online game participants by studying their life values and preferences in the online game world. The gamers' lifestyle in the physical world, therefore, can characterize their lifestyle in online games, reflecting their behavior and life pattern in the cyber game.

General computer games and video games differ from MMORPGs in the way they are enjoyed and played, as well as with respect to the demands of the players. The significant difference with MMORPG is with whom and how it is played. Depending on the number of simultaneous players logged on (though it is classified by "stand alone game," "multi-user game" and MMORPG), it is important to keep in mind who controls the possible changes in the game world.

Although many people participate in the online game world, there are fundamental differences between such multi-user games as *StarCraft* and MMORPGs. This is a matter of who makes the rules in the game world. Table 1 classifies the differences of MMORPGs with other games according to interface, prototype and other major characteristics. The interface and game system of online games similar to MMORPGs are different from general PC games or other multi-player games like *StarCraft*. Examples of representative multi-player games are *baduk* and chess. These games have a winner and a loser, and once there is clearly a winner and a loser in the game, the game is finished. With MMORPGs, however, winning or losing is not the end of the game. The game, regardless of whether or not a particular person is playing, continues to run as long as there are some players interacting in the game world. Changes in this society take place indefinitely as long as it has participants.

With online games, however, it is not easy to predict the direction the game will take or changes that may occur, as the game is determined according to each of the players' moves, as opposed to the players following a set sequence of events and meeting the expectations of the game and completing the various stages of the game. Therefore, the level of engagement and excitement are greater with online games. Moreover, many people participate simultaneously in the online game which possesses properties similar to a virtual society. Table 1 distinguishes the psychological meaning of three types of computer games by their form of interfaces and user's experiences.

Formation of Korean youth online game culture

The beginning of online MUD games in Korea goes back to the early 1990s with the commercialized service of *Land of Tan-gun*. In the text-based MUD game,

participants would type in certain commands to move their characters. The players of this earlier game comprised mostly college students majoring in computers or game enthusiasts. The general public began to play online games when the graphic-based online games were put in service. The world's first online graphic MUD game was launched, as the graphic-based game *Land of Wind* became available for service in 1995.

Table 1: *The types of Computer Game by the interface, prototypes and their defining features.*

Computer Games	Stand Alone (ex, <i>SuperMario</i>)	Multi-Play (ex, <i>StarCraft</i>)	MMORPG (ex, <i>Lineage, Everquest</i>)
Interface	User vs. Program	Users vs. Program	User vs. User
Prototype (Media)	Novel (book)	(Card/ Board) Game	Real World Simulation (Society, Life)
Defining Features	Level upward, Fixed Events (Scenario, Sequences)	Collaborative work, Group Achievements, Fixed Rules	Self Expression, Social Interactions, Emerging Communities, Emerging Rules

MMORPG players tend to create a life through the characters they choose in the game world. These characters can be seen as their alter ego. The characters represented as knights, sorcerers, elves and monarchs (lords) serve as a means for carrying in cyber space a new identity for the individual player. Through the characters, players choose, they are able to continually develop and change as they experience various events and face situations such as hunting, battling and making friends. Such experiences and changes are possible with the simultaneous participation of countless other players. As mentioned previously, unique to these online games is that it is not a fixed environment by the game developer but that the circumstances and destiny of a game change according to the unpredictable story created through players' actions.

This means that although there are fixed aspects in the game, the story and fate of the game differ depending on the participants. For instance, the game becomes very different from its initial stages influenced by players' behavior, the relationship among players, and the various groups formed. In this respect, online games are the closest form of the theoretical model of virtual reality proposed by scholars who study cyber communities and virtual identities (Turkle, 1996). As they maintain, with an individual identity, people in the online game world experience a new type of human relations and community. In comparison, standard video games are pre-programmed by the developer and have a definite conclusion according to the users' reactions, which are limited by the game's program. In the

case of online games, however, the gamers' action is determined at the very moment. The game programmer or developer cannot predict or control the player's actions.

An online game can serve as a subject of psychological research, since it offers an environment that combines reality and fantasy. Because the majority of online game users in Korea are youth in junior high or high school, aged in their 20s or early 30s, this activity has not always been viewed as positive. People are concerned that youth spend most of their time online, repeatedly confronting battles and hunting ventures, being deprived of their time to prepare for the future in the real world. But the bigger problem is that it is difficult to find the significance of meaning from experiences gained in the game world for life in the real world.

If online games are viewed as a gambling activity or entertainment, then devotion of one's life to the game world would be considered a waste of time. It's not a matter of confusing the real and game worlds, but rather that the individual should rethink how he or she lives life. But if the online game world contributed to one's ability to strategise and wisdom and was not simply retaliation, then the space would provide an opportunity for individuals to think about how human beings should live. If the online game world became a meaningful existence where people share things and respected each other, then people would discover and form values important to life in that world. One could expect to see a whole new world through the online games, if they move toward a direction of adopting a more sophisticated value system.

In this regard, MMORPG manifests as a virtual society rather than a game program. Moreover, developing and operating a MMORPG requires sophisticated knowledge of human psychology and social phenomena, and not just of the programming and design technology. Previous researches on MMORPGs such as *Everquest* and *Lineage* show that the lifestyle and behavior manifested in online games are diverse and concrete (Whang and Jang, 2002; Yee, 2001). People's lifestyle in MMORPGs is more like the real world, when compared with other types of games. Thus, rather than looking at the MMORPG as a game, it can be seen as a reflection of a virtual society similar to the society in the real world. Gamers even form a strong bond and show loyalty to the virtual communities of which they are a part. Battles between clans and the various activities between members are the alluring characteristics of the online game world. Gamers conduct business transactions as they buy and exchange items during the game. This activity is something the game planner did not expect would occur in the virtual space (Whang, 2000; Whang, Lee and Chang, 2003; Yee, 2001).

Online game research

Game users have already come to view the game world not as a virtual game but as a place where they can experiment with diverse social activities. Members of online game communities spontaneously plan new events and engage in business activities. Not only do players exchange game items and rewards online, but they also exchange and buy treasures and weapons offline in the real world. In other words, cyber money and game items are purchased with real money. The idea that the valuables and resources of the game world could have practical value in the real world has shocked the public unfamiliar with the online game world. But as *Avatar*, a site in which people pay to create their own digital characters, emerged as a business, cyber space offering game items became a new kind of business activity (Whang and Lee, 2003).

Youth today can learn the social skills and moral virtues that may some day become important as they play online games. The cyber game world in Korean society has now become a space similar to the real world in which human beings can carry out a life. Online games are no longer a game played by multiple players at the same time, but a social space in which a new life can be found and human relations are formed. If this is so, then who are these people living in this virtual society, and how do they live out their lives? How gamers present their social identities in the online game society, and how the game world coincides with the real world are major areas for research that are relevant to Korean society today.

By aiming to understand the characteristics and the ways in which people create a lifestyle online, this can serve as a model for predicting how the youth in Korea may possibly develop the culture and change society in the future. Through the particular characteristics of cyber space, one may be able to find various measures needed to discern how the culture and lifestyle of the real world could change.

In order to examine the dynamics of the online game world and discern its characteristics, this research chose two representative online games in Korea. One is *Lineage* (developed by NC Soft) with the most number of paid subscribers, and the other *Land of Wind* (developed by Nexen), the world's first graphic-based online game. This study was based on the findings of a one-month online survey conducted on each of the game's official websites beginning at the end of October 2001.

In the case of *Lineage*, there were 15,201 reliable respondents. Of them, 14,641 were male and 570 female. *Land of Wind*, on the other hand, had 24,247 reliable respondents, of which 21,048 were male and 3,199 female. Classifying *Lineage*'s respondents by age, 17.4 percent were junior-high school students, 40 percent high school students, 38.1 percent were college students and those in their 20s and 4.5 percent in their 30s. *Land of Wind*, however, mostly comprised junior-high school

students with 73 percent, followed by high school students with 11 percent and college students with 7 percent.

Korean youth psychology in online game world

Devoted game users

When covering the issue of online games in Korean society, it is first necessary to mention the presence of a strong degree of devotion to the game world. In the case of *Lineage*, a mere 4 percent of the total number of respondents said they spend on average less than one hour each day playing games. Those who play more than three hours on average made up 60 percent. Those respondents who said they spend more than 10 hours with *Lineage* made up 12 percent. This was similar for the players of *Land of Wind*. Those who play on average less than an hour of *Land of Wind* made up 3 percent, while those who played over three hours made up 52 percent.

The rule of behavior in cyberspace seems to follow an interesting pattern, which was called as “a law of gradual increase on utility value” (Whang, 2000). This is an opposite concept of a law of gradual decrease of utility value in economics. Specifically, as individuals nurture an *Avatar* and participate in community activities, the game will grow to become more important and more fun, giving a high probability of increasing the time spent playing the game. For such reasons, online game companies set up a community-oriented system. The play forum formed through the community activities in the game world serves a similar role as the media.

Part of the reason for some players finding themselves absorbed in the online game community is the latent psychological desire to freely express themselves by adopting various identities. Consequently, as such users cannot help themselves from feeling attached to the game world, they enjoy developing the characters, or *Avatars*, they play. Players may not be able to live out these cyber characters in the real world, but they can express and realize their hopes, desires and curiosities through these characters. Youth at game world tends to experiment with different identities, showing that it is a natural tendency for human beings to be unsatisfied with a fixed identity in the real world.

As the game users experiment with new identities, they constantly improve and change themselves in cyber space. As a result, cyber space can be seen as a place where individuals can develop and experience new identities, rather than as a place where they are deprived or anonymous. This suggests it is not solely playing the game that influences players to grow devoted to the online game world. Becoming attached to and absorbed in the online game world reflects the psychological tendency of human beings to be devoted to their own lives. The more gamers place

importance on their image and lives, the more they tend to give meaning to the life in the online game world.

The world of swords and sorcerers as living space

A distinctive character of the online game world is that individual players adopt characters that represent them as sorcerers, knights or elves. Gamers tend to place the more importance on their characters' physical strength than on their skills and wisdom. The most popular forms of action in the game world are hunting or battle. Most of the online MUD game participants were males. As many as 96.3 percent of *Lineage* game players were male, while it was 87.1 percent for *Land of Wind*. This makes a significant difference with the popular U.S. online game *Sim's Family*, which has many female participants. Described as a more masculine game, similar types of violence arising in the game world have become a social issue in the real world. Representative examples are player killing (PK) and person-to-person combat (PvP). These forms of violence deal with attacking opposing characters in the game.

The reason violence was mentioned as an issue with online MUD games is that they are based on fantasy or fiction. A representative example of a fantasy novel involving swords and sorcerers is "Lord of the Rings." A children's version of "Lord of the Rings" can be represented by "Harry Potter." If these novels brought a whole new kind of world to adults and children, then *Lineage* offers a world in which people can interact directly.

The environment in which one lives has a direct effect on human behavior. The online game world that resembles the world of fantasy novels gives people the chance to participate directly, making the game world no longer a part of one's imagination but something that can be felt and experienced directly. In the fantastic cyber world, people can be happy, sad, in despair and even ambitious. Such experience is part of reality as the individual encounters such direct experience not alone but with others. In this environment, players change and create an identity as they share experiences with others in the game world. They transform into characters of elves, knights or sorcerers. Although it appears as though players' behavior is restricted in the game world, it is actually diversified by the various participants they encounter and the different relationships they form between characters. For example, as gamers act linking their role in the real world with the cyber world, it is possible for them to express the behavior they adopt in the online game world in the real world.

Lifestyles extended into the virtual: Online lifestyle standards of value

Certain lifestyles exist in a particular society or culture. Lifestyle analysis can be used for product development and marketing as well as serve as an invaluable tool to understand political economic and cultural phenomena related to societies (Kim, 1998). With growing accessibility of the Internet and its use ever expanding, the Internet has not only become a major tool in the daily lives of many people, but has begun to provide a new “living” place where individuals may spend their time.

This virtual living place, such as Internet-created space, being another medium of human life has given rise to a new type of community. The Internet has now become the social medium through which individuals with unique identities can express themselves (Whang, Yang and Kang, in print; Whang and Yang, 2002; Whang, Lee and Chang, 2003). Now, in these virtual living places, people are able to express their values and lifestyles as they might do in the physical real world. A classic example of this kind of medium is the online game world.

Method: Participants and Measures

Participants

Participants in this research were selected from those who visited the *Lineage* official site (www.Lineage.co.kr) and *Lineage* play forum (Lineage.playforum.net), the largest *Lineage* community site in Korea. An official announcement was made on these sites inviting anyone to take part in a survey on lifestyle and behavior in *Lineage*. The survey drew about 5,000 participants during its two-week duration however, only 4,786 participants were complete and included in the analysis.

Measures

Measures of values and attitude of online gamers were defined according to the real world-based values and lifestyles of Koreans. The list items of lifestyles in Korean have been translated to express the behaviors and meaning of game players, by consulting online game experts. An initial list of 127 measures for studying the values and behavioral characteristics were reduced to 64 upon a cross-validity test conducted by experts of online games. The list of 64 items related to the values and characteristics of online game players were reduced through factor analysis in a pilot study. It identified nine different major factors accompanying 25 characteristics to classify the online gamers: social-oriented; traditional; off-real world; role playing-oriented; achievement; materialistic; hierarchy; discriminative; anti-group. Table 2 summarizes nine factors and their meanings and their representative items with respect to their factor weight.

Table 2: List of characteristics of online game players' values & lifestyles and their factor loadings.

Value factor	Item	Factor load
Social oriented	It is important to me that players around me are also doing well.	.735
	I feel good when players around me either gain a level or acquire a good item.	.574
	I often chat with new players met in the game.	.420
Traditional	I always follow the decision made by my clan.	.642
	Upon becoming the ruler of a castle, I plan to lower tax rate and exercise my power in a just and noble manner.	.536
	I feel good when someone I know become famous.	.516
	It is frustrating to realize that the game I love is slowly degrading.	.471
Off-real World	If necessary, I consider stealing or swindling items to be acceptable.	.807
	It is enjoyable to harass or bully inexperienced new players.	.600
Role-playing oriented	If a player asks for my age or gender, my answer is based on the current character in the game.	.453
	Whenever there is an event or a castle siege going on, I always participate in order to get any spoils of the war.	.452
	To earn money, I am prepared to resort to activities, such as begging.	.403
Achievement	I feel a sense of pride, as my character becomes stronger and more powerful.	.931
	I believe competition among players in a game is very natural and an integral part.	.552
Materialistic	Having a lot of game money is always a good thing.	.624
	In the game, success eventually means either to reach a high level or become wealthy.	.597
	I always take care to avoid, while playing the game, situations leading to financial loss.	.472
Hierarchy	Members of the clan should be willing to sacrifice themselves for cause of the clan.	.765
	To sacrifice clan members for the leader is perfectly acceptable.	.647
	To run a clan successfully, it's vital to have a well-defined system of order and a strict chain of command.	.562
	Whatever situation the clan is faced with, its members should always unite.	.548
Discriminative	When I come across a new player the first thing I inquire is about their age or game experience.	.733
	When I meet a player, I check their sexual gender.	.686
Anti group	I've chosen not to join any clans.	.509
	I have no interest as to which clans gain control of castles and come to power.	.447

These factors act as a useful set of criteria to characterize the values and lifestyles of online game players, as opposed to a structural model characterizing their behavior patterns. The “socially-oriented” factor was interpreted to represent those behaviors and values related to other-oriented and pro-social activities. The traditional norm-oriented factor represents the promotion based on chivalry, honor

and feudalistic order in the game world. Both of these behaviors put importance on one's ethics and reputation. On the contrary, the outlaw-oriented (off-real world) factor shows the characteristics of players who separate the game from reality. The role-playing-oriented factor represents the adoption of game-specific rules and morals. The achievement-oriented factor shows a tendency of seeking personal accomplishment and success in the game world, regardless of whether they are affiliated to the group or not.

The material-oriented factor measures players' sense of success by the level of game or the collection of precious items, solely based on materialistic facts within the game. The hierarchy-oriented factor emphasizes the following of a strict system of ranks and chain of command that are found in a highly organized body such as the military. The discriminative factor means the tendency of gamers to decide their conduct based on gender and age of other players. Finally, the anti-group-oriented factor represents those players who often choose to act alone and consider personal freedom important in the game world.

Results

Categories of online lifestyles

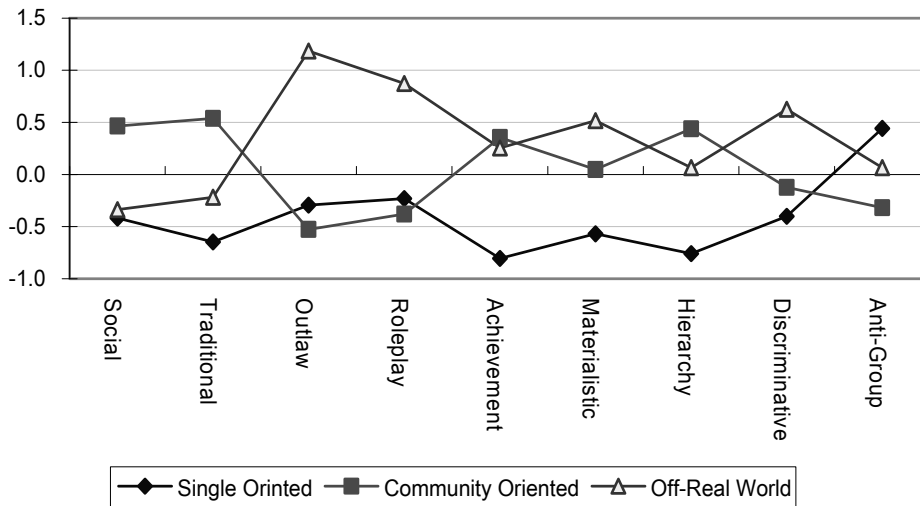
The nine factors of values and lifestyles were applied to the participants with cluster analysis in order to identify their characteristic behaviour patterns. Three categories of groups are derived from k-means method of cluster analysis. Each group was significantly different from each other by the factors of values and lifestyles in the online game world. Each of the group's unique qualities was used to find the characteristic values and lifestyle of each of the groups. The three groups were named according to the features of their profiles to characterize the values and lifestyles: single-oriented, community-oriented, and off-real world. The characteristics of three groups have been summed up in Figure 1. Each group of game players was specifically characterized by their distinctive factors.

Single-oriented players

Those players classified as a single-player type do not focus on accomplishments in the game world. Specifically, they do not feel the need to be part of a certain community. While such players show indifference towards others, they also do not cause harm to others. These are also individualistic players who do not like to be interfered with. Characteristic of these players is they either play arcade games alone or apply the single-player game paradigm of computer games onto online games. For them, the online game world is another form of video game or console game, in which they do not really appreciate the social network features of the

online game world. A total of 28.2 percent of respondents in this study has been identified to belong in this category.

Figure 1: Value & lifestyle profiles of three online game player groups (y-axis is 'z' value of factors).



Community-oriented players

On the one hand, this category showed a strong trait of being social as well as success- and hierarchy-oriented. On the other hand, they showed little propensity towards role-playing and were not self-centered. These players tend to follow the hierarchical order in a clan and have strong comradeship. It was also found that members of this category tend to be very open minded and not discriminative towards gender and age, unlike in reality where a conservative person is indeed discriminatory against gender and age. The gamers of this category, which comprise 44.8 percent of the respondents, can be seen to represent the mainstream players. They also showed appreciation for the social network features of online games.

Off-real world type players

This category showed a strong inclination for being an outlaw and anti-social behavior in game world. More particularly, they had a disposition to place importance on game-world focused values and materialism and vertical individualism. Having the propensity to adopt a value of relativism, these gamers believe it is all right to harm others in the game world, whereas they do not in the real world. This category of players displayed the tendency to use every possible

means to achieve personal success in the game world. They also showed the proclivity to put great emphasis on developing a new identity in the virtual world. It was also found that in place of acting alone they preferred belonging to specific groups as well as being very discriminative towards gender and age. Considering such characteristics, this group comprising 26.9 percent of the respondents, has the highest inclination to harm others, creating social problems in the online game world.

Lifestyles and online game playing activities

Lifestyles and aggression in online games

Three different groups of lifestyles tend to display different behaviour patterns in the game world. In this study, the social issues of a game, particularly concerning the aggression involved, have been explored according to the types of gamers' lifestyle. One particular social concern of online games was on the expression of aggressive behaviour, such as character attack or killing. Exploration of the relationship between the lifestyles of gamers and their behaviors focused on topics of 'online player killing (PK or PvP),' main activities in the game world, socio-economic status by lifestyle, community participation such as in a 'clan,' and expression of gender identity in the online game world.

Online player killing is an act of attacking and eventually killing another player's character inside the game world. However, the death resulting from PK is very different from reality in that characters in the game world can be revived indefinitely. Nevertheless it is still a traumatic experience for some players, since dying comes with severe penalties with various consequences such as losing valuable player items or damaging the abilities of players, causing time losses. It sometimes causes severe emotional distress if the player got involved in the game world. In an online game world there are two forms of PK that are viewed differently both by players and developers of the game. A legitimate form of PK, also known as PvP (Player versus Player), occurs when a war including castle siege is officially announced or declared.

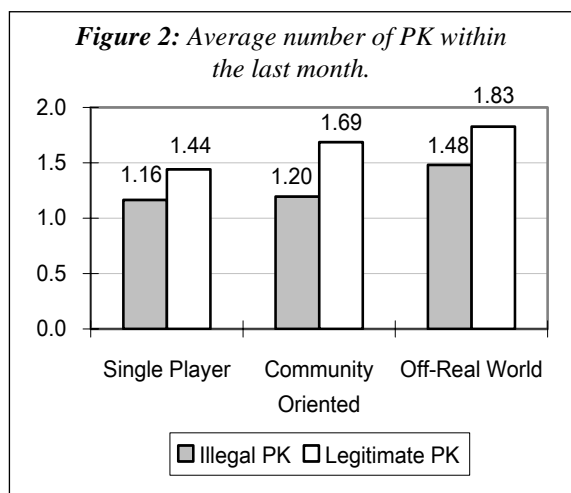
In *Lineage*, systematic measures are in place to maximize the combat experience and to protect players who are legitimately involved. As PvP is considered to be honorable, therefore, a player who kills an official enemy character suffers no penalty. This is a form of legitimate PK. There is, however, an illegitimate form of PK that is usually referred simply as PK. It occurs when death results from ambush or when some players want to take advantage of other players' possessions. This type of PK is viewed as a cowardly act or virtual crime both by players and developers of the game. Although, there are some special measures to inhibit these forms of acts in the game world, players practice these acts. Penalties are implemented by the game system in the form of guards existing in the game world.

They openly attack criminal players on sight, or the players are labeled as a criminal for their illegal act.

There has been speculation on whether the increase of PK in the game world would provoke the gamers to act violently in the real world. People have shown particular concern over the illegitimacy of PK. Their view is that it can induce violent behavior in real world. In this study, the types of game players were compared based on their experiences of PK within a month period, depending upon the context of PK, both the illegal and the legitimate.

The average gamers' experiences of PK were different by the nature of act. The frequency of legitimate PK was higher than the illegal PK, regardless of the types of gamers. However, considering the difference in frequency of PK for each type of lifestyle, 'single-oriented type' showed the least frequency. The 'off-real world type' had the highest frequency of PK among the three groups (illegal PK: $F_{2,4785} = 67.54$, $p < .0001$, legitimate PK : $F_{2,4785} = 53.95$, $p < .0001$). There was no significant difference of PK

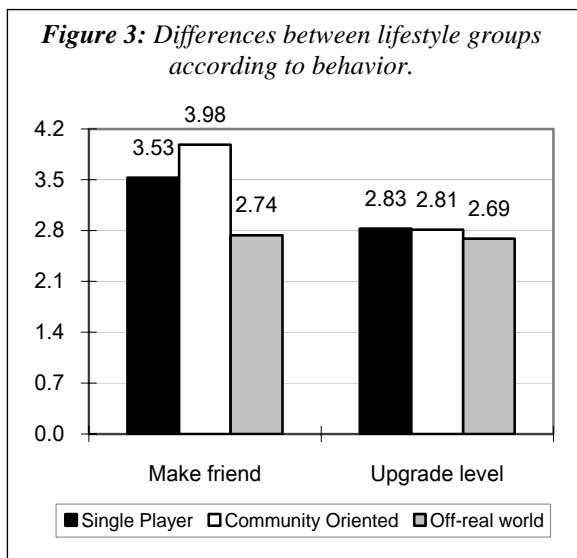
frequency between the single player type and community-oriented type. The off-real world type, on the other hand, displayed a significantly high rate of PK compared to the other types. A particular lifestyle could be interpreted to have a strong relationship with the PK activity in the online game world. Figure 2 displays the distinctive PK activities in three types of lifestyles.



Behavioral Characteristics by Lifestyles in Online Game World

The most common behavior of players in online games is either socializing to meet new people or upgrading one's skills to advance his or her level in the game. The advancement of skill or levels through continuous and intermittent reinforcement was criticized as a cause of self-addictive game behavior pattern. In this study, significant differences were not identified among the three groups with respect to degree of game addiction. The online game addiction scale was modified from the Internet addiction scale of Young (1998), and Whang, Lee and Chang (2003).

The three groups, however, were quite different with respect to diverse social behaviours inside the game. Online gaming activities can be classified into two

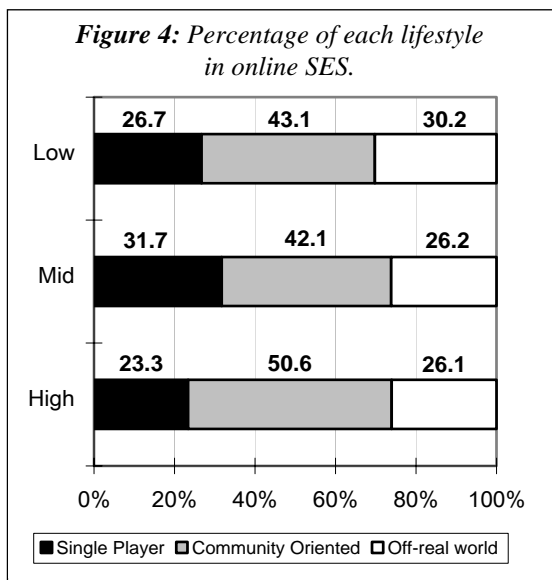


types: social activities and self-indulgent activities, such as mob hunting. Although there was no significant differences among the groups in hunting activities, there was a clear difference in social activities ($F_{2,4785} = 73.78, p < .001$). In terms of sociability, the community-oriented group was the highest, followed by the single-oriented, and off-real world players. It was a noticeable fact that the off-real world player showed the least tendency to engage in social activities compared to the

single-oriented players. This finding may be related to the fact that the off-real world player showed a high degree of anti-social behavior, which is associated with their low level of social activities. Figure 3 shows the different social activities in the game world by three lifestyle groups.

Lifestyles and socio-economic status in online game world

One of the salient characteristics of online games is the accumulation of gamers' activities, which are transformed into wealth in the game world. Gamers' wealth is expressed in different ways, such as character level, money or valuable items. Each player can be identified to have a certain amount of wealth, which has a significant effect on how the players work and live with others in the game world. The lifestyles of gamers were explored according to socio-economic status in order to identify the social meaning of game world through people's interaction.



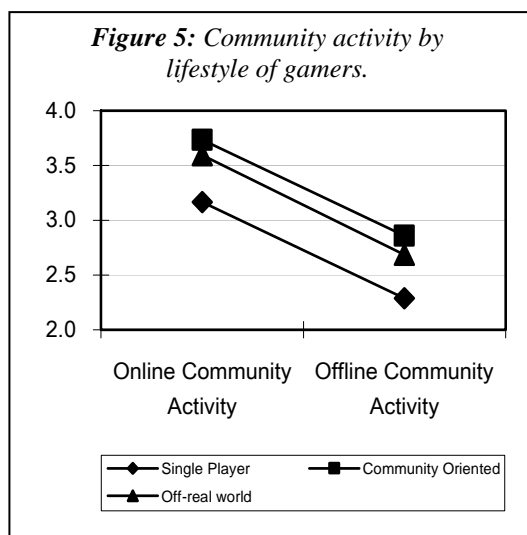
Based on the players' character

level and the amount of wealth possessed in the form of items and game currency, the socio-economic status of players was classified into three levels: upper, middle and lower classes. The community-oriented type displayed the highest proportion, reflecting the higher proportion in the game world. Nevertheless, this type also made up the highest proportion in the upper class. In contrast, the study found that towards the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum, the proportion of off-real world type player increased ($\chi_{4,3994} = 28.230, p < .001$). This can be compared to the high crime rate found in densely populated underprivileged areas in the real world. Figure 4 displays the differential proportion of player types according to the level of social-economic status.

Lifestyles and Community Participation

There is a form of community, or so-called ‘clan’ or ‘blood clan’ inside the online game world. The communities in *Lineage* have specific functions, such as mutual protector or collaborator for combat. But some have more diverse functions, such as serving as a place for social gathering and casual social meetings among members. For the benefits of clan members, a clan functions as a major organization indispensable for seizing the castle or hunting for a ferocious monster. However, some friendly communities only present themselves as a group for friendship. In this study, about half of the game players identified themselves to be members of a clan. The clan activities reflect the gamers’ lifestyles as well.

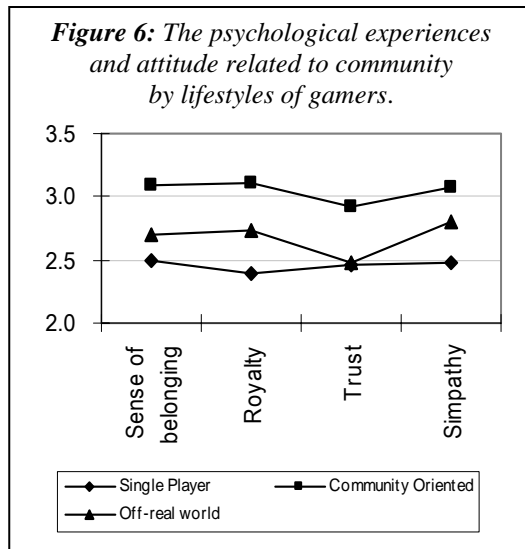
The differences in community activities by lifestyle have been explored in relation to their commitment to communities. The results showed that single players have



the least tendency to take part in a community, while community-oriented players have the highest tendency, which reflected the image of their lifestyles and their community activities (online activity, $F_{2,4785} = 177.55, p < .001$; offline activity, $F_{2,4785} = 98.46, p < .001$). Interestingly, off-real world type players also showed a similar pattern to the community-oriented player. This finding suggests that off-real world players in real life prefer taking part in activities in a group. The single player consistently showed a lower level of

community participation in online and offline context. Figure 5 presents the differences of community activities among three groups.

What are the experiences of gamers in the online game world? Based on the diverse psychological facets of the online game world, this study attempted to compare the different psychological experiences according to gamers' lifestyles. Considering the community experiences in a month, this study identified the level of psychological (mental) involvement in the game world community, considering the players' sense of belonging, level of trust and loyalty.



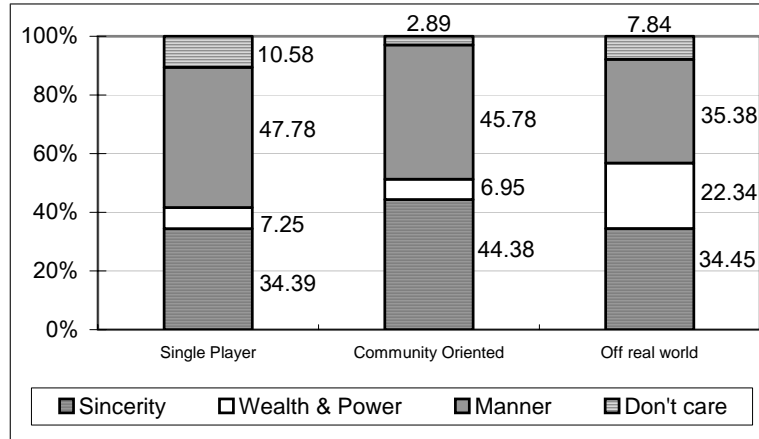
There were dramatic differences between single players and community-oriented players, who consistently showed psychological involvement. Off-real world gamers, however, showed similar patterns compared to the community-oriented, but there were also significant differences for each measure: sense of belonging ($F_{2,4785} = 293.19, p < .001$), loyalty ($F_{2,4785} = 501.82, p < .001$), trust ($F_{2,4785} = 241.03, p < .001$), sympathy ($F_{2,4785} = 280.71, p < .001$). The single-oriented player did not show any differences in community

experiences according to specific psychological criteria. Figure 6 presents different levels of psychological experiences among three groups.

Lifestyles and self-expression of values in the online game world

The expression of self also reflects people's lifestyles. This is also related to the specific values they emphasize in the game world. The players found "manners" to be the most important factor for expressing themselves in the online game world. This value was most clearly expressed in single-oriented players. Sincerity was considered to be the second most important value. Community-oriented gamers however found sincerity just as important as manners. Among the three groups, 'financial wealth and skills' were selected with most frequency by off-real world type gamers. Figure 7 displays the differential importance of diverse values according to three lifestyles.

Figure 7: The expression of values by gamers, selected to be most important in the online game world.



Discussion

This study explores whether online gamers develop their own distinctive lifestyles, as the game world functions as the real living space. As the online game world has as much diversity of people as the real world, participants adopt their own lifestyle and values according to their experiences in the game world. If the cyber game world does not function as another type of real society, it would be difficult to find the diverse lifestyles to characterize the game players. More specifically, this study aims to organize the similarities and differences in lifestyles and behavior in the online game world based on the values held by gamers. The lifestyles characterizing the single-oriented, community-oriented and off-real world type players are compared based on their main activities, style of community participation and method of self-expression.

The online game world and the real world clearly display similarities in that each player forms a unique lifestyle showing differences in behaviour and a way of life. Single player type players express their unique characteristics through manners, being individualistic and preferring light casual relationships. However, this type of player does not actively avoid meeting others nor did he or she have preconceived prejudices towards others, a trait also found in the real world by the current N-Generation. To such a player, an online game such as *Lineage* serves as a space to exercise unlimited individual freedom.

By contrast, community type players, find *Lineage* to be a place where they can exercise and express a sense of loyalty. In the game world, common goals and interests as well as mutual concerns play a central role in the behaviors of these players. Off-real world type players are the most interesting. They value wealth

and strength in the game world as much as those in real world, they have the strong inclination to resort to any possible means to increase their wealth and strength inside the game. For them, the game is not simply a game. It is another version of life, and their life is as active, or more so, in the game. However, most of the off-real world players tend to be the weak and helpless in the game world. Although these players actively participate in communities, they do so without much trust. To these players, the cyber game world provided by *Lineage* is a place where they feel inferior and insecure. Nevertheless, they likely have a high chance of becoming addicted.

These findings suggest that the online game world does not have absolute characteristics and that it differs according to how the participants view it. This is similar to the real world. Some people consider Korea a place that offers dreams and opportunities, while others consider it to be a place that offers only fears and frustrations. This study predicts variations of values and lifestyles that may exist, and these variations may be connected to the real world socio-cultural differences among players. In Korea, *Lineage* received numerous criticisms for having violent content, whereas in other countries the same content was viewed as being cute and simple. Such cultural differences may be understood and attributed to the diverse lifestyles of online gamers. The lifestyles of game participants, and not the game itself, offer the key factors for explaining different gamers' behaviours and their sense of community. This study is useful for showing the cautions that need to be considered when identifying the consequences and future impact of game addiction.

This research also provides some possibilities for research, considering that players from different countries are expected to have very different socio-cultural backgrounds and behaviour in the online game world. This study proposes that players of online games from different countries are expected to possess vastly different kinds of behavior in the virtual world.

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Demographic and economic pressures to move: Youth aspirations and livelihood opportunities for youth in the liberal economic environment of Sri Lanka

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Background

Sri Lanka has figured prominently in the global media in the recent past thanks to violent and turbulent politics in the country over the last two decades, in particular the brutal ethnic conflict that claimed thousands of lives. The country has also continued to be treated as an exceptional case in the international development discourse due to remarkable achievements in many areas of social development such as literacy, general education, life expectancy and low infant mortality. Even though the two pictures might appear to be inconsistent, there is nevertheless an intriguing connection between political development on one hand and achievements in the social sector on the other. Though it may sound ironic, it is true that some of the seeds of social and political discontent were concealed behind many achievements on the social development front. For instance, declining mortality rates resulted in rapid population growth exerting pressure on economic resources (Table 1). Increasing levels of educational attainment led to an explosion of employment aspirations (Table 2).

Table 1: Population increase in Sri Lanka by age cohort (1881 – 1981).

Age Cohort	Percent													
	1881	1901	1921	1946	1953	1971	1981	1881	1901	1921	1946	1953	1971	1981
0-14	1201295	1505879	1771386	2578444	3214929	4997716	5236962	43.5	42.2	39.4	40.1	39.7	41.9	35.3
15-24	560476	742456	855340	1322185	1471316	2607511	3117321	20.3	20.8	19.0	20.6	18.2	21.9	21.0
25-29	270177	365841	420660	577518	708871	933434	1273381	9.8	10.3	9.4	9.0	8.8	7.8	8.6
30-39	305639	430489	621924	918196	1056375	1436863	1961582	11.1	12.1	13.8	14.3	13.0	12.0	13.2
40-59	333887	424509	633271	1001077	1209135	1134325	2273413	12.1	11.9	14.1	15.6	14.9	9.5	15.3
60 - >	82326	96452	195960	35946	437269	821325	985701	3.0	2.7	4.4	0.6	5.4	6.9	6.6
Age Unspecified	5938	328	64					0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	2759738	3565954	4498605	6433366	8097895	11931174	14848360	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Government of Sri Lanka, Department of Census and Statistics, Census Reports (various years).

Table 2: Student enrolment by educational level (1953 – 1997).

Educational Attainment %	Survey Period						
	1953	1963	1973	1978-79	1981-82	1986-87	1996-97
No Schooling	41.8	26.8	22.9	14.9	15.1	11.8	8.6
Primary	46.8	45.5	43.2	43.8	42.9	41.1	35.2
Secondary	9.6	22.7	27.3	29.8	29.2	32.1	35.5
Tertiary	1.8	5.0	6.6	11.5	12.8	15.0	20.7

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 'Report on Consumer Finances and Socio Economic Survey Sri Lanka 1996-97.'

Increasing competition for economic resources such as land and employment persuaded political leaders to adopt pragmatic responses that often appeared to favour one community as opposed to another. In a popular democratic political framework that came into being after independence, both old as well as new identities and interest groups became targets of political mobilization. In the immediate aftermath of independence, social class appeared to provide a convincing framework in the context of the ensuing competition for power and economic resources. Many socio-economic reforms and changes in the first two decades since independence could be easily attributed to pervasive social class politics during this period. On one hand, the sense of community and identity based on ethnic, linguistic and religious affiliation did not fade into the background. In fact, post-independence social and economic reforms tended to reinforce ethno-linguistic identities, particularly among youth hailing from non-elite backgrounds (Hettige, 1998).

At a time when school enrolments were rapidly increasing throughout Sri Lanka, an ethno-linguistically segregated school system contributed to the formation and reinforcement of ethnic identities at the expense of a larger Sri Lankan identity. Moreover, monolingual education that was imparted by an expanding public school system hindered spatial mobility of educated youth from an area dominated by one ethnic community to another inhabited mostly by a different ethnic group. So, even when demographic and economic pressures necessitated youth to leave the area of origin, inability to work in another language prevented them from doing so. Such pressures have increased over the last twenty years as liberal economic reforms have facilitated a development process that is biased towards urban centres. In a country where the population has been largely concentrated in rural areas, the above developments have exerted considerable pressure on the rural unemployed to migrate to urban areas. But, this is not an easy transition for many educated youth as their livelihood aspirations do not match with the kind of employment opportunities available in the newly liberalized economy. It is this issue that is examined in the present paper.

The crisis and the liberal response

As mentioned earlier, population increase and rising educational aspirations after independence led to the swelling of the ranks of the educated youth looking for white collar employment. Since the post-independence, Sri Lankan economy was increasingly dominated by the state, employment opportunities had to be created within the state sector to absorb the increasing number of youth with educational qualifications. Since such employment could not be created in sufficient numbers, it naturally led to high rates of youth unemployment. This was an explosive situation as widespread unemployment resulted in restlessness among youth. The liberal response to this situation has been to relax state control over the economy and open it to local and foreign investors. It was hoped that an expanding private sector would create employment opportunities for youth, thereby reduce their dependence on state sector employment (Hettige, 1996). Sri Lankan experience over the two last decades shows that the expanding private sector did not create sufficient employment opportunities for the educated rural youth. The kind of employment that the private sector has offered to educated rural youth has not been the type desired by the latter. These are mostly unskilled jobs in the Free Trade Zones and service industries. On the other hand, more desirable and lucrative white collar jobs available in the private sector have been taken up mostly by English-educated youth hailing from privileged urban families.

As mentioned in the background section of this paper, an expanding public education system provided a monolingual education to the vast majority of youth in the country. While the Sinhalese youth in general became educated in the Sinhala language, Tamil youth in general had their education in Tamil. Though many monolingual youth, with educational qualifications could find employment in state institutions as teachers, clerks, office assistants, field officers, etc, they could do so only in areas where their own language was the dominant language. In contrast, the corporate private sector continued to be city-based, and dominated by English-speaking urban elites. The corporate sector usually recruited English-educated persons for white collar positions in their organisations. In other words, an English education was a prerequisite for lucrative employment in the private sector. This situation did not become a critical issue until recently as most youth aspired for state sector employment. After economic liberalisation, the state sector began to contract leading to a sustained reduction in state sector employment. It was then that private sector recruitment policy became a contentious social issue. Moreover, with the increasing employment opportunities in the private sector, private educational institutions offering instruction in English also began to expand. Yet, access to these institutions has been restricted to children from affluent families. These private educational institutions have been able to churn out youth with educational certificates at a rate commensurate with the increasing demand for English-educated recruits in the expanding private sector. This has

enabled the private sector firms to find potential recruits without turning to non-English speaking educated youth leaving state-schools and universities.

In spite of the increasing demand for English, state schools and universities have not been able to make the necessary transition due to serious structural constraints. The monolingual education policy that has persisted for several decades has not only prevented youth from acquiring a bilingual education but also has made successive generations of teachers also monolingual. This situation has not helped the vast majority of school children to acquire a reasonable knowledge of a second language, in particular in English. The performance of school children at national examinations in the English language leaves much to be desired. In fact, except in Colombo and a few other urban centres, performance of most children in most parts of the country is dismal (Hettige, 2003). Non-availability of competent English teachers and other facilities in most public schools is no doubt the main reason for this state of affairs.

The above situation cannot be easily remedied without a concerted, long-term effort involving a large investment in equipment, books and teacher training. The state, hard pressed for funds needed to finance a myriad of activities, cannot easily allocate the necessary funds for the above purpose. On the other hand, fee-levying private-schools have been able to make the necessary investments and recruit English-educated teachers to offer instruction in the English medium, meeting the increasing demand for such an education. As mentioned before, only affluent parents can send their children to well-equipped schools and colleges.

On the other hand, non-affluent parents have no choice but to send their children to state schools. Many of these children also secure educational qualifications but are handicapped when they have to compete for white collar jobs in the private sector as they have to compete with English-speaking youth from affluent urban backgrounds. Non-English speaking disadvantaged rural youth are aware of their disadvantaged position as they recognize the need for a good English knowledge to be able to find employment in the private sector. They no doubt make every effort to learn English, by going for private tuition but with little success. This in turn compels them to accept unskilled jobs in the private sector as they cannot easily find jobs in the state sector. However, many educated but monolingual youth remain unemployed rather than accept low status, unskilled jobs in the private sector. This is particularly the case with university graduates, whose main interest is to find secure, state-sector employment. This is true for both Tamil-speaking youth in the north-east of the country as well as Sinhala-speaking youth in other areas. According to the National Youth Survey, a majority of youth in all parts of the country express their preference for state sector employment (Government of Sri Lanka, 1999). It is this situation that helps perpetuate a wide gap between employment aspirations and opportunities.

Persisting gap between employment aspirations and work opportunities

The gap between youth aspirations with respect to employment on one hand, and available employment opportunities on the other, has been a major social problem in Sri Lanka at least since the early 1970s. Youth leaving schools and universities with educational qualifications displayed a strong preference for white-collar jobs. While some critics argue that the problem was with the kind of education they received, others felt that it was a socio-cultural issue. In response to the first issue, educational authorities in the early 1970s introduced vocationally oriented curricular in the schools and job oriented courses in the universities. But, with the change of government in 1977, the reforms were abandoned and the old system was restored. The result is that the incongruence between the kind of education young people receive and the type of skills in demand in the labour market has persisted to this day.

In other words, school children as well as university students continue to study conventional subjects and secure educational certificates that reinforce their white-collar orientation further. Youth with educational certificates prefer white-collar employment, which they consider to be socially more rewarding and acceptable. It is this sort of employment that youth find more and more difficult to secure today. In an increasingly market-led economy, it is mostly casual and unskilled employment that is being created (Table 3). What is also noteworthy is that economic liberalisation has reinforced a pattern of uneven development with a distinct urban bias. In fact, the Western Province has emerged as the most economically vibrant region with a very high concentration of income opportunities as well as social infrastructure facilities.

The kind of uneven development that has taken place over the last two decades encourages people living in less developed regions to migrate to more developed urban areas. This is what is evident from recent demographic trends. As the Table 4 shows, densely populated but less developed districts such as Galle, Matara, and Kegalle are net out-migration districts whereas Colombo and Gampaha in the Western Province are net in-migration districts. One of the least developed districts, namely, Monaragela, figures as a net in-migration district. This is due to the fact that the availability of agricultural land has attracted landless peasants into these areas.

It is true that economic pressures arising out of employment persuade people to leave their areas of residence. This is in spite of their preference to find employment in their own areas. In fact, both the National Youth Survey (Government of Sri Lanka, 1999) as well as another survey conducted in 2000 revealed that a majority of unemployed youth wished to find employment in their own localities or in a nearby town, rather than to migrate to another region (Hettige and Fernando, 2002-2003).

Table 3: Changes in employment status by sector.

Sector	Year	Total	Self employment	Employer	Employee	Unpaid family Worker	Regular employees	Casual employees	Contractual employees
Urban	1973	31.89	7.56	0.68	23.23	0.41	-	-	-
	1978/79	79.28	14.55	2.01	-	5.07	37.41	20.24	-
	1982	85.8	16.2	1.9	-	4.1	34.5	29.1	-
	1996/97	86.6	22.0	2.3	-	3.3	27.1	30.1	1.8
Rural	1973	35.44	14.32	0.56	17.14	3.42	-	-	-
	1978/79	85.43	24.58	1.24	-	15.51	20.21	23.89	-
	1982	88.0	23.9	1.0	-	9.5	19.4	33.3	-
	1996/97	89.8	29.5	1.2	-	11.1	16.1	30.1	1.8
Estate	1973	96.45	1.05	0.45	94.79	0.15	-	-	-
	1978/79	94.43	0.88	0	-	0.41	80.08	13.0	-
	1982	95.0	1.4	1.0	-	0.5	63.7	28.5	-
	1996/97	93.1	2.9	-	-	0.5	62.8	26.7	0.2
Total	1973	39.00	12.07	0.57	23.74	2.60	-	-	-
	1978/79	85.25	19.58	1.25	-	11.48	31.13	21.81	-
	1982	88.3	20.1	1.9	-	7.5	26.8	32.0	-
	1996/97	89.6	26.9	1.3	-	9.5	20.4	29.8	1.7

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Consumer Finance and Socio-economic Survey, 1973, 1978/79, 1982, 1996/97.

Yet most youth cannot stay in the locality when they cannot find jobs in their own areas, hence the tendency for out-migration to more developed urban areas. However, it cannot be concluded that economic pressures always drive youth away from these areas. As mentioned earlier, educated youth remain unemployed for several years rather than accepting non-white collar employment. They also join protest movements that put pressure on the government to provide employment to educated youth. This is evident from the political campaigns currently under way in different parts of the country where unemployed university graduates stage non-violent protests. It is also significant that industrial firms in the two main Export Processing Zones located close to Colombo find it difficult to fill many vacancies in spite of widespread youth unemployment in other parts of the country.

The above state of affairs does not seem to be surprising in view of the mounting research evidence that shows a persisting tendency among youth to acquire educational qualifications and look for often non-existent state sector employment. In other words, what the young people are looking for are upward social mobility, job security, freedom, a good and steady income and social standing, not just

employment. In the next few pages, this issue is discussed in the light of empirical data down from several studies conducted under the direction of the author.

Table 4: Net migration rates for districts in Sri Lanka, 1981 and 1994.

District	1981 (%)	1994 (%)
Colombo	5.0	11.2
Gampaha	8.8	12.1
Kalutara	-4.3	-1.9
Kandy	-17.1	-12.7
Matale	-4.3	-1.1
Nuwara Eliya	-4.0	-5.5
Galle	-14.8	-11.1
Matara	-20.8	-20.2
Hambanthota	-0.2	-2.0
Jaffna	-6.4	N.A
Mannar	16.6	N.A
Vavuniya	30.5	N.A
Mullaitivu	37.0	N.A
Batticaloa	-0.5	N.A
Ampara	13.2	N.A
Trincomalee	17.5	N.A
Kurunegala	-2.0	-2.3
Puttalam	8.3	9.2
Anuradhapura	20.4	15.4
Polonnaruwa	44.6	35.0
Badulla	-6.7	-4.0
Monaragala	25.8	18.5
Rathnapura	1.6	-0.7
Kegalle	-14.7	-9.9

Note: Negative signs indicate out-migration. N.A: Not available.

Source: Government of Sri Lanka, Department of Census and Statistics, General Report, 1981; Government of Sri Lanka, Department of Census and Statistics, Demographic Survey, 1994 (foreign born excluded).

Table 5: Where would you like to work?

Preferred place of work	No.	%
The locality itself	481	45.7
Nearby towns	288	27.6
In 'undeveloped' areas	140	13.4
Overseas	83	8.0
Anywhere in Sri Lanka	4	3.9
Not applicable	9	0.9
Missing	11	1.1
Total	1053	--

Source: Hettige and Fernando (2003).

Table 6: Where do you prefer to work?

	Hambantota	Colombo
Local area	45.9	45.6
Nearby city	13.5	32.9
Periphery Rural areas	26.7	7.9
Overseas	83	8.0
Anywhere in Sri Lanka	4	3.9

Source: Hettige and Mayer, 2000.

Economic pressures and social aspirations

Neo-liberal economic reforms implemented in Sri Lanka since the late 1970s have resulted in many changes in the economy, social structure and even behavioural patterns as is evident from newly emerging consumption patterns and lifestyles. Among the major aspects of the impact has been growing economic pressure on lower income groups, including the unemployed. The resultant urge to earn as much money as possible have persuaded many people to migrate from rural to urban areas. The district of Gampaha where the main export processing zones are located has attracted the largest proportion of rural workers. More and more people have also sought to migrate to other countries, often on contract employment. It is estimated that about 1.5 million Sri Lankan contract workers are employed at present in the Middle East, Europe and South-East Asia. The process has been underway from the late 1970s. In the initial years, only a few thousand workers migrated abroad for employment (Hettige, 2002).

While these trends are clear and unmistakable, we should not be blinded by them, and thus not observe other, parallel trends in society. In other words, to what extent, these trends are in conformity or in conflict with social attitudes and livelihood aspirations also needs to be investigated.

As mentioned earlier, economic liberalization led to an expansion of the private sector at the expense of the state sector. In other words, not many new employment opportunities are created in the state sector and therefore, the vast majority of the unemployed have to be accommodated in the private sector. But, the issue is whether the younger population in the country has accepted this reality and are adapting accordingly. This is not what we see from empirical evidence. As is evident, a majority of the young respondents continue to aspire to state sector employment. This is also the aspiration of a majority of parents with respect to their children's employment (Table 9). Moreover, they continue to invest heavily in education and collect academic credentials needed for such employment.

Table 7: Employed persons in Sri Lanka by sector after economic liberalization.

Year	Government*	Semi government*	Private*
1977	422647	617033	283437
1978	446085	652472	321951
1979	470118	747034	315972
1982	484802	784370	345679
1987	513300	752700	NA
1989	588500	749700	425784
1991	652959	654000	687086
1992	653959	637271	NA
1993	676403	618793	NA
1994	699898	625666	NA
1995	737504	569484	NA
1996	752194	409278	NA
1997	762067	309633	NA
1998	790492	300654	NA
1999	822122	296248	NA
2000	856665	299615	NA

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Annual Reports, 1982-2000.

Note: Central Bank reports do not provide data on private sector employment after 1992. However, these reports indicate a decrease in public sector employment and an increase in private sector employment in relative terms. For instance, the share of public sector employment decreases from about 23% in 1991 to about 13% in 2000. On the other hand, the share of private sector employment increases from about 33% in 1990 to about 44% in 2000 (Central Bank reports).

Table 8: Status of employment in Sri Lanka by sector and category (%).

Period	Public sector employees	Private sector employees	Employers	Self-employed	Unpaid family workers	Total
1990	21.5	33.7	1.8	29.2	13.8	100
1991	22.9	39.5	2.2	25.4	10.0	100
1992	20.0	40.0	1.6	27.1	11.2	100
1993	17.4	42.8	2.0	27.4	10.4	100
1994	16.4	44.3	2.3	27.2	9.8	100
1995	15.6	44.3	2.5	28.3	9.4	100
1996	15.0	45.8	2.3	26.8	10.0	100
1997	15.1	44.3	2.3	28.8	9.4	100
1998	14.5	41.2	1.9	28.9	13.6	100
1999	14.4	43.1	2.0	28.3	12.2	100
2000	13.6	43.2	2.3	27.6	13.3	100

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Annual Report, 1999.

Reasons for the public sector preference are interesting. Job security, freedom, pensions, social prestige, and good income are the most widely given reasons for the preference. It is also significant that most of the private sector jobs that became available after economic liberalisation are of a lower social status and this appears

to be a major factor reinforcing the desire for state sector jobs. The fact that a majority of youth, particularly in the provinces, feels that the private sector discriminates against non-English speaking, disadvantaged rural youth can also be an important factor behind the strong preference for the state sector (Table 10).

Table 9: Aspirations and expectations regarding the sector of employment among parents and youth (%).

Employment sector	Parents		Youth	
	Aspiration	Expectation	Aspiration	Expectation
State sector	70.3	31.8	70.1	39.1
Informal	30.7	9.0	1.7	3.8
Private sector	8.0	20.9	14.5	21.6
Private/Foreign	10.9	24.9	7.7	22.7
Self-employment	6.5	12.5	4.3	10.9
Overseas	.5	.9	1.5	1.6

Source: Hettige and Fernando (2003).

Table 10: Preferred sector of employment (%).

	Private	Public	Informed	NGO	Any	Total
Hambantota	22.1	59.1	10.6	0.3	5.9	98.0
Colombo	43.5	41.1	12.1	0.8	0.4	97.9

Source: Hettige and Mayer (2002).

Table 11: Discrimination by private sector (%).

	Hambantota	Colombo
YES	64.4	40.1
NO	25.4	39.2
DON'T KNOW	10.2	20.4
TOTAL	100.0	99.7

Source: Hettige and Mayer (2002).

What is also important is to look at the employment trends after economic liberalisation. Data on the activity status of the adult population of the country show that casual employment is on the rise whereas regular employment is on the decline. On the other hand, self-employment activities that have proliferated after economic liberalisation are not always stable and sustainable. These circumstances

no doubt contribute to an enhancement of the desirability of state sector employment. What is also noteworthy is that some of the jobs that became more easily available after economic liberalisation are not considered desirable by a majority of youth. As Table 12 shows garment factory work, unskilled work in restaurants, employment in the construction sector and agricultural labour are considered as less socially prestigious than some of the conventional jobs like clerical and teaching. There are, of course some significant differences in the responses of youth from Colombo and the peripheral areas of the country. For instance, a majority of Hambantota respondents considered work in the Middle East as lowly. On the other hand, a majority of Colombo district respondents considered farming, driving and construction work as lowly.

Table 12: Social status of selected occupations (%).

	HAMBANTOTA			COLOMBO		
	<i>High</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>Low</i>
Garment work	1.3	32.7	65.0	3.1	32.8	63.6
Middle-East	3.3	40.6	54.1	4.3	58.3	36.7
Agri Labour	.3	33.7	64.4	2.5	27.3	69.3
Waiter	.3	25.4	71.6	1.5	25.1	72.7
Army	46.9	49.8	2.6	41.9	48.3	9.5
Self-employed	5.6	60.7	31.6	7.5	56.4	35.9
Clerk	11.9	77.6	8.6	8.3	78.4	12.4
Mason/Carpenter	4.6	57.8	35.6	4.8	43.1	51.7
Driver	4.0	65.7	28.1	3.2	46.3	50.0
Farmer	9.6	51.2	36.0	11.9	37.5	58.1
Teacher	38.0	57.8	4.0	50.5	47.9	1.5

Source: Hettige and Mayer, (2002).

Social evaluation of an occupation is important in view of the fact that the vast majority of youth consider the social standing of an occupation as very important. In other words, job preferences are very much influenced by such social evaluations. Youth usually look for jobs that have a higher social standing. Since state sector employment is accorded a high social status, preference for such employment remains strong despite the fact that it is increasingly difficult to secure such employment.

Summary and conclusion

So far in this paper, an attempt has been made to examine how economic and demographic pressures have compelled youth to move away from their habitats to look for livelihoods elsewhere. Such pressures have become stronger after economic liberalisation. Economic liberalisation not only has increased the need for monetary incomes but creates opportunities for earning money. On the other

hand, long established socio-cultural values do not change easily. What many youths and their parents expect from employment is not only an income, but also other attributes such as social ranking, job security, freedom and old age social security. State sector employment usually has all these attributes, hence, the preference for such employment.

It is also significant that the expanding private sector does not necessarily accommodate the livelihood aspirations of a majority of youth, in particular, the disadvantaged but upwardly mobile youth. What is often offered by the corporate private sector to their youths is lower-end, casual employment that does not satisfy their livelihood aspirations. On the other hand, the sector offers more lucrative and socially rewarding positions to privileged, English-speaking urban youth, creating a sense of discrimination among educated youth from disadvantaged rural backgrounds. It is against this background that the latter continue to pin their hopes on the state sector and strive to acquire educational qualifications that may be useful in finding employment in this sector. The persisting high demand for general education and paper qualifications in spite of high rates of unemployment even among university graduates in the country attests to this fact. Meanwhile, youth political parties that represent the intent of disadvantaged youth constituencies appear to be growing in popularity as is evident from the continually improving electoral performance over the last decades.

It is true that many youths have not been able to, or do not wish to resist the economic pressures imposed on them by liberal economic reforms. In fact, hundreds of thousands of young and not so young people have taken up livelihood opportunities that became available after economic liberalization, both in the country as well as abroad. Yet, it appears that these are mostly people with lower educational attainment. On the other hand, youth with higher levels of educational attainment do not readily respond to such employment opportunities. They not only continue to build on their educational credentials, i.e. accumulate more and more certificates, but remain committed to a life world that is increasingly at variance with the ethos of the emergent liberal economy. The latter encourages people to be mobile, accept whatever livelihood opportunities that came one's way, and discard social and moral values that discourage the acceptance of any form of livelihood.

Education became perhaps the most important avenue of social mobility in post-independence Sri Lanka. Post-independence economic, social and language policies facilitated the above process, enabling thousands of lower class rural youths to achieve rapid social mobility. This, in turn, reinforced the significance of education in the country. However, when the state-led economy became stagnant and could not create employment opportunities desired by upwardly mobile youth, unemployment among educated youth began to accumulate leading to political and

social unrest. As mentioned before, this situation paved the way for economic reforms. It is now the market's turn.

The market does not necessarily respect social and moral values. In a market situation, one could make choices at one's own peril. Disadvantaged rural youth who would have earlier reached either the highest positions in the state bureaucracy or taken up middle level white collar positions in state institutions as clerks and teachers, cannot necessarily secure such positions today. Neither do they have the required social and cultural capital needed to secure such positions in the expanding private sector. Thus they are often faced with a choice between long term unemployment, hoping that one day they will find the desired employment or accept income opportunities offered by the new economy. While some may opt for the second alternative, at least as a survival strategy, others tend to perceive the emergent situation as immoral and unjust. While the former tend to reinforce the new liberal economy, the latter tend to swell the ranks of alternative political movements that challenge the moral and ethical basis of the new economy.

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Monitoring the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Thailand

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Introduction

The definition of “youth” used in this paper follows the UNESCO definition, i.e., ages 15-24. However, since children and youth are very much related and have overlapping issues, the distinction may not be strictly made in the discussion. Similarly, the term “transition” is used in its broadest sense of meaning, namely change which covers a whole range of issues. But, since the purpose of the conference is to identify some of the challenges faced by young people in a rapidly changing and increasingly globalized world, in discussing youth in transition in Thailand, the author chooses to view transition following the approaches adopted by the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)¹ and the 1990 World Declaration for Children (WDC) made at the World Summit for Children in New York. Specifically, the issue of survival, development, and protection – the essence of the World Declaration, and rights-based approach evident in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) will be the focus.

Furthermore, since the Country Report on the Follow up to the World Summit for Children, *Children in Thailand 1990-2000* (National Youth Bureau and UNICEF, 2000) is now available, this paper will summarize the report and further identify two cases related to the issue of youth protection needing further development. The two cases are youth and prostitution and youth and drug problems.

Shift in development paradigm

The needs for a new development paradigm have been recognized a few decades ago. Expansion of globalization and its negative impact has been observed with larger income distribution gap between the rich and the poor within the same country as well as between rich countries and poor countries. Exploitation of natural resources is another dimension of the negative impact of globalization.

Since after World War II and during the 1960s, most countries have incorporated the strategy of increase production, expansion of natural resource utilization, and infrastructure development, as important components to bring about economic growth which was the development goal. Globalization processes have been an outcome of some of the development strategies adopted. The processes have led to unwise use of natural resources, poorer quality of life of certain groups of the people, and social inequity.

During the 1970s, the United Nations introduced the concept of self-reliance and people's participation. It was hoped that the adoption of the concepts would bring about better social equity. The concept of self-reliance is similar to the USSR self-reliance closed door policy of the 1960s. Similarly, the concept of people's participation is an alteration of the socialist/communist commune systems where members of the communes participated in all levels of production and received equal shares of production in return.

One may ask whether the two concepts are paradoxical and/or compatible. Capitalistic globalization process has been very forceful and powerful. Communism and socialism both have not been able to resist globalization. Most countries that adopted communism and socialism have now adopted capitalism. One may be optimistic and hope that the introductions of people's center development will help abate negative impacts of capitalistic globalization.

Since the turn of the past decade, the shift in development paradigm has been most recognized. Human-centered development paradigm has been advocated by many international organizations as seen in the adoption of "Human Development" concept by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Human Development Reports published every year since 1990. Prior to that, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted in 1989 and the World Summit for Children took place in 1990. In that same year there were World Conference on Education for all and the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro followed by the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 and the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994. In addition, the United Nations also identified issues to receive special attention on certain years, i.e., 1993 International Year for Indigenous People, 1994 International Year of the Family,

1995 the United Nations Year of Tolerance, and 1996 the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty.

Furthermore, the Convention on the Elimination of the Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1985 and World Conferences on Women took place in 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1995. Furthermore, the Convention on the Elimination of the Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1985 and World Conferences on Women took place in 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1995. The World Summit for Social Development, which took place in Copenhagen the same year as the Fourth World Conference on Women also advocated people-centered development with emphasis on the poor, the unemployed and the vulnerable groups. In June 2000, in Geneva, the United Nations Twenty-fourth Special Session of the General Assembly held a follow-up conference entitled “World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalizing World” to evaluate the commitments made by the member countries.

The ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Declaration of the World Summit for Children (1990)

The Thai Government acceded to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child – CRC, with reservation on three articles, nationality (7), refugee status (22), and education (29) on 12 February 1992. Meanwhile, Thailand participated in the World Summit for Children – WSC, organized by the UN in New York in September 1990 and signed the Declaration in Bangkok on 12 March 1991. While the Council of Ministers approved to withdraw the reservation on education on 12 November 1996, other reservations have not been withdrawn due to national security reasons.

Despite the fact that the Thai Government has ratified not all articles in the Convention, the 1997 Constitution included principles of the World Declaration for Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The 1997 Constitution includes articles on human dignity, non-discrimination, children and youth protection, violence, rights to be cared for, gender equity, unity and strong family and community. Equity access to free basic education for twelve years as well as standard and effective health services are also included in the 1997 Constitution in addition to the National Education Act 1999 and the Universal Health Insurance Act 2002.

The ratification of CRC, the signatories of WSC, and the inclusion of certain clauses in the 1997 Constitution do not ensure that youth rights and protection will be achieved. First of all the paradigm shift needs to be recognized. The Convention is instrumental in introducing this paradigm shift, even though many government agencies and development workers may have not fully realized it. UNICEF must

be commended for promoting the dissemination of CRC and WSC. But the impact has not been fully observed. Even the Millennium Development Goals identified by the United Nations in the year 2000, are still very much survival or development and needs-based in approach. The following table clarifies common differences between needs-based (survival) and rights-based (protection) approaches.

Table 1: Common differences between needs-based and rights-based approaches to child protection.

Needs-based (survival)	Rights-based (protection)
Children deserve help.	Children are entitled to help, as the subject of rights.
Governments ought to help, but there is no clear obligation.	Governments have binding legal and moral obligations.
Children can participate in order to improve service delivery.	Children are active participants by rights.
Given scarce resources, some children may have to be left out.	All children have the same right to fulfill their potential.
Each piece of work has its own goal but there is no unifying overall purpose.	There is an overarching goal to which all work contributes.
Certain groups have technical expertise to meet children's needs.	All adults can play a role in achieving children's rights.

Source: Save the Children Fund (UK), 1999. 'Guidelines on Child Rights Programming'. London: SCF.

Country Report on the Follow Up to the World Summit for Children

The Country Report covers a whole range of activities related to children and youth. But since this paper focuses on youth rights and protection, discussion in this section will include only activities related to youth in terms of their rights and protection. Activities on the implementation and monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of Child taking place since the accession of the Convention include four main aspects, namely:

1. **Guarantee** the rights of the child/youth as stipulated in the Convention without discrimination and with recognition of the best interest of the child.
2. **Administer** all measures to ensure the rights of the child/youth as stipulated in the Convention with respect to the rights of parents, family and local tradition.
3. **Disseminate** principles and articles of the Convention to the public.

4. **Present** reports to the United Nations' Child Rights Committee as required (NYB and UNICEF, 2000).

The government and nongovernment organizations of the central, regional and local level with child participation undertook many activities to monitor the implementation of the four principles as follows:

1. Survey for acceptance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. Sub-committee on the Rights of the Child.
3. The National Assembly for Child Development.
4. The Opinion Survey of Children and Youth.
5. The Network of Child Rights.
6. Meetings of Children.
7. The Child Assembly.
8. The Child Rights Forum.
9. Social Indicators.
10. The CRC Report.

Attempts have been made to organize most of these activities, some as a pilot project. Not all of the activities carried out are equally effective. Some of the activities may be abandoned after evaluations are made.

Revisions and amendments of law

In terms of child rights there have been major revisions and amendments of law, improvements and introduction of measures and practical guidelines, and organization of trainings, meetings, and workshops. The Country Report summarized major legal activities implemented in Thailand during the past decade. Major revisions and amendments of law following the Convention on the Rights of the Child can be summarized in Table 2 below.

Formulation or revision of further laws and regulations to assist children, including increasing child friendly legal procedure and protection, include:

- Labor Protection Act 1997.
- Rehabilitation for the Disabled Capacity Act 1991.
- The Penal Code, No. 14 , 1997.
- The Criminal Procedure Code No. 20, 1999.
- Money Laundering Control Act 1999.
- National Education Act 1999.

Table 2: Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Convention on the Rights of the Child	Major revisions and amendments
Article 7: --Right to be cared for --Right to nationality.	The second revision of the Nationality Act grants Thai nationality at birth to children born of Thai mothers and foreign fathers.
Article 28: Right for education and discipline in schools in respect of child dignity.	National Education Act, 1999 includes regulations on the evidence showing the date, month and year of birth to be used in school enrolment by students in schools under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.
Article 32: Prevention of violation of rights and economic exploitation of child labor.	The Occupational Training Promotion Act, 1994. Labor Protection Act, 1998: -- the minimum age for employment was raised from 13 to 15 years with special measures for employees ages 15-18. -- prohibition of sexual offences against female or child employees. -- the right to take 30-days a year with pay for training, apprenticeship, or seminar attendance leave. -- prohibition of payment of wages belonging to child labors to other persons were incorporated.
Article 33: Protection against drug-related exploitation of children.	Money Laundering Control Act 1999.
Article 34: Protection of children against sexual violation and exploitation.	Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act, 1996. Prevention and Suppression of Trade in Women and Children Act 1998. Addition to the Penal Code (14 th edition) 1997: --additional penalty to offenders committing sexual crimes on children and penalties for offenders living abroad. Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment Act No. 20) 1999 (on taking evidence ⁴ from the child). The Plan of Action for the Prevention and Solution of Commercial Sex Exploitation and the plan for the Guidelines for Prevention and Solution of Trafficking in Women and Children Operation.
Article 36: Protection against exploitation detrimental to the welfare of the child.	Child Protection Act 2003.
Article 37: Protection against cruel punishment, capital punishment or life imprisonment.	Draft on the amendment to the Penal Code with the amendment on Section 76: Prohibition of capital punishment on persons aged below 18.
Article 40: Protection of child dignity and values and respect for child rights.	Institution of the Juvenile and Family Court Act, and the Juvenile and Family Procedure Act 1991, as amended from the Juvenile and Family Court Act and the Child and Youth Procedure Act 1951 extending coverage to family matters.

In addition, a law on protection and the welfare of the children and promotion of their good behavior is ready to be presented to the Parliament. It is recognized that the promulgation of these laws needs to be complemented with serious implementation procedure.

Children in Especially Difficult Circumstance (CEDC)

Thailand has identified CEDC as covering 14 groups:

- i. Abandoned and neglected children.
- ii. Orphans including those of parents with HIV/AIDS.
- iii. Street children.
- iv. Child beggars.
- v. Children of those who are under absolute poverty line.
- vi. Children who have been physically or sexually abused.
- vii. Children in commercial sex.
- viii. Trafficked children.
- ix. Children with disabilities.
- x. Children who use drugs.
- xi. Stateless children.
- xii. Children of disadvantaged parents.
- xiii. Children from the very remote areas.
- xiv. Children involved in child labor.

The Country Report further states that the exact or even estimated numbers for some groups of children are not readily available. For some specific groups, there have been research or surveys, and for some groups, the only data available are the numbers of children that have been reported in various shelters run by either GOs or NGOs. In addition, the Report also states that data on CEDC as well as monitoring and evaluation needs to be improved (NYB and UNICEF, 2000). In the following section, details of two CEDC groups will be elaborated. They are children and youth prostitutes and youth and drug problems.

A number of laws and policies have been reviewed and activities implemented concerning the issues of gender equality and promoting women's rights. New legislation has been introduced to address the prostitution and trafficking in women and children, namely the Prostitution Prevention and Suppression Act 1996 and the Act concerning Measures for the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Women and Children of 1997.

Laws on violence have been amended including the Criminal Procedure Code concerning rape, pornography, and investigation of victims and witnesses to provide more appropriate protection for children and women. The National Youth Bureau is currently formulating a national plan of action on trafficking of women and children. A framework for stronger collaboration between relevant agencies, both GO and NGOs, in providing protection assistance to victims of trafficking has been developed in the form of Memorandum of Understanding on Common Guidelines of Practices for Agencies Concerned with Cases where Women and Children are Victims of Human Trafficking.

The Labor Protection Act 1998 provides for gender equality in employment and prohibits sexual harassment. Domestic violence against women and children has also been the focus of government activity. One of the efforts in this regard is the formulation of a National Policy and Plan of Action for Counseling Services. Attempts have been made to organize one-stop service in various hospitals under the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration to assist victims of abuse. A training course has been organized to train relevant personnel in a multi-disciplinary approach to assist victims.

Two cases of youth protection needing further development

In this section two issues on youth protection needing further development are explored, i.e., youth prostitution and youth and drug problems.

The implementation of the Cabinet's Resolution on Child Prostitution

The Foundation for Women (2003) reported on the situation of child prostitution after the implementation of the 1994 and 1996 cabinets' decisions by studying 5 comprehensive measures to prevent child prostitution in Thailand including **prevention, suppression, protection, recovery and monitoring.**

The magnitude of child prostitution and the negligence of the state to take action against violence against children have tarnished the image of Thailand in the international community. The government was obligated to formulate a national policy and plan to do away with sexual exploitation and child prostitution because of international pressure, the trade sanction and the accession to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1994.

Implementation. The study of the implementation of 1994 and 1996 cabinets' decisions by the Foundation for Women reveals that the responsible governmental agencies have implemented educational and vocational programs preventing young women and children from being lured into prostitution.

Suppression. The laws suppressing prostitution and traffic of women and children were amended and promulgated in 1996 and 1997 respectively. The national monitoring body has been formed in the framework of the 1996 Law on the Suppression and Prevention of Prostitution, which deliberates buying sexual service from underage prostitutes, is a crime. Other legal measures have been initiated to enhance more effective law enforcement and justice system.

Protection and Recovery. Child protection and recovery processes are both provided to Thai and non-Thai children who are victims of national and cross-border human trafficking. The concerted actions of various governmental and non-governmental agencies have mitigated the problem of child prostitution. The scholarship program providing opportunity to rural children for higher education helps prevent the systemic luring of tender age children into prostitution. The vocational training, though not being able to prevent migration of young women, provides economic alternatives to married women to work in the community. The recovery program though not diversified to the special need of different target groups, can help redress the traumatic experience of sexual victims.

Monitoring. The areas that need more vigorous actions are the law enforcement and the monitoring mechanism. The law enforcers are yet to be informed and comprehend the deliberation and substance of new laws and guidelines of practices such as the inter-governmental agencies' memorandum of understanding. The national committees set up by different governmental agencies with common aim to prevent child prostitution and traffic of women and children need to consolidate into a more effective national mechanism that formulate policy and monitor the implementation of national plans.

The measures *that were* formulated in line with the cabinet's decisions have diminished the magnitude but not eradicated the problem of child prostitution in Thailand. The commercial sex industry continues to lure girls and boys to do sex work in exchange of the modern pattern of consumption, and recruits young women from neighboring countries to replace Thai girls. The changing pattern of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Thailand requires concrete government's political will to stop – according to the newly adopted UN protocol – traffic in children and youth.

During the past decade attempts to mitigate child/youth prostitution and sexual exploitation have been made by concerned agencies. Media has been exposing cases of sexual exploitation of different forms to make the public aware of the problems. Cases have been sent to courts and many other legal mechanisms have been followed through. Despite the many efforts made, sexual exploitation of different forms still exist. Much more work still needs to be pursued.

The Foundation for Women study proposed recommendations to concerned agencies including the following:

1. Ratify the UN Protocol to suppress, prevent and punish traffic in persons, especially women and children.
2. Set up a national mechanism to coordinate and monitor the work of all responsible agencies including prepare periodic report on traffic of women and children.
3. Allocate adequate resources for the implementation of national plans and programs to prevent traffic of women and children (Foundation for Women, 2003).

*Social integration, societal crimes, social justice, and social development:
The case of narcotic suppression activities*

Drug use among children and youth

Drug addiction in Thailand has been serious, especially among children and youth. The National Social Policy Committee has underlined the importance of this problem and provided guidelines to promote, prevent and solve the problem of drug use by the communities as well as appointed government agencies to provide support and assistance to those communities. In 1993, the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI), found the total number of addicts in Thailand from all walks of life and age groups to be 1.3 million people or 2.17 percent of the total population of the country, 71,300 of which were students. There were five categories of drug use: inhalants, marijuana, amphetamine, heroin and opium.

In 1999, the Office of the Narcotics Control Board in conjunction with the Assumption University conducted a survey during July-August, 1999 on the spread of narcotic drugs in educational institutions. Of the total of 5.4 million students nation-wide surveyed ranging from Primary 6 to first-degree level students, about 700,000 students or 13 percent were involved with drugs. Out of these, 294,000 were students who had experimented with drugs; 87,500 were drug addicts; 56,600 were drug pushers; 60,200 were pushers-cum-addicts; and 46,400 were users-cum-pushers (NYB and UNICEF, 2000).

Amphetamine use was found to be rampant among children outside formal education, including juvenile delinquents, street children, children engaged in sex services, impoverished children, etc. These children were connected with amphetamines either as users or retailers. Younger children were enticed into the drug-pushing racket by serving as messengers delivering amphetamine to customers.

There has been a dramatic increase in arrests for drug related crimes. Available data from the *Narcotics Suppression Bureau, the Royal Thai Police* indicate a general upward trend since 1992. But from 1997 to 1998, there was a considerably

large increase, 27 percent more arrests in 1998 than in 1997. Figures for 1999 up to August were also high. One can therefore hypothesize that people turned to criminal behavior to replace lost wages. But such hypothesis may be oversimplistic. It was clear that the Chuan Leekpai Government at the time showed its political will to tackle drug trafficking and use among younger people. More raids and arrests took place during 1998 and 1999, and there were many school programs to deal with drug problems. The Thaksin government which came into power in 2001 took the drug issues more seriously by identifying narcotic eradication program to be one of the national agenda. Narcotic trafficking cases have been reported. Dealers of all levels – Mafia, community dealers, and drug pushers – together with drug users have been arrested and punished.

One cannot view drug-related crimes as having been caused by the economic crisis. Evidence from industrializing countries also indicates that there is a strong correlation between economic growth and social ills. Political and economic conditions in neighboring countries also attribute to the high growth of amphetamine and metamphetamine production, distribution and consumption, with Thailand serving as an excellent outlet.

However, evidence exists which suggests that the crisis has had impact on the incidence of crime. The World Bank Thailand Social Monitor III (1999) stated that the level of overall crimes seemed to be on a generally increasing trend, with no noticeable deviation during the crisis years. The level of violent crimes remained at pre-crisis levels in 1998. However, arrests for property crimes, and specifically theft, dramatically increased above the trend in 1998. This coincidence of events suggests that economic pressure on household and individuals has led to the upsurge in property crimes. But other factors could be involved, including more effective police work, changes in the law, and evolving norms and values not linked to the crisis (World Bank Bangkok Office *et al.*, 1999).

The government drug eradication agenda

After Thaksin Shinawatra came to power in early 2001, he declared drug eradication as a national agenda. During 2002, drug addicts, pushers, and dealers have been arrested in large numbers. When the government wanted to publicize its success in drug eradication activities, statistics climbed up drastically. At the same time, the police have been accused of extra-judicial killings and human rights violations. At the end of 2002 and early 2003, the government has been strongly criticized. Since then no statistics are reported.

Social integration is a philosophical concept that must be embraced by society. It must serve as a guideline for social policy and the public consciousness at large, apart from making sure that changes at the policy level are translated into concrete and tangible plans to enhance better quality of lives of marginalized people. What

remains a challenge for Thai society is the development of awareness and consciousness on the rights and dignity of all peoples. Prior to the large crack-down, almost everyone, slum dwellers as well as hill people in the north, were involved in drug business in one form or another. During the crack-down, those involved were alienated. Parents were arrested, leaving children with no one to look after. Instead of achieving social integration, family and community disintegration have been observed. Social exclusion has been one of the unexpected outcomes.

Governmental, non-governmental and advocacy organizations must work in partnership to ensure the continuation of sound structural and legal frameworks to enhance the social integration of peoples of diverse backgrounds and cultural identities. At the same time, it is important that all efforts be harnessed to facilitate the empowerment of marginalized population socially, politically and economically so that they are equipped with confidence and therefore are able to take an active part in the nation's development process. For now, Thai society must begin to examine what 'social integration' really means from the point of view of those who remain "strangers within our own society" if we are to take social integration to heart. Here children and youth are one of the most vulnerable groups.

Conclusion

The paper attempts to review *Youth in Transition* through the monitoring and evaluation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and the Declaration of World Summit for Children 1990. The shift in paradigm from needs-based to rights-based has been observed in the Convention and the Declaration. In the implementation of the two instruments in Thailand, it is clear that both GOs and NGOs have been working very hard to achieve the goals of child/youth survival, development, protection, and participation, the concepts inherent in the two instruments. Thailand has been reasonably advanced in the survival dimension of child/youth development. In reporting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) proposed by the UN, Thailand has been considered to have passed the goals and has identified indicators beyond the UN goals (ESCAP/UNDP, 2003). Thus, this paper focuses on youth protection and rights more than other aspects.

In terms of rights and protection, legal measures in the forms of revisions and amendments of laws, formations of measures and guidelines, and training and workshop programs have been made. Three major laws include the 1997 Constitution, the 1999 National Education Act, and the 2002 National Universal Health Insurance are the most important in guaranteeing the rights of children and youth. Other laws include: the Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act 1996; the Labor Protection Act 1998; and the Money Laundering Control Act 1999; as well as other acts on specific issues.

Two cases of child/youth protection in the area of youth and prostitution and youth and drug problems indicate clearly that Thailand still needs to put greater efforts in the area of Children in Difficult Circumstances (CEDC). The National Youth Bureau and UNICEF Country Report on the Follow Up to the World Summit for Children identified CEDC to be the most important areas needing further work. Statistics on these groups are still lacking and plans of actions for specific groups are still needed. Because of the sensitivity of the issues in terms of unexpected adverse impacts on the groups, great caution needs to be made to ensure that one positive initiative does not have negative impacts on other groups. The case of the National Drug Eradication Agenda having negative effects on family and community disintegration impacting on children and youth is the case in point.

NOTES

1. *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989. The Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989. It entered into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49. It has been ratified by 191 countries.

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Vietnam's youth in transition

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Introduction

In every country, youth plays a very important role for the future of a nation. In a country like Vietnam, the role of youth is even more important because youth occupies approximately 36 percent of the population and 56 percent of labor force. Throughout Vietnam's history, youth has made a great contribution to the struggle for independence and unification of Vietnam. Today, young people are a key force in the realization of industrialization and modernization.

Assessing the role played by the youth in building socialism in Vietnam, the Central Executive Committee of Vietnam's Communist Party (9th term), in its Fourth Resolution states: "Whether or not the cause of renovation is successful, the country can occupy a worthy position in the World when entering the 21st century, this mainly depends on the youthful force and on the training of the young generation; the youth business is a vital task of the nation and being one of the factors deciding the success or failure of the revolution". This is the reason Vietnam's Communist Party and Government attaches such great importance to the training and fostering of young people.

Vietnam's definition of youth

In Vietnam there is no official definition of youth and this has led to different understandings of youth issues. In Vietnam's "Law of Caring for and Protecting

Children”, youth is defined as all young people aged over 16 years. In contrast, the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth League which is the unique political organization of Vietnamese youth defines young people as being 15 years old and over. Vietnam’s Labor Law permits all those aged 15 years and over to sign labour contracts in a number of situations and these people are recognized as youth. Meanwhile, the Law of Criminal Affairs of Vietnam states that people are responsible for any criminal offence they commit once they are 18 years old. Thus, according to these laws, youth consists of people who are less than 18 years of age. In the International Convention of Rights of Children, youth consists of all young people who are under 18 years old. Vietnam is the second nation to have signed this Convention and in this context Vietnam regards those people as youth. Although there are different definitions of youth for legal purposes, it was considered that a broader definition was more appropriate for the purposes of this paper. All people aged between 15 and 34 years will be defined as Vietnam’s youth.

Overview of youth in Vietnam

Vietnam’s youth population

According to the 1999 Census of Population and Housing, the total population of Vietnam is 76,372,919 people. Among those, the number of the young people aged between 15 and 34 years is 27,749,547 or 36 percent of the total population of the country. The estimated number of young people in Vietnam in 2004 is 30,487,500, representing 38 percent of Vietnam’s total population.

Table 1: Youth population in Vietnam ('000 people).

	1996	1999	2000	2001	2004*	2005*
Total population	75,335,2	76,327,9	77,635,4	78,685,8	80,423,0	81,324,0
Male	36,773.3	37,518.5	38,166.4	38,684.2	39,589.1	40,042.7
Female	38,581.9	38,809.4	39,469.0	40,001.6	40,833.1	41,280.0
Population of youth	25,314,7	27,749.5	26,919.2	27,135.7	30,487.5	31,022.4
Male	12,360.8	13,855.9	13,374.5	13,459.3	15,332.4	15,613.7
Female	12,593.5	13,893.7	13,544.7	13,676.4	15,155.1	15,408.7
Youth (% of total pop.)	33.6	36.4	34.7	34.5	37.9	38.1

* Estimated figure. Source: General Statistics Office, Vietnam.

From the above table, we can see there has been a change in the number of the Vietnamese youth in the period from 1999 to 2001 (22.5%) and it is expect that in the years to come, the youth population in terms of numbers in Vietnam will increase because of the continued rapid growth of population in Vietnam.

However, it is anticipated that the pace of increase will slow when the impact of the government's policy of population is felt.

Age and sex structure of youth population

Of the total youth population in 1999 (36.4% of total population), the majority falls within the younger cohorts and females are in a slight majority. The number aged between 15 and 24 is 15,147,667 (54.5% of all youth), while the number aged between 25 to 34 years is 12,601,880 (45.4% of all youth). The number of boys is 13,855,863 (49.9%) while that of girls is 13,893,684 (50.1%) (Table 2). The gender balance is reassuring because it indicates that there is no significant interference to support male preference.

Table 2: Aging and sex component of youth 1999 (persons).

Youth composition by age and sex	Total	Male	Female	Percentage of total population
Total population	76, 327,919	37,518,547	38,809,372	100.0
Youth population (people aged between 15 - 34 years) including:				
Number	27,749,547	13,855,863	13,893,648	
Percentage of youth	100.0	49.9	50.1	36.4
- 15 -24 years old				
Number	15,147,667	7,571,142	7,576,525	
Percentage of youth	54.5			20.0
- 25 - 34 years old				
Number	12,601,880	6,284,721	6,317,159	
Percentage of youth	45.4			16.5

Source: General Statistics Office, Census of Population and Housing (1999).

Residential location of youth

At present, the majority of the Vietnamese youth still lives in the countryside although in the last few years, there has been an increasing flow of young people from the rural provinces to the cities. Such internal migration results in an increase in city population. Of those who migrate, a high proportion are young people aged between 15-34 years and as a consequence there is an over-representation of youth within urban areas. Over 25 percent of youth live in urban areas compared to only about 20 percent of the total population (Table 3).

Ethnic components of youth

Vietnam is a multi-ethnic nation with 54 ethnic groups. The ethnic distribution of youth in Vietnam are reflected in Table 4.

Table 3: Residential location of youth 1999 (persons).

	Total	Male	Female	Percentage
Total population of youth including:	27,749,547	13,855,863	13,893,684	100.0
- rural	20,746,355	10,419,856	10,326,499	74.76
- urban	7,003,192	3,436,007	3,567,185	25.24
Total population	76,327,919	37,518,547	38,809,372	100.00

Source: General Statistics Office, Census of Population and Housing (1999).

Table 4: Ethnic structure of youth (persons).

	Number	Ratio
Total number of youth	27,749,547	100
Kinh	24,107,079	86.87
Tay	527,248	1.90
Thai	473,520	1.70
Hoa	323,452	1.16
Muong	375,402	1.35
Khmer	399,466	1.43
Nung	296,667	1.07
H'mong	245,605	0.89
Dao	214,091	0.77
Gia Rai	100,331	0.36
Ede	87,550	0.32
Bana	55,052	0.20
Coho	42,515	0.15
Cham	46,140	0.17
Other Ethnic groups	455,411	1.64

Source: General Statistics Office, Census of Population and Housing (1999).

The Kinh is the largest ethnic group in Vietnam and Kinh youth comprise 86.87 percent of total youth population in Vietnam. The second rank belongs to the Tay minority comprising only 1.90 percent. The ethnic minority who has the smallest percentage of youth is the Co Ho people (0.15%).

Religious structure of the youth in Vietnam

Although the majority of the Vietnamese people have no religion, Vietnam is a multi-religious nation with six main religions including Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islamism, Cao Dai and Hoa Hao.

The most popular religion is Buddhism. According to the 1999 census, the number of the Buddhists is 7,104, 933 persons. Buddhists occupy 50.99 percent of the total number of believers who are between 15 and 24 years old compared to 33.09

percent who are Catholic in the same age group. The religious components of Vietnamese youth are shown in the Table 5.

Table 5: Religious structure of youth (percent).

Religion	Total believers	Age group				
		0-14 years old	15- 24 years old	25- 34 years old	15- 34 years old	over 34 years old
	14,718,971	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Buddhists	7,104,930	45.16	50.99	52.19	51.59	57.88
Catholics	5,111,119	40.23	33.09	32.99	33.04	28.16
Protestants	410,134	4.03	2.87	2.40	2.64	1.98
Islamists	63,147	0.07	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.05
Cao Dai believers	856,747	4.86	6.55	6.73	6.64	7.02
Hoa Hao believers	1,172,896	4.67	5.68	5.00	5.34	4.33

Source: General Statistics Office, *Census of Population and Housing (1999)*.

In summary: youth in Vietnam is defined as those aged between 15 and 34 years; youth comprises just over one third of the population; the majority of youth live in the rural areas however youth are overrepresented in the urban areas; most youth are Kinh ethnicity and of those who profess a religion, over half are Buddhists however about 80 percent of youth are non-believers.

Vietnam youth in transition

Political, socio-economic and cultural environment in Vietnam in the doi moi period

Vietnam is in a transitional period and the political and socio-economic environment in which youth live and work is different from the pre-renovation *doi moi* period. As for the political environment, although Vietnam is a one-party state, the process of democratization of political life in the country is growing. People are involved more and more in the process of policy-making. They have the right to express their opinion regarding every important issue of their nation, ranging from law making to the construction of a new road. Vietnam's Communist Party (VCP), the single leading force in Vietnam, encourages the Vietnamese people to actively participate in the political life of the country. The VCP purports that an active participation on the part of the people in politics is crucial to realizing its policies.

As for the socio-economic environment, Vietnam is building a socialism-oriented market economy. The objectives pursued by the VCP and Vietnam Government in building such an economy are to provide Vietnam's political regime with a strong material foundation and to enhance the living standard of the people. The socialism-oriented market economy in Vietnam is made up of many components

over which the state sector plays a dominant role. Other economic sectors, including the private sector, are also encouraged by government.

In the last few years, the application of rules of the market economy has made great contributions to economic achievements in Vietnam. Last year, Vietnam's economy grew at 8 percent. Vietnam occupies second place among the Asian countries with highest economic growth rate after China.

However, the building of a socialism-oriented market economy in Vietnam has also resulted in negative consequences. Although Vietnam's Government has made great efforts to equally distribute fruits of development of the country to every person, not discriminating over ethnic or religious origin, the disparity in income among social classes has increased. The gap in development between rural and urban areas has also widened.

As far as the cultural aspect is concerned, there are also many points that are worth to noting. The market economy is creating new cultural values in Vietnam. Personal qualities such as dynamic self-determination and individual resilience are considered factors in the success of young people. However, on the negative side the relaxation of social control by the state has resulted in the emergence of many "social evils" including gambling, drugs, and prostitution.

The policy of integration into the regional and international community implemented since 1986 creates favorable conditions for Vietnamese people to establish global networks. Every year the number of foreigners coming to Vietnam and Vietnamese going abroad increases. Contact with foreigners increases Vietnamese people capacity to understand the values of outside cultures and results in a change in their perception of values. Nowadays in Vietnam, not only leaders and high officials, but also well-known artists and businessmen are revered.

To summarise, the political, socio-economic and cultural environment in Vietnam in the period of renovation is said to be more diversified and complicated than before *doi moi*. This environment creates both opportunities and challenges for youth in Vietnam.

Opportunities and challenges facing Vietnamese youth

Opportunities

Now Vietnamese young people have more job options than their parents did, because the policy of building a multi-sector economy is creating job opportunities for youth. As a consequence, the value system of Vietnamese young people has changed and they no longer limit their job search to only state offices or jobs. Foreign and private companies have attracted thousands of young people. In contrast with the past, all people who are successful are revered in the society regardless of their profession. Such a change in value perception is freeing young people from unnecessary hesitations in choosing jobs.

In the current living and working environment, many educational and training opportunities are created for young people. They can enroll in state universities or schools if they are able to fulfill the requirements put forth by those universities and schools. Before *doi moi*, opportunity to go abroad for study was very rare. Only students carefully selected by the government's authorized organizations could go abroad for study. Nowadays, young people are free to select a foreign university to study if their parents have the financial means capable of meeting the costs of studying abroad.

Because of the increased opportunities to study and seek a job, Vietnamese young people have more favorable conditions to realize their own capabilities. Young people change jobs when they find that their work is no longer challenging. It is clear that the youth in Vietnam today have more favorable living and working conditions than their parents did.

Challenges

In the period of renovation, there are many challenges which face Vietnamese youth. The first challenge faced by the youth in Vietnam is competition for jobs. According to the results of an investigation on the state of labour and jobs, conducted by the Center for Management of Educational Information under the Ministry of Education and Training in 1992, the youth population involved in economic activities was 62.9 percent of the total economically active population and was 84.9 percent of the total youth population in Vietnam. Ten years later, the equivalent percentages were 50.7 and 73.8 respectively. The decrease in the percentage of youth participating in economic activities has not resulted from unemployment, but from the increase in the number of youth involved in study.

Competition for jobs among Vietnamese youth has increased but it is not necessarily attributed to a lack of jobs but to the contest for jobs in two sites: the government and the city. The main competition for jobs is within the public sector. Although the salary received from government organizations is lower than that of foreign companies for similar work (\$30 cf. \$300 per month), Vietnamese youth prefer to work for government offices or state companies. This is because when they become members of a staff of a state office or company, they will have life long employment. Moreover, as a state employee, s/he will have the opportunity to be continuously trained in government funded programs.

Working in government offices and companies is considered an honorable profession especially by youth from the countryside. In their opinion, when they work in a state organization, they become "a person of the state" which for a young man or woman born in the countryside is a title which carries status. His or her parents are also more respected by other villagers.

The second site of competition is for jobs in the cities. Although living conditions have improved considerably in Vietnam, there is a major disparity in development levels between rural and urban areas. As a consequence, a majority of youth like to work in cities but due to the limited number of jobs in cities, many young people have failed in job-seeking.

As a result, youth unemployment in urban areas is quite serious. In 1996, youth unemployment in urban areas was 5.7 percent. Four years later, the proportion had increased to 7.2 percent but had declined to 6.2% in 2001. It is worthy of note that youth unemployment is always higher than for the population as a whole.

The second challenge facing the Vietnamese youth is their material and spiritual needs. Thanks to the initial success of the renovation, the living condition for most Vietnamese has significantly improved. Now, the needs for living and working have become more numerous and diverse. For example, before *doi moi*, owning a bicycle was a dream that was very difficult for a young person to realize. Now, motorbikes have become a popular means of transport and the city is larger, which means that buying of a motorbike has become an urgent requirement for young people. The cost of a motorbike is equivalent to 10 months salary. In addition to meeting the costs of the motorbike, a young person has to pay for food and lodging if not provided by the parents. This is, indeed, a challenge.

Assessing the difficulties that youth in Vietnam are dealing with, Professor Dang Canh Khanh, Director of the Institute of Youth Studies said: “The situation of youth today is more difficult than that of their parents when they were young” (*pers. com.*, September, 2003). Professor Dang identifies the causes creating the hardship of the Vietnamese youth as follows:

First, it is more difficult for youth to secure jobs, despite the fact that their educational level is higher than their parents. The current reality is that if a young person falls into unemployment, he could suffer hunger whereas before the socialist system provided a safety net. Second, before *doi moi*, the society was stable. The values that all people revered were clearly identified. Now there is a confusion of individual values. While many people continue to attach great importance to traditional individual values, like political power or higher educational attainment, others revere riches. Such confusion results in difficulties for youth in determining the purposes of their life. Nowadays, social relationships have become more complicated. Third, although the living standard is higher than before the *doi moi* period, life has become more uncertain and can cause hardship to youth. Fourth, social differentiation has taken place. There are various groups among youth: those born into rich families and those born into poor families, rural-born and city-born youth. This degree of differentiation is undermining the strength and solidarity of youth in Vietnam today.

Although youth face these difficulties they have much strength: they are more dynamic; they have higher educational levels and a higher sense of initiative than their parents did.

Adjustment by Vietnamese youth

To live and realize their dreams, Vietnamese youth have no other way but to adapt themselves to the new environment in their country in the *doi moi* period. Now, the dynamism of Vietnamese youth is brought into play in the process of economic development. As noted above, the economy of Vietnam is multi-sectoral which includes a private sector. Vietnamese youth are playing a very important role in promotion of development of this sector.

Although state employment is the preference of the majority of Vietnamese youth, they are also prepared to seek jobs elsewhere. For young people, there are two choices: to apply for jobs in a foreign or local company or to create jobs for themselves. There are many young people, especially graduates, who have successfully found relevant work in local or foreign companies. Those who do not, are encouraged by their relatives or the government to start their own company. It is this sense of self-determination of the Vietnamese young people that differentiates them from their parents.

Due to the economic dynamism of youth, a generation of young entrepreneurs has taken shape. At present there are over 5,000 public companies in Vietnam. The number of private companies and individual bases of production are 70,000 and 1.2 million respectively. Youth occupy about 25 percent of the leadership positions and positions on the boards of management.

The young Vietnamese entrepreneurs are different from the old entrepreneurs in the following ways: first, they have emerged within the regime of socialism which means that they come from the working class or revolutionary intellectual circles and have been forged by school and by the regime of socialism. In the view of the Institute of Youth Studies, it is this feature of the Vietnamese young entrepreneurs that reflects an essential difference in background between them and entrepreneurs in the world. Second, the entrepreneur circles are the most dynamic section of the Vietnamese youth. They have higher educational level. The results drawn from a research proposal conducted by the Central Executive Committee of the League of Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth show that 74 percent of total young entrepreneurs in the Ho Chi Minh City and 92 percent in Hanoi are above graduate level. (Committee of the League of Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth, 1998). Third, young Vietnamese entrepreneurs have a dynamic and creative spirit in making a living and a strong will to make themselves and their country rich.

Young entrepreneurs occupy a dominant position in productive and business fields, which require the application of higher technologies. According to the results of the investigation implemented by the Council of Young Entrepreneurs, 90 percent

of the Vietnamese young entrepreneurs are carrying on businesses in electronic and information technology as well as in new constructive materials production.

One example of success of the young entrepreneurs is the FPT Company. Founded in 1988 by a Soviet Union-trained young physicist, right after the launch of the policy of renovation, FPT became one of the leading companies owned by the young entrepreneurs. The business field of FPT ranges from producing software to distributing medical equipment. There are 1,500 young people working in various FPT productive and trading bases located in all big cities of Vietnam. Now the FPT leadership board plans to export their products to overseas markets, such as the United States, Japan and India. The success of young entrepreneurs in general and FPT Company in particular, are regarded as examples of successful transitions of the Vietnamese youth.

However, in Vietnam, the number of young people who are considered successful are in the minority. Most young people face great difficulties in the transitional process. In order to be considered successful, they must excel in school and university. Their difficulties are often attributed to one of the following three causes: first, they may not have made enough effort studying during school or university. According to Mr. Phung Khac Binh, Director of the Department of Political Official Business, among 1.6 million students who are studying in universities of Vietnam, 175,000 (10.85%) are poor performers, 9,800 (0.61%) are excellent students, 4.08% are above average while the remainder are average (*Nguoi Lao Dong*, 2003).

Second, the knowledge they receive in schools or universities is inadequate or outdated. The educational and training standards in Vietnam are lower than those in other ASEAN countries. This is a reality that has been recognized by senior officials of Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training. With lower educational and training standards, it is very difficult for graduates to seek jobs with high salaries. Realizing their weakness of knowledge, after graduating, many young people have enrolled in a second university to continue their study at the university or post graduate level. This phenomenon is becoming more common in Vietnam today. In fact, 57.3 percent of total graduates in the academic year 2001 enrolled in additional courses. The universities which have the greatest number of graduate enrollments were economics and law (73.4% of total graduates enrolled in additional courses) and the majority of those graduates were enrolled in courses of foreign languages, especially English and Chinese. This is because the proficiency of a foreign language becomes the primary qualification in finding a job with a higher salary.

Not all graduates who fail to secure a position relevant to their qualifications enroll for further training. Some reconcile themselves to accepting a position which has no relevance to their qualifications or they fall into unemployment. The results of the research proposal on jobs of graduates, conducted by the Ministry of Education

and Training, show that only 10 percent of 23,195 graduates that participated in the study are working in professions for which they were training (*Tuoi tre chu nhat* (Youth in Sunday), March 23, 2003).

Third, for youth their limited learning opportunities are often due to the limited financial resources of their parents especially for rural-born students. Parents have to pay for university fees, food and lodging and the cost is often beyond their financial capacity. This fact prevents many capable young people from attending university and they are compelled to stay in the countryside or to join the flow of labourers going to the cities for jobs.

High youth unemployment is the leading cause of social evils like drugs, prostitution, and gambling amongst this group. Up until late 2002, in Vietnam, there were 42,000 people with HIV/AIDS and this number is increasing. Sixty per cent of the total victims of the HIV/AIDS were aged between 20-29 years in comparison with 29 percent in 1999. The main causes of the HIV/AIDS epidemic are IV drug use and prostitution (Nguyen Son, 2002).

In addition to using drugs, there is an increased rate of prostitution as a result of unemployment. The majority of young girls earning money from prostitution are from rural areas. Having no opportunity to secure employment in cities, these girls have chosen prostitution as their temporary profession. Other young girls have found a way out of their dilemma by marrying a foreigner. Taiwanese men are the preferred choice for a number of young girls, especially of the girls born in the provinces of Southwestern Vietnam. In the last 3 years, in Soc Trang Province, there were 400 girls who married foreigners, especially Taiwanese (*Nguoi Lao Dong*, 2003).

Conclusion

From the research on the situation of youth in Vietnam in the period of *doi moi*, we can draw three main conclusions: first, nowadays, Vietnamese youth have more opportunities to study and to work than their parents did; second, the challenges facing youth in Vietnam are similar to those in other developing countries and the biggest challenge is unemployment. Third, unemployment is the main cause pushing a section of youth toward social evils, especially drug use and prostitution.

Although Vietnamese youth are faced with many difficulties, the majority are not discouraged. They are making an effort to build a good life for themselves and contribute to turning Vietnam into a rich and strong nation in this century.

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The transition from childhood and adolescence into adulthood is often difficult.

There are many decisions which young people have to make in a rapidly changing world in which there are many options and pathways but also numerous risks and uncertainties. Many of the traditional institutions and values of the society in which their parents grew up are under threat or have changed. There are also changes in the experience of growing up in families and communities as well as changes in beliefs and expectations about roles and opportunities for young men and women in a globalised world; the relationship between the individual and society; access to education, employment, careers, social support, and material well-being; and concepts of a just, equitable, and healthy social world.

The Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC) 15th Biennial General Conference, brought together social scientists from a range of countries and disciplines - including psychologists, sociologists, demographers, anthropologists, economists, and social geographers - to examine from their perspectives some of the challenges and opportunities young people face in selected Asian countries and how the social sciences can anticipate and respond to the challenges faced by youth in transition.

Part I: Youth in Transition: Changing concepts of youth

Youth in Asia: An overview

Youth, cultures and societies in transition: The challenges of growing up in a globalized world

Global cultural change and young people's wellbeing

Globalisation and an epidemic: The consequences of HIV/AIDS for young people

A demographic view of changing youth in Asia

Generational change and cyberpolitics in Asia

PART II: Case studies of Asian youth

Papers presented from Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, People's Republic of China, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

