

## PROBLEM CONFRONTATION OF COASTAL YOUTH IN UNDERTAKING SELECTED AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN TWO VILLAGES UNDER BHOLA DISTRICT

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### Abstract

The study was focused in determining the problems confronted by coastal male youth in undertaking selected agricultural activities in two selected villages namely Chartitia and Debirchar of Lalmohan Upazila under Bhola district. Data were collected through interview schedule during September 2003. The selected characteristics of the coastal youth were age, education, knowledge of the coastal environment, knowledge in modern agriculture, cosmopolitanism, use of media, household activities, farm size of parents, annual income of the family, assets owned by parents, innovation proneness and migratory mindedness. The study further explored the relationships between the selected characteristics coastal youth and problem confrontation of coastal youth in undertaking selected agricultural activities. Problem Confrontation Index (PCI) was computed to determine the rank order of 25 problem items in undertaking agricultural activities. PCI was ranged from 0-300. The PCI of 25 items related to problem confrontation indicated that the indices of 6 items were above 200 and top three in rank order were 'feel it risky in undertaking agricultural activities due to natural calamity(287)' and 'barrier in fish cultivation due to joint ownership of pond(275)' and 'Insufficient cash and operational land posses by parents(232)'. The first ten problems in rank order were concerned with the joint ownership of land, lack of cash, land, draft power, and natural calamity. The overall problem confrontation of coastal youth in selected agricultural activities revealed that the largest proportion (53%) of the coastal youth had high problem confrontation. Out of 12 possible correlations, 9 were statistically significant. Education, cosmopolitanism, use of media, farm size of parents, annual income of family, assets owned by parents, innovation proneness and migratory-mindedness of the coastal youth had significant negative relationship with their problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities while participation in household activities had positive relationship with their problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities.

**Key words:** Problem confrontation, coastal youth, agricultural activities

### Introduction

Youth, who comprise one-third of country's population, is vital force of the nation. As they had played important role in our national crisis and history, their participation in our national development is essential. The nation depends on their

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active participation for national development and progress. They are the most energetic and productive segment of the total population in Bangladesh. Youth, the state of being young is a transitional period in personality development that bridges the years between childhood and adulthood (D'Souza, 1970). The age bracket varies among authorities ten to twenty years (Shingi *et al.*, 1980) and 10-30 years (Anonymous, 2000). In some societies, as long as one remains a bachelor or spinster, one is a youth! Youths possess unique capabilities; dynamism, strength, adventure, ambition, hilarity etc. (Udah, 2001; Waldie, 2004; Akwivu *et al.*, 2005). These are assets for agriculture. Youths sometimes have their farms or gardens and on the other hand complement parents' farm effort by supplying labour for a wide variety of activities. They receive farm information and in some cases assist parents in analyzing innovations. According to National Youth Policy, the age group between 18-35 years is called 'youth' in Bangladesh. Of the country's total 15 crore people, about 78 percent of them live in rural areas and agriculture is one of their main sources of income. About 60 percent people living in rural areas have not their own land and they cultivate on other's land (Islam, 2010).

Mobilizing the youth for national development is a common phenomenon amongst the western and developing countries. In such countries as Great Britain, Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, the United States of America and Tanzania, the involvement of youths in agricultural production through youth programs had contributed significantly to agricultural development and empowering the citizenry and youth to always meet the full needs and deep seated aspiration to be self sufficient in food production (FAO, 1999). Indeed, since the youths are the future of any country, it is useful to develop them into patriotic citizens, future progressive farmers and better citizens.

Poverty, over population and unemployment problems are obstacles on way to our development. It is not possible to attain country's overall development without involving youth into development process. It is essential to involve the youth in self-employment activities by imparting them proper training and necessary assistance for attaining the goals of development. But a huge number of our young people are poverty-stricken and leading an unemployed life. Besides youth has to face various difficulties in undertaking self-employment ventures. Considering the above facts in view, the study has been designed with the following objectives:

- To determine and describe the extent of problem confrontation of the male coastal youth in undertaking selected agricultural activities.
- To determine and describe the selected personal, social, economic and psychological characteristics of the male coastal youth.
- To explore the relationships between the selected characteristics of the male coastal youth and their extent of problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities.

## Methodology

The study was conducted in two villages namely Deberchar and Chartitia of Lalmohan upazila under Bhola district. There were 284 coastal male youth who constitute the population out of which 100 were selected randomly as sample for this study. Data were collected during September, 2003 using interview schedule.

Problem confrontation of coastal youth in undertaking selected agricultural activities was the dependent variable of the study. In measuring the problem confrontation of the coastal youth in 25 items of problems, a 4 point rating scale was developed and designed with 4 kinds of responses namely high, medium, low and not at all. The corresponding scores assigned for each kind of

response were 3, 2, 1 and 0 respectively. Score for problem confrontation of a respondent in 25 items could range from 0 to 75. To have an insight into the problem confrontation of the coastal youth in selected items, frequency distribution and rank order of each problem was done by developing Problem Confrontation Index (PCI).

$$\text{Problem Confrontation Index (PCI)} = P_{\text{hpc}} \times 3 + P_{\text{mpc}} \times 2 + P_{\text{lpc}} \times 1 + P_{\text{npc}} \times 0$$

Where,

$P_{\text{hpc}}$  = Percentage of the coastal youth with high problem confrontation

$P_{\text{mpc}}$  = Percentage of the coastal youth with medium problem confrontation

$P_{\text{lpc}}$  = Percentage of the coastal youth with low problem confrontation

$P_{\text{npc}}$  = Percentage of the coastal youth with no problem confrontation

Problem Confrontation Index (PCI) in respect of any problem item could range from 0 to 300, 0 indicates no problem and 300 indicate high problem confrontation. Base on problem confrontation indices, rank order was done for each selected problem item.

## Results and discussion

### Selected characteristics of the coastal male youth

Characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 1. The proportion of older youth was higher in comparison to youth and teen youth. Exactly half of the respondents had primary level education while 3% illiterate, 17% mid schooling and 30% S.S.C and above level education. About three quarters (74%) of the youth had medium knowledge about coastal environment along with 8% poor and 18% high environmental knowledge. Almost equal proportion (41% and 47%) of the respondents had poor and medium knowledge leaving 12% high knowledge in modern agriculture. Little less than two third (60%) of the respondents had medium cosmopolitanism. Majority (63%) of the coastal youth had low use of communication media while 23% had medium and 14% had high use of communication media. Almost half (44%) of the respondent had medium participation in house hold activities followed by 35% high and 21% low participation. Based on farm size score almost equal proportion of the respondents (49% and 45%) was covered by very small and small farm size categories leaving a minor proportion (6%) in marginal farm size category. Little more than half of the respondents (56%) had low annual income while 40% had medium and 7% had high income. Score of family asset revealed that majority (60%) of the respondents had low assets while 33% had medium and 7% had high family assets. Based on innovation proneness score higher proportion (54%) of the youth had high proneness to innovation followed by 37% medium and 9% low proneness. Migratory mindedness score revealed that almost half (47%) of the youth possess low migratory mindedness leaving 33% medium and 20% high migratory mindedness.

**Table1.** Selected characteristics of the coastal male youth with basic statistical values (n=100)

Selected characteristics	Categories	Respondent		Scoring method	Range		Mean	Std. dev.
					Min	Max		
Age	Teen youth(15-19)	33	33	Year	15	30	23.24	5.11
	Youth(20-24)	17	17					
	Older youth(25-30)	50	50					
Education	Illiterate (0)	3	3	Year of schooling	0	11	5.20	3.72
	Primary schooling(1-5)	50	50					
	Mid schooling(6-8)	17	17					
	S.S.C and above(9 & above)	30	30					
Knowledge of the coastal environment	Poor (12-18)	8	8	Score	12	30	22.74	3.29
	Medium (19-25)	74	74					
	High (26-30)	18	18					
Knowledge in modern agriculture	Poor (28-34)	41	41	Score	28	48	36.22	4.79
	Medium (35-41)	47	47					
	High (42-48)	12	12					
Cosmopolitaness	Low (11-16)	20	20	Score	11	29	19.45	4.08
	Medium (17-22)	60	60					
	High (23-29)	20	20					
Use of media	Low (6-11)	63		Score	6	27	12.72	5.93
	Medium (12-19)	23						
	High (20-27)	14						
Participation in house hold activities	Low (10-14)	21	21	Score	10	23	17.54	3.80
	Medium (15-19)	44	44					
	High (20-23)	35	35					
Farm size of parents	Very small(.016-.040)	49	49	Hectare	.016	1.531	.458	.302
	Small(0.41-0.90)	45	45					
	Marginal(0.91-1.531)	6	6					
Annual income of family	Low (up to 55)	53	53	'000' Taka	25.57	156.80	60.96	27.26
	Medium (56-108)	40	40					
	High (109 & above)	7	7					
Asst owned by parents	Low (up to 65)	60	60	'000' Taka	25.44	368.00	70.92	52.44
	Medium (66-131)	33	33					
	High (132 & above)	7	7					
Innovation proneness	Low (10-14)	9	9	Score	10	24	19.02	2.99
	Medium (15-19)	37	37					
	High (20-24)	54	54					
Migratory-mindedness	Low (10-14)	47	47	Score	10	23	15.44	3.80
	Medium (15-19)	33	33					
	High (20-23)	20	20					

### Problem confrontation of coastal male youth in undertaking selected agricultural activities

The problem confrontation score (Table 2) of coastal male youth ranged from 25-54 against a possible range of 0-75 with an average of 41.09 and standard deviation 9.29. The problem confrontation score showed that majority of the respondent had high problem confrontation including 27% medium and 20 % low problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities respectively. Coastal families are crowded by many problems and it is quite natural that their young inherit these from them. Moreover, background of sea and violent weather, poverty of their parents and own joblessness make the coastal youth severe victim of many circumstances.

**Table 2** Overall problem confrontation of coastal youth in undertaking selected agricultural activities

Categories of participation	Number	%	Mean	SD	Range	
					Observed	Possible
Low (upto 25)	20	20				
Medium (26-50)	27	27				
High (51 and above)	53	53	41.09	9.29	25-54	0-75
Total	100	100				

**Relationship between independent and dependent variables**

This piece of research included twelve independent variables. Table 3 shows that out of 12 possible correlations 9 were statistically significant, of them 8 were negatively and 1 were positively correlated. Education, cosmopoliteness, use of media, farm size of parents, annual income of family, assets owned by parents, innovation proneness and migratory mindedness had significant negative relationship with problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities. On the other hand participation in household activities of the coastal youth had significant positive relationship with their problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities.

**Table 3.** Summary of correlation between dependent and independent variables

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities
1	Age	0.028
2	Education	-0.556***
3	Knowledge of the coastal environment	-0.132
4	Knowledge in modern agriculture	0.053
5	Cosmopoliteness	-0.305*
6	Use of media	-0.442***
7	Participation in household activities	0.375**
8	Farm size of parents	-0.466***
9	Annual income of family	-0.591***
10	Assets owned by parents	-0.418***
11	Innovation proneness	-0.489***
12	Migratory-mindedness	-.0.205***

Table value of 'r' at 0.001=0.324, 0.01=0.257, 0.05=0.197, with 98 d.f.

- \* indicate significant at 0.05 level of probability
- \*\* indicate significant at 0.01 level of probability
- \*\*\* indicate significant at 0.001 level of probability

The knowledge of coastal youth in coastal environment has no influence on the extent of problems they face in undertaking selected agricultural activities as because the amount of knowledge of the coastal youth in coastal environment seems to be of similar level. At the same time the coastal youth whose parents posses little operational land generally do intensive agricultural activities and face more problems.

Although only one-fifth of the coastal youth have high migratory-mindedness yet this factor enforces a negative relationship as these coastal youth may mostly remain away from home to become settled in other places or to leave for foreign countries for employment. But often they do not become successful and come back to villages to undertake agricultural activities as their occupation. They face more problems because, they were absent from home and being away from agriculture, they have little experience in production activities.

### Problem confrontation of coastal youth in undertaking selected agricultural activities on selected 25 items

The problem confrontation of the coastal youth was investigated on 25 items of problems related to agricultural activities. Table 4 reveals that Problem Confrontation Index (PCI) ranged from 44 to 287, PCI of seven items had indices 200 and above and another 7 items had indices between 150 and 200.

**Table 4.** Distribution of coastal youth according to their problem confrontation in undertaking twenty-five selected agricultural activities

Sl. No	Items of problems	Extent of problem confrontation (%)				Problems confront index	Rank order
		High	Medium	Low	Not at all		
1	Feel it risky in undertaking agricultural activities due to frequent natural calamity	93	4	0	3	287	1
2	Barrier in fish cultivation due to joint ownership of the pond	76	23	1	0	275	2
3	Parents lack cash and operational land	60	23	6	11	232	3
4	Lack of required draft power	70	2	17	11	231	4
5	Difficulties in marketing of agricultural products due to underdeveloped communication system	50	22	16	12	210	5
6	Economic inability to buy fish fries	49	29	19	13	204	6
7	Lack of own cash and capital	57	11	7	25	200	7
8	Lack of sufficient fodder in rainy season	29	42	26	3	197	8
9	Complexity in getting loan due to lack or ownership of land	37	32	19	12	194	9
10	Financial inability to arrange seed, fertilizer, irrigation, and other agricultural inputs	48	19	9	24	191	10
11	Absence of loan giving agency at upazila level for the youth	21	38	41	0	180	11
12	Lack of extension program for the youth at upazila level	36	18	34	12	174	12
13	Economic inability for livestock treatment	32	28	14	26	166	13
14	Biasness and negligence of the officials to select youth for training program	13	42	0	15	153	14
15	Not liking and lack of consent of parents in undertaking agricultural activities	32	11	31	26	149	15
16	Lack of knowledge in modern income earning agricultural activities	12	25	53	10	139	16
17	Lack of proper storing and marketing facilities of fish	28	13	24	35	134	17
18	Carelessness of extension agencies about rural youth	13	32	25	30	128	18
19	Scarcity of vaccination facilities for livestock	16	18	40	26	124	19.5
20	Lack of hatchery/ proper technical knowledge for fish fry production	23	7	41	29	124	19.5
21	Not avoiding traditional agriculture	10	13	56	21	112	21
22	Lack of veterinary doctor	19	3	48	30	111	22
23	Social barrier in undertaking agriculture an educated person	23	15	3	59	102	23
24	Lack of sufficient time in undertaking agricultural activities due to busyness in educational activities	13	15	4	68	73	24
25	Insufficiency of fruit and forest saplings due to less number of nursery	0	21	2	77	44	25

Top three problems in rank order were: i) feel it risky in undertaking agricultural activities due to frequent natural calamity (287), ii) barrier in fish cultivation due to joint ownership of pond (275), iii) parents lack cash and operational land (232). Data contained in Table 4 clearly reveals that the coastal youth face significant problems largely due to natural calamities, joint ownership of ponds, lack of land and cash, lack of cash to purchase inputs and lack of agricultural extension services. The coastal youth have little access to the government extension services, programs and activities and hardly find existence of these organizations in the coastal areas.

### Conclusion

The investigation on the 25 items of problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities by the coastal youth revealed that they face endless problems. Of them top five were: i) feel it risky in undertaking agricultural activities due to frequent natural calamity, ii) barrier in fish cultivation due to joint ownership of the pond, iii) parents lack cash and operational land, iv) lack of required draft power and v) difficulties in marketing agricultural products due to underdeveloped communication system. Besides, indices of 14 out of 25 problem items ranged from 150 to 287 against a possible range of 0 to 300. Problems of the coastal youth are very acute. Education, knowledge in modern agriculture, use of communication media, farm size and annual income of parents had negative significant relationship with problem confrontation in undertaking agricultural activities whereas Participation in household activities has positive significant relationship with problem confrontation in undertaking selected agricultural activities.

The coastal youth in general are born and brought in many kinds of hardships and immense struggle. Poverty of their parents including cash, assets, and land loom very large as problems. Very few parents have the ability to spend money for education or enterprise to establish their youth.

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