

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

## Studying Social Development of Students Enrolled in National Outreach Program: A Case Study of Cadet College Hasanabdal

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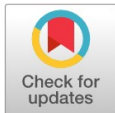
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**Abstract**— This study highlighted the social development of less developed areas students enrolled in the National Outreach Program (NOP). The research objective was to know students' perceptions of their social development during the National Outreach Program at Cadet College Hasanabdal. The descriptive survey research design was applied. The 169 male students were taken as a sample of research by using the total population sampling technique. A social development questionnaire was developed by the researcher that was used in this research. The validity of questionnaires was checked through a panel of experts and pilot testing checked reliability. The results indicated that NOP has significantly developed the social skills of students. It can be concluded that NOP is an intervention that paves the path toward an effective learning process. As results indicated a positive change in students due to the NOP in terms of communication skills, building self-esteem, strengthening learning skills, co-curricular activities, and establishing a positive attitude. The national outreach program is run under the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS). NOP implies awareness in the fields of civil society, youth, socialization, and engagement. Therefore, it is recommended that government may initiate a NOP program for less developed areas students that facilitates them to acquire social learning skills necessary for their academic success.

**Index Terms**— National outreach program, Case study, Less developed areas, PIP

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### Introduction

The economic development of a country depends on many factors, but human capital is the fundamental factor. Von Witzke (1984) stated that in contrast to land and other capitals like physical capital, components like human quality and human capital are important and core components in the growth and progress of a country. Schultz (1961) has also strongly advocated the significance of the expense of resources in human capital as an essential and fundamental component in the advancement and development of a country. Many research studies have reflected that human capital plays an important role as one of the significant elements for economic development and progress. It is crystal clear that education is an integral part of any human capital. Thus, continuous investment in manpower in the form of education is essential for the stable development and success of the economy. Pelinescu (2015) strongly argued that aims and goals of high growth cannot be achieved in the absence of quality education and professional coaching. Education catalyzes the genesis of human capital by enabling people to become more effective and productive by enhancing the potential level of their earnings in monetary terms. The traditional methods for easing this burden focus on community outreach by enlisting local partners and healthcare professionals

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to spread health information on CVD awareness and prevention. In order to improve community involvement in risk factors and illness reduction, current community-based techniques, like the barbershop and faith-based programs, have built upon prior approaches and integrated fresh ideas. Future paths suggested by these models hint to a greater reliance on community partners, health information technology, and patient education on healthy behaviors in order to lower CVD risk factors and prevalence in an ethnically susceptible group (Ferdinand, Nedunchezian, & Ferdinand, 2020). It is a proven fact that disparate provision of education has a defeatist effect on per capita income, especially the areas which were given less attention to achieving quality life are called underdeveloped areas in Pakistan (Haris, 2017; Zahoor & Rumi 2020). Hassan and Shehzad (2005) searched for the effect of academic inequalities on economic growth in Pakistan. The study of Hassan and Shehzad (2005) shows that inequalities in education inhibit the country's economic growth and negatively affect the lives of people in underdeveloped areas. Recently, Ibourek and Amaghous (2013); Idrees and Shah (2018) also showed that inequalities in education harm underdeveloped areas, and people in these areas usually lag in the race of life.

The government of Pakistan initiated National Outreach Programs (NOP) that are meant to include remedial actions to support students in their growth challenges and to increase their abilities to make the maximum out of their educational exposure and experience. These students were given less attention because of slow economic growth.

According to the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS), the aim behind the development of such programs is to equip students with a set of skills, knowledge, and behavior; encourage their academic, personal, and career choices; strengthen their optimistic and pragmatic self-evaluation. To increase their potential to relate meaningfully with others and boost their ability to get involved in an efficient lifestyle (Boyd et al., 2003). Seminars, outreach programs, and workshops come under the umbrella of such programs. A variety of courses is offered in Outreach Programs in various institutions. No doubt, several student counseling centers have uploaded particulars about their outreach programs on their websites, yet there is no single case in which a generic report of the topics and frequency of deliverance is mentioned. AUCCCD (The Association for University and College Counseling Centre Directors) has prepared a catalog of some Outreach Programs on their website for the benefit of the public. Student Orientation Information, helping college students understand counseling, and dealing with Loss are some examples of Outreach Programs. There are many educational institutions, which ensure the provision of opportunities for staff and students to request an Outreach Program with topics of their own choice and interest.

Furthermore, the style and pattern of the Outreach Program vary considerably. Although it is a very common and traditional practice that in an Outreach Program, a speaker delivers the program to students, nowadays-educational institutions have been adopting innovative ways to reach out to students. For example, according to AUCCCD's annual survey report (Alghamdi & Sun, 2017; Barr et al., 2010), one university formally mentioned their attempt to development of targeted brochures' set for differing groups of students. One more university mentioned using an organized and logical way of coupling with other agencies to provide all-inclusive outreach programs to students. Many other institutions reported using social media, electronic mail, or blogging to access the students on their campus.

An obstacle in examining the efficacy of outreach programs in educational institutions lies in the variety of subjects or topics. The heterogeneity and variety of the student population and their hurdles develop a need for versatile topics of Outreach Programs. The dissimilarities among subjects/topics and patterns make it difficult to conduct outcome studies, as different subjects/topics of Outreach Programs indicate differing goals for their outcome. Although the programs have multiple subjects/topics, they have a common objective of increasing students' consciousness about mental health issues, social development, academic development, awareness of students for the services available to them, and encouraging the students to seek help in various day-to-day issues.

Keeping in mind the basic role of educational inequalities in the growth of less developed areas, the objective of the present study is to analyze the imbalance in the provision of education in underdeveloped areas. In Pakistan, less research has been carried out on the measurement of development in less developed areas. Furthermore, the NOP is novel, which needs to be investigated thoroughly that focuses on the social development of less developed areas. According to the literature, there is no such significant development has been seen in the area of NOP. This research established a viewpoint that enables to focus on education for students with fewer facilities and resources.

### **Importance of Activities**

This study makes the people of underdeveloped areas more aware of the benefits of NOP through measurable changes in personal and academic achievement. This research makes the Federal and Provincial Ministries of Education realize the importance of the National Outreach Program and provide help in policymaking and planning. Thus, Ministries would have more confidence in allocating budgets for such programs. Through this research, other institutions would be able to assess their weaknesses and deficiencies to conduct and implement NOP in a better way. Society gets benefits in terms of students' educational awareness about such programs.

### **Problem Statement**

In 1959, Commission on National Education recommended mandatory quality education for children. Similarly, in the light of 25A the article of 1973's constitution, it was made sure that it would be the primary duty of the country to provide compulsory education to children between 5-16 years free of cost, as per law. Other than national legislation, the international body of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) has made it compulsory for Pakistan to ensure equitable and inclusive quality education for all Pakistani children. But it is a bitter reality and unfortunate that the government of Pakistan could not ensure the provision of quality education for all children. The children belonging to marginalized areas of Baluchistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, and erstwhile FATA, enrolled in the CCH National Outreach Program validate this bitter reality (Tarar, Khan Ranan, & Abbas, 2021).

The participants of the CCH National Outreach Program belong to less privileged backgrounds and underdeveloped areas namely Baluchistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and erstwhile FATA. As the infrastructure in these areas is not developed, the people in these areas are lacking basic facilities and particularly quality educational institutions. As a result of this, the majority of the children in these areas are unable to compete with their counterparts from the rest of the country. Keeping in view the global movement "Education for all" (EFA) led by UNESCO, a fair representation of children of age between 12-14 in above mentioned respective areas is selected to provide them an opportunity to explore their hidden potentials of curricular and co-curricular activities by bringing the positive change in their personal and academic development. This program aims to make their chances of selection high in Cadet College Hasanabdal and other well-reputed educational institutions for their further studies. In this way, CCH National Outreach Program pragmatically contributes to the concept of EFA and National Integration.

This research creates a sense of realization and responsibility for those who were supposed to provide equal educational opportunities to students of Baluchistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, and erstwhile FATA, but had failed to deliver. Many times, we have seen how students' unwillingness is made to be the reason for the lack of education in Baluchistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, and erstwhile FATA, but this reason is used as a scapegoat by responsible ones to cover their faults. However, the exuberant performance being shown by these underserved students in CCH NOP for four years, speaks volumes about their inclination towards education and personal development.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of the study is to assist students in their development and growth by including preventative interventions and pave the way towards augmenting the benefit gained by their educational journey. The International Association of Counselling Services has highlighted outreach programs as; "these programs should be formulated in a way that assists students in obtaining new skills, knowledge, behaviors, and skills. These programs should encourage realistic self-evaluation and optimism; strengthen personal, career, and academic choices; add to the capability to establish implicitly and mutually with their peers; and augment the ability to involve in a personally sustaining and efficient style of living (Boyd et al., 2003). Seminars, workshops, and outreach programs come under the umbrella of such programs. Outreach programs have covered a wide range of topics on school campuses. There is a greater number of such counseling centers for students, which provide all such relevant information on their website. However, there exists an absence of a proper report and frequency of deliverance on such a topic. AUCCCD (The Association for University and College Counselling Centre Directors) has gathered information on all such outreach programs and has placed the data on its website. This information is accessible to the public. A few such examples include Helping Students Understand Counselling,

Dealing with Loss, and Student Orientation Information. Many opportunities are provided to students, teachers, and staff by different universities. By using such opportunities, students can demand the topic of their own choice in a specific Outreach Program. The audience is then informed about the program

### **Objective of Research**

1- To know the perception of students about their social development during the National Outreach Program at Cadet College Hasanabdal.

### **Significance of Study**

This research identifies the effectiveness of the CCH National Outreach Program. It provides guidelines for overcoming deficits in the implementation of the program. It enables us to achieve the desired objectives of this program in the future. This study causes awareness in less privileged societies of less developed areas. This research not only contributes to the global program "Education for All" but is helpful for the policymakers and administrators in planning to provide equal educational opportunities to students of Baluchistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, and erstwhile FATA

## Literature Review

Goodyear and Soysa (2017) researched NOP in New Zealand. The women working in the fields of (STEM) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics were the sample of research. To ensure the long-term protection of protected areas, particularly in developing nations, local populations' active participation in conservation efforts is essential (Altakhayneh, 2022; Abukari & Mwalyosi, 2020; Dickman, 2010; Mbise & Sosiya, 2023). The NOP demonstrates social benefits, and it engaged students' interest and enhanced their understanding of theory and practices in engineering. The core purpose of the program was to augment the interest and ambition of girls and encourage them to build up their careers in the field of STEM. It was achieved by depicting and highlighting the social benefits of opting for these fields as a career. The research of Murphy and Kelp (2023) has investigated the perspectives of students, teachers, parents and scientists in one university run astronomy outreach program with the aim of better understanding the role that communities of practice play in science outreach in developing students' science identity.

Blocher (2011) researched the effectiveness of NOP, which was designed to improve the help-seeking attitude of college students. The sample  $n = 201$  targeted two groups i.e., outreach program group and the control group with no treatment. The test was administered to both groups and a comparison was drawn, which highlighted students' positive interest and attitude who belongs to the outreach program group.

Research findings of Nuncio, Arcinas, Lucas, Alontaga Neri, and Carpena, (2020) are that in Pulo Elementary School, a pretest and posttests were conducted with results showing that the program has improved participants' e-Learning knowledge and skills except for advance skills in hardware utilization. The participants also showed a strong positive attitude towards the ELOP. Benefit sharing fosters good neighbourliness boosts community involvement in conservation efforts, and moulds locals' attitudes towards conservation into responsible action (Khan et al., 2011; Kideghesho, Kimaro, Mayengo & Kisingo, 2021).

Brown (2018) investigated the outcome of outreach programs and knowledge about nuclear radiation on students' attitudes. The study investigated the probable impact on students after visiting nuclear reactors, the influence of outreach programs of nuclear reactors on the attitude of students towards nuclear power, and the knowledge related to nuclear reactors and radiation. The survey research design employed 32 students aged ranges from 13-14 years belonging to rural areas in the United States. Based on self-reported data, Randolph, Hay, Rethman, Erukhimova, Donaldson, and Perry (2021) findings demonstrate that students who led informal physics programs positively shaped their physics identities, felt more a part of the physics community, and gained 21st-century career skills. Students specifically mentioned improved communication, teamwork and networking, and design skills. Departments of any size can benefit from these programs without making substantial financial commitments or curriculum adjustments.

The results depicted that after paying a visit to a nuclear reactor, students developed a positive inclination towards nuclear power and radiation. Results further showed an increase in the knowledge of students about nuclear power, reactors, and radiation. Before the conduction of this outreach program, many students had misapprehensions about the science of nuclear power and radiation, but this outreach program paved the way towards alleviation of those misconceptions.

People with formal education were more appreciative of the Community Outreach Programme's initiatives and were more inclined to alert park administration about poachers. Furthermore, older and middle-aged residents of the research area expressed greater satisfaction with various COP-initiated activities than were young people. Therefore, everyone in the area should actively participate in various conservation initiatives in order to improve mutual cooperation between parks and local communities. For example, the majority of respondents who got incentives and took part in COPs expressed satisfaction with the conservation efforts taking place in their region (Mbise & Sosiya, 2023).

Suresan et al., (2019) conducted their study on the impact of NOP on personal growth, academics, and mandatory obligations of dental students. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of NOP. The experimental design was employed on two groups, which were formulated. At baseline, pre-tested and structured questionnaires were used to administer participants. An intervention was made by sending participants to public health centers for academic field visits and rural regions for outreach activities. After the intervention, the questionnaire was administered to gauge the deviation from the baseline. The results indicated a positive significant difference between the n experimental group as compared to the control group. Thus, the leadership traits, sense of social responsibility, self-confidence, academic skills, and communication skills were seen to be improved after the outreach program.

## Research Design

The variables of current research i.e., study of less developed areas by NOP through quantitative approach and descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. This design permits the Researchers to get a deep descriptive account of research variables. The variables were studied using questionnaires. The detailed description of variables developed through the analysis of the data. Students' perceptions about their social development, academic development, and teachers' efforts during the National Outreach Program at Cadet College

Hasanabdal were measured through descriptive accounts. Population and sample, sampling technique, research tool pilot testing and validity & reliability are the parts of the research design.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population of the study comprised 169 male students who were enrolled in Cadet College Hasanabdal from since 2017 to 2021.

Table I  
Sampling framework

S. No.	Year	No. of Students	Sample
1	2017	45	36
2	2018	49	42
3	2020	25	21
4	2021	50	46
Total number of students	169	145	

There were 169 male students enrolled through NOP. Out of 169 students 145 students were selected conveniently. All 145 students were contacted through different sources. All these students were passed out from the Cadet College Hassan Abdal. All these students were contacted for seeking consent for filling the out-research tool.

### **Research Tool**

The questionnaire focused on the social development of students has five (05) categories i.e., development of communication skills, building self-esteem, strengthening learning skills, co-curricular activities, and establishing a positive attitude. Each category has four (04) statements. The four-point Likert scale was used i.e. strongly disagree to strongly agree.

### **Pilot Testing**

The reliability of the questionnaires was checked through pilot testing. The questionnaires were piloted on a non-sample of the study among 20 SSC students of Cadet College Hasanabdal. Afterward, the data was interpreted in Excel and SPSS version 23. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient ( $r$ ) is used to check the reliability of the tools.

### **Validity and Reliability of Tool**

The validity of the questionnaire was checked by a panel of experts committee. Moreover, reliability was checked through pilot testing and Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient ( $r$ ) was used ( $\alpha = 0.753$ ).

### **Data Collection**

The researcher collected the data from the respondents by using different means i.e. sample was targeted by telephone, email, messages, personal contacts, and postal services because they were passed out from NOP. The data collected the desired information from the sampled respondents. Clear instructions were formulated for the responders and they were asked to feel free in their responses as ethical consideration of confidentiality was ensured.

### **Data Analysis**

The data was collected from respondents and analyzed by using SPSS version 21. Descriptive statistics were employed to achieve the objective of the research.

Table II  
Descriptive Analysis of Students Regarding Social Development in NOP

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SEMean	SD
Development of Communication Skills	145	1.00	4.00	3.2190	0.04478	0.53916
Build Self-Esteem	145	1.00	4.00	3.2362	0.05398	0.65004
Strengthen Learning Skills	145	1.00	4.00	3.1638	0.04778	0.57538
Co-curricular Activities	145	1.00	4.00	3.2069	0.05034	0.60621
Establish positive Attitude	145	1.25	4.00	3.2569	0.04936	0.59435
Valid N (listwise)	145					

The table depicted the descriptive statistics regarding the social development of underprivileged students in NOP. The students claimed that NOP has developed their communication skills ( $N = 145$ ,  $\text{Min} = 1.00$ ,  $\text{Max} = 4.00$ ,  $\text{Mean} = 3.2190$ ,  $\text{SE Mean} = 0.04478$ , and  $\text{SD} = 0.53916$ ). The students responded that ( $N = 145$ ,  $\text{Min} = 1.00$ ,  $\text{Max} = 4.00$ ,  $\text{Mean} = 3.2362$ ,  $\text{SE Mean} = 0.05398$  and  $\text{SD} = 0.65004$ ) NOP has built their self-esteem. In addition, students claimed that ( $N = 145$ ,  $\text{Min} = 1.00$ ,  $\text{Max} = 4.00$ ,  $\text{Mean} = 3.1638$ ,  $\text{SE Mean} = 0.04778$  and  $\text{SD} = 0.57538$ ) NOP strengthen their learning skills. Moreover, students also responded that ( $N = 145$ ,  $\text{Min} = 1.00$ ,  $\text{Max} = 4.00$ ,  $\text{Mean} = 3.2069$ ,  $\text{SE Mean} = 0.05034$  and  $\text{SD} = 0.60621$ ) NOP improved performance through co-curricular activities Likewise, students responded that ( $N = 145$ ,  $\text{Min} = 1.00$ ,  $\text{Max} = 4.00$ ,  $\text{Mean} = 3.2569$ ,  $\text{SE Mean} = 0.04936$  and  $\text{SD} = 0.59435$ ) NOP established positive attitude among them.

In summary, the highest mean score was recorded for Establishing Positive Attitude (3.2569) and the lowest for Strengthen Learning Skills (3.1638).

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before the data collection process, the sample was taken in confidence that their data is utilized for research purposes only. The information is treated well under confidentiality.

## DISCUSSION

The current study focused on the comparative study of less developed areas students enrolled in national outreach programs. This study focused on an unobserved problem in Pakistan, which needs to be taken into consideration. The questionnaires were used to measure the social development and academic development of students. The respondents were given their perception regarding NOP. The results of this study indicated that NOP has significantly increased their social development in terms of communication skills. Goodyear and Soysa (2017) and Brown (2018) supported the evidence. They found that communication skills are a necessary element for social development. The NOP has significantly increased their communication skills while learning in school.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that NOP is an intervention that paves the path toward an effective learning process. As results indicated a positive change in students due to the NOP in terms of communication skills, building self-esteem, strengthening learning skills, co-curricular activities, and establishing a positive attitude. As Boyd et al. (2003) argued that NOP encourages realistic self-evaluation and optimism; strengthens personal, career, and academic choices; adds to the ability to relate meaningfully and mutually with others; and augments the ability to engage in a personally satisfying and efficient living style.

The academic development of students increases during NOP. Students claimed that during the session, they learned skills which helped them in their academics, as well as social skills. Ghazzawi et al. (2019) claimed that outreach programs successfully supported students in their academic performance. The efforts made by teachers during NOP are highly acknowledged by the students. They reported that teachers taught them different life skills, which helped them in their academics.

It can be concluded that NOP is a tool for imparting skills to students, which needs a teacher as a tool. This program allowed the teachers to put their efforts into shaping good students' behavior and attitudes.

It can be concluded that the perceptions of students belonging to different areas i.e., Gilgit Baltistan, FATA region, and Baluchistan were found to be similar in terms of their social development and academic achievement. Similar results reported non-significant differences in the perception analyzed by using the ANOVA test. As the perceptions of students were found like one another and NOP significantly increases their social development and academic performance, the results are also found correlated to one another. Therefore, social skills positively influence on academic achievement of students.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are drawn based on the conclusion of the study.

It is recommended that the government may initiate a NOP program for less developed areas students that facilitates them to acquire learning skills, which are necessary for academic success. Remuneration may be given to less developed areas students, which motivates them to acquire education and promote the learning process.

It is recommended that policymakers and government officials may initiate such programs at the micro level for less developed area students. This may help them to get basic education and to motivate them to acquire higher education.

It may be suggested that educational authorities emphasize the less developed areas of students' problems and initiate programs like NOP to promote effective teaching and learning processes.

Teachers' effort is the main component of imparting knowledge and skills to students. The authorities may educate and train the teachers about the NOP program and its effectiveness for its proper execution.

Social skills are an important factor in academic achievement. It may be suggested that curriculum developers may include activities in the curriculum that emphasize social skills. Teachers may teach these skills through various teaching methods.

Rural education initiatives need to be considered and they may target those groups who do not have resources for acquiring education.

### **Future Implications**

Future researchers may highlight NOP's effectiveness. In addition, teacher education is also an important component for initiating such programs. The researchers may focus on the professional development of teachers in the field of NOP.

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