Usage of Media: Is It Impel as a Pull and Push Factor for Behavior of Youth Gangs?

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Abstract: - The group formation of urban male gangsters is influenced by multiple factors that include their social setting as well as collective psychological behavior. Albert K .Cohen (1964) in his research on delinquent boys, the culture of the gang, attempts to formulate and to solve certain neglected problems. Most of the literature in the field of juvenile delinquency is concerned with the question: Why does this or that boy become delinquent? Cohen's study argued gangs of boys doing things together: sitting on curbs, standing on the corner, going to the movies, playing ball, smashing windows and going robbery. These things they do are not the simultaneous expression and magical coincidence so many discrete impulses, each with his own history, each fully understandable apart from the others. They are joint activities, deriving their meaning and flavor from the fact of togetherness and governed by a set of common understandings, common sentiments, and common loyalties (Cohen, 1964). This paper try to understand how Medias in society impact to youth gangs and their behavioral patterns. To achieve above purpose 493 youth male were identified as the gang members and data were gathered through observations, questioners, interviews, focus group discussions, case studies. Data has analyzed using Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 and Microsoft SQL server Management Studio 2008.Through findings its clearly visible media has played a role as a pull and push factor for gang behavior.

Key Words: Behavior, Gangs, Media, Pull factor, Push Factor, Youth

I. INTRODUCTION

The social issue of youth ganging and their anti-social activities and behavior is a very common in all over the world but the extent of impact and types of social problems are highly variable in different part of the world. But also there are some specific social issues to different societies in relevant to their own culture and other factors. Thrasher (1927) defined gang as, "an interested group originally formed spontaneously and then integrated through conflict and characterized by meeting face to face, milling, movement through space as a unit, conflict and planning. The behavior develops a tradition unreflective internal structure, esprit de corps, solidarity, group awareness and attachment to a territory" (Thrasher 1927). Walter B. Miller defined a gang as "a self-formed association of peers bound together by mutual interest. A gang has an identifiable leadership; well develop lines of authority, and other organizational features who act in concert to achieve a specific purpose of purposes which generally include the conduct of illegal activities and control over particular territory, facility or type of enterprise (Miller 1980). Definition of gang subjects to variations based on the parameters such as time, culture, society etc.

Media, police and crime reports information reveals almost daily that there are increase number of incidences related to anti-social behaviour, abuses, abduction, drug addiction murders, robberies and other crimes happening in Sri Lanka, especially in Colombo city. There are new patterns of crimes; innocent general public especially women and children have become the victims of those crimes. Very high majorities of these crimes or anti-social activities are reported to be occurred with the involvement of youth male gangs. Most of the crimes are not reported either in the public media or other resources (Hidden Crimes), victims does not complain/report to the Police or any other institutions for legal assistance due to the fear. Lack of awareness on the gangs and there activities, the elder community has not taken sufficient preventive actions to avoid being victims as well as to protect their young children from joining with the gangs.

Today the main argument of the origins of the gangs and maintaining of the culture of the gang is different. Some say their family background and other poor circumstances are the main reason. But some researcher say there are some push and pull factors lead for the gang and gang subculture. Through this research paper researcher tried to identify how media impact for the youth and their behavioral patterns as well subculture as a full or push factor. Because some argued that media has a vast responsibility to social movement and social issues.

Authorities have not identified properly the impact of male youth gangs on the society, extent and the criticalness of the social problems, methodology to protect the society from this anti-social development etc. Lack of information on the gangs such as, types of gangs, number of gangs, their members, and factors causing people especially youth males to join with gangs, activities of gangs and their expectations, outside parties strengthening & assisting the gangs, impact on the society by the gang activities has prevented authorities, law makers to design & implement sufficient protective measures aiming the security of the society. There is a great demand from the society, academic community, police and legal institutions, law makers & policy makers to conduct an initiative & comprehensive research study on the male youth gangs, what are the push and full factors which lead for

ganging, their activities and impacts on the social behavior in order to use the research outcomes for their requirements & activities towards establishing proper social security measures. Furthermore this initiative research would guide future studies and researches of refined subjects related to the ganging and related social problems.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

William Foote Whyte (1960) on the other hand in his study of street corner society has explained the younger generation has built up its own society relatively independent of the influence of its elders. Whyte has tried to see how youth male gang organize the activities of their own groups, and then, to place those groups in the social structure. Not only Whyte and Cohen, urban male ganging and its impact on the society has being widely studied by academics, researchers, scholars from different fields such as sociology, socio-psychology, criminology and behavioral science on different perspectives at the global context. A study in Orange County, California, in which random samples of residents were interviewed, illustrates this case. Fear of crime and gangs was an "immediate," daily experience for people who lived in lower-income neighborhoods where gangs were more prevalent (Lane and Meeker, 2000). In the most gang-ridden areas, many residents reported having avoided gang areas because they were afraid of gangs and criminal victimization. Others talked about avoiding certain streets and taking a circuitous route to shopping areas at night to avoid gangs that operate in their neighborhoods. Intimidation of other youths, adults, and business owners is not uncommon, and intimidation of witnesses or potential witnesses is particularly serious because it undermines the justice process (Bureau of Justice Assistance,1997). Irrespective of the size of the families living within the neighborhood where gangs are active, the impacts are negative, diverse and disgusting (National Youth Gang Center, 2002)

Until up to recent time in British Colombia, there was on average ten murders per year involving 18 – 35 year-old South Asian young men as both victims and perpetrators. Codes of secrecy and intimidation of witnesses has made solving gang crimes problematic in these closed South Asian communities. It is important to understand that these gang members are not representative of the overwhelming majority of South Asian boys and young men in Canada. Most gang members do not have healthy adult role models due to a lack of parental engagement. Some immigrant parents work very long hours to financially support their families. They are unavailable to help their children, many of whom struggle with racism and social acceptance.

Compared to the highly structured and low profile murders by Europe based groups, South Asian including Sri Lanka the gang violence has been very public and high profile (Wijewardhana 2015). When the rate of crimes are concerned in Colombo it is notable that the crime rates are increasing as Reported by: The National Dangerous Drugs Control Board

(NDDCB) / 2004, in Sri Lanka, 'the crime rate is so aggressive that the crimes such as homicide, attempted homicide and other forms of bodily harm, Sexual offences and Robberies were shown at the rate of 283(per 100,000 individuals) which is a colossal social complicacy. In addition, unlimited social harassments are caused by incidences of drug trafficking, raping and smuggling as reported almost every day in the country. It has being reported that more than 75% of those offended are against drug trafficking by organized gangs mostly composed of by youth aged 15 to 26.

Some of the key reasons for youth to join gangs in Colombo city symbolize few major concerns as revealed by *Sevanatha,* a registered institution working for the betterment of poor in Colombo. One of the visible reasons is the increased number of people moving to Colombo resulting unmanageable congestion of inhabitants which gets worse due to the insufficient town planning. Whereas, poverty has becomes a visible reason where 23% of families belong to the category of poor and socially unprotected (Chularathna, 1999). Other key factor is the type of dwelling where the poor inhabitants living in slums and shanties in a crowded manner. Also revealed that families living in congested setting do not sufficiently interacting among each other due to cultural and ethnic differences and the isolation life style creates positive environment for the gangsters. Conversely, poor interaction between parents and children due to specific social factors creates growing demand for adolescents to seek membership within gangs.

However, so far, except wijewardhana 2015 studies ,there is no indepth research or survey had being conducted on youth male gang behavior in Sri Lanka's urban settings. The gangs and their activities are being widely discussed in general by the public media and the people in Sri Lanka recently because of the rapid and significant increase of the crimes and gang activities. In fact, the male youth gangs have become a very critical social issue in Sri Lanka (Senaratna & Wijewardhana 2012) now as it is believed to be contributing in increasing crimes, introducing new crime patterns, as well as deviant behavior & gang delinquency causing negative impacts to the wellbeing of the general public (fear of crimes, feeling of social insecurity, threats & violence)(Wijewardhana 2018). Hence above study makes an attempt to address the gap of literature of ganging focusing followings; what are the major determinants that determine collective group formation in the urban setting in Sri Lanka. Through this paper covered following research gap: usage of media among the youth male gangsters how impact for their gang thoughts, subcultural patterns, anti-social behavior; Because there is no direct argument related to media usage and how does it guide to path as a pull or push factor for ganging.

III. OBJECTIVES

To identify gangs and their social behavior, to identify how do their usage of media and to analyze what are the co -

relationship between media usage and their social behavior, how analysis media usage as a push of pull factor for gang behavior and finally suggest how media use for escape from antisocial behavior and negative impact of gangs' activities are the objectives of this paper.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Research design and the data collection of this study were attended in several steps.

Selection of Research Sites

When the selection of sites of youth gangs is concerned, the specific geographies commonly known as pasture fields or the territorial sites of gangs are given preference by the sociologists or the criminologists. Accordingly, Colombo city was selected as to be the research site.

Collection of Primary Data

Compilation of primary data of the study was attended in several steps.

To gather information of youth gangs within the GN divisions such as Fort, Pattah, Keselwatta etc. the required tools were prepared under step 1. Observation was the key instrument applied during the above time span on field data and information. At this stage, information was collected through gang members in focus of the reasons affected for them to join gangs including the details of streets where they used to gather information and also their daily conduct. The next stage was a questionnaire based data collection. At the end of the initial stage, a data collection up to a certain extent was achieved by several ways; observatory experiences, informal interviews, field testing reports, photo taking etc. However, extensive complicacies observed within the lifestyles of youth in the study area, especially the impact in the lifestyle of migrated youth who entered to Colombo city from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, also representing varied employment settings. Furthermore, the complexity of livelihood patterns, legal vulnerability of certain living means too, was deliberated. Hence collection of data was attended through a formal survey at the 2nd stage. A questionnaire was used in this research too. There were 67 questions consisting of both close ended and open ended questions. The research team comprised by 20 persons at this research had possessed a complete sort of picture of the life of urban youth gangs. Nevertheless, a group of 6 research assistants (3 undergraduates and 3 police officers) were able to build up close friendship with gang members. At the 3rd step research team did obviation to cross check information given through questioners. 4th step research team did Focus Group Discussions and finally did case studies to gather information related to gangs and their behavioral patterns.
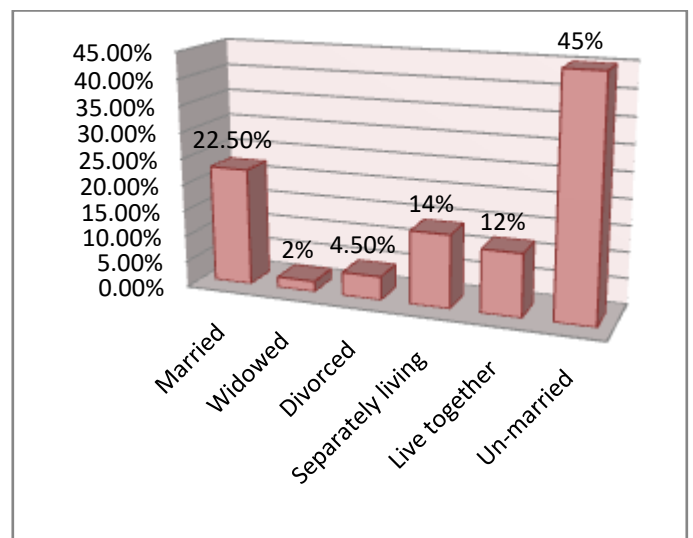
Data analysis

Survey System – Approach

This system has developed using Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 and Microsoft SQL server Management Studio 2008. The software interface and its functionalities are developed using C# programming language. It is a simple and modern, but object oriented programming language which has being developed by Microsoft. The system database built using slandered SQL (Structured Query Language) with support of Visual Studio - entity framework 4.0.

V. RESULTS/ FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1.1. The composition of the research sample

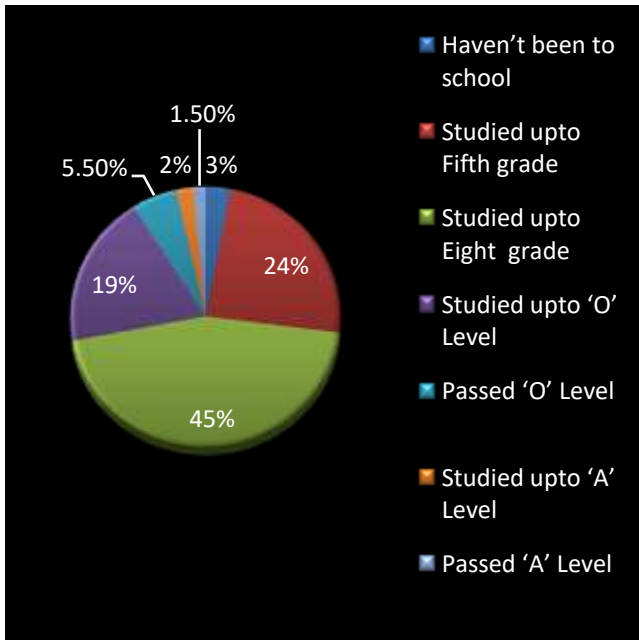| Nos.	GramaNiladhari Division	Number of listed gangs	Number of membership
01.	Mattakkuliya	09	52
02.	Modera	05	39
03.	Bluemendhal	03	16
04.	Kotahena	03	14
05.	New Bazzar	09	67
06.	Fort	09	71
07.	Pettah	09	68
08.	Grandpass	04	22
09.	Maligawatta	05	28
10.	Kochchikade	06	30
11.	Suduwella	02	17
12.	Keselwatta	03	20
13.	Panchikawatta	04	24
14.	Maligakanda	04	25
	Total	75	493

Figure 1 Position of Married / Un-married revealed through the study sample

Clearly, the majority of 493 interviewees are found to be un-married which corresponds to 45%. The 111 respondents representing 22.5% of the sample are married. All in all, that

living together without proper registration and also the other category that lives separately too, represents fairly higher percentages. The two segments stand for 12% and 14% respectively. It was possible to identify the members living together without entering into a proper marriage in all GS Divisions except in Grandpass.

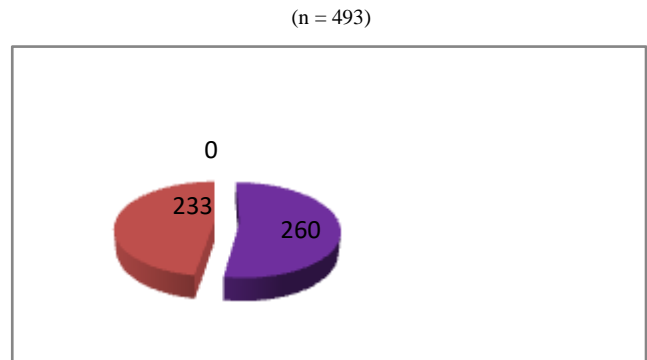Figure 2 Backgrounds of basic Education of respondent youth (n-493)

The figure 2 provides a classification of basic education attained by the responded youth gang members. It has revealed that 45% of youth have studied only up to 8th grade. Though some of the youth   claimed they have studied up to 8th grade the actual happening had been, as apparent, that teachers had assisted these ineffective students to continue up to 8th. Grade, just to avoid early drop outs from education, though they haven't reached the required goals.

There are various backgrounds and complexities visible among the urban anti-social gangs which reflect within the sub culture of gangs. The family backgrounds, socio-economic and cultural environment, levels of education and varied social adaptations are there as cross-cutting issues in favor of social norms as well as against the social norms. The below mentioned information addresses the relationship between the news channels carrying information on daily events and the views of gangsters.

A visible characteristic with regard to the familiarization of gang youth on the regularly published news was found to be at a lower level. A notable feature was that youth didn't have interest or keenness on the news. The publication carrying betting and racing news was popular among the youth. Some of the youth purchased newspapers and read   the news when there are hot incidences are published eg: on Cricket matches, or other agitate or outburst happenings. The views shared by 53 % youth claimed that whatever newspapers they used to
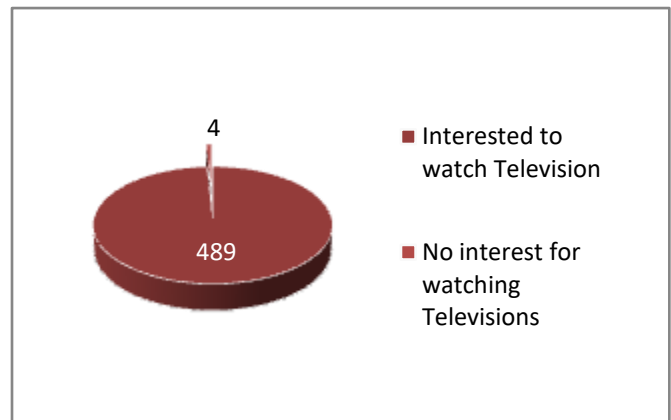
access are read, which are available at places they normally assemble in leisure times.

Figure 3. Scale of Interest of the responding youth on Media and the News

(n = 493)

Other information revealed was that 81% of gang leaders purchase whatever newspaper, daily. Normally all those in gangs do not like to listen to radios as well. Yet, depending on the availability of radios at work places youth do have interest to listen to them. Out of vast number of channels, several networks such as; *Neth, Lak, Vee, Max,* and Tamil medium channels are also English medium programmes could be heard as their popular channels. Out of 493, 489 youth found interested to watch Televisions. In this regard access for Television seemed available as a privilege either in own house or at boarding rooms/rented houses.

Figure 4. Status of Interest of the responsive youth in watching Television (n = 493)

As shown in the above chart 99% of gang youth do have interest in watching Televisions whereas, only 4 of them out of 493 respondents do not have such interest. In this respect it is worthy to look at the expected aims of youth having some curiosity to watch Televisions. According to the feedback received, majority of them (61%) watch news and 82% of them watching news via the one of the famous channel .Not only Sinhalese youth but Tamil and Muslim youth too, have selected the above channel. Commenting on the specialty to select the said channel they said the flow of presentation of news in pertinent to the particular incident is planned and designed in such a way that to imitate a story.

This story type presentation raises their inquisitiveness to watch the news item in full. This type of presentation also creates analytical aptitude for them to visualize how things to be planned in particular the acts of misdeeds, likely weaknesses in addressing subsequent happenings etc., It is further disclosed that 100% of youth out of 82% of those watching news articulated similar opinion as stated above paragraph. Also learnt that several gang leaders have instructed their member youth to watch the said channel and try to grasp valid messages.

A Muslim youth aged 22 identified as Bm/Sg of Bm/Mg's gang states as learn how we should do things in a safety manner. It is our belief that they give follows.

"News being broadcasted through xxxxxxxx channel is good. Having watched news in this channel one can understand the ambiguities which can push us to danger on certain things that we are doing. When we watch the news as a regular practice we can the news in a smart way. In certain events, we plan our strategies in line with what we see in this channel. We can be motivated ourselves to attack a shop or to murder somebody when we see one or two similar case stories.

The feedbacks shared by gang youth from *Bluemendall* emphasized why certain individuals watch news with such affection. Also disclosed in the study that youth gang members do not have higher interest to watch tele-dramas. Nevertheless the expressions made known that the gang members are desirous to watch politically driven as well as those showing varied competitive type programmes. When the interest of other nationalities is concerned it is ShakthiTV was popular among the Tamil and Muslim youth.

As a whole, based on the expressions of the responsive youth there is a strategically based specific inquisitiveness among them to acquire through the usage of communicative media. It is also apparent that these youth expressed marginal interest to watch tele-drama because they have alternative ways to relax and enjoy. And other thing is they have used to use social media especially in face book.

We almost all have used face book. We have separate group related to our like and dislike. If we need to stat affair with male partner we have group. Not only are those we earning some money through this group too. Because we can provide some services for others (laugh) Service meaning someone need women male we can provide them conceal their identification. (26 year gang member)

Media is doing a good job. We decide how we wear how we do styles how we live as a popular team. It's an amazing. I never go to school. But I know everything. How? Because of Media. As the group we are doing everything together, We know how do we plan our activity as well as we no current trends.. Everything we know through media. We all love to use media. Especially fashion show, tell drama, those are the

things that guide us . (30 year old Muslim boy who attached to gang)

The key characteristics of youth gangs and their linkages with urban Colombo city together with causes and effect of gang delinquency were very difficult. This paper describe most illustrative information of the concealed backgrounds of youth gang members having taken strides forward to assess essential factors beyond what can be seen on the surface by specifically pursuing the research objectives while also to analyzing the findings. Also delineated the deviant behavioral factors of youth gang members and the harmful effect causing enormous amount of negative impact on their own family members as well as the entire community. As a whole it was exhibited that without delinquent behavior no gangs can be existed. Despite whatever common objectives the gangs intend to achieve, the accomplished data analysis attested that their motives have correlation with delinquent behavior. Due to the factors that beastly experience gathered in their childhood and also the excessive eagerness to fulfill basic propitiations when they grow up, there is no intension for them to analyze their actions. Information gathered revealed that the gang youth are simply incapable of taking decision on behalf of their lives or their personal conduct but all such decisions are taken by the gang as a whole. It is also imperative to consider the theoretical perspectives defined by various sociologists, psychologists and criminologists on the behavioral pattern of gang youth and to act on a comparative assessment to perceive how far such analysis fall in line with the nature, attitude and actions of these respondent youth. When the criminal acts or to abuse children is concerned the causes affecting such actions is due to the psychic imbalance or the result of mental illnesses as expressed by psychologists or the psychiatrics. The psychologists argue on the hypothesis that when basic assumptions are not attained it affects the personality of such persons and the consequences can be the derivation of criminal acts. Author *Helen Gum westlake* of the research book titled " *Children : A study in individual behavior' (Westlake, 1973)* has discussed this subject at length. In this research is concerned 100% of the respondents' sample have failed in achieving their basic assumptions. When the criminal behavior is concerned there are many different psychological models of criminal behavior ranging from early ***Freudian*** notions to later cognitive and social psychological models.

There are several fundamental assumptions of psychological theories of criminality (and human behavior in general) where, **Sigmund Freud** believed that personality developed through a series of childhood stages in which the pleasure-seeking energies become focused on certain erogenous areas. Also stated that crimes become a result of instincts of mind and the social adaptation happens due to three psycho-sexual stages. The first stage is the ***oral stage*** the infant's primary source of interaction occurs through the mouth, so the rooting and sucking reflex is especially important. Secondly, If parents take an approach that is too

lenient, Freud suggested that an *anal-expulsive personality* could develop in which the individual has a messy, wasteful, or destructive personality. Thirdly, the phallic stage's major pleasure center is the main *genital organ* in either boys or girls and if the family circumstances are not developed in favor of enriching the balanced personality during the three growth stages, the tendencies are much higher to affect the post staged personality.

A similar hypothesis of psycho-social development theory has been discussed by Eric Ericson too. Within the gang culture in urban zones, the factors eg; values of social setting, education, religion and the culture are treated with low quality of acceptance. It is quite difficult to see the thoughts or understanding to consider that child is an extremely important personality and sufficient measures be there to give the child his or her childhood in a responsible and careful manner within each family unit. These families have delivered children not because they need them but might be as a result of their sexual desires. Under these facts it is apparent that the children born to those families of gang youth have not regarded the social adaptation of next generation as per the three psycho sexual stages shown by Freud and Erickson. Based on the empirical research accomplished in 1925 by *Cyril Burt*, one of the psychologists, published his book titled 'Young *Delinquents'.* This study had been focused on 200 delinquent children together with 200 well behaved children and emphasized that multi- obstinacy is a direct cause for delinquency. Strong obduracy was existed among the respondent youth as well.

In addition, the theory of inter-correlation presented by Southerland *too*, has discussed the gang delinquency. *Southerland* stated that inter-correlation between gangs becomes a source for gang delinquency. In reference to the views of respondent youth, 100% of them in the sample mentioned that Ganging is for shared friendship, yet, the innermost cause is to organize themselves for criminal actions. On the other hand the gangs youth try to associate with similar aged individuals as friends too are persons keen to clash with the law.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Usually, the ganging society is consisted by fragmented family backgrounds. The values of the society have transformed into precious morals due to the involvement of gang members on their sub cultural factors. The main choice of the said sub culture is to carryout crimes and delinquency through; murder, ransoms, abduction, alcoholism, drug addiction, un-ethic sexual behavior etc., which brings blessings for the youth. Some of the gang members address their wives using impolite dialect or even using filthy words. In turn, wives of gang members address their husbands using similar language. Even children in those families used to address parents using same language due to their ignorance. When analyzed aforesaid background and concepts it is clear that no one is supposed to bring criminal behavior, yet the living pattern and the social adaptation as well as the personnel's motivation is clear that general or specific characteristics are reflecting. Specially some strong factors are leading some behavioral pattern as the pull and push factors. Media usage is the one of key factor that guide to someone's' behavior and attitudes. The aforesaid data analysis clearly specifies the extent of the above symptoms are substituted their behavior in line with the urban youth gangs.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is essential to use media as a motivation module to develop youth and their skills. It can be progressively used for national agendas on production, development and other through establishing proper training opportunities and employment opportunities, which will eventually help the individuals to establish their own life and requirement for achieving life targets. Thus media must direct them to develop their self-concept and must encourage to joining each other's as the antisocial youth gangs and they do not need join with gangs or seek assistance from them. Apart from this establishing employment opportunities in different fields through development in production, agriculture, health, construction, IT etc. filed give all the youths to find their paths in desired filed of work.

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