Young peoples' perceptions of living with change in Brunei Darussalam

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Research into the attitudes and feelings of youth is not new in most industrialised countries. Over thirty years ago the sociologist Talcott Parsons explained the emergence of modern youth culture, and the issues and problems attendant on youth cultures, in terms of the impact of changes that occur in modern industrial societies (1964). A decade earlier Eisenstadt argued that youth is a time of instability but that a shared youth culture provides meaning, friendship and shared experience (1956). Each year more academic tomes appear, often with popular commentary in the media since "youth" is newsworthy, on the perceived problems of young people; be it alienation (e.g. Marcuse, 1972), anti-social behaviour (e.g. Hargreaves, 1975; Pearson, 1983), fashion and music (e.g. Leonard, 1980; Frith, 1983), crime (Robbins, 1978; Redhead, 1991; Rutter and Smith, 1995), drug abuse (Cosgrave, 1989), or whatever - it would seem everyone has a view. Often such studies are done on a systematic basis by government agencies concerned with programmes that are targeted at youth. ACER, the Australian Council for Educational Research, recently completed a survey, Youth in Transition, which targeted a cohort of 10,000 students in Year 9 in 1978 who were then interviewed annually until they were 25 years old. DEET, the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, began the Australian Longitudinal Survey in 1980. Those originally interviewed are still in the study (now in their mid-thirties) and they and new cohorts are surveyed annually by mail, mainly for developing and refining employment, education and training policies. (Long, 1995)

In Southeast Asia such studies are more recent and from a cursory reading of the English language press of Malaysia, Singapore and Borneo it might appear that this interest is stimulated more by the need to anticipate possible (antisocial) behaviours by youth and as a response to actual youth behaviour, than as an academic study on its own. Academic interest in young people's lives and interests is still quite new although, especially in Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong, several significant studies of young peoples' educational needs and behavioural problems have been undertaken in the region. (See bibliography in Thomas, 1989)

The concept of youth studies has taken on some urgency in the last few years, especially with increased urbanisation, mass schooling, and the seeming inevitability of the "importation" of some of the problems industrialised countries have experienced with youth, particularly in a post-industrial setting (see Marcuse, 1972). With increasing affluence in the "tiger economies" of Southeast Asia and increasing leisure activities to attract the attention of the young urban dweller, there
has been a heightened perception that this section of the community has needs and desires that may be different from other generational groups. And there have been a number of serious attempts to discuss youth issues in the media, especially in the Southeast Asian press (e.g. 'Beat "Lepak" with Rakan Muda', Rahmah, Sunday Mail, Malaysia, 1.1.95, which outlines a programme to engage loafers in "healthy activities").

In Brunei, Government have been aware that with media access and the internationalisation of "news", Brunei is not isolated from at least hearing of the ills of the world at large and in the case of youth issues Government has sought to initiate a debate on the current and future position of young Bruneians. In these discussions special attention has been paid to the role of the family in transmitting the traditions, customs and values of society from one generation to the next. In particular, His Majesty Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has constantly stressed the importance of Islamic values in reinforcing the family in bringing forth "good ummahs". During the celebration of Hari Raya Aidilfitri last year His Majesty told his people that the International Community 'have begun to realise that many social ills that are rampant involving youths around the world are due to their viewing lightly the important role of the family institution' (Brunei Darussalam Newsletter, No. 161, 15.3.95, p.1). One week later the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports stated at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, that the Brunei Government is "fully aware of the importance of creating the family institution social order" in assisting "to overcome such problems as poverty, unemployment and social exclusion and reaffirmed its belief that such development cannot take place without the existence of peace and stability"( Brunei Darussalam Newsletter, No. 161, 15.3.95, p.11).

In 1994 the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS) initiated a dialogue with Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) to share ideas on a number of social issues that were becoming prominent in the work of the Ministry, for instance, single-parenting, divorce, child abuse, pondons, and youth. Over a number of discussions with MCYS personnel, teachers and welfare workers, parents, student teachers and UBD colleagues, it slowly emerged that the whole area of what was known about youth issues in Brunei, and what needed to be known if relevant and ameliorative policies were to be implemented by government, was an area full of opinions and controversies with an often expressed opinion that youth is somehow out of control. As is found in most parts of the world, parents and officials blame schools, external influences, and teachers for the "youth problem"; and teachers blame parents, officials and external influences for the situation they find themselves in....fewer institutional controls, loss of traditional respect, poor teaching facilities, unsympathetic authorities, etc. For some the answers to the apparent unruliness of youth seem easy and are simplistic - more discipline, return to traditional teaching, shorter
haircuts, some form of National Service - the answers are straightforward and glib. But for parents and teachers there are no easy answers, although in Brunei as elsewhere there is the feeling that some form of "moral education" may be an answer.

One of the initial problems with the MCYS study was in persuading education faculty to get involved in such studies, a common response being that many faculty felt unqualified to deal with such issues and so avoid them. In discussions it was commonly stated that most non-Bruneians (the bulk of UBD academic staff are expatriates) do not have an adequate knowledge of the cultural norms existing in Brunei and so are reluctant to research into young people, and parents, whose cultural backgrounds are likely to be different from their own. In particular there was expressed the strong belief that these are "sensitive issues" that are not easily researchable in the Brunei context; such issues as patriotism, or feelings about the country and the world around them, perceptions of the future, criminality, sexuality, and economic well-being. However, it was the view of the Ministry and the author of this paper that an attempt should be made on such a study assuming on the part of the researcher a sympathetic perspective, such as that described by Hernandez, starting from a recognition of: "(a) the political, social, and economic realities of individuals' experience in culturally diverse and complex human encounters; and
(b) the importance of culture, race, sexuality, and gender, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status and exceptionalities in the educational process." (Hernandez, 1989, p.4)

The paper is organised in two parts: Part 1 will deal with the methods of the youth survey and some of the biodata, while Part 2 will discuss some of the results of the survey in the context of the conference themes.

PART 1: Purpose of a preliminary survey of youth perspectives

After a year of formal and informal meetings it became clear that a preliminary study would have to be carried out to test the main hypothesis that young people were willing to take part in such a survey and would answer questions concerning social issues that were put to them by sensitive local interviewers. Thus the purpose of the small preliminary study partly reported here was to examine the possibility of asking young people in Brunei Darussalam about the way in which they perceived their lives in terms of several important areas that were deemed to be sensitive and that were possibly not amenable to this form of study. In order to achieve this purpose, the following research questions were posed:

1. How do young people feel about their country?
2. How much empathy do young Bruneians have for other people and for the
important issues facing people in all countries?
3. Who has influence over young people?
4. How do youth feel about the way they were raised?
5. Do youth have a uniform code of behaviour concerning wrongdoing?
6. How exposed are young people to criminality?
7. Do youth see outside interests as having an effect on their behaviour?
8. Do youth see any causes and effects with regard to crime?
9. How do youth see their future prospects?
10. Is there any clear relationship between socioeconomic status and the views held by youth?

In this paper comments will mainly be confined to the first four questions. The terms "youth" and "young people" are sometimes used interchangeably but for the purposes of the survey the age range of youth was defined by MCYS as being between 16 to 23 years. Essentially all the respondents were either in the late secondary stage of schooling or had recently left school and were seeking employment. Although children may start school at five years old because of late entry and repetition there are often over-age pupils in the secondary schools.

Methods

The interview-questionnaires were administered by mature students in their final year (1996) of the BA Primary Education degree. Fifty young people participated in the exercise with equal male/female representation. Biodata collected from the questionnaire indicated the following:
- all were Bruneians;
- all the males were single; 3 of the females were married;
- 10 males and 11 females (42%) had completed their formal education;
- 4 males and 5 females (18%) were in some form of further studies;
- 11 males and 9 females (40%) were in secondary school;
- 6 males and 5 females (22%) described themselves as unemployed; and the remainder were in some form of schooling or further education.

Family data indicated the following:
- that 16 fathers and 18 mothers (68%) had no education higher than primary schooling;
- only 2 fathers and no mothers had a post-secondary education;
- that 7 (14%) fathers were unemployed, 7 were government teachers, 11 (22%) were government labourers, 12 (24%) were other lower grades of government officers (clerks etc.) and 8 (16%) were self-employed, the rest being pensioners or private sector;
- that for mothers 36 (72%) were full-time housewives, 5 (10%) were government teachers, 4 (8%) were government labourers, 3 (6%) were self-employed, and the rest were with the private sector;
- and of the employed parents, 39 (78%) were employed with the government sector.

Finally, the average age of the respondents was 19 years, the
average number of siblings in the family was 7.6 years, and their average own position among siblings was 4.9.

Although the family data on education and occupation for parents and respondents would appear to indicate a fairly low educational and socioeconomic profile, it is worth noting that all but one family owned their own home, that all households owned a car, and that 43 (86%) households had more than one car.

Instrument

Based on a review of other work on youth in the region, on the general literature, and on a number of informal interviews with colleagues, preservice and inservice teachers and the staff of the MCYS, a number of statements were developed that seemed pertinent to each of the research questions. These statements were tested, changed if necessary and then used for the questionnaire.

The first page of the questionnaire provided the information that forms the biodata. Subjects were told that there was no identification of themselves on the forms and that they were free to take their time over the second part of the questionnaire and could seek advice or clarification from the interviewer if they required it. They were also told that they were free to put no response to any questions that they felt uncomfortable with, but it was explained that the questionnaire was being administered partly to find out what young people felt could and could not be discussed in this kind of way. In the event the very few "No responses" which occurred arose on the "morality issues" and they came from only three respondents. The questionnaire contained 30 questions or statements derived from the 10 research questions presented above, each with a number of statements to which respondents were generally asked to indicate their level of agreement. Items in the questionnaire were grouped according to the research questions but no test of reliability coefficients has been carried out as this sample is not randomly selected and the objective of the survey does not require such treatment at this stage.

As is clear from the above there are a number of points to be made about this preliminary survey that preclude it being taken at this stage as a comprehensive and wholly reliable piece of research.

It is worth noting that:
- the respondents do not form a carefully controlled random sample.
- the distribution of respondents is only within the Brunei-Muara and KualaBelait Districts peri-urban areas (which contain 68% of the population).
- this is not a controlled study, in that although it is based on a particular age group, it is not stratified socially or in any other way.
- it is impossible to rule out the possibility of false answers.
- it can be argued that so many closed statements do not allow people to have any freedom to express themselves in their own words about such important issues as their view of life, or their concept of the future. However, answering open-ended questions presupposes a good command of the written word (and this questionnaire was in English, the second
language of both the questioner and respondent) and confidence in the interviewers.
- this is a very restricted questionnaire based mostly on degrees of opinion.

- it cannot be assumed that the fifty respondents are necessarily representative of the whole population of young people.

However, the results of this small survey cover ground that is quite old in several fields of study, ground that, as has been pointed out in the introduction, has been well tilled by sociologists, demographers, psychologists, statisticians, and the like and as will be seen the results seem to conform to patterns seen in similar work elsewhere. And as the response refusal rate was very low and only in a few questions, at least the primary research question has been answered, that such questions can be asked of young people in Brunei.

PART 2 : Results and discussion

Item 1. Youth perspectives on Brunei's future world position (n=50)
Perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All</th>
<th>MF</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) I see Brunei as a world power</td>
<td>4% 4% 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) I see Brunei as a major power in SE Asia</td>
<td>20% 28% 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) I see Brunei as a minor power in SE Asia</td>
<td>22% 16% 28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) I see Brunei as having very little influence</td>
<td>34% 28% 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Don't know</td>
<td>20% 24% 16%</td>
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</table>

The interviewers began by asking the respondents for their views about Brunei's future over the next decade or two. The largest group see Brunei's international influence as being restricted to Southeast Asia, although a third expect Brunei to have very little influence. Females are more pessimistic than males (also true for most questions in the survey) in that 68% of them believe that Brunei will be a minor power or have very little influence compared with 44% of males.

Item 2.(a)Would you choose to live in another country if you could do so?Yes16(32%)No 34(68%)
(b) If "Yes" - where?50% Malaysia
50% named more than one country.

It is significant that over two-thirds would not wish to live elsewhere and of the one-third who did would so choose, very few chose countries outside of Southeast Asia. As Australia and the USA were the only western industrialised countries mentioned more than twice it would appear that the fear that western influences are overwhelmingly attractive in terms of lifestyle is misplaced as very few would seem to be willing to change their Bruneian environment for a western one.
Item 3. How proud are you of Brunei compared to other countries? n=50
Response
(a) I feel very proud. 48%
(b) I feel a little proud. 36%
(c) I don't feel proud at all. 12%
(d) Don’t know. 4%

Asked whether or not they felt proud to be Bruneian, 48% said they were "very proud" but as with most questions in the survey young females were more pessimistic and/or negative than males and only 36% of them were "very proud"—or perhaps they are just more modest as 48% of the female were "a little proud" compared to 24% of the males.

Item 4. How will Brunei be in the future as a place to live and work and raise a family?
Response
(a) It will become better than it is now. 60%
(b) It will become worse than it is now. 22%
(c) It will stay much the same as it is now. 12%
(d) Don't know. 6%

There were no real differences of view between young males and females about the quality of life in Brunei as measured on their views on the future with most taking an optimistic view, although 1 in 5 do feel that life will be worse. As is universally the case most youth have an optimistic view of the future, 60% believing things will get even better. However, as can be seen from Item 5 below, when asked the same question in more detail, the answers were somewhat different. In particular, it is noticeable that although overall more respondents feel that life will not be worse for them than it has been for their parents, fewer are prepared to claim that it will be better. Whereas 60% were prepared to believe that "Life will become better than it is now" in Item 4 above, only 32% in Item 5 believed that their "way of life will become better than it is now". Presumably the findings confirm the common generational view that each generation improves on the previous generation; overall the optimism of youth is still the predominant feature.

Item 5. When you are your parent's age how do you think you will be in terms of your health, wealth and way of life?
Response
About same Better Worse Don't know
(a) Health 34% 38% 4% 24%
(b) Wealth 28% 40% 8% 24%
(c) Way of life 30% 32% 6% 32%

This optimistic viewpoint is reinforced to some extent in Item 22 below, which asked youth to consider a number of circumstances which might occur in their own lives and these were then ranked as positive and negative feelings about their future.
Item 22. (a) What is the chance that the following good things will happen to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Good Chance</th>
<th>No Chance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That you will marry</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will buy a home</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will become rich</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will have children</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will be promoted in job</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will travel abroad</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will continue studies</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will be happy with life</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) What is the chance that the following misfortunes will happen to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Good Chance</th>
<th>No Chance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That you will suffer from an eating disorder</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will become a single parent</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will be divorced</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will go into debt</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will try drugs</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will be mugged or robbed</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will be unemployed for a long time</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you will be sexually assaulted</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to ponder on the meaning of "a long time" in relation to the statement on unemployment above for in response to a question in another section of the survey (See Appendix, Table 23) 60% expected to wait over a year after finishing full-time education before finding a job, and only 10% expected to find a job within 6 months.

The question for Item 22 asked young people to think ahead 10 to 15 years and consider the chances of a wide range of circumstances occurring in their own live. Although only the expectation of marriage produced more than two-thirds positive responses, on the whole young people are generally optimistic about their futures as shown in section (a). In view of the fact that Government is planning for human resource development through widening educational provision it is a matter of concern that 1 in 5 do not expect to further their education.

Under misfortunes, section (b), the percentages expecting misfortunes are quite low, as might be expected from the finding of Item 4 above, which largely indicates a level of contentment with life. However, as indicated above by the comment on unemployment, there is need for further investigation as other questions, e.g. in the crime section of the survey, do indicate some contradictions in responses. Certainly a majority of the respondents reported knowing people who were affected by these misfortunes. It is cause for concern that while 22% expect to go into debt, only 16% definitely feel they will not do so - and that in a state that is seemingly very lawful, 14% think that there is a "Good Chance" that they "will try drugs" (in spite of a
long-running anti-drugs campaign) and 10% live in fear of being mugged or sexually assaulted.

Although young people do have some worries about the world that they live in they still do retain youthful idealism as is shown by responses to a number of questions that attempted to get an indication of the their values and feelings regarding the wider world.

Item 6. Worldview n=50
(a) The world is OK as it is. 6%
(b) The world should be a better place and people like me can help to make it better. 56%
(c) The world should be made a better place but there is not much that people like me can do about it. 24%
(d) The world will always be as it is and there is nothing that anyone can do about it. 10%
(e) Don't know. 4%

Item 7. Would you be willing to work in a less developed country for very little money?
Yes - 38%
No - 62%

Asked if they would spend a year or more working for their keep and very little else, 38% said they would. And of the 62% who said "No", most gave as their reasons either that they felt they should do something to further the development of Brunei first or that they felt they needed to get some financial security in their own lives first before they could think about helping others.

Taken with the findings in item 6, where 80% feel that the world should be a better place, the findings suggest that complacency about the present state of the world is a minority view among Bruneian youth. On the whole the replies reveal low levels of cynicism and despair.

And it is clear that young Bruneians have very real fears about the world they live in and its future. A number of current common environmental concerns was read out to them followed by a list of issues involving ethical decisions about man's use of animals and nature. The results are shown in Items 8 and 9 below.

Worries about the environment.

Item 8. How worried are you about the following issues? n=50

(a) The destruction of trop rain for.54% 34% 0 12%
(b) Sea and river pollution. 68% 22% 2% 8%
(c) The dumping of industrial waste 56% 28% 2% 14%
As can be seen the proportion of young people saying they were "not at all worried" never rose above 8%, while the proportion who were "very worried" ranged between 48% and 68%. It is interesting given the low level of industrialisation in the state that air and water pollution are the two major areas of concern which presumably bodes well for keeping Brunei in the future as an environmentally high profile nation. It possibly also reflects the teaching concerns of science and geography syllabii which may mean that Bruneian students have greater familiarity with issues of environmental pollution as compared to ozone depletion and global warming, concepts that are perhaps more difficult to imagine in this environment. It is the intention of Government to introduce mandatory environmental science across the curriculum in primary and secondary schools in 1997. (Ministry of Education, Borneo Bulletin, 6.11.96)

Man and animals

Item 9. How do you feel about these issues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Using animals in exper.</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Testing cosmetics on animals.</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Keeping animals in zoos.</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Hunting animals for fun.</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Hunting animals to eat.</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Hunting animals for furs and skins.</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Hunting elephants rhinos for ivory.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) Using long drift nets sea-fishing.</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Factory farming.</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results for man's use of animals in his environment are much more mixed with a majority being against hunting animals either for fun, or for animals' furs and skins, or for ivory, and a majority also being against testing on animals by cosmetics manufacturers. Somewhat contradictorily only 28% are against the general use of animals in factory experimentation. But when it comes to feeding mankind, the majority of young Bruneians are "not worried" by hunting to eat, by factory farming, or drift net fishing. It may well be that the environmental lobby has been very successful in getting some of its messages across on the world's media and has been less successful with
others such as food issues. It is worth noting that on 6 out of the 9 issues one in five respondents haven't made up their minds and register as "Don't know".

Finally, many Bruneian parents will be pleasantly surprised to learn that most young people (66%) are basically content with their upbringing. Only a small number would reject their parent's child-rearing methods, with about two-thirds saying their parents had got it about right and that they would raise their children more or less as they were raised. They also take their parents seriously in terms of receiving advice, far more seriously than their teachers, or community leaders, or siblings, with males being slightly more receptive to their mother's advice than females (88% M/72%F) and both taking their father's advice equally seriously (over 80%).

To see whether these high percentages turning to their parents for advice was evidence of the absence of any real generation gap (which is often postulated as increasing as societies modernise) respondents were asked the question below.

Item 10. Who have you most in common with? Response
   (a) People of your own age in other countries.52%
   (b) People of your parents' age here in Brunei.22%
   (c) Don't know.26%

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly in view of the contentment respondents expressed over their parents' childrearing practices, a majority (52%) feel they have more in common with youth elsewhere and a substantial minority (26%) are undecided. But in this young Bruneians are much in line with the findings of similar studies elsewhere (e.g. SOFRE's L'Etat De L'Opinion 1994).

Touraine (1970) argues that world-wide the young have experienced symptoms of post-war confusion reflecting a disillusionment with the leadership of the earlier generation and leading the young to look among themselves world-wide for their intellectual and social icons. However, this seems an unlikely explanation of the Bruneian youths' feelings of communality with youth elsewhere, given that they are still very family-bound in their decision-making processes. Perhaps the permeation of social structure by the international media is a cause?

Attitudes to wrongdoing

The above items dealt with young Bruneians attitudes to their environment and to the way in which they were raised and developed feelings towards their family and society and to the wider world. The other issues asked of respondents were more concerned with values and attitudes to behaviour that did not conform to that expected in a 'moral society' and in a society going through a period of rapid changes. It was stressed at the World Conference on Education for All held at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, in the Brunei Country Paper that "In
particular, efforts are being made to ensure not only close correlation with our manpower needs, but also that the nation's Malay and Islamic heritage, values and traditions will not be lost in the pursuit of industrialisation and other forms of development. Indeed, the concept of 'values education' is constantly stressed, with the aim of making students morally mature and balanced in their responses to emotive social issues."

This view was further reinforced by the Minister of Education at the South-East Asia Ministers of Education Council Meeting of 16-19 January in 1995 when he emphasised that the national ideology of Melayu Islam Beraja (MIB) or Malay Islamic Monarchy is giving particular attention to important values at all stages of education, and that "it is hoped that such an emphasis on MIB can be a cultural defence against negative and unhealthy values that are widespread through the mass media and other sources." (Brunei Darussalam Newsletter, No.160, 1995)

As ever, the two sides of the mass media coin are in evidence here for as was seen above it is striking how aware Bruneian youth is of world issues and of how they might relate to the Brunei context. Even issues that might never impinge on the daily lives of youth, such as ecological concerns, seem to evoke a positive and sensible response which possibly reflects both education and mass media influence.

And yet it is often heard in school staffrooms and in casual conversations with older Bruneians that youth is somehow "going out of control" in a time of change. Reports of increasing drug abuse, joyriding, fighting among school gangs, unruly classroom behaviour, loafing around or "lepak", while more common in the press of Malaysia, are now occurring in Brunei; or so anecdotal evidence would have it. The survey was, therefore, interested in getting a view of young peoples' attitudes to some of these social phenomena and some of the results are reported below.

The first set of questions were concerned with levels of honesty and attitudes to some behaviours commonly seen as anti-social and increasingly reported as being "new" or "imported" into Bruneian society. The tables and the questions referred to are contained in the Appendix.

As referred to above (p.12) Government in Brunei Darusalaam have expressed concern that the nation's youth are not losing their "Malay and Islamic heritage and values and traditions" and that through 'values education' and "an emphasis on MIB (Malay Islam Beraja) can be a defence against negative and unhealthy values that are widespread through the mass media and other sources". Implicit in this approach is the dual belief that education can be a tool for inculcating morality and that through education young people will at some stage or other be able to internalise their own codes of conduct and act in a 'mature and balanced' way, the ultimate stage in Kohlberg's theory of moral development in which the individual gains increasing autonomy and comes to recognise the intrinsic value of rules and laws. (Kohlberg, 1984)
One of the difficulties with teaching morality is deciding which moral issues to cover, especially as in many societies we often confuse two possibly different things; social rules and moral behaviour. Most of the theories of moral development that teacher educators use with student teachers, e.g. Kohlberg (1984), Piaget (1934), accept that moral awareness develops in stages. Young children follow the parents' views and later begin to see that there are two parties involved in anything they do: themselves and the person they affect. Later, by teenage, comes the comprehension that a larger group called the community has to be considered, and later still, but still in the age group under discussion here, youth come to the understanding that there is an even more abstract idea called society (Tapp and Kohlberg, 1971). The problem faced by educationists dealing with this age group is how do parents, teachers, and other leaders cultivate in the young this growing sensitivity to the rights and needs of others?

From the educationist's point of view it is obvious that parents differ in how they raise their children (and yet the Brunei sample shows basic acceptance by Bruneian youth of the ways by which they were raised) and in how they wish their children to be taught and how they should behave after schooling. Some expect filial obedience on everything while others believe the young must be taught how to decide right and wrong for themselves. As educationists do we help the young to be conformist, obedient and good or do we teach the young to ask questions? No doubt the first method will produce people who will not steal your car cassette but will they also be capable of change and autonomous action, or of asking awkward questions - and do all societies want such citizens, anyway?

Perhaps from the moral education perspective we need to try to find out from youth what are the elements in society that make them uncomfortable with their society, leading in extreme cases even to alienation. In this way those concerned with youth can seek from them ideas about the kind of society they would be comfortable with and be able to participate in meaningfully as full citizens. Many studies of youth have shown us that far from being anti-social young people do need to feel part of the wider community, they want to belong and do accept rules in their own clubs and groups and follow strictly their own codes of conduct (Marsh, et al, 1978; Hall, 1976). As has been seen in the results reported above and is confirmed in most societies around the world, young people are highly moral and also often idealistic and caring (see Musgrave, 1987) and many programmes of civics and moral education designed for schools, youth clubs and other non-formal education agencies build upon this youthful morality to teach them how to become well-informed and responsible adults, able to understand the rights and duties of citizenship and to weigh up social, moral and legal issues. It will be important in the Brunei context for programmes such as MIB and Civics to foster a sense of citizenship with a clear understanding of how much in this society a citizen can actually participate in the key areas of societal life. In many
countries governments do use their education systems to foster a sense of belonging to one polity, partly because as Tungku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia's first Prime Minister, said, "all projects, including education, are meaningless if people are not united" (q.v. Watson, 1994). Thus, for Malaysia, the Rukenegara (the fundamental principles of the nation) forms a similar policy statement to MIB in Brunei, in informing guidelines for the direction of schooling and in enabling Government to seek to bring about certain common developments, both economic and social. Consequently, in Brunei all schools, not only those run directly by government, must teach the principles of MIB.

It is within this context that the Tables 16-21 (Appendix) should be viewed, that of a changing society attempting to strongly influence the moral behaviour of its young people and to help them develop sound moral behaviour. As can be seen, the issues deal with a various aspects of young peoples' attitudes and feelings towards deviant behaviour and certain criminal behaviour in particular, ranging from 'simple' issues of 'honesty' to more complex ones dealing with responsibility for other peoples' behaviour. The issues were deliberately chosen to reflect those that might figure in their everyday experience (car crime, causes of crime, effects of media) to those that will probably never be met in most people's lives (murder, prison). In terms of the pilot project these questions were only asked to test whether young people would be willing to answer and discuss such issues and only secondarily were they to test how far youth conforms to the model of a moral community with shared values and attitudes towards certain kinds of behaviour.

Tables 16 and 17 asked, firstly, whether they would report to the police someone they knew who had committed a crime and, secondly, whether they knew someone who had committed such crimes. As shown in Table 16 the crimes of burglary (80% Yes) and murder (82% Yes) were seen as warranting a report to the police but there was uncertainty over the crime of sexual assault with only 36% for reporting and 42% uncertain - and with females both less willing to report and more uncertain as to what they would actually do. By comparison, and perhaps reflecting this highly car-conscious society, (96% of households had more than one car and none had no car, Table 29) 80% of males and two-thirds overall would report someone to the police for theft from a car, yet while 74% knew someone who went joyridding in a car only one third would report an unlicensed joyrider (Table 16).

It may seem surprising, considering the support shown earlier by youth for their family support and childrearing practices and the high value placed on parental and religious leaders' guidance (p.16), that the young know so much about crimes that are committed in society. According to Table 17, of the more serious crimes, about 1 in 3 young people know a young person who has had sexual relations below the legal age limit, 1 in 5 know a young person who has committed a sexual assault, and 1 in 10 know a young person who has committed the crimes of burglary and robbery with violence, while 40% know a young person who has taken illegal drugs, 70% know one who has taken alcohol (illegal), and 80% know one who has been fighting.

One striking disparity along gender lines is that young females
report substantially more knowledge of crimes committed by young people in the realms of sexual assault, illegal sex, drug abuse, using pornography, and shoplifting.

With regard to the causes of crime and the treatment of criminals (Tables 18-20) there is a consensus over a number of issues. Both males and females agree that stricter parents (60% All) and more discipline in schools (80%) would create less crime. In placing the emphasis for reducing criminality on the family and the school they reflect the social concerns of Government in this matter but they see no strong relationship between other social factors in creating the conditions for criminality to occur, only 46% seeing bad housing as a cause of crime (perhaps because with the enormous effort currently underway to provide good housing for the population they see this cause as diminishing - 98% of the sample lived in family-owned homes. Table 27) and only 56% believe that unemployment is a cause of crime, with 36% definitely discounting unemployment as a cause. Generally their views on the effects of prisons on criminals are fairly liberal; although 76% believe in the retention of capital punishment for serious offences.

Much debate is exercised in Brunei over the power of the media, especially television and video, to influence people's lives and particularly of the supposed perniciousness of much of the offerings of the foreign-controlled TV stations. As has been seen by the mushrooming of satellite discs around the state, scarcely a home does not have access to foreign media through the TV. It is clear that young people do believe that TV and videos are a corrupting force with 84% believing that the crime and violence seen on TV and videos do influence some people's behaviour (Table 20) and 60% claiming to know someone who has been influenced to commit a crime because of a programme that they have seen (Table 21). Furthermore, 66% believe that there is a lot of crime and violence seen on TV and videos (Table 19) and 80% believe that the amount crime shown on TV and film should be strictly limited (Table 18,f). All in all, young people certainly believe in the power of the media to influence behaviour and in this sample they are not in favour of what they have seen delivered into their homes by the media in the areas of crime and violent behaviour.

Conclusion

These results indicate that youth in Brunei are aware of many issues related to living in the modern world and of the major issues that confront them and their leaders as they approach the twenty-first century. In the survey there were very few "Nil" responses and, as reported by the interviewers, no hesitancy in answering any of the items raised above or in seeking clarification of some of the issues raised. In view of this result, it can be concluded that in relation to the research questions young Bruneians have no difficulty or unwillingness to participate in such an opinion-seeking exercise. Thus the hypothesis that "young people were willing to take part in such a
survey and would answer questions concerning social issues that were put to them by sensitive local interviewers” is proven for research questions 1 to 10. One of the most striking results of the survey is the general indication of how aware youth is of world issues and of how these issues relate to the Brunei context, even when the connection is not immediately apparent. And yet, as stated earlier, it is often heard in school staffrooms and in casual conversations with older Bruneians, that youth is somehow “going out of control”. Reports of drug-taking, joyriding, fighting among school gangs, loafing around (lepak), while more common in the press in Malaysia (see Borneo Bulletin report of 23/24.10.93 and Sunday Mail, 1.1.95) are now occurring in Brunei, or so some would claim, although evidence of such activities is somewhat circumstantial and even anecdotal. It is possible that these activities are international phenomena which may require legislative action, as in the Malaysian state of Johor, which recently called for an anti-loafing law and for expulsion from school for students caught loitering in public places(Sunday Mail, 18.8.94).

So how can parents, teachers and others cultivate in youth the growing sense of belonging to a wider group and a sensitivity to the rights of others? If we accept that the young have high ethical principles then the emphasis has to be on reasoning not didactics, on recognising the standards that the young do have and hold strongly and in helping them to apply these standards not just to their friends but to society.

Transparency, dignity, objectivity, neighbourliness, and readiness to admit one’s mistakes and the merits of one’s adversaries are among the principles claimed for youth by Philippe Bernard. He claims that in France, at a time when the political community is desperately trying to find some way of building bridges with young people, notably through advertising campaigns, a fair number of young people have turned their back on the national stage and are rediscovering the pleasure of being active locally in community-level works and programmes (Bernard, 1995). There appear to no signs that young people in Brunei have engaged in any energetic manner in community works. In a speech opening the 1994 national meeting of the Scouts Association of Brunei Darussalam, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, highlighted the need to create a scheme to enable youth, particularly those with "good education", to contribute to the country and he regretted that "The small involvement of youth with high education in welfare or voluntary bodies is a sad state of affairs.” (Brunei Darussalam Newsletter,143/144,1994.)

In Brunei the problem of designing programmes for young people is compounded by the fact that many young people have had low achievement, or underachievement, at school and as we have seen from the perceptions of employment above, may see themselves as having a bleak economic future in a society where birthright and/or intellectually marketable skills seem to be the only legal ways of progressing in life. Several of the young people approached by interviewers were quite surprised that anyone would want to hear their views, such being the power of
labeling that they already saw themselves as people with nothing interesting to say. A similar view is often stated by youth elsewhere (Bourdieu, 1994). Indeed, it is worth ending by reminding ourselves that the respondents to the questions that led to this paper are in their answers much like their counterparts elsewhere around the world in that for most of the issues discussed they exhibit the traditional optimism of youth. And moreover, in terms of the main reason for carrying out the survey, they have shown that Bruneian youth are as willing and as able as other youth to seriously discuss the major concerns that affect their lives now and that will continue to affect them in the future. They must be able to play a part in the designing of programmes that will assist in bringing improvement to the lives of young people as Brunei, unique in many ways, moves into the post-industrial age with all the concomitant problems that this process of development may bring.

References


Brunei Darussalam Newsletter (1995) 'SEAMEO urged to plan programmes and projects more relevantly to meet consumers' needs', 28 February, no. 160.


Table 14. In today's world, do you think you can succeed and always be honest; or is it necessary to be dishonest sometimes? All F M (%)

(a) You can succeed and be totally honest 12 12 12
(b) Sometimes it's necessary to be dishonest
(c) Don't know

Table 15. Here are some things that people do. What is your opinion of them?
(OK - It's OK : NOK - It's not OK : DC - Don't care : 4 - a refusal to answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OK/NOK/DC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Dropping litter in the street or a park</td>
<td>4/90/6</td>
<td>8/84/8</td>
<td>0/96/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Keeping the change when a shop assistant makes a mistake</td>
<td>20/60/20</td>
<td>24/56/20</td>
<td>16/64/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Taking a small item from a supermarket without paying</td>
<td>4/82/14</td>
<td>8/76/16</td>
<td>0/88/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Driving a car without a driving licence</td>
<td>16/70/14</td>
<td>24/64/12</td>
<td>8/76/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Joyriding in a car without the owner's permission</td>
<td>2/90/8</td>
<td>4/88/8</td>
<td>0/92/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Driving while &quot;high&quot; on drugs or alcohol</td>
<td>2/96/2</td>
<td>4/96/0</td>
<td>0/96/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Watching &quot;blue&quot; movies or videos</td>
<td>8/70/18:4</td>
<td>8/68/20:4</td>
<td>8/72/16:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) Having sex while unmarried</td>
<td>4/80/12:4</td>
<td>4/76/16:4</td>
<td>4/84/8:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Having sex while under 16 years</td>
<td>2/90/6:2</td>
<td>4/88/8</td>
<td>0/92/4:4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16. If someone you knew well did one of the following things would you go to the police?
(Y - Yes : N - No : DK - Don't know : 4 - is the percentage refusing to answer.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y / N / DK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Stole an item from a supermarket</td>
<td>42/36/20:2</td>
<td>32/44/20:4</td>
<td>52/28/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Stole from a car</td>
<td>66/14/18:2</td>
<td>52/20/24:4</td>
<td>80/8/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Took a car for joyriding while unlicensed</td>
<td>32/40/26:2</td>
<td>24/44/28:4</td>
<td>40/36/24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Committed a burglary</td>
<td>80/6/14</td>
<td>84/4/12</td>
<td>76/8/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Committed a sexual offence</td>
<td>36/18/42:4</td>
<td>32/16/48:4</td>
<td>40/20/36:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Committed a murder</td>
<td>82/4/14</td>
<td>84/4/12</td>
<td>80/4/16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17. Do you know personally a young person who has done any of the following things?
(Y - Yes : N - No : Refusal to answer - :4) All
F M(%)
Y / N Y / N Y / N
(a) Painting or writing on walls or buildings 54/44:2 64/32:4 44/56
44/56
(b) Shoplifting 44/54:2 56/40:432/68
(c) Joyriding 74/26 76/24 72/28
(d) Breaking into a car to steal things 14/84:2 12/84:4
16/84
(e) Stealing a car 16/84 16/84 16/84
(f) Driving while drugged or intoxicated (drunk)26/72:2 24/72:4 28/72
28/72
(g) Burglary 10/88:2 4/92:4 16/84
(h) Fighting 82/18 4/16 80/20
80/20
(i) Mugging/Robbing 12/86:2 16/80:4 8/92
8/92
(j) Watching a pornographic movie or video 40/56:4 44/48:8 36/64
36/64
(k) Taking alcohol 70/28:2 68/28:4 72/28
72/28
(l) Taking illegal drugs 38/58:4 44/48:8 32/68
32/68
(m) Having sex while under 16 years 30/66:4 36/56:8 24/76
24/76
(n) Sexual assault 22/74:4 28/64:8 16/84
16/84

Table 19. Do you think that there is a lot of crime and violence seen on TV and videos?
AllFM(%)
(a) A lot666468
(b) A reasonable amount323232
(c) A very little 2 4 0

Table 20. Do you think that the crime and violence seen on TV and videos influences some people's behaviour? AllFM(%)
(a) Yes848484
(b) No 8 412
(c) Don't know 812 4

Table 21. Do you personally know of someone who you think has committed a crime because of a video or a TV film or programme that they have seen? AllFM(%)
(a) Yes606060
(b) No404040

Table 23. If you are now in full-time education, how long do you think it will take you to get a job when you finally leave the education system? AllFM(%)
(a) Immediately480
(b) Up to 6 months6012
(c) 6 months to 1 year 2020
(d) More than 1 year 30 40 20

Table 27. Do you, or your family, own your own home or do you rent it? F M(%)
(a) Own 98 96 100
(b) Rent 24 0

Table 29. Do you, or anyone else in your family, own a car? All F M (%)
(a) No car 0 0 0
(b) One car 14 1 2 1 6
(c) More than one car 86 8 8 8 4
(d) My own car 0 0 0