



CYW-RPF

**Children, Youth and Women
Research and Practice Forum**

**CYW-RPF
Quarterly
Newsletter
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Editor's Note

Dear readers,

Welcome to the September 2024 edition of the CYW-RPF Quarterly Newsletter. In this issue, we are excited to share summaries of two insightful research papers presented during our recent CYW-RPF seminars. The first, *Intergenerational Transmission of Prosocial Attitudes: Evidence from Young Lives Countries*, draws on data from the Young Lives study, while the second, *The Power of Play and Early Childhood Education at Schools*, highlights findings from field research conducted by Children Believe.

Additionally, we bring you an exclusive update from Young Lives Ethiopia Project Coordinator Chanie Ejigu, who offers valuable insights into the preparations for the highly anticipated seventh survey round.

We look forward to receiving your feedback, suggestions, and contributions. For more information, please feel free to contact us at crpf.ethiopia@gmail.com or +251 11 154 0121.

Young Lives Ethiopia Completes Successful Round 7 Survey Despite Challenges

The Young Lives Ethiopia Round 7 survey has been a remarkable achievement, underscored by meticulous planning, teamwork, and resilience in overcoming obstacles. Despite ongoing security challenges in the country, the survey achieved a high completion rate, with 2,231 interviews conducted—1,535 from the Younger Cohort (YC) and 696 from the Older Cohort (OC). This represents 82.54% of the target sample and a commendably low attrition rate of 74.37% from the original Round 1 sample.

The survey faced significant challenges, including conflict in the Amhara region, migration of participants in search of employment, and the tragic loss of 31 participants, primarily from conflict-affected areas. However, the team's adaptability, such as shifting to phone surveys in two Amhara sites, ensured the survey's success.

A key highlight was the collection of hair samples to measure cortisol levels, an indicator of stress, which exceeded expectations by securing samples from 49% of participants, despite cultural sensitivities.

The data from Round 7 is currently being analyzed, and the findings will be available in early 2025 through the Young Lives international and Ethiopia websites.

Watch Young Lives Ethiopia Project Coordinator Chanie Ejigu interview – <https://bit.ly/3AjwzUI>

Research Summaries from CYW-RPF presentations

Intergenerational Transmission of Prosocial Attitudes: Evidence from Young Lives Countries

Abraham Seyoum Gonfa

Introduction

Human personality and attitudes play a pivotal role in shaping individual choices and outcomes across various aspects of life. Among these, prosociality stands out as a key personality trait, influencing a wide range of economic behaviors and outcomes, including the provision of public goods, labor market success, personal well-being, investment in risky assets, and even broader economic growth. Despite its significance, much remains to be understood about how prosociality is developed, particularly during childhood.

The formation of prosocial attitudes is often shaped by a combination of genetic factors and social interactions. Attitudes are influenced by parents, role models, and social environments, suggesting that the intergenerational transmission of these traits can occur through both biological evolution and socialization. Genetic factors, or the “nature” component, contribute to this transmission, while socialization, or “nurture,” reflects the influence of the broader environment in shaping attitudes such as risk-taking, trust, economic preferences, and even gender roles. Understanding the balance between these forces remains an important area of study, as it provides insights into how key personality traits and social behaviors are passed from one generation to the next.

Research question

- What affects a child’s prosocial attitude in childhood and adolescence?
 - ✓ Is it Intergenerational transmission or outside-family social environment influence?
 - ✓ Does the transmission and outside-family influence vary between boys and girls?



Data

Young Lives Data from UK data Service - International Study of Childhood Poverty in four countries: Ethiopia, India, Peru, and Vietnam.

Old cohort children

- ▶ 8 years old in round 1 (year 2002), born in 1994/5
- ▶ 12 years old in round 2 (2006),
- ▶ 15 years old in round 3 (2009)
- ▶ 19 years old in round 4 (2013)
- ▶ 22 years old in round 5 (2016)

The study uses:

- ▶ Older cohort – 1st three rounds, about 1000 children from each country in each round
- ▶ About 4,000 children per round, a total of more than 10,000 observations
- ▶ Attrition: less than 2%. tab in_2009 if in_2002 & flag ; 0 (Freq =64, percent =1.72) ; 1 (Freq =3658, percent = 98.28)

Key Findings

- **Intergenerational Transmission:** The evidence of intergenerational transmission varies across countries, showing consistency in Ethiopia and Vietnam, but not in Peru and India.
- **Influence of Socialization Outside the Family:** Across all contexts, socialization outside the family plays a significant role in shaping children’s prosocial attitudes. In fact, the influence of external social environments consistently outweighs that of parental influence.
- **Cultural Variability in Socialization:** These mixed results suggest that within-family socialization processes differ across geographic regions, likely due to cultural variations, including differences in parenting styles and parent-child relationships. This “within-family blackbox” highlights how culture and values may shape child development in distinct ways.



- **Cultural Values and World Value Survey Insights:** Data from the World Value Survey partially support this reasoning. Two key variables—the importance of family in life and unselfishness as a valued quality in children—provide insight into these cultural differences.
 - ✓ In the 2001 World Value Survey, which is close to the timing of the first Young Lives survey, around 39% of respondents in Vietnam considered unselfishness an important quality for children, compared to 36% in India.
 - ✓ From the 2006–2007 World Value Survey, which closely aligns with later Young Lives survey periods, approximately 92% of Ethiopian respondents and 77% of Peruvian respondents emphasized the importance of family in life.

Conclusion and Implications

Conclusion

The study presents mixed evidence on the transmission of prosocial behavior from parents to children, showing that this process is not consistent across all countries. However, the findings strongly suggest that environments outside the family, such as socialization in schools and communities, play a significant role in shaping children’s prosocial attitudes.

Implications

- **Enhancing Parental Awareness:** Since within-family socialization is often left to the discretion of parents, it is crucial to develop strategies that raise parental awareness about their own behaviors and the attitudes they wish to instill in their children. This can be achieved through targeted interventions and educational programs.
- **Protecting External Social Environments:** Given the powerful influence of external social environments on children, it is essential for governments and community organizations to safeguard schools and communities from delinquent behaviors. Ensuring these environments remain positive and nurturing is vital for fostering healthy prosocial development in children.
- **Further Research on Causal Relationships:** While causality in parent-child behavioral relationships remains difficult to establish, long-term experimental studies could offer more insights. Additionally, gathering

data on the behaviors and experiences of grandparents may provide valuable perspectives on intergenerational transmission of behaviors and attitudes, enriching the understanding of these dynamics across different contexts.



Research Summaries from CYW-RPF presentations

The Power of Play and Early Childhood Education at Schools: Insights from Field Research

Fiseha Teklu and Zelalem Woundimu

Introduction

This study focuses on case studies from Ethiopia. Ethiopia is Africa’s second most populous country, with over 123 million people. Though almost half of the population (48.6 percent) is children under the age of 15, and nearly 15 percent are under the age of 5, more than 55 percent of preschool children in Ethiopia do not have access to an Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. In addition, 41.3 percent of preschool children are categorized as severely malnourished.

Methods

The study employed a qualitative, comparative case study approach, focusing on four operational areas of Children Believe: Addis Ababa, Bishoftu, Adama, and Arsi Negele. From each location, two schools were selected as study sites for in-depth analysis.

Key Findings

- In Ethiopia, the provision of formal early childhood development

and education, which was once predominantly supported by non-government actors primarily in urban areas has undergone transformation where the Government and its partners have developed a national policy and investment plan to expand the services in both urban and rural areas. The national efforts to expand play and access to preschool education by introducing O -classes for 5 and 6 year-olds have significantly increased school enrollments for both boys and girls. Pre-primary enrollment in Ethiopia rose from 4.2 percent in 2012 to 45.4 percent in 2018/19. The enrollment rate further increased to 48.6 percent for females and 51.4 percent for males in the 2022/23 academic year.



- However, the study revealed that while there has been substantial investment in building infrastructure, there has been less emphasis on improving the skills of teachers and caretakers and the overall quality of education. This highlights the need for greater investment in non-infrastructure aspects of early childhood education (ECE). On the other hand, positive results have been recorded in communities or regions where

there has been strong collaboration between the government, non-governmental organizations, and international development partners including Children Believe, with investments made in both soft skills and infrastructure. Strengthening these multi stakeholder partnerships will help expand and scale up access to play and early childhood programs, especially in remote and fragile communities.

- Despite the strong belief in the benefits of play and play based learning, there is a need to improve facilities and the quality of preschool teachers in public and government owned early childhood preschools to enhance play in these settings. It is important to promote and integrate ‘indigenous’ play-based education to diversify the types of play and games in school settings and contribute to the holistic development of children.



Policy Considerations and Recommendations

To advance the state of culturally sensitive, socially inclusive and academically effective play and ECE, the following policy considerations and actions are recommended.

- Support a balanced approach to play-based learning
- Promote curricula that reinforce the interconnection of caregiving and play
- Deepen the inclusion of indigenous and cultural knowledge in early childhood curriculum development
- Establish minimum standards for the training of parents and other caregivers, and promote their participation and sense of ownership in early childhood education programs
- Contextualize play and address toxic stress among children
- Strengthen fathers, men's, and boys' engagement
- Optimize the application of play and its equalizing power to foster social inclusion
- Enhance multi-sectoral coordination and synergy of programs among diverse stakeholders
- Strengthen the collection, availability, and accessibility of data on children's socio-emotional development and wellbeing



Interested to Know about CYW-RPF?

The Child Research and Practice Forum (CRPF) was recently renamed Children, Youth and Women Research and Practice Forum (CYW-RPF) in order to expand the mandate of the Forum at the request of stakeholders and after holding a survey poll of the mailing list members.

CRPF was established in 2010 to promote work on child research, policy and practice. CWY-RPF makes use of monthly seminars, quarterly newsletters and annual publications as a means to achieve its objectives. The publications are also available on the Young Lives Ethiopia website (<https://www.younglives-ethiopia.org/>). CYW-RPF is organized by Young Lives with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and UNICEF.

If you want to know more, please contact us via crpf.ethiopia@gmail.com