

# Brain drain and the future of Pakistan

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## Outline

### 1. Introduction

Thesis Statement

### 2. Decoding the key term brain drain

### 3. Understanding why brain drain is increasingly happening in Pakistan

#### 3.1, Minimal economic opportunities

- high unemployment 11.2%
- absence of ease of doing business

#### 3.2, Better living standards

- case in point of quality life standards index 2022

#### 3.3, Slow recruitment processes in Pakistan

- key case of public sector job recruitment process

#### 3.4, High wages and salaries

- comparative analysis of wages in Pakistan vs minimum wages in the West

#### 3.5, Political uncertainty in Pakistan

- key case of May 9 <sup>riots</sup> violence that damaged Pakistani firms users reputation worldwide

#### 3.6, Lack of social security

#### 3.7, Corruption in recruitment process

- key case of PMS 2020 Sindh

### 4. Describing the possible future



## future of Pakistan following the brain drain

- 4.1, Lack of qualified individuals
- 4.2, Possible increase in inflow of remittances.
- 4.3, Economic slow down
- 4.4, Lack of innovation

## 5. Efforts required to slow down the brain drain and improve the future of Pakistan

- 5.1, Increase<sup>in</sup> minimum wages according to the inflation
- 5.2, Fasten recruitment process
- 5.3, Investment in human development
- 5.4, Improvement in quality of life

## 6. Conclusion

~ Essay ~

Everyone in life quests for better opportunities, where one can grow, improve and have a quality life. It is imperative and inevitable that humans of today will go after good economic opportunities.



quality life style and bright future. why would they stay in a country where economic opportunities are decreasing, where inflation is sky-rocketing and wages are nose-diving? This is one of the challenges facing Pakistan in the status quo:-

Brain drain. It is migration of highly qualified individuals from their home country to another country that is ~~providing~~ <sup>provides</sup> better opportunities. Therefore, the reasons for brain drain are obvious; minimal economic opportunities, absence of quality life and low wages and salaries. All of this brain drain poses a challenge to future of Pakistan, that might not be as good as it would have been ~~either~~ otherwise. Lack of qualified individuals and an economic slowdown would obviously put Pakistan at loss. Therefore, Pakistan must brace timely for slowing down the brain drain by providing them with better economic opportunities, accelerating recruitment process and improving quality life at home. This essay will explore the reasons for brain drain happening in Pakistan; Future of Pakistan following the brain



drain. In the end will provide with some policy prescriptions to slow down the brain drain.

Before understanding the reasons for brain drain. Let us first ~~explore~~ understand the concept of brain drain fully for better understanding of the essay.

Brain drain, if we one puts it simply, is leaving of home country in search of better economic opportunities, a quality life style, and good jobs by qualified individuals. A research survey conducted in 2022 concluded that 50% of Pakistani graduates will leave country for better opportunities, if given a chance. These figures are alarming as almost majority of graduates youth does not see their future inside Pakistan. A recent report published in Pakistan times lately with coordination of ministry of foreign affairs stated that 47000 young graduates have left Pakistan in last 6 months. All this describes better that what brain drain is, and at what pace is it happening



in Pakistan.

Let us now delve deeper and explore the main causes behind increasingly happening brain drain in Pakistan. Firstly and foremostly, minimal economic opportunities in Pakistan is the main reason behind young people leaving home country. Unemployment rates in Pakistan are all time high as quoted economic survey of Pakistan 2022) Along with this, if graduates want to start a business, they have to struggle a lot for just opening it lawfully. As our country lags behind in ease of doing business - says council on foreign relations seeing ease of doing business index Hence, it is right to say minimal economic opportunities is a major reason for brain drain.

Secondly, young individuals want a better living standard; which Pakistan, unfortunately, still struggles to provide. Therefore, people part



of the brain drain get their required life style in countries they go. This can be evidenced from the facts of quality of life index; which labelled Karachi, economic hub and biggest city of Pakistan, one of the worst cities for living. Therefore, it will be true to quote a quest for better living standards a reason for brain drain.

Moreover, slow recruitment process in Pakistan also contributes to the increasing brain drain. A key case in this regard can be of public sector recruitments; where a post for job is advertised in a year; tests are conducted after a year; interviews after half a year and the whole selection process takes about 2 to 2.5 years - which is very unfortunate. Therefore, slow recruitment serves as a catalyst to brain drain in Pakistan.

More importantly, the young individuals, part of the brain drain, expect competent and lucrative packages



and salaries - that Pakistan still struggles to offer. A better understanding can be concluded from the countries the individuals are going, or aspire to go to. Pakistan's minimum wages are under 30000 rupees to 34000 / 140 \$, whereas countries like Singapore 6700 \$ per month, Norway 2800 \$ per month, Canada 2200 \$ per month, Finland 7100 \$ per month. It is surprising that Pakistani students and graduates spend quality life there and spend send filthy amounts home as well. Thus, it is right to mark high wages outside a reason for brain drain.

In addition to that, the continuous political uncertainty in Pakistan leaves no clue for young qualified individuals as to what their future will be in the midst of the political crises. An unstable and uncertain government forces young individuals to take tough decisions - as of leaving their homes behind.

**A key case of political instability**



to hurting young graduates can be disowned from May 9 riots. Government in the aftermath of May 9 riots shut the internet countrywide. This move affected millions of Pakistanis whose livelihood and earning was based on the very basic facility - internet. Fiver, a worldwide freelancing giant, issued warnings to worldwide customers as to refrain from hiring Pakistani individuals for their work - as country had no internet. It is heart-wrenching that this move inflicted million dollar pain to Pakistanis. Therefore, it is a genuine reason to quote for brain drain.

Furthermore, lack of social security in Pakistan also fanned the flames of brain drain. Pakistan scores very low in terms of providing basic healthcare, education, job security to its citizens. 24 million out of school children - UNESCO, poor healthcare services and doctor's availability says



World Health Organization.

Therefore, all this contributes to an increasingly happening brain drain.

Unfortunately, corruption, also, is a major reason for youth leaving country. Corruption in recruitment is a habitual practice in Pakistan. A case in point in this regard can be of Provincial Management Service Exam 2020 - which was conducted in 2021 and again conducted in 2023 because of massive corruption in it. (Sindh Public Service Commission notification available on their website) Hence, one can say that corruption serves as a reason for the ongoing brain drain.

Let us explore the possible future of Pakistan in the aftermath of this huge brain drain. Firstly, the country will be deprived of the highly qualified competent graduates are assets of the country - who



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will be lost. It will not be lesser than a loss of treasure, which will now contribute in some foreign economy, instead of his/her own.

Secondly, being optimistic, these individuals will work in their desired countries and will send savings and other needed money back home to Pakistan. This could result positively and might increase the remittances. It will boost economy, and will provide country with surplus of dollars making rupee stronger against the dollar. Therefore, there is at least a single positive hope after the brain drain too.

Nevertheless, the absence of these qualified individuals will, undoubtedly, bring an economic slowdown in the long run. which is not good for the hetering economy of Pakistan considering it is at the verge



of collapse. Had all these people been in Pakistan, they would have contributed to the economy. Therefore, an economic slow down is inevitable.

Moreover, country will face lack of innovation as well. As young energetic and qualified individuals will not be gone only, but their bright and competent trained innovative minds will be lost too. Therefore, Pakistan will surely suffer from lack of innovation, which would otherwise had been here.

All of these future probabilities require an immediate and timely effort. In order to slow down the brain drain; Pakistan needs to come up with following efforts. Firstly, increase minimum wages according to the inflation. It will serve as a life saver for people taking tough decisions of leaving the country.



Secondly, accelerate the recruitment process by forming a policy or enacting a law. This will provide a sigh of relief for people who have been waiting for years for their written results, interview results and final recommendations.

Most importantly, Pakistan needs to invest as much as possible in human development. As Ishaq Hussain says "Investing in human development changed the fate of Singapore, now it is time for Pakistan to change the fate of their people." It will require investment in education, healthcare and an increase in salaries.

Lastly, Pakistan needs to improve quality of life for better future of Pakistanis. Additionally, for giving a ray of hope to people part of the brain drain to so that they should not leave their homes and livelihoods behind. It requires



efforts at all levels to do  
so.

To conclude, it can be said that brain drain, leaving of home country by qualified individuals, is increasingly happening in Pakistan. This is triggered by minimal economic opportunities, lack of quality life, minimum wages and slow recruitments. This endangers the future of Pakistan to a greater extent as it would deprive country of qualified individuals, make an economic slowdown inevitable and innovation will nose dive. Therefore, Pakistan needs to act timely in order to save these qualified individuals and make them live in their home country. All this require an improvement in living standards, raise of wages and salaries, and investing in human development. This will slow down the brain drain, and surely all of these will remain in their home country - making it a prosperous Pakistan.