

# YOUTH BULGE IN PAKISTAN: Date

## AN ASSET OR LIABILITY?

### 1) Introduction

Thesis Statement: It is difficult to say whether the youth bulge in Pakistan is an asset or a liability. However, if the condition ~~of~~ and progress of youth is examined meticulously, then it can be said that youth is an asset. Pakistan has been failed to utilize its youth effectively by <sup>not</sup> providing them infrastructure, facilities and skills-

### 2) Youth demographics within the Pakistani Population

### 3) Youth bulge in Pakistan is an asset (Thesis)

- (a) Youth brings innovation and entrepreneurship in the country
- (b) Youth is the source of remittances which is a lifeline of Pakistan's economy
- (c) Youth can bring social transformation
- (d) Youth has potential to bring an end to terrorism
- (e) Youth can increase the international fame of Pakistan through its success and achievements

### 4) Youth bulge in Pakistan is a liability

- (a) Many young individuals are uneducated and skills of educated ones do not match with industry requirements
- (b) Large portion of youth is unemployed which is straining country's resources
- (c) Youth can damage the social fabric when their demands are not met
- (d) Youth itself is indulged in terrorism
- (e) The phenomena of brain drain can also be a mismatch Gracy

the fame of Pakistan by showing its inability to utilize the talent of youth

- 5) The points of being an asset ~~are~~ outweigh the points of being a liability
- (a) It is the inability of state to enroll all the individuals and aligning the academic courses with industry requirements
  - (b) Poor economic condition of country is the main factor behind unemployment
  - (c) The positive role of youth in social transformation is of greater magnitude than to its negative role
  - (d) It is unjust to label the entire youth as a liability based on the involvement of few individuals in terrorism
  - (e) These talented youth individuals will forever be remembered as a representative of a Pakistan that enhance country's prestige throughout the history

Nelson Mandela said, "Our children are the rocks on which our future will be built, our greatest asset as a nation". It is difficult to say whether the youth bulge in Pakistan is an asset or a liability. However, if the condition and progress of youth is examined meticulously then it can be realized that youth of Pakistan is an asset. Although, Pakistan has been failed to utilize its youth effectively by not providing them facilities, skills and infrastructure. The arguments that substantiate the thesis ~~are~~ include youth can bring innovation and entrepreneurship in country, youth is a source of remittances and youth can bring social transformation. Moreover, it also includes youth has potential to bring an end to terrorism and youth can enhance international <sup>image</sup> of Pakistan through its success. On the contrary, there are some arguments that favour that youth is a liability. These include youth is uneducated and unemployed, youth ~~can~~ damages social fabric in frustration, youth is involved in terrorism and the phenomena of brain drain will tarnish the global image of Pakistan. However, the points of being an asset outweigh the points of being a liability. This is proved by these arguments which say that it is the state's inability to enroll all the individuals, state's poor economic condition cause unemployment and the positive contribution of youth in social transformation is greater <sup>than</sup> its negative role. Furthermore, it ~~is~~ also includes it is unjust to label youth as a liability due to indulgence of a few individuals <sup>always</sup> in terrorism and talented youth ~~is~~ <sup>abroad</sup> will be remembered as Pakistan which will glorify Pakistan's image.

Pakistan is considered to be the 71<sup>th</sup> largest young country in the world. The United Nations Population Fund Report underscores that 63% of Pakistani population comprises youth out of entire population. Further, it can be classified ~~that~~ into two leading age groups. The most populous age bracket is 20-24, consisting of 37.5 million youngsters while around 69 million of them are aged under 15. (**Growing Population of Pakistani Youth, Exam Hafeez, Dec 2018**). Pakistan is among few countries that have high <sup>young</sup> ~~young~~ population. Many countries are worried about the <sup>ance</sup> ~~abundance~~ of old people and shortage of youngsters. Therefore, Pakistan's population is predominantly occupied by youngsters.

Youth is an asset in a way that it brings innovation and entrepreneurship in the country. Pakistan is the country that has been lacking behind in innovation and entrepreneurship since long. This innovation and entrepreneurship provide multifolded benefit to Pakistan. Many Pakistani young individuals who founded startups are included in international list because of their talent. 23 Pakistani are included into the list of Forbes 30 under 30. (**Kashif Ali, Business Recorder, April 23**). Many Pakistani youngsters have invented innovative applications that has made the life of Pakistanis easy. InDrive is a transportation app and startup launched by young Pakistani. This application has made the travelling easy. Therefore, young minds can bring innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.

Youth ~~is~~ ~~are~~ is the source of remittances which is the lifeline of Pakistan's crippled economy. Remittances contribute greatly to Pakistan's revenue. Gracy

collection- Pakistan's economy is dollar starving economy- Dwindling Foreign reserves is the main issue of Pakistan's economy- Remittances are the main sources of incoming foreign currency- Many Pakistani young individuals work abroad- They have their families behind, for whom they send money- Besides, many Pakistanis who study abroad also work on part time and support their families- According to Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, Pakistan received \$2208.1 million in remittances in 2023- Therefore, youth bulge plays role is strengthening Pakistan's economy-

Youth has great potential to bring social transformation in Pakistan- Young minds are replete with new ideas- They always want to replace old and traditional thinking with up to dated one- Youth has always speak against ~~old~~ <sup>antique</sup> traditional exploitive norms and cultural values- Aurat March is a movement in Pakistan for advocating the rights of women- This movement is primarily led by youth- Many Pakistani youngsters write in different magazines, newspapers and columns- Few of them write book- All of them want to bring social change through their writings- Many young individuals utilize social media and technology for ~~spreading~~ spreading awareness about social issues- Therefore, youth plays a very pivotal role in social transformation

Youth with its zeal, zest and vigour can also bring an end to terrorism- Terrorism is the grave problem with which Pakistan has been combating for decade- Terrorism has caused great loss of Pakistan- Many young individuals have passion to serve and protect their country from any threats- For this purpose, they often join Pakistan Army- Around 320-700 Gracy

individuals are recruited

each year in Pakistan Army. Many of them martyr who  
fighting for their country. Some want to cessate  
the menace of terrorism through gun, while other  
want to finish it through their literary services  
and speeches. Malala Yousafzai is an epitome of  
this. Therefore, Pakistani youngsters are bulwark  
against the proliferation of terrorism.

Youth can increase international fame of  
Pakistan through its success and achievements.  
Skills and talent is considered precious everywhere  
in world. People around the world know the worth  
of talent and have always admire it. Pakistan  
is the country that has lot of talent &  
skills in its youth. Many young Pakistan has  
received acclimation and achieved difficult  
target in younger ages. Anza Kareem, a renowned  
Pakistani, was the world's youngest Microsoft profess-  
ional at the age of nine. Pakistani youngsters have  
not made their name in technological field but also in gaming  
world. Summat Hassan Syed is the winner of DOTA 2  
Championship. Therefore, youth has played a key role in  
enhancing prestige of Pakistan at global level.

There are also some arguments ~~which~~ <sup>which</sup> say that  
Pakistan's youth bulge is a liability. One of the argument  
is that many young individuals are uneducated and skill  
of educated ones do not match the industry requirements.  
Education and skills are very important for enhancing  
one's worth. If a person is devoid of these qualities  
then he is only a burden. There are alot of out  
of school children in Pakistan. According to UNICEF  
there are over 20 million out of school children in  
Pakistan. Even those who complete their education are  
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not useful because of lack of skills. A report from State Bank in May revealed that <sup>only</sup> 10% of Pakistani graduates are employable because of lack of technical skills & soft skills. Therefore, youth bulge because of illiteracy is a liability.

Large portion of youth bulge is unemployed which make them burden on their family, country and on its resources. If a man does nothing, he will be felt as burden. Instead of producing anything, he is just consuming everything. Youth bulge often do not get employment because of absence of required skills. Ruljkar Haider, secretary of ministry of overseas Pakistanis told that over 50,000 engineers are unemployed. Some remain unemployed because they do not want to leave their comfort zone. According to ILDSTAT, unemployment rate in Pakistan is 11.24%. Therefore, youth in Pakistan is unemployed which make them liability.

Youth is also involved in damaging of social fiber when their demands are not ~~not~~ fulfilled. Cognitive and mentality level of youth is not very high. They ~~often~~ sometimes fail to understand the difference between right and wrong. When youngsters want to get something and they ~~have~~ are short of resources. They often resort to illegal means for acquiring it. Out of 85000 jail inmates in the country, 1300 are under the of 18 years. They are captured and held in jails mostly on the charges of robbery. (Society: A Childhood in Prison, Javed Jabbar, March 2021) - Many youngsters become drug addict and destroy them and society. There are over 7.6 million drug abusers in Pakistan and half of them are under 30 (Zubeida Mustafa, Drugs in

Schools, Aug 23) Therefore, youth can disrupt the social order in frustration. Youth is also indulged in terrorism. Young individuals who are supposed to protect Pakistan from terrorism are damaging the country. They are involved in many terrorism related activities. Youth take the law in their hands in anger. They are involved in killing of fellow student over alleged blasphemy charges. Mashal Khan, a student of journalism in Abdul Wali Khan University, was killed by fellow students on blasphemy charges. Many young individuals are recruited by militant organization for suicide attacks. Some students also involved in killing of their teachers over perception of being anti-Islamic. A professor was killed by his student over anti-Islam remarks in Bahawalpur in 2019. Therefore, youth is involved in many terrorism related activities.

Talented Pakistani that leave Pakistan contribute to the phenomena of brain drain. This will diminish the fame of Pakistan by showing its inability to utilize the talent of youth. Brain drain is often triggered due to poor living standards, lack of facilities, poor economic condition and security risk. People, who face these issues, leave their country and head toward foreign country. These people are evidence of poor present condition in their country. Around 830,000 Pakistanis went abroad for employment. In 2022, over 92,000 were graduates and more than 350,000 were trained workers & laborers. The repatriation of these individual speaks the poor economic condition of country. Therefore these migrated individual will furnish the global image of country.

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~~Point~~ All 5 ~~before~~ aforementioned points asserts that youth is a liability. However, youth is still an asset because it is state's inability to utilize youth effectively. It is the inability of state to enroll all the out of school individual and aligning the academia with industry requirements. Pakistan has also shown little interest toward amelioration of its education standards and practices. Pakistani students completing their high school education have ~~measurable~~ lacunas which they ought not to have. According to study, when Pakistani student complete his high school then it must have 9.4 years of schooling but what they actually learned is of 8.5.1 years. The spending of Pakistan on education is also very low. Pakistan spends only 1.7% of its GDP on education, which is lower than World Bank prescribed limit. Therefore, it is state's fault for making youth unproductive and useless.

Poor economic condition of country is main factor behind unemployment. It is a fact that Pakistan's economy has been grappling with myriad of crises that have ultimate effect on unemployment. The rupee has been ~~continuously~~ declining against dollar for past 4-5 years. Companies are unable to generate profits for paying their expenditures. Some companies decide to shut down, whereas other downsize their employees. According to <sup>an</sup> estimate, around 8.5% of total workforce remain unemployed ~~due~~ due to business closures, shut-down and loss in reduction. (The Explosion of Unemployment, Mohiuddin Aazim, January 2023)

Therefore, it is state's fiscal policy and poor <sup>management</sup> ~~Gracy~~

that cause unemployment-

The positive role of youth in social transformation is of greater magnitude than to its negative role. ~~Many~~ Many in youth bulge have played very crucial role in transforming the social structure of society. Some of them have even sacrificed their lives for protecting other. Some remain vocal and continued their fight against social evils. Malala is the one who successfully diverted world's attention toward the women condition in KPK. After the attack on Malala, Pakistani government established fund for women's education. Some young heroes are busy in awakening world or particularly Pakistan through their motivational speeches. Hammad Saffi has been very active in this ground. Therefore, youth is very essential component of social transformation.

It is unjust to label entire youth as a liability based on the involvement of a few individuals in terrorism. In every group, organization and association of people, some are bad and some are good. There is a high probability to draw conclusion about all from the actions of few. It is true that there are some examples where youth is involved in terrorism related activities. However, there are copious number of incidences where Pakistani youngsters sacrificed their lives for saving other. Aitzaz Hasan, hero of Pakistani soil, martyred on January 2014 while preventing a suicide bomber from entering a school at Hangu village. His sacrifice rescued the lives of 2000 students who were attending classes at the time of incident. This shows that Pakistan youth is precious and no less

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than an asset -

All the talented young individuals will forever be remembered as representatives of Pakistan that will enhance the country's prestige throughout the history. It is hard to forget those incidents that are extraordinary in nature - Some Pakistani have shown ~~extra~~ brilliant result that will always always be remembered - Haroon Tariq set a world record of achieving 87A's in both O/A levels in variety of subjects that perhaps most have not heard of - Some have developed application in very young age that amazed everyone - Hasis Khan is the youngest smart-phone application developer in the world. Therefore, these Pakistani individuals have set the records which will always make Pakistan proud.

In a nutshell, the discussion started with a the thesis that youth bulge of Pakistan is an asset. Different arguments were give for proving the stance like youth brings innovation, entrepreneurship, remittances and social transformation. Youth can <sup>bring</sup> glory global image of Pakistan. ~~Then~~ Then, an antithesis emerged which asserted that youth is a liability. This was proved by arguments like youth is illiterate, unemployed, disrupt social order and spread terrorism. However, on comparing both ~~of~~ theses and antithesis, synthesis is drawn which said that youth is still an asset because it is state's failure to utilize youth effectively. This is proved by points like poor economic condition and educational policy of the state. As Iqbal said:

نہیں یہ نا امید اپنی کشت ویراں سے  
ذرا فہم تو یہ مٹی میں ڈر فیر یہ ساقی

(There is no despair from your barren field, If it's a Gracy

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Bit moist, the soil is very fertile)  
Iqbal, in this verse, metaphorically alludes to youth.  
He says that youth is very talented and skillful.  
It only require ~~the~~ little attention and care.  
The result of ~~the~~ care and attention will be the  
progression of youth in their life. Soon, they will  
reach the dizzy heights of success.