

# Topic: Youth bulge in Pakistan: an asset or liability.

## Outline

### 1. Introduction:

Thesis Statement: Youth bulge can be a great asset for nation. Unattained youth can be harmful. But calculated measures can solve those issues.

### 2. How youth bulge can become an asset or liability.

#### 3. Youth bulge can become an asset for a nation

a. They are the great source to help in governance and policy making.

b. Youth is the best source to promote the goodwill of the country around the globe.

c. They are the great potential for country's economic recovery e.g. through remittances.

d. A country can become the skill resource country if youth get the skills training.

e. Youth bulge can promote the science and technology in the country.

#### 4. Youth bulge is a liability for the country

a. Making policies and governance is work of experienced persons not youth.

b. Goodwill depends upon the other factors such as foreign policy and economic prowess.

c. There are other avenues for economic recovery e.g. eradicating corruption.

d. Pakistan doesn't have capacity to promote skill development among youth.

e. Science and technology depends upon the proper educational factor at universities.

5. Pakistan Youth bulge is best option available available to solve problems of a nation

a. Youth can also be experienced if given proper attention and time. e.g. Sanna Marin 33 year's old P.M of Finland.

b. Foreign policy is a factor but not a benchmark of goodwill. Pakistan P.M (Bilawal Bhutto) is a youth.

c. Corruption is prevailing only because youth doesn't get chance to get administrative roles.

d- Pakistan has multiple skill development programs and training centres. eg Aman foundation.

e- There are multiple universities in Pakistan which are in the ranking of world best universities, due to their research programmes.

6- Conclusion.

"Fostumes of States through each youth prowess ripen, each man is one star of their ascendant (destiny)". These are words of national poet Allama Iqbal where he considers youth as an asset of nation and each one is powerful to write the destiny of a nation. In a country having huge youth population can be a great asset for the country, However, unattended youth can be a harmful. But calculated measures can solve all those issues and turn them into asset. Youth bulge can become an asset if they participate in reforms making and policy implementation, this way youth can become a source of goodwill for a nation if they enhance their skills, helps in economic development and promote research. On the other hand they can become liability if they don't get chance in governance, fails to achieve quality education and get unemployment. To avoid such scenario authorities must involve in taking all necessary measures to

make youth bulge an asset and not a liability.

Pakistan's rising youth population can become an asset or liability. Out of the total population in the country, 64% is below the age of 30, and 29% is between the ages of 15-29 years (UNDP Report, 2022). This huge population can become an asset for Pakistan if they can use their academic skills and knowledge to create innovative solutions for various challenges in the society and economy of the country. At the same time, youth bulge can become a liability for a country if they are not provided with adequate opportunities and resources to develop their potential and contribute to the society and the economy. Youth may create problems such as youth violence, youth unemployment, youth dependency, etc. If such problems occur then it will be a liability than an asset.

Youth bulge of a country can help in in governance and policy making. Youth has potential to create leaders and activists who can shape the future of a nation. Prime Minister's Youth Program and Young Parliamentarian's Council in Pakistan are specifically designed programs to prepare youth for future governance and policy making. There are multiple youth advisory councils in various countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand where youth provide advice and feedback to local. Through these measures youth bulge can help in country's governance and policy making.

Youth bulge can also help in promoting goodwill for the country around the globe. Youth represents their country through their acts. Youth's participation in activities such as sports, education and skill development will create a country's goodwill in the world. 5.7m out of 8.8m overseas Pakistanis are youth (UN Pakistan, 2021), representing Pakistani in different fields such as Sports, Business Sector, Science and education, etc.

That's why youth bulge should be con- 6  
sidered as an asset for the nation.

Youth bulge plays an important role in country's economic recovery. They can be utilized in steering out the country from economic woes by giving them business opportunities and employment. Countries such as Japan, Italy and Greece having youth population of 9.3%, 9.5% and 9.7% respectively are looking for policies and strategies to counter this problem (Business - Insider Report, 2022) Youth can also help country's economic struggle through remittances. Just like in 2022 Pakistan received record \$31 billion remittance from overseas Pakistan. It clearly indicates that youth bulge is a blessing for Pakistan.

Pakistan can be a skillful country with the help of youth. Pakistan has 100 million youth population (Worldometers). Providing skills to these 100 million will make Pakistan a skill resourceful country. Government's initiatives such as "Honormand Nojawan", "Kamyab Nojawan", "Pasalikha Nojawan" are few examples in which government is

trying to provide skills to youth. These skillful youth can contribute to economic growth, enhance social and political stability and improve quality of life. This shows how important skill development is for the youth of this country.

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Youth bulge can help in promoting science and technology in the country. By giving them proper educational facilities and opportunities youth can promote the research and help the country in making it hub of research. Youth can promote science and technology in the country by providing a large pool of scientists, engineers, innovators, and entrepreneurs who can contribute to the advancement of knowledge, discovery and innovation. The National Academy of Young Scientists which is non-profit organization that aims to promote science and technology among youth is a promising initiative towards promoting science and technology. Such initiatives at government and private level will increase the potential of research among youth.

Apart from those who consider youth as an asset there are also segments of society consider youth as liability.

According to those, they believe that making policies and governance need experience. Inexperienced youth can be a detrimental factor for such a sensitive matter. Youth bulge can pose a challenge to governance and policy making because youth in a country are marginalized and excluded from meaningful participation. Pakistan Youth Forums have failed to contribute in any policy making and governance models. Pakistani youths are not capable enough to hold such positions, giving them such portfolios is just like inviting disasters.

If we talk about the good will of the country is not dependent on youth. There are other more prominent factors to promote good will such as foreign policy and economic powers. Developed countries like Switzerland, Canada, New-Zealand, etc have no youth bulge to promote their good will in the world. One of the most developed countries in the world is Japan, its total youth population is 12% of its total population, so it is wrong to say youth is promoter of good will. Furthermore, unskilled, uneducated, inexperienced youth is a liability for any country. All western



countries are not willing to accept the 9 emigrants from countries like Syria, Iraq, Libya and African states, because they have no knowledge and skills to contribute in other country's development. According to the guardian The E.U member states ordered the deportation of 96,550 emigrants. This example show that youth bulge can be a liability.

As far as economic recovery is concerned, there are multiple other things which are the root causes of economic downfall which must be fixed at 1<sup>st</sup> priority. Corruption, poor law and order situation and no proper mechanism of governance must be fixed for economic recovery. China is a great example in this regard, China does not require remittance from overseas chinese to build-up their economy, they implemented laws and tightened the regulations to make their country economically stable. Chinese example is valid example to prove that youth bulge has least contribution in country's economic recovery.

— Pakistan if we analyze the skill development, lacks skill development and employment. There is neither vocational institutes nor state of the art educational

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System to compete with the youth of developed world. In developed countries they teach skills to their youth at primary level. Education system of western countries are specifically designed to promote skills and make them identify their area of interest. According to the World Economic Forum report, countries like Singapore, China, Japan, Estonia, Canada, Singapore and Finland teach skills to their youth at school level. Pakistani youth cannot compete with their youth due to outdated educational mechanism.

Hence, advancement in science and technology is also dependent upon the performance of universities. Pakistani universities doesn't give proper attention to research. There are many universities in Pakistan who don't have thesis as a compulsory subject to get the degree. Science and technology requires proper attention from university teachers and scholars. Youth bulge only cannot promote research in science and technology. These are all examples to substantiate that youth bulge is a liability not an asset.

Those who believe that youth bulge is an asset agree to the points raised by those who consider youth bulge as a liability for the country. However there are methods available to solve those issues. Optimists believe that youth bulge are capable to solve all issues of Pakistan. Arguing to the point of inexperienced youth, one must not forget that one who ascends K.2 starts journey by taking first step. Youth can learn quickly and adopts creativity and new techniques to perform better in this sensitive area. If youth given opportunity they can gain experience and perform better. There are multiple examples, where youth got opportunity and they used it. Most notable examples are; Sanina Marin, P.M of Finland, she assumed office at the age of 32 and performed exceptionally well. Giacomo Simoncini, President of San Marino, he assumed office at the age of 24 and successfully performing his duties. Inexperienced youth can not be termed as liability, if given proper opportunities they can become an unimaginable assets in the field of governance.

These are factors such as foreign<sup>12</sup> policy or economic powers as indicators of goodwill. But one must not forget that youth of nation is also a factor. If we take example of Olympic games, it is considered as a mega event of youth representation. Countries with strong foreign policies and economies, Canada, New-Zealand, Singapore, etc. try hard to prepare their youth for this mega event. One of the most strong countries in terms of foreign policies and economy is USA, USA sent highest number of athletes (613) in Tokyo Olympics 2021 (Olympics.com). If we look at the foreign policies, youth can also frame foreign policies. There are multiple countries having youth as a foreign minister. Pakistan had two youth foreign ministers, Hina Rabani Khar assumed this role in 2011 at the age of 33, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari became the foreign minister at the age of 33 in 2022. In that case youth can become an asset if they become the framers of foreign policy.

Exorcising corruption is the step... 13  
towards economic recovery, but it isn't a solution. Poor governance and law or order have not been fixed for so many years because youth does not get any chance to solve such issues. If youth given that opportunity, these problem can be fixed. Countries around the globe use the youth for exorcising corruption and promote transparency. Youth against corruption is network of young activists from different countries who work to promote transparency and accountability in the world. Young Anti-led Corruption Network (YACNI) is coalition of young individuals in Nigeria who collaborate to fight against corruption and promote good governance in their country. These examples show that youth is not a liability and it is a potential asset against all forms of evil including corruption.

Now let's talk about skill development, Pakistan does not lack skills and there are multiple skills development and vocational training centres for men and women. Institutes like National Vocational and Training Centre, Sindh Technical and

vocational institute, Aman Foundation by 14  
Sindh government, etc. they all provide  
various courses and programs to help  
youth to acquire marketable skills and  
enhance their employability. In educational  
Sector of Pakistan, government has taken  
steps to revamp the educational system  
and promote skills at primary level. For  
that matter, Single National Curriculum is  
one step towards uniform educational sys-  
tem, In addition president Arif Alvi's initiative  
to promote and improve mental health in  
school is a national program that aims  
to enhance the socio-emotional development  
of school-going children. It is evident  
from these examples that Pakistan  
is going towards the right direction  
for making youth as an asset and not  
a liability.

As far as research in science  
and technology is concerned, Pakistan  
is not behind in this field as well. There're  
multiple universities in Pakistan famous  
for promoting research. Universities  
such as Quaid-e-Azam university Islam-  
abad, placed in 401-500 rank-band

globally. It has the strong reputation for research excellence and innovation specially in Physics, biology and environmental sciences. Government college University Faisalabad, is ranked 501-600 globally, has vibrant research culture and has established several institutes for research in Physics, Microbiology and Food Sciences. University of Management Technology Lahore, COMSATS University Islamabad have also vibrant reputation due to their research programs (Times higher education.com). So, its wrong to say, there is lack of focus towards research. Pakistan has all avenues available to provide them quality education at university, focusing towards quality research for promoting science and technology in the country.

Pakistan's youth bulge is a blessing. If youth properly managed they can become a remedy for all the country's illment. Youth must also take full advantage of their potential, and work hard for country's progress and contribute in its success. There are all resources available in a country to help youth in the area of governance, politics, economy and science and technology. Every nation has convected

their youth into an asset and not a liability. Because youth are the foundation blocks. As national poet of Pakistan Allama Iqbal has said  
 "When an eagle's spirit awakens in youthful hearts,  
 It sees its luminous goal beyond the starry heavens"

عقابی روح جب بیدار ہوتی ہے جوانوں میں  
 نظر آتی ہے اٹکو اپنی منزل آسمانوں میں -

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