

Youth Bulge in Pakistan: An Asset or a Liability

Outline

1. Introduction

- a) Population Explosion: Strain on the economy
- b) Youth: A Major share holder in the population explosion
- c) Thesis statement.

2. Youth Bulge in Pakistan: A Liability

- a) A strain on the current economy due to the conditions of Pak
- b) Increase in food shortages
- c) Increase in the dropout from schools
- d) Unemployment is high due to low capital current situation in Pakistan
- e) Insufficient ^{use of} resources: An unequal divide
- f) Increase in Environmental ~~prob~~ issues
- g) High rate in crimes
- h) Increase in Inflation rates
- i) Ratio of suicides among youth has increased: A dilemma for the state.

3. Youth Bulge in Pakistan: An Asset

- a) Contribute in spreading of literacy in their localities
- b) Bring innovation and creativity at their workplace
- c) Become highly effective manpower.

4. Conclusion

Youth Bulge in Pakistan: An Asset or a Liability?

"Real problem is not population explosion, but what the population is doing" says famous American Humanitarian activist Radhanath Swami. This quote has proved its veracity in terms of the current economic conditions of Pakistan. Pakistan is currently the 5th most populous country with a population of over 241.49 million. The current population growth rate is at 2.55% and according to the Pakistan Survey 20 for fiscal year 2022-2023, the current economic growth is 0.29%. This trend shows that the massive population explosion is a strain on the economy of Pakistan. Where on the other hand, the youth of Pakistan comprises of 68% of the total population under the age of 30. And to further add, this youth lacks basic necessities due to which results in the ^{them} youth being malnourished in order to become an asset for the state. Rather than an asset ^{they} it ^{have} has become a liability for the state as the state has failed to

provide all the necessity for its youth to adequately benefit the country. In a nutshell, youth bulge in Pakistan is a liability even though many people opine them as an asset.

The most significant factor making youth bulge ^{in Pakistan} a liability is the increase in level of food shortages. Youth comprises of 68% Youth is a major shareholder in the massive population explosion occurring in Pakistan due to which meeting the food demand and supply have become difficult. Also because of massive consumption by the population, it has become difficult for ~~st~~ the state to fulfill the food supply and demand for its population. According to Pakistan National Human development report of 2021, 68% of population is under the age of 30 and around 27% is between the age of 15 and 29. On the other hand, the current agriculture growth rate is 1.55% according to the Pakistan Economic Survey of fiscal year 2022-23. This current trend shows that the agriculture sector has failed to fulfill the ^{food} demands

of the population and youth being a ~~an~~ considerable chunk of the ~~p~~ population, due to high consumption rate ~~of the~~ there has been an increase in the food shortages making the youth bulge a liability for the state.

Increase in unemployment rate is another ~~obstacle~~ standing in the way of youth bulge becoming an asset for Pakistan. ~~But the~~ Due to the current economic situation of Pakistan where GDP growth rate according to Pakistan Economic Survey of fiscal year 2022-2023, is 0.29 pc as compared to 6.1 pc in 2022. This trend shows that ~~the~~ ^{in the} current ^{in situation} state of Pakistan, the state have failed in providing employment opportunities for its people. According to Pakistan Institute of Development Economics reported that 30% of the country's youth is currently unemployed. When there is no job market in the country, no investment and the GDP is at its lowest as compared to previous years, the youth will stay unemployed and they won't be of any use for the state and its betterment. Thus, the youth becomes a burden

and not a blessing for Pakistan.

Furthermore, the country is witnessing a significant drop out of students from schools. This sign reason has become a major cause behind the youth being a liability for Pakistan. According to UNICEF, 22.8m children at the age of 5 to 16 are out of school. When a major amount of youth is not literate, no benefit can be taken from them by the state. Also, the government's expenditure on education is only 2.38%. This shows that the government spends little amount on the education sector and takes not particular actions to solve the drop out issue which results in youth being talent being wasted and that this youth bulge is becoming a burden and not an asset.

Also, insufficient resources and their ~~an~~ unequal divide of the present resources have made the youth in dire need deprive of their basic necessities. Major chunk of resources like electricity, water and gas is available to

people living in lavish so urban societies of Pakistan. Many poor families living in rural areas or slums are deprived of these resources.

According to Humanium, an International NGO, only 20.88% of children live in urban areas and have access to fundamental needs. This shows that majority of the youth bulge in Pakistan have not yet resources to meet their basic needs which results them in limiting their growth and as well as their potential to achieve their goals and dreams. Therefore, another reason behind why youth bulge is a liability in Pakistan.

Another reason onto why youth bulge in Pakistan is a liability is due to increase in the environmental issues. Pakistan being a populous country, higher number of young people show that there their would be higher number of birth rate in the future. This shows that when population increases, more younger generation will come resulting in a direct effect to the environment. According to WHO World Health Organization,

all of Pakistan * 241.241.49 million people live in areas where the annual average particulate pollution level exceeds the WHO guideline; 98.3% of population live in areas that exceed the country's own national air quality standards. So, ^{In a nutshell} a country which is facing massive economic issues have to deal with another ^{problem of regarding environment where} ~~where~~ ^{issue} ~~the on the~~ ^{already} ~~one~~ issue to of youth bulge is already at hand.

Higher rates in crime is also why youth bulge in Pakistan has become a liability. When there are food shortage, unemployment, government ignorance towards the youth and their basic needs, and increase level of drop out ratio in the from the schools; in the youth will divert itself to the wrong path as the state has failed to become a guiding hand for its people. especially for its younger generation. A state should play a role of a mother for its youth in order to fully nourish them and develop their full potential. Then only they can become a asset for the state.

High rates in crime is the direct result of inflation which has reached its ultimate peak. Due to severe inflation, people are only focused to achieve get their basic needs like food and water to survive. At this point, the main focus of youth is to survive or leave the country for the better. According to Pakistan Economic Survey of fiscal year 2022-23 the inflation has gone to 29.2% as compared to 11.3% in 2021-2022. And almost 832,000 including 400,000 highly skilled youth have left Pakistan due to Brain Drain phenomenon called brain drain. When no opportunities are given to the youth, they will go to places where they can survive and bring the most out of their potential. A state, whose literates are leaving the country can't flourish as at the backhand, it has majority of youth which is illiterate to tackle with. Hence, due to this reason a youth bulge is becoming a liability.

Along with in high inflation rate, there is increase level of suicides among the youth in Pakistan. This is another issue which the

country is facing despite all the issues at hand. According to Pakistan Journal of Medical sciences, suicidal ideation was found in 35.6% of youth, where 13% were of 10-18 years old. In From 2021 to 2022, in one year 2295 suicides were reported. When one focuses on this trend and what Maslow in his hierarchy of needs taught the world, there is a connection that is to be seen. When the first level of Maslow hierarchy of needs that is physiological needs is not met, the human can't reach on to the next level. In Pakistan, youth can only become an asset if he or she reaches meets the entire level of the Maslow hierarchy of needs and achieves the very last stage of self-actualization. However, in the current scenario the youth have not yet achieved the first stage due to which the suicides rates are increasing day by day and government is has failed to resolve the issue. Thus, youth bulge is not seen as an asset at this point.

How youth bulge in Pakistan is a liability has been discussed with all of its aspects in the above paragraphs. In this following paragraphs, the discussion will revolve around the arguments of those who consider youth bulge an asset.

The proponents of youth bulge being an asset put forward the argument that they contribute in spreading of literacy in their localities. According to them, the youth can teach the importance of literacy in their local areas. However, there are certain ~~areas~~ reasons on which their stance can be refuted. First of all, ~~the~~ majority of the younger population is out of school. According to UNICEF, Pakistan has the world's second highest number of out-of-school children. Likewise, ~~from~~ ~~out~~ of ~~68~~ ~~65~~ % of total youth, ~~only~~ 11.4 million adolescents between age 10-14 does not receive total educational education majority of the girls are deprived of their basic rights of education. When the literacy rate is so low, it can be said that the youth bulge is not an asset but a liability.

There are also of the view that youth can bring innovation and creativity in the workplace. However, it is easier said than done. According to UNDP, only 39 out of 100 are employed. When the employment rate is low, old elites have taken up all the positions in the market, low lack of educational investment and low literacy rates, and old cramming methods methodologies in schools are used. All of these reasons prevent the youth from bringing out their creativity and innovation into the jobs. Therefore, these reasons hamper the youth from becoming an asset.

Lastly, in their opinion youth bulge becomes highly effective manpower. However, it is not true in countries like Pakistan. According to Melinda Gates, "if you want to lift up an economy, you basically start with women." Youth bulge cannot become an effective manpower when the ratio female participation in economy is less than the male. According to World Bank, female participation is only 24.61% and male participation into the economy is 80.86%. Also

unemployed female youth is ~~that~~ 14.1% and male is only 10%. Likewise, according to UNICEF, around 3 in 4 youth lacks skills. With this said, all these reasons proved the fact that youth in Pakistan cannot be effective manpower until the issues are resolved. Thus, youth bulge in Pakistan is not an asset rather a liability.

To conclude, youth bulge has ^{become} ~~being~~ a liability for Pakistan due to myriad reasons. The dire situation of economy, political issues and lack of resources, have all contributed for the youth bulge in Pakistan to become a liability. The state can no longer benefit from them until they resolve the issues present at hand. However, Moreover, many people opine the youth as an asset but their arguments cannot be converted into reality. The reality is much more painful and heart-rending. Youth is an asset in countries when the government provides them with all the opportunities so that they can bring out their potential, country with better economy

treasures their youth. But in terms of Pakistan, where ignorance by the government towards youth prevails no such benefits can be taken from them. Against this backdrop, the country has to overcome the hurdles step by step before stepping into the venture of transforming the youth bulge into an asset. After all, according to Herbert Hoover, the ^{former} U.S. President, "Older men declare war. But it is the youth that must fight and die".