

# Persistently Prevailing poverty in Pakistan and the way Forward

## Outline

### I- Introduction

### 2- Manifestations of the persistently prevailing poverty in Pakistan

I Limited access to education  
Poor Health outcomes

II Malnutrition and food insecurity

III Limited access to clean  
water and sanitation

IV Substandard housing and  
living conditions

V High infant mortality rate

VI Limited job opportunities and unemployment

VII Dependence on informal economy

VIII Social inequality and discrimination

### 3. Factors responsible for the persistently prevailing poverty in Pakistan

I Limited access to quality education

II Persistently prevailing political instability and corruption

III Over-dependence on agriculture

IV Limited access to credit and financial services

- V Vulnerability to natural disasters
- VI Historical legacy of colonialism and political instability
- VII Increase in Brain drain
- VIII Limited Foreign Investment

## 4-Way Forward for the eradication of poverty from Pakistan

- I Investment in education and healthcare infrastructure
- II Promotion of Economic growth through industrialization and Entrepreneurship
- III Implementation of social protection programs and safety nets.

IV Addressal of inequality and discrimination through policy reforms

V Improvement in governance and transparency

VI Assurance of provision of equal opportunities to all the individuals

VII Assurance of strict accountability

VIII Implementation of rule of law.

IX Assurance of proper working of government institutions for the eradication of poverty

5. Conclusion

Poverty is a persistent issue in Pakistan since its inception. It hinders the country's economic growth and social development. Despite efforts to alleviate poverty, it remains a significant challenge, affecting millions of lives. So, there is no iota of doubt that poverty is the persistently prevailing social issue of Pakistan which is affecting multiple lives at different levels in a miserable way. Limited access to education and health care units, malnutrition and food insecurity, limited access to clean water and sanitation, substandard housing and living conditions and high infant mortality rates are some of the many manifestations of persistently prevailing poverty in Pakistan.

A number of factors are responsible for this issue. However, a meticulous analysis of the situation shows that some meticulously devised and whole-heartedly implemented policies can ameliorate the situation.

Before moving towards the manifestations of the persistently prevailing poverty it is important to understand that what is poverty? Poverty is actually that condition in which people are forced to live below the normal standard of living, facing food shortage, limited water access and other basic necessities of life. This condition leads to different problems in the society.

After having discussed what is poverty, now it is time to analyze about the manifestations of persistently prevailing poverty in Pakistan. To start with, limited access to education and healthcare facilities is one of the many manifestations of poverty in Pakistan. Pakistan has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. As Noble Laureate Malala Yousafzai notes, "one child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world." Similarly Pakistan's healthcare system is under-developed, leading to poor health outcomes. According to WHO, Pakistan has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the region, with 46 deaths / 1000 live births. Hence, Pakistan is facing the

challenges of health and education.

Likewise, Malnutrition and food insecurity are pervasive in Pakistan. According to the Global Food Security Index, Pakistan ranks 109th out of 113 countries in terms of food security. Moreover, 24% of the population suffers from malnutrition and 36% of children under five experience stunting. So, Pakistan lacks sufficient food, leading to persistently prevailing poverty.

Similarly, access to clean water and sanitation is a significant challenge in Pakistan. According to the World Bank, 22% of the population lacks access to improved water resources, and 40% lack access to improved sanitation facilities.



Hence, limited access to clean water and sanitation enhances the chances of poverty.

Additionally, many Pakistanis live in substandard housing and poor living conditions.

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 95% of the population lives in informal settlements or slum. This leads to increasing poverty in the country.

Likewise, Pakistan faces significant challenges in terms of job opportunities and unemployment. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the unemployment rate is 8.5% and 30% of the labour force is underemployed. Hence, unemployment is the greatest factor responsible for poverty.

Similarly, many Pakistanis rely on the informal economy for survival. According to the World Bank notes, "The informal economy is a significant challenge for economic development and poverty reduction. According to PBS, 72% of the labour force works in the informal sectors. This is one of the many reasons for persistently prevailing poverty in the country.

Likewise, social inequality and discrimination are pervasive in Pakistan. According to the United Nations Development Programme, 60% of the population experiences multidimensional, with significant disparities based on gender, geography, and ethnicity.

As the Pakistan Human Rights Commission notes, "Discrimination and inequality are significant challenges for human rights and social justice?" So, indiscriminate also plays key role in the prevalence of poverty in the country.

After having analyzed the manifestations of the persistently prevailing poverty, it is immensely important to analyze the factors responsible for it. To start with, Pakistan's education system is plagued by inadequate infrastructure, poorly trained teachers, and a lack of resources. This results in a significant portion of the population remaining uneducated, lacking the skills necessary to secure better-paying jobs and improve their socio-

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economic status.

likewise political instability and corruption have hindered Pakistan's economic growth and development. Corruption diverts resources away from essential public services, exacerbating poverty and inequality. Political instability discourages foreign investment, stunting economic growth.

Similarly, Pakistan's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture, making it vulnerable to natural disasters, climate change, and fluctuations in global market prices. This limits the country's ability to diversify its economy and reduce poverty.

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Similarly, Pakistan faces significant challenges in creating job opportunities, leading to high levels of unemployment. This lack of decent work and underemployment perpetuate poverty.

Likewise, many Pakistanis lack access to formal financial services, forcing them to rely on informal money lenders and predatory loan practices. This perpetuates poverty and limits economic mobility.

Additionally, Pakistan is prone to natural disasters including earthquakes, floods, and droughts. These disasters exacerbate poverty, destroying infrastructure, homes and livelihood.

Moreover, Pakistan's history of colonialism and political instability has hindered its economic

development and perpetuated poverty. The country's resources have been exploited, and its institutions have been weakened.

Similarly, Pakistan faces a significant brain drain, as talented individuals emigrate to other countries in search of better opportunities. This deprives the country of skilled professionals, perpetuating poverty and limiting economic growth.

Last but not the least, limited foreign direct investment has been decreased owing to political instability, terrorism, and poor infrastructure. This limits the country's ability to access new technologies, skills, and capital, perpetuating poverty.

A meticulous analysis of the persistently prevailing poverty reveals that a myriad of steps can be taken for the amelioration of the situation. Firstly, investing in education and healthcare units is critical to addressing poverty in Pakistan. This includes building schools, hospitals, and training institutions, as well as providing resources and equipment. In this way, Pakistan can equip its citizens with the skills and knowledge necessary to secure better-paying jobs and improve their well-being.

Moreover, Pakistan needs to focus on industrialization and entrepreneurship to promote economic growth and create employment opportunities. This can be achieved by providing incentives for business, investing

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in infrastructure, and supporting innovation. By diversifying its economy and promoting entrepreneurship, Pakistan can reduce its reliance on agriculture and increase its competitiveness in the global market.

Likewise, social protection programs and safety nets are essential for supporting vulnerable populations and alleviating poverty. Pakistan can implement programs like cash transfers, food assistance, and housing support to provide a financial safety net for those in need. These programs can help mitigate the effects of poverty and provide a foundation for economic mobility.



Last but not the least, Pakistan must address inequality and discrimination through policy reforms that promote equal access to education, employment, and health care. This includes implementing anti-discrimination laws, increasing representation for marginalized groups, and providing targeted support for disadvantaged communities. By addressing these underlying issues, Pakistan can create a more inclusive society and reduce poverty.

Conclusively, poverty in Pakistan is a complex issue requiring a multifaceted approach. The prevalence of poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, and political instability and corruption all contribute to this persistent problem. To address poverty,

Pakistan must invest in education and healthcare infrastructure, promote economic growth through industrialization, implement social protection programs, and address inequality and discrimination through policy reforms. By working together, Pakistani nation, as a whole, can reduce poverty and create a more equitable society for all Pakistanis.