

# Youth bulge in Pakistan, an asset or liability?

## Outline

### 1 Introduction:

Thesis statement: The youth bulge in Pakistan is a demographic phenomenon that has potential to be both as asset or liability for the country. However, effective management of youth bulge in order to realize its potential benefits and mitigate its risk, is crucial.

### 2 Understanding the term 'Youth bulge' and its good and bad impacts.

### 3 Youth bulge as an asset

- It provide large pool of potential workers and entrepreneur
- It help in accelerating economic growth
- Youth bulge leads to research and innovation
- Adaptable to change and have resilience
- More dynamic and youthful society
- A large consumer market.

### 4 How can youth bulge be liability for nation?

- High unemployment and underemployment
- Low level of education and skills
- Increase in crime and violence
- Brain drain increase
- Rise of extremism
- Rise in corruption and instability of nation

### 5 Challenges to tackle youth bulge in Pakistan

- Investing in education and skill

development

b. Addressing the root cause of social unrest.

c. Providing job opportunities.

d. Promoting entrepreneurship

6. Case study of top three countries in youth bulge

a. Nigeria

b. India

c. Indonesia

7. Conclusion

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"The youth bulge is a challenge but it is also an opportunity. If we can invest in our young people, they can help us build a better future for Pakistan" (former prime minister, Imran Khan). These words of prime minister is the common concern of every Pakistani. The youth bulge is a ticking bomb that could either propel Pakistan to greatness or plunge it into chaos. It is now uncertain to state that youth bulge in Pakistan is liability or an asset. There are number of factors that are evident of how youth bulge can be an asset, such as provision of potential workers and entrepreneurs. Youth bulge also help a nation accelerate its economic growth and lead a nation to excel in the field of science and technology leading to innovation. Youth bulge are the group which are considered strong and resilient for any change, they are more dynamic and youthful also, they provide a large consumer market. On the other hand, the youth can be liability for nation if not provided with enough resources and opportunities they suffer from high unemployment and underemployment. The government can not provide quality education to the large youth bulge and they remain unskilled. It result in high ratio of crime, violence and extremism in society.

The nation suffer brain drain because the own country can not provide sufficient opportunities, so the youth see green pastures in other nations. Also, the society suffer from corruption, injustice and instability. There are many challenges that are faced by youth bulge of Pakistan like unemployment, lack of education and opportunities because of poor investment in education sector and skill development. The government is unable to address the root cause of social unrest. However, if youth bulge be provided with ample opportunities they can outshine a nation in every field of life like science, technology, economy, education, industry and so on.

The youth bulge in Pakistan is a demographic phenomena in which a large proportion of the population is in the age group of 15-29 years. It has potential to be both asset and liability for the country. According to the World Bank, 62% of Pakistanis population is under the age of 25. This means that there are more young people in Pakistan than the working age population (15-64 years old). The impact of youth bulge depends on the opportunities, education and facilities provided to youths bulge. They can be both an asset leading a nation towards development and can be liability to strain the economy as well as becoming a burden on nation.

The youth bulge can be proven as asset by providing a country large pool of worker and entrepreneurs. These as well as entrepreneurs run the government machinery of private sector. They run the machinery of govt and industry. Until

the country have efficient and effective workers both in government and private sector the country can not achieve progress. The country working age population is projected to grow by 20% between 2020 and 2030, according to World Bank. which shows that there will be more increase in the potential workers and entrepreneurs of country.

In addition to increase in the potential worker and entrepreneurs, youth bulge help to accelerate economic growth. By participating in many platforms like industry, education, and technology the youth bulge help to accelerate economic growth as well. For instance, South Korea, the youth bulge in 1960s and 1970s coincide with the period of rapid economic growth. This was due to number of factors, including high investment in education and infrastructure and the availability of cheap labour. If the young population is healthy, educated and employed they can contribute to economy and help to boost productivity and innovation.

Moreover, along with accelerating economic growth, youth bulge play vital role in leading a country excel in research and innovation if they are provided with better opportunities they can do wonders for a country. India has the second largest youth bulge in the world, their government is investing in education and research, due to which they have become a major hub of innovation, and become the first country to land on the south pole of moon. Therefore, it is the youth bulge that take a country towards innovation and success in the field of technology.

Apart from leading a country towards innovation in field of technology and science the youth bulge is that group of nation that is most powerful, resilient and adaptable to any change. For instance Pakistan was best controlled and less affected by Covid-19 because of the youth bulge according to World Health Organization. The country suffer less if youth bulge is more, otherwise the weak and aged society leads a country to suffer more from different calamities.

Youth can be liability for nation in different ways. For instance youth bulge is facing high unemployment and underemployment in Pakistan.

The unemployment rate in Pakistan was 6.42% in 2022, according to International Labour Organization. This is slight increase from 6.34% rate in 2021. The unemployment rate is expected to remain around 6.5% in 2023, according to world bank. High

level of unemployment leads youth towards many social and mental problems like stress and anxiety, dissatisfaction and increase in crime and unfair means of earning in society.

Along with unemployment, Pakistan youth bulge is facing problem in availing quality education and opportunities. Without education the youth is mere burden on the shoulder of state. Despite of ensuring free education till the age of 15 years according

to the 18th amendment in Constitution of Pakistan. The literacy rate of Pakistan is 62.31, according to the Ministry of Federal Education Professional Training. The gender gap in education is significant, having females only 51.8% literate and males 72.8% literate. Such statistics are of large concern as they are alarming for the progress of a nation.

Due to lack of education and employment the youth bulge adopt the unfair means of earning. The most common crimes in Pakistan are theft, robbery and assault. There is also a significant problem with violent crime, such as murder and kidnapping. According to World Bank the crime rate in Pakistan was 44.2 per 100,000 people in 2020 down from 50.2 per 100,000 people in 2019. Which shows that by providing different schemes, employment opportunities and platforms such crime rates can be alleviated.

Because of low level of education and skills, Pakistan is facing severe crises of brain drain. They youngs are leaving country for education and job opportunities in Europe countries. According to the latest statistic, 8 lac people left the country in last 5 year with 5 lac in previous 8 month from January to August. It is quite a serious concern that well qualified, educated doctor, engineers and other professionals are leaving country in quest of better opportunities.

Because of the absence of ample opportunities people especially youth bulge is getting more and more frustrated and results in the extremism. As evidence from a may incident, where youngsters attacked jinnah house due to aggression because of the political instability and many other reasons, the energy of youth cannot be harvested in positive way.

There are many challenges that are to be tackled by Pakistan government to utilize the youth bulge in positive way but the foremost concern is to utilize the huge sum of capital in education sector. Class rooms decide the future of nation. The educated community can only lead a nation towards development, progress and peace.

The government need to address the root cause of social unrest among youth and utilize the youth in effective way. The collaboration of government in form of launching different programmes can satisfy the prevailing unrest in youth.

The government is prioritizing many other issues like economy, increasing budget deficit, security challenges, water and food insecurity, natural disasters over the unemployment of youth bulge which is demanding the economy of Pakistan. Therefore, practical steps should be taken to utilize the youth bulge in many developmental programmes like CPEC, to provide employment

and entrepreneurship to the youth bulge.

We can take different countries having maximum youth bulge. For instance Nigeria has the world's highest youth bulge with 60% of its population under age of 25. The country unemployment rate is also very high at 33%. However, Nigeria has made some progress in recent years in terms of education and skill development.

In addition to Nigeria, India has the world's second highest youth bulge with 53% of its population under the age of 25. The country unemployment rate is also very high at 22%. However, India has a strong track record of economic growth and the government is investing in education and skill development. This is expected to boost productivity and reduce unemployment among young people.

Moreover, Indonesia has world's third highest youth bulge with 48% of its population under the age of 25. The unemployment rate in country is at 10%. However, Indonesia has young and growing workforce and the government is investing in infrastructure and other sectors that create jobs.

In a nutshell, it can not be wrong if we say that the youth bulge can be both an asset and liability, depending on how to control them. provided with ample resources, youth lead nations toward success and development but with lack of resources they drain



the economy and lead a nation towards  
 fiasco. The educated youth are the  
 building block of peaceful and  
 prosperous society. Otherwise, the illiterate  
 societies are hub of lawlessness, violence  
 extremism and poverty. Apart from gover-  
 nment responsibility, it is also the onus  
 of youth to utilize their energy in  
 fruitful and productive activities  
 and refrain from the activities that  
 leads a nation towards downfall  
 as motivated by the poetry of  
 Iqbal, he said to youth that

اینیں و شیرائیں  
 لو شاییں و یسرا  
 قمر سلطانہ گنبد پر  
 در بازاروں کی چٹانوں پر