

## Youth Population in Pakistan: Leveraging Growth for National Advancement

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*This study examines Pakistan's youth, who comprise more than 64% of the population, and their capacity for change and the implications for the country's future. It examines the current demographic trends, problems like the lack of meaningful employment opportunities, education and skill gaps, unemployment, and the potential benefits of this demographic boom. To maximize youth potential as a catalyst for economic growth, social progress, and innovation and avoid the youth bulge becoming a socio-political strain, the article emphasizes the urgent need for strategic interventions and comprehensive reforms in education, employment, health, and civic participation. The study offers suggestions and measures to turn the growing youth population into a significant asset for national development and draws lessons from international examples, particularly China. To make the rising population of youth an asset for Pakistan, several measures are required. Firstly, investing in quality education is crucial. By implementing policies that guarantee equal educational opportunities for all young individuals, irrespective of their socioeconomic status, we can effectively provide them with the essential competencies and information required to navigate the challenges of the forthcoming era. This includes promoting technical and vocational training programs to address the needs of the job market. Secondly, creating employment opportunities is essential. The government and private sector should work together to generate jobs and promote entrepreneurship. This can be achieved through supportive policies, incentives for businesses, and fostering a conducive environment for innovation and growth. Lastly, focusing on healthcare and social services is vital. By prioritizing the well-being of the youth, we can address issues such as malnutrition, healthcare access, and mental health support. This will not only improve their quality of life but also enable them to contribute effectively to the development of the nation. By implementing these measures, Pakistan can harness the potential of its growing youth population and transform them into an asset for the country's progress and prosperity.*

## 1. Introduction

Pakistan has a young, active population, a demographic that can serve as a steppingstone for the country's progress toward sustainable growth and prosperity. The youth, who make up more than 64% of the population, are the future architects and hold the potential to take the nation to new heights of innovation, progress, and societal well-being. However, to fully fulfill the potential of this young population, the trip that lies ahead is fraught with a great number of challenges and obstacles, all of which must be surmounted. This article thoroughly investigates the current demographic trends, the ongoing issues preventing youth development, and the plethora of opportunities that, if properly tapped into, can change the country's course. The article further aims to present a comprehensive view of the youth's role in Pakistan's developmental narrative suggest practical solutions and strategies to cultivate their capabilities and aspirations by analysing global paradigms and integrating various perspectives (Dimitrova et al., 2021).

Youth population growth in Pakistan presents both opportunities and challenges for the nation's development. To harness the potential of this demographic dividend, it is crucial to implement measures that transform the youth population into an asset. This research aims to explore the measures required to achieve this objective and provide valuable insights and recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders (Shaikh, 2018). Youth in Pakistan face numerous obstacles, such as limited access to quality education, a dearth of employment opportunities, and inadequate healthcare and social services. These issues hinder their ability to contribute effectively to the nation's progress. Therefore, it is essential to address these challenges and create an enabling environment for the youth to thrive.

By investing in quality education and promoting technical and vocational training programs, we can equip the youth with the necessary skills and knowledge for the future job market. Additionally, creating employment opportunities, both through supportive policies and fostering entrepreneurship, can empower the youth to become active contributors to the economy. Furthermore, focusing on healthcare and social services is crucial to ensure the well-being of the youth population. We can improve their quality of life and enable them to attain their full potential by addressing issues such as malnutrition, access to healthcare, and mental health support. Through this research, the researcher aims to identify the specific measures required to make the rising population of youth an asset for Pakistan. By understanding the challenges and exploring successful strategies from other countries, we can develop recommendations and policy suggestions that foster the empowerment and utilization of the youth population in Pakistan's development journey.

Young people in Pakistan play a significant role; they are the country's foundation. In Pakistan, there are a lot of young people living there. More than 64% of Pakistan's population is young, and this trend is anticipated to continue until 2052, according to the United Nations Population Fund Report from 2017 and the Human Development Report from 2018 (Asad, 2014). Putting money into the next generation is like planting seeds for Pakistan's future. This article

shows that giving young people the right opportunities, such as high-quality education, employment, and active social participation, can help them decide what is best for themselves, their families, and society. The problem statement for the measures required to make the rising population of youth an asset for Pakistan is to address the challenges and barriers that hinder the full potential of the youth. This includes limited access to quality education, lack of employment opportunities, inadequate healthcare and social services, and insufficient support for entrepreneurship. By identifying and addressing these issues, this study is intended to create an enabling environment that empowers the youth to contribute effectively to the development of Pakistan (Ashraf et al., 2013; Muhammad et al., 2023). The objectives of the study include.

1. To identify the current challenges and barriers that hinder the effective utilization of the youth population in Pakistan.
2. To analyse successful case studies and best practices from other countries that have effectively utilized their youth population.
3. To develop recommendations and policy suggestions to policymakers and stakeholders for maximizing the positive impact of the youth population on Pakistan's development.

Youth empowerment is crucial. Youth can innovate and make positive changes that advance the nation when given the opportunity. Realizing the potential of Pakistan's youth and giving them the resources and opportunities, they need to succeed is imperative for the country's leaders. An essential element in harnessing the potential of Pakistan's growing youth population is the prioritization of education and the enhancement of skill acquisition. By allocating resources towards the enhancement of education and vocational training initiatives, we can effectively provide the younger generation with the essential information and competencies required to excel in the labor market. This would not only bolster their prospects for employment but also make a significant contribution to the broader socio-economic advancement of the nation. Furthermore, it is imperative to consider the significance of generating job prospects, fostering entrepreneurial endeavors, and effectively addressing healthcare and social service requirements while harnessing the potential of the youth demographic. By strategically focusing on these crucial domains, Pakistan has the potential to empower its younger generation and harness their skills and dynamism to drive the nation's advancement (Tunio et al., 2022).

This research paper thoroughly overviews Pakistan's youth population, outlining their difficulties and potential opportunities. It will provide information and suggestions on empowering young people and using their abilities to benefit the nation. The paper will also compare with other nations to comprehend how they have used youth for national development, including China (UNESCO, 2019). This introduction sets the stage for the paper by highlighting the importance of Pakistan's youth in its development. It describes Pakistani youth's opportunities and problems, suggests empowering them, and concludes the UNDP report and comparative studies with other nations (Ali, July 25, 2023).

## 2. Research methodology

In order to investigate the necessary methods to transform the growing youth population into a valuable resource for Pakistan, a comprehensive research technique was employed. This study employed qualitative methodologies. Firstly, a literature review was conducted to gather existing knowledge and insights on the topic. This involved studying academic papers, reports, and policy documents related to youth empowerment, education, employment, healthcare, and social services in Pakistan. Additionally, data analysis techniques were employed to analyse relevant datasets, such as demographic data, education statistics, employment rates, and healthcare indicators. Furthermore, case studies and comparative analysis of successful initiatives implemented in other countries was conducted. This provides a broader perspective and highlight potential strategies that can be adapted to the Pakistani context. Lastly, the research findings were synthesized and analysed to develop recommendations and policy suggestions. These recommendations are evidence-based, practical, and actionable, addressing the specific challenges faced by the youth population in Pakistan. Overall, a comprehensive research methodology combining literature review, data analysis, case studies, and policy analysis provide a holistic understanding of the measures required to make the rising population of youth an asset for Pakistan.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Demographic Overview

#### 3.1.1 Youth Population Trends

Analysing youth population trends is like examining Pakistan's future. It aids in understanding the need to support Pakistan's young population and the number of young people there will be in the ensuing years.

#### 3.1.2 Current Trends

Pakistan currently has a sizable youth population. They make up a sizable portion of the population and have the power to alter the nation drastically. The future's workers, leaders, and thinkers will all be among today's youth. They are the ones who will determine Pakistan's future (Afridi et al., 2023)

#### 3.1.3 Projections until 2052

More than 64% of Pakistan's population is young, according to the UNDP report, and this trend is unlikely to reverse itself soon. It is anticipated that this trend will last at least until 2052. As a result, Pakistan will have a sizable population of young people who can contribute to its development and growth over the coming decades (Asghar et al., 2020).

### **3.1.4 Implications of Youth Population Trends**

Pakistan's large youth population presents both opportunities and challenges. It presents a challenge because it implies that there must be sufficient resources, such as employment and education, to support the youth. It is a chance because, with the right support, the youth can significantly contribute to the nation's advancement. They can infuse Pakistan with fresh perspectives, vitality, and innovation.

### **3.1.5 Comparative Analysis with Other Countries**

When we examine other nations, we notice that those with a sizable youth population have been able to take advantage of this. They have invested in their children, giving them access to opportunities, education, and skills that will enable them to benefit the nation. For instance, nations like China have successfully utilized their youth populations to advance their economies and development. Pakistan can find ways to use its young population for national development by taking lessons from these nations.

## **3.2 Need for Strategic Planning**

Pakistan needs to have a strategic plan in place to support its youth, given the current trends and future projections. This strategy should strongly emphasize giving young people access to high-quality education, job opportunities, and meaningful engagement. By doing this, Pakistan can make sure that its youth are prepared to contribute to the growth and prosperity of the nation. According to the UNDP Report, we focused on the current situation and projections through 2052 as we examined Pakistan's youth population trends. The nation faces opportunities and challenges due to the large youth population. Pakistan can utilize its youth population for national development and growth by studying other nations' experiences and implementing strategic plans (Khalid et al., 2020).

### **3.2.1 Comparative Analysis**

When we compare the youth populations of various nations, we compare their potential for the future. Pakistan can gain understanding and pick up important lessons by studying how other nations have used their youth for national development.

### **3.2.2 Leveraging Youth Population: Global Perspective**

Many nations have taken action to empower their young populations because they understand the value of having them. These nations have made investments in youth engagement, education, and employment opportunities, allowing them to make significant contributions to national development.

### **3.2.3 Case Study: China**

China is a shining example of a nation that has successfully used its young people to advance its development. China strongly emphasized giving its youth access to quality education,

career opportunities, and skill development, which were crucial to the country's rapid economic development. By studying China's strategies and approaches, Pakistan can gain insights into effective youth empowerment and engagement for national progress.

### **3.2.4 Lessons from Developed Countries**

Thanks to their excellent educational systems and strong economies, developed nations have successfully involved young people in nation-building. They have implemented policies and initiatives encouraging youth innovation, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement. These nations have demonstrated how young people can propel societal advancement and economic prosperity if given the proper opportunities and encouragement (Tunio, 2020).

### **3.2.5 Contrasting with Developing Countries**

Contrarily, many developing nations need help to give their youth the support they need due to scarce resources and numerous difficulties. The youth's potential is frequently not used to its fullest due to a lack of high-quality education, employment opportunities, and venues for meaningful engagement. However, some underdeveloped nations have overcome these obstacles and empowered their youth to play a vital role in developing their countries, providing important lessons for Pakistan (Ahmad & Khan, 2019).

### **3.2.6 Implications for Pakistan**

Pakistan must comprehend how other developed and developing nations have exploited their youth populations. It offers a road map for creating strategies and laws to empower young people. Pakistan can create tailored strategies to tap the potential of its youth for national development by studying the successes and difficulties of other nations (Ahmad et al., 2018).

## **3.3 Strategic Recommendations for Pakistan**

Based on the comparative analysis, Pakistan should:

- Invest in youth skill-building and education programs.
- It provides many employment opportunities and supports an environment that encourages innovation and entrepreneurship (Ahmed et al., 2020).
- Creates frameworks for youth civic participation and meaningful engagement.
- Creates and puts into effect policies that consider the special needs and aspirations of the young, allowing them to contribute to the country's development effectively.

To understand how different nations have used their youth populations for national development, we conducted a comparative analysis in this section. Pakistan can develop effective strategies and policies to empower its youth and harness their potential for the progress and prosperity of the country by studying the strategies and approaches of nations like China and learning from the experiences of both developed and developing countries.



### **3.3 Challenges Faced by Youth in Pakistan**

#### **3.4.1 Education and Skill Gap**

It is critical to comprehend the state of education and skill development because it directly affects young people's potential to make significant contributions to society and the economy.

#### **3.4.2 Current State of Education**

Numerous issues with Pakistan's educational system affect the youth's access to and quality education. Many young people need access to high-quality education, which impedes their ability to grow personally and professionally. The availability of low-quality education impacts the youth's capacity to acquire the knowledge and skills required to participate effectively in the economy and society.

#### **3.4.3 Skill Development Scenario**

Another area where Pakistani youth face significant obstacles is skill development. There is frequently a disconnect between the skills that young people acquire and the skills employers seek because the existing skill development programs are only sometimes in line with market demands (Ahmed, 2019). Due to this misalignment, young people have fewer opportunities for gainful employment and career advancement, impacting their employability.

#### **3.4.4 Implications of Education and Skill Gap**

The country and the youth both suffer from the education and skill gap. It not only has an impact on the young population's personal and professional prospects, but it also hinders the nation's economic development. The country loses human capital when young people cannot effectively contribute to the economy because of a lack of education and skills.

#### **3.4.5 Comparative Analysis with Global Standards**

The disparity between Pakistani education, skill levels, and international standards is even more pronounced. Many nations have made significant investments in their educational and skill-development initiatives to ensure that their young people are prepared to meet the demands of the modern economy. The disparity between Pakistan and these other nations' educational systems and skill-building initiatives highlights the urgent need for reforms and investments in these sectors. In this section, we examined Pakistan's current education and skill development situation and its effects on the youth and the nation. The education and skill gap in Pakistan is a significant issue that impacts the prospects for young people and the nation's economic growth. Pakistan can enable its youth to make meaningful contributions to the economy and society by enacting reforms and spending money on skill development and education (Hafeez & Fasih 2018).

### **4. Unemployment and Underemployment**

Exploring the employment landscape is crucial because it reveals young people's possibilities and obstacles as they seek stable and satisfying employment (Rahman et al., 2019).

#### **4.1 The Unemployment Dilemma**

Many young people in Pakistan struggle to find employment. The high unemployment rate among young people reflects the few available job opportunities. This lack of employment opportunities is a fundamental problem because it impacts the young population's economic security and well-being.

## **4.2 The Issue of Underemployment**

Many young people still need help with underemployment even after landing jobs. They frequently work in positions that underutilize their training and education, wasting human potential. Low wages and job insecurity are other consequences of underemployment, which affects young people's quality of life and prospects for the future.

## **4.3 Implications of Unemployment and Underemployment**

Youth unemployment and underemployment rates are extremely high, which has grave consequences. They cause social unrest, a rise in poverty, and economic instability. The country needs more talent and human capital due to the youth's inability to find suitable employment, which slows down national growth.

## **4.4 The Role of Education and Skill Development**

The country's widespread education and skill gap and the problems of underemployment and unemployment are closely related. Youth find competing in the job market challenging due to a lack of relevant education and skills, raising unemployment and underemployment rates (Ashiq et al., 2021).

## **4.5 Comparative Analysis with Other Countries**

Pakistan's youth employment situation contrasts sharply with that of other nations. Through educational reforms, skill development programs, and economic policies, many nations have fostered an environment favourable for youth employment. Pakistan can learn much from these nations' success in tackling youth unemployment and underemployment.

This section went in-depth on the difficulties that Pakistani youth experience with underemployment and unemployment. Wide-ranging effects on the nation's economic and social structure result from the absence of employment opportunities and the prevalence of underemployment. Pakistan can foster an environment encouraging youth employment by implementing targeted reforms and studying global best practices. In this way, Pakistan can utilize the potential of its young population for national development (ResearchGate, September 28, 2023).

## **4.6 Political Involvement and Engagement**

Studying young people's political participation and engagement is important because it sheds light on their influence and role in determining the nation's political climate.

### **4.6.1 Current State of Youth Political Involvement**

Pakistan's youth get involved in politics less than in other countries. Although they have the potential to be a powerful political force, several obstacles prevent them from actively participating in politics. These obstacles include a need for more information, instruction, and chances for significant political engagement.

### **4.6.2 Importance of Youth Political Engagement**

The democratic process depends on youth participation in politics. They contribute to creating inclusive and progressive policies by bringing new viewpoints, energy, and ideas to the political conversation. Their active involvement is essential for addressing young people's



problems and ensuring that the political agenda considers their needs and aspirations (Imtiaz et al., 2020).

#### **4.6.3 Barriers to Political Involvement**

Several obstacles prevent Pakistani youth from becoming politically active. These include a lack of political awareness and education, a lack of opportunities for political engagement, and a political culture that frequently marginalizes young people. Removing these obstacles to increase youth political participation and take advantage of their capacity for political change is crucial (Ida et al., 2020).

#### **4.6.4 Comparative Analysis with Other Democracies**

The level of political engagement and involvement among young people in Pakistan is low compared to other democracies. Youth actively participate in politics in many democracies, influencing laws and bringing about political change. To improve youth political engagement in Pakistan, we can learn a lot from these democracies' experience. In this section, we looked at the difficulties young people in Pakistan face in participating in politics. Youth's scant political engagement represents a missed opportunity for political and democratic advancement. Pakistan can tap into the potential of its youth to influence its political future and bring about positive change by addressing the obstacles to political participation and creating an enabling environment.

### **4.7 Opportunities and Potential**

#### **4.7.1 Demographic Dividend**

Exploring the youth's untapped potential and how it can catalyse the country's economic development is analogous to discussing the demographic dividend.

#### **4.7.2 Understanding Demographic Dividend**

A country experiences a demographic dividend when there are more working-age people than dependents, such as children and older people. This situation may result in economic growth because more people can work, produce goods, and contribute. Utilizing this demographic dividend for Pakistan, which has a sizable youth population, is essential for the country's development.

#### **4.7.3 Potential for Pakistan**

With a growing youth population, Pakistan is well-positioned to benefit from a demographic dividend. With their vigor, creativity, and resiliency, young people have the power to boost productivity, stimulate economic growth, and effect social change. To empower young people and enable their meaningful participation in society and the economy, strategic investments in education, employment, health, and governance are necessary to realize this potential (Zulfiqar et al., 2019).

#### **4.7.4 Transforming Youth Bulge into Demographic Dividend**

Developing an enabling environment is necessary for the youth bulge to become a demographic dividend. This entails providing high-quality education, chances for skill development, gainful employment, and venues for civic engagement. Pakistan can use the potential of its young people to boost economic growth and achieve sustainable development by attending to their needs and aspirations (Batool et al., 2022).

#### **4.7.5 Comparative Analysis with Other Countries**

Countries like China have successfully converted their demographic dividend from a youth bulge into unheard-of economic growth. Pakistan can create policies and interventions to effectively utilize its demographic dividend by researching and modifying the methods used by these nations. This section discussed the demographic dividend and its implications for Pakistan. The youth population can significantly contribute to the nation's economic development if given opportunities and support. Pakistan can turn its youth bulge into a demographic dividend and pave the way for a prosperous and sustainable future by studying and implementing other nations' lessons.

#### **4.8 Entrepreneurship and Innovation**

Investigating entrepreneurship and innovation is like highlighting young people's economic and creative potential and realizing how it can catalyse societal advancement and economic growth.

##### **4.8.1 The Role of Youth in Entrepreneurship**

Thanks to their new perspectives and willingness to take risks, youth play a crucial role in entrepreneurship. They contribute to developing fresh businesses and industries by bringing innovative concepts and solutions. In Pakistan, encouraging youth entrepreneurship maximizes their creative potential and propels economic development (Tunio et al., 2021).

##### **4.8.2 Innovation as a Catalyst for Growth**

The backbone of economic expansion and growth is innovation. It results in the development of novel goods, solutions, and technologies, boosting output and competitiveness. Young people are natural innovators because of their adaptability and willingness to try new things. Pakistan can accelerate its economic growth and achieve sustainable development by encouraging and supporting youth innovation.

##### **4.8.3 The Current Landscape of Youth Entrepreneurship in Pakistan**

The entrepreneurial landscape in Pakistan is changing as more young people express interest in launching their businesses. However, they encounter several difficulties, such as restricted access to financing, a lack of mentorship, and a complicated regulatory environment. It is essential to address these issues to encourage young people to engage in entrepreneurship and innovation (Ali et al., 2017).

##### **4.8.4 Comparative Analysis with Other Economies**

There are notable differences between Pakistan's entrepreneurial ecosystem and other economies. Many nations have developed entrepreneurial and innovation-friendly ecosystems that give access to funding, mentorship, and favourable regulatory environments. Pakistan can benefit from studying these nations' experiences to create policies encouraging youth innovation and entrepreneurship (Soomro et al., 2020). This section examined how young people participate in innovation and entrepreneurship and how that affects the economy. The youth in Pakistan have the potential to lead the way in entrepreneurship and innovation, propelling societal advancement and economic growth. Pakistan can unleash the enterprising spirit of its youth and accelerate

economic growth by creating a supportive environment and addressing the difficulties young businesspeople face.

#### **4.9 Social Change and Activism**

Understanding Pakistani youth's propensity for social activism and change will help us better understand how they can influence societal norms and values.

##### **4.9.1 Youth as Agents of Social Change**

Youth have the drive, passion, and idealistic spirit to improve society. They frequently take the lead in social movements that promote equity, justice, and human rights. The youth in Pakistan have the power to be the driving force behind social change by addressing societal problems and advocating for values like tolerance, inclusivity, and diversity.

##### **4.9.2 Inclination Towards Social Activism**

Pakistan's youth are getting increasingly involved in social activism. They are speaking out against social injustices, inequality, and discrimination while working to make society more inclusive and equitable. However, they frequently need more resources, platforms, and support to amplify their voices and impact (Saud, 2020).

##### **4.9.3 Impact on Societal Improvements**

Youth social activism can significantly improve society. They can assist in the creation of a more just and equitable society by addressing social issues and fighting for change. Their efforts may result in changes to institutions, policies, and social norms that will have a long-term effect on society.

##### **4.9.4 Comparative Analysis with Global Movements**

It is possible to gain insight into the potential and difficulties of youth activism by contrasting the youth-led social movements in Pakistan with those worldwide. Around the world, youth have successfully driven change movements, influenced policies, and enacted social reforms. Understanding these movements can be useful for developing strategies and maximizing the impact of youth-led social activism in Pakistan. This section examined Pakistan's youth's involvement and propensity for activism and social change. Youth can advocate for a more just and equitable society and be the driving force behind positive social change. Pakistan can take advantage of the potential of its youth to create long-lasting societal improvements by assisting them and learning from international youth-led movements (Soomro et al., 2020a).

#### **4.10 Measures**

##### **4.10.1 Quality Education**

Improving educational standards is essential for developing young people because it gives them the knowledge and skills, they need to navigate the modern world successfully. Here are some suggestions for enhancing educational standards and closing the skill and education gap:

##### **4.10.2 Educational Reforms**

- Implement thorough reforms to update the curriculum, enhance teaching techniques, and guarantee universal access to high-quality education.
- Encourage the development of an innovative, critical-thinking, and problem-solving environment in the classroom.

#### **4.10.3 Infrastructure Investment in Education**

- Spend much money improving educational facilities, training teachers, and ensuring the availability of necessary learning resources and materials.

#### **4.10.4 Promotion of Inclusive Education**

- Create and implement policies and programs to address the educational needs of underserved and marginalized groups, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to pursue a higher education.

#### **4.11 Gainful Employment**

The economic empowerment of young people and the nation's overall economic development depend on addressing unemployment and underemployment. The following are some tactics for expanding employment opportunities and lowering youth unemployment and underemployment.

##### **4.11.1 Job Creation Initiatives**

Create and implement policies and programs that will encourage the creation of jobs in a variety of economic sectors, with a focus on those with high rates of youth unemployment.

##### **4.11.2 Entrepreneurial Support**

To promote entrepreneurship and innovation, put in place support systems for young business owners, including financial resources, mentorship, and business development services.

##### **4.11.2 Enhancement of Employability**

To increase youth employability and lessen the mismatch between acquired and desired skills, align education and training programs with market demands.

#### **4.12 Meaningful Engagement**

To enable youth to participate actively in societal and political processes and contribute to creating inclusive and democratic societies, it is crucial to facilitate meaningful engagement. Here are some ideas for building venues for young people to actively participate in political and social processes:

##### **4.12.1 Establishment of Youth Participation Platforms**

To foster a culture of participation and dialogue, create platforms and forums where young people can express their opinions, worries, and suggestions on various societal and political issues.

##### **4.12.2 Promoting Civic Education**

Integrate civic education into the curriculum to improve youth comprehension and awareness of societal and political processes, rights, and obligations.

##### **4.12.2 Inclusive Decision-Making Processes**

Engage young people in decision-making at various levels to ensure that policy development and implementation consider their perspectives, needs, and aspirations.

#### **4.13 Health and Well-being**

The youth's overall development and well-being depend on maintaining their mental and physical health, which enables them to lead fulfilling lives and effectively participate in society. Here are some suggestions for promoting the youth's mental and physical health.

#### **4.13.1 Mental Health Awareness and Support**

To meet the needs of youth, raise awareness of mental health issues among them, and offer them high-quality, easily accessible mental health services. Incorporate mental health education into the school curricula to improve understanding and lessen the stigma surrounding mental health issues.

#### **4.13.2 Promoting Healthy Lifestyles**

- Implement initiatives and programs to encourage young people to choose healthy lifestyles, a balanced diet, and physical activity.
- To enable youth to make wise decisions about their health and provide information and resources on wellness and preventive healthcare.

#### **4.13.2 Accessible Healthcare Services**

Ensure that youth have access to and availability of high-quality healthcare services, focusing on primary, preventive, and specialized care. Create healthcare services geared toward young people that consider their specific health needs and worries.

#### **4.14 Skill Development**

For young people to become more employable and be able to adjust to the changing demands of the job market, it is crucial to give them marketable skills. Here are some methods for teaching young people marketable skills to increase their employability:

##### **4.14.1 Development of Skill Development Programs**

Create and implement skill-development initiatives concentrating on technical and soft skills and aligning with the labour market's demands. Work with industry stakeholders to ensure that skill development programs are pertinent to and applicable to the market for employment today (Shabbir et al., 2018).

##### **4.14.2 Promotion of Vocational Training**

Increase youth access to vocational education and training to give them practical, marketable skills and various career options. Improve the standard and applicability of vocational training programs by continually evaluating them and adjusting them to meet market demands and industry trends.

#### **4.12.3 Lifelong Learning Opportunities**

Encourage the idea of lifelong learning and give young people opportunities for ongoing education and skill development. Create tools and resources to support self-directed learning and skill development so that young people can adjust to the shifting skill needs of the labor market. This section explores the unrealized potential and opportunities of Pakistan's young people. It discusses how youth can propel innovation, entrepreneurship, and social change with the right support and guidance, significantly contributing to the country's economic expansion and societal advancement (Peterson, 2017).

### **4.13 Case Study: China's Demographic Dividend**

#### **4.13.1 Overview**

The story of China's success in realizing and using its demographic dividend offers a compelling illustration of the transformative potential of a young population. China took advantage of the size of its working-age population about 15 years ago by enacting reforms and policies that

sparked economic growth, innovation, and development. China changed its demographic structure into a driving force for economic prosperity and global dominance through strategic investments in employment, healthcare, and education (Cai, 2016).

#### **4.14 Lessons for Pakistan**

Pakistan can learn a lot from China's experience in using its youth population for national development. Following are some analysed takeaways and observations from China's experience:

##### **4.14.1 Strategic Investments in Human Capital**

China's emphasis on education, skill development, and healthcare exemplifies why investing in human capital is crucial to take advantage of the demographic dividend. Prioritizing investments in these sectors can help Pakistan's youth become more capable and empowered.

##### **4.14.2 Economic Reforms and Openness**

China's economic reforms and openness to foreign investment were crucial to fostering economic growth and job creation. Similar reforms can assist Pakistan in attracting investments, boosting economic activity, and generating job opportunities for young people.

##### **4.14.3 Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

China's emphasis on encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship has been crucial in advancing its economy and technology. Pakistan can unleash the creative potential of its youth and improve its global competitiveness by developing a supportive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship.

##### **4.14.4 Inclusive and Forward-looking Policies**

Thanks to its inclusive and progressive policies, China has effectively addressed its population's diverse needs and aspirations. Pakistan can utilize its youth population for sustainable development by creating and enacting policies that are inclusive, equitable, and in line with emerging trends. This case study on China's demographic dividend offers a glimpse into how wise financial decisions, economic changes, and encouraging government actions can turn a young population into a valuable resource for the country's advancement. Pakistan can use the lessons from China's experience as a guide as it utilizes its young population to promote economic growth, social advancement, and sustainable development.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The study examined youth in Pakistan from multiple perspectives, highlighting the immense potential and opportunities possessed by this demographic. Young people, who constitute a significant portion of the population, have the potential to serve as the nation's engine for innovation, social change, and economic development. This potential has yet to be realized due to issues such as skill and education gaps, unemployment, and a dearth of meaningful engagement opportunities.

For Pakistan, empowering young people and making them assets has significant ramifications. It may result in a demographic dividend that spurs economic growth, raises productivity, and promotes social progress. Youth can significantly impact the nation's sociopolitical and economic landscape by promoting tolerance, inclusivity, and diversity when given the right opportunities, skills, and knowledge.



But for this vision to become a reality, Pakistan's leadership must work together. To effectively address the needs and aspirations of the youth, it is urgent to put comprehensive reforms and strategic interventions in areas like education, employment, health, and civic engagement. Leveraging the potential of young people requires investments in their human capital development, creating an environment that supports innovation and entrepreneurship, and promoting inclusive policies that look to the future. The findings of this research should motivate Pakistan's leadership to prioritize youth empowerment and take decisive action to capitalize on the demographic dividend represented by the country's young population. It is crucial to prevent the "Youth Bulge" from straining the nation's sociopolitical structure and causing conflict. Pakistan can pave the way for a prosperous and sustainable future by utilizing the youth's vitality, ingenuity, and tenacity, thereby achieving its development goals and enhancing its international standing.

## **5.1 Recommendations**

### **5.1.1 Recommendations for Bridging the Gap**

To close Pakistan's education and skill gap, it is essential to:

- Reform the educational system to increase education access and quality.
- Programs for skill development should be in line with market demands.
- Invest in opportunities for youth to pursue lifelong learning and vocational training.
- Create an environment in the classroom that values creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

### **5.1.2 Recommendations for Addressing Unemployment and Underemployment**

It is advised that Pakistan:

- Implements educational reforms aimed at equipping young individuals with the requisite skills and knowledge essential for contemporary labor market demands.
- Develops laws and initiatives to give young people more employment opportunities.
- Creates high-quality jobs that are compatible with young people's abilities and education to address the issue of underemployment.

Adopts successful approaches other nations use to combat youth unemployment and underemployment and adapts them to the local situation.

### **5.1.3 Recommendations for Enhancing Political Involvement**

The following recommendations are made to increase the youth's political engagement and involvement in Pakistan:

- Implement political education initiatives to increase youth awareness and comprehension of the political process.

- Create venues and chances for young people to participate in political debate and decision-making.
- Encourage the development of a political culture that values and supports the contributions of youth.
- Study other democracies' lessons and adjust best practices to the regional situation.

#### **5.1.4 Recommendations for Harnessing Demographic Dividend**

To fully utilize Pakistan's demographic dividend, it is essential to

- Education, healthcare, and skill development are all ways to invest in human capital development.
- Promoting entrepreneurship and creating jobs creates an environment favourable to economic participation.
- By offering spaces for discussion and engagement, promote social cohesion and civic engagement.
- Adopt inclusive and progressive policies to address young people's diverse needs and aspirations.

#### **5.1.5 Recommendations for Fostering Entrepreneurship and Innovation**

Following are some suggestions for encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship among Pakistani youth:

- Create enabling environments that give people access to funding, mentoring, and business development services.
- Create a welcoming environment for establishing and operating businesses by streamlining regulatory processes.
- Spend money on education and skill-building to give the next generation the knowledge and abilities required for entrepreneurship.
- Encourage innovation and original thought with contests, prizes, and assistance programs.

#### **5.1.6 Recommendations for Supporting Social Activism**

To encourage and strengthen the role of young people in social activism and change, it is advised that:

- Give young people venues and tools to participate in social activism and promote change.
- Encourage and support youth-led initiatives for social change by creating an environment that supports them.

- Create policies and initiatives that consider youth needs and aspirations and include them in decision-making.
- To encourage social activism among Pakistan's youth, adopt best practices from international youth-led movements.

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