

Key Messages

- Inclusion of women, specifically young women, should be mandatory in all policies, government interventions and programs.
- Economic policies must cater to the needs of young women, irrespective of their marital status, or location. Employers can be encouraged to recruit more women, and to provide the mandated amenities that facilitate women.
- Education is a key lever of change for young women who are more likely to be in paid employment. Policies to enable out of school girls and young women, and for skills training to be more than stereotypical “women’s” skills are needed.
- Civic and political participation of young women must be encouraged through state and social institutions. Ensuring that young women’s voices are included in policies is important. Obtaining a CNIC should be streamlined so that NADRA automatically notifies youth attaining 18 years, and sets up camps in educational institutions to facilitate women in receiving their CNIC.
- Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a pervasive form of discrimination, violating basic human rights. Policies that address violence has resulted in progressive legislation, amendments to the Hudood Ordinance, and increased penalties under existing laws in Pakistan. Services for survivors, such as Dar-ul-Aman, Crisis centers, shelters, medical services and psycho social counseling are available to some extent through government funded facilities. However there is a need to create awareness of laws among police, lower judiciary to improve implementation. Create mass awareness and target public service messages to men to prevent acts of violence.

Context

The demographic transition in Pakistan has resulted in a youth population (ages 15-29) of 29%, considered a demographic dividend for the next 25 years, assuming that a skilled, educated young labour force is in place to drive economic growth and progress.’ However this requires forward looking policies for education, public health, promotion of labour market flexibility and incentivizing investment and savings if the specter of unemployment and dysfunctional education, health and old age security systems is to be avoided.²

Driving Change

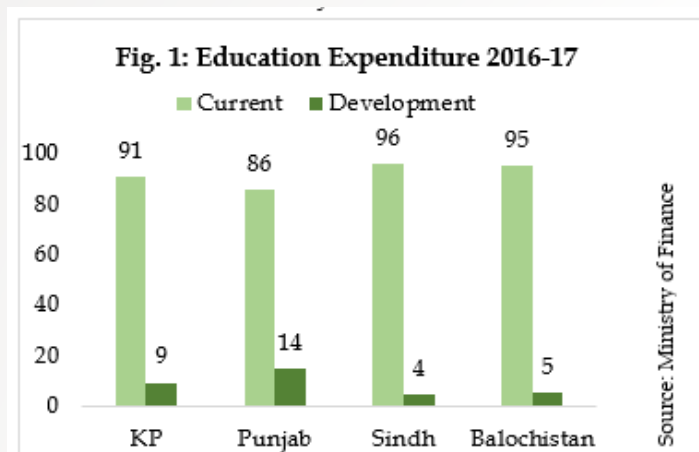
Three levers of change are identified for youth empowerment i.e. quality education, gainful employment and meaningful engagement.’ Women constitute 49% of the total population of Pakistan of which 28% (23 million) are in the age group 15-29.⁴

For women, young women in particular, the opportunity to live in an environment free of the fear of gender based violence is a key lever of change—supported by families, especially men, and by the state, young women can go about their pursuit of education and employment, participate in the public sphere and political arena as responsible full citizens. Women have the capacities to change not only their own socio-economic status but also of their local communities.

Education

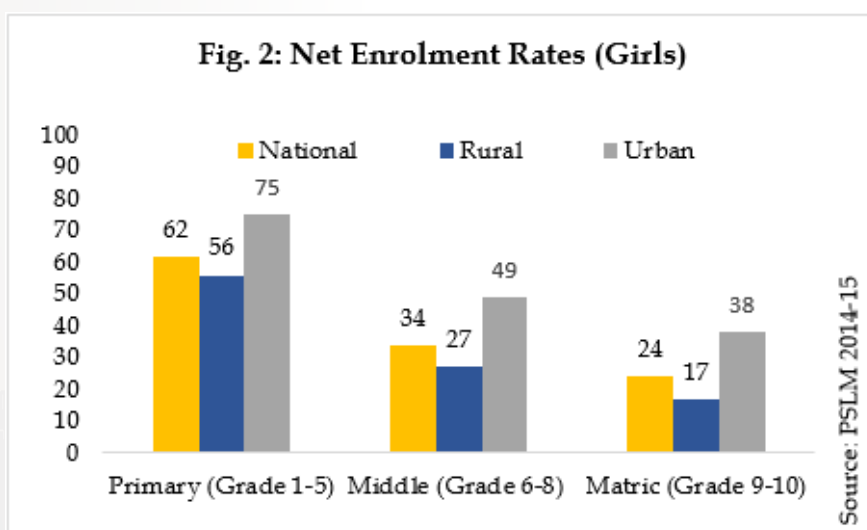
Women’s education as an end and a right is well recognized by all member states of the United Nations and enshrined in its conventions and resolutions. The Constitution of Pakistan, through Article 25-A mandates free education for all ages 5-16 years. 60% of female youth are literate, with higher rates in urban (80%) than in rural (49%). Allocations for education in the provincial budgets are on the increase, however almost 90% is for current

expenditures on salaries and maintenance and are by no means sufficient to ensure the implementation of Article 25A (Fig. 1).



Schooling, in particular for young women can improve individual life outcomes (higher age at marriage, better economic prospects, fewer number of children, contraceptive use etc.) and improve family outcomes (nutrition, children's education, fewer low birth weight babies etc.).

The focus of the government has been on increasing primary enrollment (the impetus generated by the Millennium Development Goal 2 on universal primary education, grades 1-5)⁵ and more recently on secondary education. 49% of all girls (grades 1-12) remain out of school. Net enrollment rates point to a sharp drop between primary and middle school from 62% to 34%, falling further to 24% by grades 9 and 10 (Fig. 2),⁶ indicating issues with quality, inadequate infrastructure (toilets, boundary walls) and social norms (restricted mobility after puberty, early marriage, household chores).



Lack of transport and distance to schools discourage families from sending girls to school, as fear of girls being harassed is high given the related norms of family honor. However education is also about retaining girls and boys in school and ensuring that they receive quality education that focuses on learning outcomes and equips them with tools for a changing future. Initiatives undertaken by the provincial and the federal government are too few and well-resourced to meet the growing school age population.

Gender Parity Index in higher education is 0.8. Even so, as Table 1 shows, only 6.5 percent of all young women (ages 15-29) have a B.A and above degree; this figure rises to 11% if we consider only urban female youth.

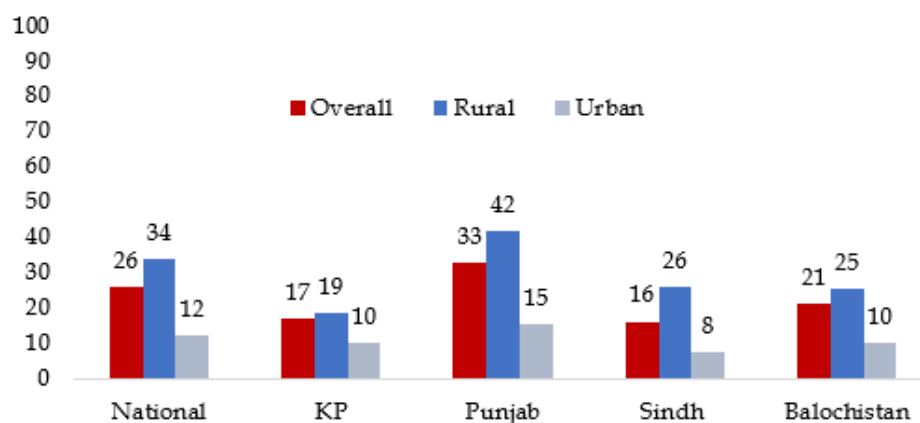
Table 1: Young Women (ages 15-29) by Education Level (%)

Education Level Attained	National	Rural	Urban
Matric	16	11	23
Intermediate	8.1	4.9	14
B.A and above	6.5	3.8	11

Source: Estimated from LFS 2014-15

Employment

The female labour force participation rate for women (15-64 years) in Pakistan is 26%, with significant urban- rural disparities as participation rate of rural women is nearly three times higher at 34% than their urban counterparts (12%). Augmented activity rate is higher for women (38%), as it includes work that women do that contributes to family income and wellbeing. For rural women augmented labour is 52% and 15% for urban.

Fig. 3 Female Refined LFP Rate (ages 15-64)

Source: Estimated from LFS 2014-15.

The economic activity rate of young women is 23 percent while the augmented activity rate is 34 percent. Rural urban differences are visible in participation rates as well as employment status (Table 2).

Table 2: Economic Participation Rate of Young Women (ages 15-29)

	National	Rural	Urban
Refined LFP	23	29	12
Augmented LFP	34	45	14
Status of Employment			
Paid Worker	44	36	83
Unpaid Work	56	64	17

Source: Estimated from LFS 2014-15

The majority of working women (52 percent or 6.1 million) are concentrated in the age bracket of 30-59 years, and about 39 percent of working women are young (ages 15-29).⁷ Many of these young women work from home: around 33 percent reported working at "own dwelling".⁸ These self-employed or sub- contracted home based workers are usually engaged in labour intensive work in the textiles, footwear and garment industries.⁹

The majority of young women (ages 15-29) are employed in agriculture (67%) and manufacturing sector, mainly in the informal sector (Table 3).

Major Industry	% of Women
Agriculture, forestry, hunting & fishing	67
Animal Production	51
Mixed Farming	25
Manufacturing	19
Manufacture of Textile	28
Manufacture of Wearing Apparel	56
Community, social, personal services and remaining industries	12
Education	67
Human health activities	6.8
Activities of household as employers of domestic personnel	15
Others*	2.3

Source: Estimated from LFS 2014-15

Note: Others include Mining, Electricity, Construction, Wholesale, Transport and Financing industries.

Occupationally, 57% of these young women are in the women are Skilled agricultural & fishery workers, 17% are Craft & related trades workers and 14% are in Elementary (unskilled) occupations. Only 8% are “Professionals” and 0.2% are Managers.

Education is linked to employment prospects. For women these are limited as most are employed in teaching, the majority in primary schools. Table 4 provides a picture of employment of educated women.

Main Occupation)	Matric	Intermediate	B.A and above	Total
Professionals	15	49	81	49
Skilled agricultural	32	13	4.3	17
Craft & related trade	34	14	2.7	17
Others*	18	24	12	17

Source: Estimated from LFS 2014-15

Others include Managers, technical and associate professionals, clerks, service worker, Plant operators and Elementary Occupations

A point to note is that more young women with a college degree are economically active (Table 5). Low labor force participation of women, especially young women in is due to multiple demand and supply side factors. For one thing there is an overall paucity of jobs; those typically available to women are low paid and vulnerable employment. Employers do not provide the facilities as mandated by law (such as social security benefits, day care, separate washrooms etc.) Socially, the stereotype of men as primary breadwinners persists, and employers favor men. Gender norms that restrict women's mobility and access to resources such as education, information, and transport also restrict employment opportunities for them.

Table 5: Status of Young Women (ages 15-29) by Education

Education	Inactive	Economically Active
Illiterate	68	32
Nursery/K.G	68	32
Primary	80	20
Middle	88	12
Matric	90	10
Intermediate	85	15
B.A and above	59	41
Total	77	23

Source: Estimated from LFS 2014-15

Engagement

Economic, social and political rights and engagement are all important for achieving one's full potential. Educating and providing employment to youth does not empower them completely, unless they can be in a position to influence the decisions that shape their lives.⁹⁰ Skills gained from schooling and the labor market enable civic and political engagement, however this sense and ability of being included in the polity extends to the uneducated and unemployed and empowers them as well.

The decline in youth development from medium to low between 2010 and 2015 is high (18%) and is linked to the decline in political and civic participation (69 percent and 58 percent respectively), especially in terms of voice (expressing opinion to an official), volunteerism, absence of a national youth policy and low likelihood of helping a stranger (UNDP 2017).

For women, entering adolescence and adulthood is a period that is fraught with constraints but also possibilities. On the one hand social norms impose restrictions on their movement and their access to resources and opportunities. Early and child marriage exists, despite legislation to the contrary. At the same time, at age 18 they can receive their national identity card, a prerequisite for multiple opportunities.

The run up to the 2018 general elections in Pakistan saw youth emerge as a significant political constituency. While exact numbers, and disaggregated data by age is not available, it is fair to state that youth voted in higher numbers than before. As candidates, a larger number of young adults ran their campaigns and young women have been elected on reserved seats on both provincial and national assemblies. While the attention to youth is now realized by political parties, the focus on young women as voters is yet to be ascertained.

The social and gender norms that restrict women's participation and mobility in the social and economic area are also present in the political sphere. A key barrier to women's political participation is the masculine nature of politics mostly women, with political parties reluctantly granting the mandatory 5% nominations to women to contest elections. The low confidence in women's "electability" is in contrast to the level of political activism seen among women. Women have limited access and control over resources, including independent financial means or social capital to enter into politics.

Gender Based Violence

As a near universal and pervasive phenomenon, women and girls, across all socio-economic groups are

vulnerable to gender based violence (GBV) as are boys. Freedom from violence is essential for assertion of fundamental human rights and instrumental to the achievement of gender equality.“ Globally thirty five percent of women over the age of 15 have experienced GBV in their lifetime, most often at the hands of an intimate partner (WHO, 2013), yet it is estimated that only four out twenty women seek help, preferring not to report the violence or seek assistance from the service providers.’²

In Pakistan, GBV is pervasive in both physical and verbal forms. Many forms of violence are not even recognized as violence by the victims. Statistics often under-represent the actual number of cases, and most are based on media reports or registered cases. Harmful traditional practices in Pakistan include honor killing, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, acid attacks, being burned, kidnapping, domestic violence, dowry murder, and forced marriages.

Domestic violence accounts for a large percentage of reported violence. 40% of women experienced physical or emotional violence over lifetime. Divorced, widowed and separated women suffered more violence than married women. Twenty-seven percent experienced physical spousal violence while one- third of women (33%) reported that they experienced emotional violence in the past twelve months preceding the survey.’

Domestic Spousal Violence (ever married women ages 15-49 years)

- 4 out of 10 women (40%) in Pakistan experience physical or emotional spousal violence over their lifetime.
- 29% of rural women experienced physical violence, 12% experienced violence during pregnancy.
- 36% of rural women experienced emotional violence
- Less than 4% of rape cases results in convictions.
- 34% of the women surveyed had experienced online harassment.

Table 6: Ever Married Women - Experience of Violence (%)

Province	Ages 15-29		Ages 15-49	
	Physical	Emotional	Physical	Emotional
National	23	27	27	33
Balochistan	36	37	43	46
KP	46	43	52	49
Punjab	19	29	24	36
Sindh	19	13	19	15

Source: PDHS 2012-13

Conclusion

The youth bulge in Pakistan can either be a youth dividend or a youth crisis for the country. To convert the current demographic transition into a meaningful one, women must be included and at the center of all policies. Massive efforts are needed to improve quality and coverage of education, enhance employable future demand driven skills, promote economic participation and influence gender norms so that women can be active in the economic, political and social spheres. Young women's participation in the labour force, political activities and attaining quality education can be an effective approach for increasing the current status of young women in Pakistan. Financial inclusion, access to technology, modern contraceptives, time saving technologies (to lessen the burden of household responsibilities, and legal recourse are needed.

Recommendations

- Quality education and forward looking curriculum that builds knowledge and values. Concepts of democracy, political processes, voting rights and obligations should be included in high school and college curriculum.
- Skills development programs specifically tailored to women's needs and requirements can be designed and implemented by the provincial technical education and vocational training authorities.
- Pakistan does not have a comprehensive national policy on youth. Policies and programs should be designed for youth, with a focus on female youth, based on their needs and demands.
- Improved public transportation and city infrastructure development ensuring greater mobility can enhance female participation
- Immediate corrective and legal action to deter acts of violence against women and girls
- Safety in public spaces, educational institutions and workplaces be ensured.
- Media and awareness campaigns that target men, especially young men to alleviate the burden of discriminatory gender norms that curtail women's ability to be active and effective members of the policy. Public service messaging by the government to discourage violence and to create awareness of laws and penalties for violating the law are needed.
- Obtaining a CNIC should be streamlined so that NADRA automatically notifies youth attaining 18 years, and sets up camps in educational institutions to facilitate women in receiving their CNIC.

End Notes

- 1 United Nation Development Program,2017.Pakistan National Human Development Report Unleashing the Potential of a Young Pakistan
- 2 Nayab, D., 2008. Demographic Dividend or Demographic Threat in Pakistan. Pakistan Development Review, 47(1), pp. 1-26.
- 3 United Nation Development Program, 2017. Pakistan National Human Development Report Unleashing the Potential of a Young Pakistan
- 4 The age disaggregated census results of census 2017 are not disseminate so we have estimated the female population for specific age group from LFS 2014-15
- 5 Government of Pakistan, 2013. Pakistan millennium development goals 2013.
- 6 Zaidi Y, Shujaat Farooq 2018. Rural Women in Pakistan-Status Report 2018. UN Women 7 Estimated from LFS 2014-15.
- 8 Ibid
- 9 Zaidi, Y. et al, 2016. Status report on women's economic participation and empowerment in Pakistan. 10 Ayonmike, C.H., 2014. Factors affecting female participation in technical education program: A study of Delta State University, Abraka. Journal of Education and Human Development, 3(3),
- 11 Voice and Agency: Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity, World Bank. 2012
- 12 Solotaroff, Jennifer L. Pande, Rohini Prabha. Violence against Women and Girls: Lessons from South Asia. World Bank Group, 2014.
- 13 PDHS 2012-13

Contributors: Dr. Yasmin Zaidi, Urooj Obaid and Muhammad Naeem Khan

Developed by Center of Gender and Policy Studies (CGaPS) for Awaz-e-Niswan. The support of UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) is gratefully acknowledged. Please send any comments to CGaPS at program.cgaps@gmail.com

