

YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN



YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN

6th Youth Parliament Pakistan

A Report on

Youth & Pakistani Politics, Challenges and Way Forward

March 2015

PILdAT
Pakistan Institute of
Legislative Development
And Transparency

Secretariat Youth Parliament Pakistan



YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN

YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN
YOUTH PARLIAMENT PAKISTAN

6th Youth Parliament Pakistan

A Report on

Youth & Pakistani Politics, Challenges and Way Forward

March 2015

PILdAT
Pakistan Institute of
Legislative Development
And Transparency

Secretariat Youth Parliament Pakistan

PILDAT is an independent, non-partisan and not-for-profit indigenous research and training institution with the mission to strengthen democracy and democratic institutions in Pakistan. It also serves as Secretariat, Youth Parliament Pakistan.

PILDAT is a registered non-profit entity under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, Pakistan.

Copyright © Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development And Transparency - PILDAT

All Rights Reserved

Printed in Pakistan

Published: March 2015

ISBN: 978-969-558-484-2

Any part of this publication can be used or cited with a clear reference to PILDAT.



Secretariat, Youth Parliament Pakistan

Islamabad Office: P. O. Box 278, F-8, Postal Code: 44220, Islamabad, Pakistan

Lahore Office: P. O. Box 11098, L.C.C.H.S, Postal Code: 54792, Lahore, Pakistan

E-mail: info@youthparliament.pk | Website: www.youthparliament.pk

CONTENTS

Preface

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Members of Youth Parliament Standing Committee on Education and Youth Affairs

Dedication

Introduction

Chapter I: Challenges and Reforms

i. Status Quo

ii. Lack of Political Awareness

iii. Gender Bias & Taboos

iv. Money Game

v. Lack of Political Will

Chapter II: Recommendations

Chapter III: Policy Opinions

Chapter IV: Danish Model for Inspiration

Conclusion

Bibliography

10

11

12

13

13

13

13

13

13

15

16

18

19

20

PREFACE

After the successful completion of 5 terms since 2007, the 6th Youth Parliament Pakistan was launched in June 2014. The specific objectives of the Youth Parliament Pakistan (YPP) programme are to inculcate democratic culture and spirit of tolerance for others views among the youth; to expose them to the political and parliamentary processes; to facilitate youth to express their views on various national, international, regional and local issues thereby helping the government and society at large to better understand the concerns of the youth; to groom the leadership potential of the youth of Pakistan by exposing them to peaceful and democratic resolution of differences especially at a time when various parts of Pakistan are suffering from conflict and extremism. Finally this provides a forum to the youth of Pakistan to understand how the Parliament works as the supreme public representative institution in a democracy.

The Youth Parliament Standing Committees of the 6th Youth Parliament Pakistan (2014-2015), as a part of the learning process were tasked with conducting reviews of national policies through research-based analysis and with developing cogent policy alternatives for the Parliament and the Government of Pakistan. The six Youth Parliament Standing Committees for the current term are:

- Youth Parliament Standing Committee on National Security
- Youth Parliament Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs
- Youth Parliament Standing Committee on Energy
- Youth Parliament Standing Committee on Law, Justice & Human Rights
- Youth Parliament Standing Committee on Education & Youth Affairs
- Youth Parliament Standing Committee on Finance, Economic Affairs & Planning

The Committees have gone through a process of intensive research, consultations with policy experts and internal review within Committees before putting together their proposals. The initial findings were shared with the Secretariat Youth Parliament Pakistan and the Steering Committee Youth Parliament Pakistan who gave their comments on these drafts. After incorporating these inputs, the reports are finalised by individual Committees and thereafter presented on the floor of the House for further recommendations and feedback from the entire strength of the YPP. Going through this rigour the participants not only experienced the process of drafting policy in a democratic fashion but also formulated useful recommendation in the form of this report,

The reports are compiled and finally published for the purpose of dissemination through media briefing and report launch event at the closure of 5th and last YPP Session of the 6th YPP term. The reports are also available online at www.youthparliament.pk.

The 6th Youth Parliament Pakistan (2014-2015) is supported by the Danish International Development Agency, Government of Denmark, as recognition of the importance of young people's development in democracy and democratic practices.

Disclaimer

The Secretariat of Youth Parliament Pakistan has provided unbiased feedback in a timely manner on the research reports and the scientific value of the work done by MYP's. The Secretariat has given guidance in ensuring the content is clear, concise, and relevant to the current pool of knowledge in regard to originality, and interest to the readers. The opinions, findings or recommendations expressed in this report belong to the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of PILDAT or DANIDA.

Secretariat of the Youth Parliament Pakistan
Pakistan institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
March 2015

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research report is a sincere composition and hard work of many intellectual minds who earnestly want to promote the involvement of youth in the political system of Pakistani and have given thoughtful recommendations and analysis.

I, **Mizghan Kirmani**, the Chairperson for (PILDAT) Youth Parliament Pakistan's Standing Committee on Education and Youth Affairs, would like to thank all my committee members who made this report possible with their ideas and planning. My appreciations go to my colleagues in developing the report with the best of their knowledge. Our Vice Chair **Ms. Anooshay Shaigan** and Secretary **Mr. Faisal Saleh Yaqub** made tremendous efforts in providing information during the drafting of this report. The Ministers for Education and Youth Affairs from Green Party, **Ms. Sammiya Mujtaba** and **Ms. Sakina Gulab** from Blue party executed work to the best of their abilities in this research report. Other Members from the Committee, **Mr. Darya Khan Pahore**, **Ms. Rahy Farooq**, **Ms. Amna Saeed Mughal**, **Mr. Akbar Khan** and **Mr. Younis Nawaz Bhatti**, brought the best of discussions in the committee meetings and drafted the report with their expertise over the issue.

I am highly indebted to **Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob**, **President PILDAT** for his guidance and constant supervision as well as providing necessary information regarding the project.

Executive Summary

The youth today is well-informed and skilled enough that their vigorous contribution in politics means an immense revolutionizing. Pakistan was given birth on the blood of young people. They heroically laid their lives for a separate homeland. However after the revolution the things grew in the same thorny field way as they were before dividing borders. The common remained ordinary and the rich grew wealthier.

Going back in the corridors of the history, we may notice that Pakistan has always been ruled by the affluent landed gentry, or dictators. The history is a spectator of self-centeredness where the superior class politicians take advantage of the subordinate class for their own rationale. The recent researches and demographic reports verify that 63% of the population is under the age of 25. If accurate socio-political steps are not taken by the system to regulate democracy for future generation, the system would disintegrate in the near prospective.

The workings on the report started in late November with all the Committee Members brainstorming over the ideas. The objective of the report is to connect Pakistani youth with the politics of Pakistan in an effective way for better future prospects.

The report focuses on the challenges that are faced by the youth, example Political Monarchy, Lack of Political Awareness, Ban on Student Unions, Great Game of Money and Stereotypical mess regarding Pakistani Siyasat. The committee has analysed reforms to each of the challenges faced by the youth in Pakistan.

The second part of the report is focusing on the recommendations proposed by the Committee Members for betterment in the system. The recommendations include very practical solutions to the problems that youth usually face in the political game of Pakistan. We propose revision of party manifestos, intra party elections, built training units etc.

Furthermore, the Committee recommends installing the practices of Danish Youth Political Structure for the stability of youth's role into Pakistani Politics.

The research is mainly based on primary data collected via expert advisors and the youth in the mainstream politics who are struggling for attainment of rights. Much of the Primary data for the report has been collected from the UK-Denmark Study Visit, 2015. Most of the ideas for recommendations are inspired by the Danish youth with whom few members of the committee interacted.

We have limited the secondary use of data to a very minimal level since we wanted to investigate the issue on our own.

Members of Youth Parliament Standing Committee on Education and Youth Affairs



Mizghan Mehboob Kirmani
(YP54-SINDH07)
Chairperson



Anooshy Shaigan
(YP26-PUNJAB07)
Vice Chairperson



Faisal Saleh Yaqub
(YP30-PUNJAB11)
Secretary



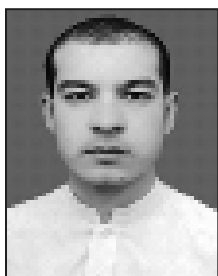
Amna Saeed
(YP25-PUNJAB06)



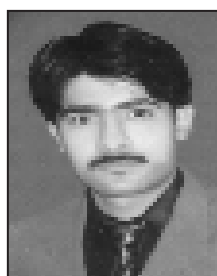
Rahy Farooq
(YP11-ICT01)



Sammiya Mujtaba
(YP42-PUNJAB23)



Muhammad Akbar Khan
(YP16-KP04)



Muhammad Younis Bhatti
(YP57-SINDH10)



Darya Khan Pahore
(YP51-SINDH04)



Sakina Gulab Khan
Youth Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
(YP19-KP07)

DEDICATION

We dedicate this report to the Youth of Pakistan and wish them best of luck for the near future. We wish to see young aspiring blood in the field of politics.

Introduction

“Pakistan is proud of her youth, particularly the students who have always been in the forefront in the hour of trial and need. You are the nation's leaders of tomorrow and you must fully equip yourself by discipline, education and training for the arduous task lying ahead of you. You should realize the magnitude of your responsibility and be ready to bear it.” – Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Youth and Politics is a sparking affair that should be catered with care and planning. Pakistan's youth is full of potential and ideas that can help the country to achieve sustainability. Why it is necessary for the youth to stay connected in the politics? It is because the time changes and the speed of creativity changes at the speed of light. Young individuals are full of zeal and energy; they know the outflows and inflows of the power.

The involvement of the youth in politics cannot be taken as an absolute good. However it is not necessary to repeat history but to look for new dimensions should be introduced in the political square. Discoveries for innovative traditions should be ensured for youth participation in the democratic development would without doubt be one of the means in cementing the potential of the democratic practice in Pakistan.

The youth should engage in politics in such a manner that highlight core issues i.e. the issues regarding women's rights.

This report also came about as part of the recommendations discussed in Youth Parliament Pakistan- that trains future leaders and is helping the youth to gain the insight of the happenings in the political buildings. The policy makers should employ the following thoughts that even the west applies to engage their youth for political means.

- i. Introduction of Political Sciences in the Curriculum.
- ii. Strategic planning and implementations for the Student Unions in educational institutions.
- iii. Age should be reduced for Voting and Enrollment in Parliamentary activities.
- iv. E-democracy should be made familiar
- v. Institutes' and Programs like Youth Senate and Youth Parliament should be promoted to educate potential cream of the crop.
- vi. Appointment of Youth as personal assistants and data base managers for Parliamentary activities
- vii. Trainings and workshops to promote Political cultures, Parliamentary jargons and literature
- viii. Inter-Provincial and International Interactions for exposure
- ix. Youth should be brought in Talk Shows instead of the monotonous faces.
- x. Nations who have failed to engage and educate their generations for political activities are considered illiterate. The locals should know the price of the barley and corn in order to question their taxes and voice their rights on injustices. The young blood should fight and come on the top to revolutionize the existences of fraudulent realm of political affairs in Pakistan.

Chapter I Challenges & Reforms

Status Quo

Pakistan has witnessed a great deal of discrimination when it comes to the status quo. The ruling classes have dominated the poor on the bases of political benefits and interest. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting worst day by day. The country that was erected on the label of farmers' blood has now turned into a moral business and elitist country for breeding new politicians.

The Youth that emerges from the middle and lower strata faces difficulty when it comes to move upwards on the ladder of stratification in the society. The youth belonging to the middle class face troubles when it's comes to join main stream politics. They cannot jump in directly, as a political leader's son will. They are short on capital, have zero political contacts, political maturity etc. The system is now designed as only the elitist will rule and narrowing down the paths for the middle class to emerge. This inequality leads to frustration in the youth thus initially cutting down politics as a career opportunity for the future.

Proposed Reforms

- The Government and the private companies should ensure sponsorships for the rising middle class leaders. They should keep an audit of the capital used so that a sense of responsibility develops since the start.
- Political parties should have fair and clear intra party elections in each area they are working in, so that they find an emerging talent-democratic elections.
- Politics should not be treated as a property; powers should be distributed properly as per the talent of an individual.
- Revision of the political party manifestoes should be done at the utmost hour.
- Local Body Elections should be ensured so that the emerging leaders get a chance to excel their skills at the best.

1. Lack of Political Awareness

One thing that Pakistani youth lacks; is political awareness. This lack of awareness is due to the biasness in our educational system. The curriculum that is taught in the schools and colleges does not provide the political and law insights thus the masses fail to understand the political systems working and manipulating around them. People should walk and talk politics so that they know that where their taxes are being utilized. People usually lack awareness at the

electoral process, paying taxes, questioning their rights according to the law, contributing at the policies etc. They fail to understand that what is happening and who is ruling them.

Proposed Reforms

- The National Curriculum should be introduced with political and civil education for 7th and Above graders.
- Political Party meetings should be open to public so that the masses feel engaged
- Proceedings of the National Assembly should be open to public with ease
- Interactions with the MNAs and MPAs should be made more common so that people know what is happening around them.
- Media should regulate more productive shows for the youth to learn more about politics
- Teams from the political parties should visit rural areas and talk to the rustic masses and educate them of their political rights.
- Training Units should be established within the party for clear insights
- Revival student unions, so that students feel engaged to their motherland.

2. Money Game

The rich gets the seats with the influence of the capital and rule the people who earn for bread. The money game hushes several young people who fail to show assets and money to enter the politics. This one big factor stops many to even think about entertaining politics as a career choice.

Proposed Reforms

- Election tickets should be allotted on the bases of the work and talent, not on the assets.
- A strict quota should be framed for the youth to compete elections.
- The party and state should ensure funds for the youth that does not cater an elite background.

3. Gender Bias & Taboos

The young women of Pakistan have always worked harder for their rights yet they fail to get acknowledged of their rights since Pakistan is a male dominated society. This taboo stops the females from further participation into politics since they know for a fact that they will not receive the equal share of success. The society itself poses a threat to women's sobriety when she comes to speak of politics in middle class households. The women are usually paid not much response when it comes to leadership because of the

male dominated aura and tribal balances.

Proposed Reforms

- a. A quota should be defined properly for the women seat reservations within the political parties.
- b. Women should be encouraged more for the leadership roles.
- c. Proper women's wing should be established in the political parties where young girls can learn and prepare for the future.

4. Lack of Political Will

Our politicians being our leaders they lack political will in almost everything. One of which is the handling the youth of the country for political purpose. The politicians do not show a positive will power to engage youth into the political affairs of the country which in return discourages the youth from the mainstream politics. The leaders do not pay attention or execute the ideas of the youth that they plan and work hard at. Sometimes the youth wings do not get full appreciation of their work, other times the youth is wrongly used for the achieving any political purpose.

Proposed Reforms

- a. Political party leaders should engage in small conferences with the youth and discuss issues.
- b. The leadership hierarchy should be based on two way communication.
- c. Politicians should be more attentive in drafting policies regarding youth.

CHAPTER II

Recommendations

As Members of the Youth Parliament Standing Committee on Education & Youth Affairs, suggest the following recommendations:

1. Political parties through their youth wings can train the youth of Pakistan in political matters and help them become the future leader of Pakistan.
2. Student Unions at college and university level should be made active to educate the youth regarding political matters of Pakistan. Youth should be made aware of the importance of their vote in the democratic process, as youth constitutes a large segment of voter population in Pakistan.
3. Media and Civil Society should play an important role in educating the youth regarding the political process of Pakistan and thereby arising an interest among the youth to participate in the political process.
4. Youth should be encouraged and invited in the political talk shows so that they may voice their opinions regarding the scenes.
5. The schools and colleges should receive full Election trainings so that the children feel engaged towards the future of the country.
6. Each school should design an activity like, "Politician for a Day" so that the youth gets to know the perks of being a politician.
7. The schools should encourage Student Councils and their elections so that the leadership skills are developed since young age.
8. Platforms like Youth Parliament should be made common not only on National but also on provincial level.

Chapter III

Policy Opinions

These opinions have been contributed by young people in government, politics and public offices in Pakistan and India.

1. Hussain Nadim, Special Assistant to Federal Minister of Planning, Development & Reform, Pakistan

"I believe youth affairs is a devolved subject and each provincial government is taking steps to work on it. However, I believe given Pakistan has 60% Youth bulge that we need to prioritize this subject at the Federal Level. Setting up a Ministry would be a good start. I believe that youth forums like Youth Parliament etc must work closely in collaboration with the government. It is only then we can have the real valuable dividends from such forums. I would highly recommend setting up counseling centers all over Pakistan to guide students in their studies and professional career. It will go a long way to change the direction of the country. Criticism has come from the elite class of Pakistan that is active on media and social media, in other words have the voice. In real terms laptop scheme and cab scheme has tremendously benefited the middle and humble class of Pakistan. We, hence, need to sensitize ourselves beyond the elite narrative of development projects. I don't think we should have any quota for youth in NA or Senate. I believe youth should instead be involved in leadership programs so they can shadow train alongside with Parliamentarians and Senators – in the long run also contest for elections".

2. Kanan Dhru, Founder and Managing Director of Research Foundation for Governance in India

"While in India we have a Ministry of Youth and Sports, there is a big need to bring the young perspective in how this department is run and its priorities. While 65% of our population is below the age of 27, we desperately need their representation in the government and their voice needs to be heard more seriously. Unfortunately, most of our decisions are made by individuals who are much above this age group and fail to represent the youth. The youth of India is excited and gearing up to give a purpose to their lives by excelling in their road ahead - this energy has to be tapped, channelized and encouraged to be in the right direction. If I had to recommend one policy, I'd like to encourage something on the lines of each parliament committee having at least one person below the age of 30."

3. Rwitwika Bhattacharya, Founder Swaniti Initiative, India

A non-profit organization that is changing young people's engagement with Indian politics and is helping Parliamentarians identify key areas for development in their constituencies and assess how their programs work. Her organization helps over 90 Parliamentarians across the country on issues of health, education, gender and livelihood. The average age of the team is between 27-28 years old. What draws these young graduates to the program is the unusual opportunity to work directly with elected officials, which is a rare opportunity in India.

4. Ahmed Safwan Shah, Special Advisor to the Chief Minister at Government of Punjab

"The NDMA has no representation of youth, both on federal and provincial levels. Historically, the youth has been actively involved in relief operations. Also, the government in the Mushaffarf era I believe, instructed the SBP to launch a Student loan scheme for students of the Bachelors and Masters level. This included benefits as no pre payment penalties and a subsidized interest rate".

5. Mustafa Khalid Lone, Director Lone Group of Companies and political activist of PTI from PP94 Gujranwala

"I do not think a youth ministry is necessary for youth to be active in our politics. Recent trends have shown the involvement of youth in every aspect of our politics. But definitely having a youth affairs ministry would facilitate the youth. Encouraging the youth national forums on various platforms can help e.g. TV shows, various workshops to increase the awareness in youth through these forums, ensuring more participation of youth in international conferences, dedicating funds to these National forums in our budgets. We don't need laptops, we don't need yellow cabs, and we don't need loans and other failed programs like these. We need to provide employment to youth. Once employment is ensured youth can excel in every possible way. We need to figure out ways for employment for youth. Such policies acted as political stunts and nothing else. Unfortunately these schemes have kept the youth away from getting political awareness and acted as a bribe to stay away from politics especially in rural areas. We should definitely have seats for youth in NA and Senate. Reserved seats have been kept for youth in the local bodies structure which has encourages youth to come forward. In my constituency PP-94 we have had overwhelming response for youth councilor seats. We had to choose from at least 15 candidates to give PTI party ticket in almost every Union Council. I have one

suggestion; we don't have any institution or any department that can provide career counseling or career advice to youth. The youth is confused about almost everything especially their careers. We need some forum where youth can seek guidance”.

Chapter IV

Danish Model for Inspiration

The Youth Standing Committee on Education and Youth Affairs proposes the Government to adopt the Denmark's DUF's (Danish Youth Council) standards for regulation and democratic practices for the youth of the country.

Upon a small interaction between the DUF President and the few committee members the workings and the model of DUF was explained in detail.

*“Danish Youth Council (DUF) Mr. **Mikkel** said that the Council is responsible for the lobby organization and service provider for 71 different youth organizations participating in democratic process. The DUF has been working since 1940 and also represents the scouts, religious, minority, theater organizations and youth clubs. He termed these organizations as the ones with 'small democracy', reflection of big formal democracy. He added that the goal of the DUF is to enlighten, teach and engage youth in democracy participating actively in it, at all the time. He said that the DUF believes immigration issue is the top most concern of the youth of Denmark amongst others including education, climate, health and surveillance.*

Mr. Mikkel commented that although the political interest among the youth seems to be increasing with time, yet a decrease in voter turnout has been seen in previous elections which is the biggest challenge. Influence of parents for the first time voters is very beneficial and for that matter the DUF has been trying to lobby and reduce the minimum voter limit from 18 to 16 years. Mr. Merkel also shared the details about the GOTV (Get up and vote) programmers launched to assist the first time voters through post cards, advertisements, and political debates and SMS reminders. He also shared the concept of national trial elections for 8th and 9th graders and cooperation between schools and youth organizations. The DUF is funded by the State lotteries that make up around 130 millions DK.”

Conclusion

Pakistan is blessed with the most powerful weapon that is the Youth of the nation that is always ready to lay down life for the country. Their involvement in the political affairs of the country is extremely important. The mobilization of youth in a progressive way is highly necessary since countries that value their youth are more successful in maintaining high percentages of democratic practices and keeping their people happy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bhattacharya, 2014. Rwitwika Bhattacharya, Founder Swaniti Initiative, India [Interview] (December 2014).

Dhru, 2014. Kanan Dhru, Founder and Managing Director of Research Foundation for Governance in India [Interview] (December 2014).

Lone, 2014. Mustafa Khalid Lone, Director Lone Group of Companies and political activist of PTI from PP94 Gujranwala [Interview] (December 2014).

Nadim, 2014. Hussain Nadim, Special Assistant to Federal Minister of Planning, Development & Reform, Pakistan [Interview] (December 2014).

Shah, 2014. Ahmed Safwan Shah, Special Advisor to the Chief Minister at Government of Punjab [Interview] (December 2014).



Secretariat, Youth Parliament Pakistan

Islamabad Office: P. O. Box 278, F-8, Postal Code: 44220, Islamabad, Pakistan

Lahore Office: P. O. Box 11098, L.C.C.H.S, Postal Code: 54792, Lahore, Pakistan

E-mail: info@youthparliament.pk | Website: www.youthparliament.pk