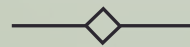


COVID INDUCED INEQUALITIES IN PAKISTAN

Situation in Education, Health, Digital Access
and Female Labor Force Participation



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Impact of Pandemic

- Spread of virus poses direct and indirect risks on socio-economic sectors as well as overall wellbeing of people,
- Direct impact: mortalities and capacity constraints
- Indirect effect: stagflation, job security, stagnation of educational services
- Unequal impact of pandemic:
 - On one side its impact directly increases the vulnerability of poor segment of society
 - On other, the government measures intensifies these inequalities



What this research tries to answer...

This research attempt to answer the following research objectives:

- ❖ Measuring Gaps in various sectors across pre- and post-pandemic times.
- ❖ Quality of service providence in health, education, digital access, and female labor force participation amid COVID-19
- ❖ Type of government policies applied (successful VS less-effective policies)
- ❖ Proposed future government interventions and policy recommendations for better preparedness



Research Methodology



Two-tier research methodology is adopted to answer the questions posed in this research.

- i. Extensive research review of recent work done in Pakistan and neighboring countries
- ii. Interviews of government representatives and field experts from related sectors to come up with concrete policy recommendations

Health Sector

While Pakistan fared fairly well against pandemic and number of mortalities were considerably low compared to neighboring countries

- ❖ Vulnerability of health sector remains there even after three years of pandemic outburst
- ❖ Provincial coordination remained a vital issue, but got improved with NCOC mechanism. However, NCOC is abolished now.
- ❖ Political instability in country holds back the intended/required improvements
- ❖ Health indicators show little improvement and remain stagnant
- ❖ Budget for health sector increased only for vaccination but not for capacity building and equipments



Education Sector

- ❖ Drop in enrollment rate is witnessed but it is now getting closer to pre-pandemic trajectory after the 4th wave of pandemic
- ❖ Most effective ➡ Technical & Vocational Training, and Universities
- ❖ Least effective ➡ Middle and Higher Secondary School

- ❖ Provincial Comparison ➡ All provinces got affected negatively except Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (education reforms and higher budget allocation)
- ❖ Literacy Rate ➡ Also dropped in all provinces with little differences but in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (increase in students from informal to formal education system)



Challenges of Online of Education

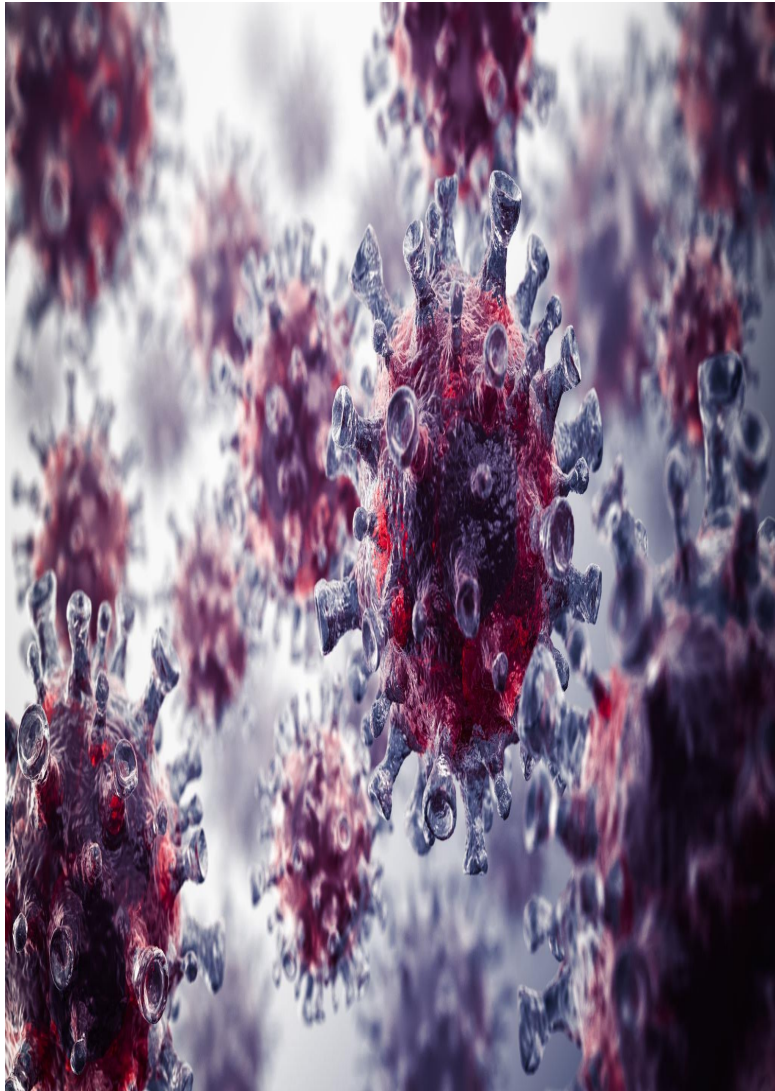
Students	Teachers	Administration
Lack of access to digital devices	Lack of technical skills to operate digital devices	Difficulty in monitoring classes
Poor internet access (mainly due to high cost)	Lack of interest of students	Providing technical support to students and teachers
Inability of students and parents to understand the online way to taking classes	Low response rate from students	Arranging and monitoring examinations
Difficulty in time management	Overload and longer screen time	Managing on time evaluation of students
Excessive exposure to digital devices	Work-life balance	
Lack of self-motivation		



Digital Access

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- ❖ Access to digital services has increased over the past few years
- ❖ But the gender gap in terms of digital adaptation is getting wider constantly
- ❖ Gender gap also persists across urban and rural areas but is even wider in rural areas



Female Labor Force Participation

- ❖ Unemployment rate among female labor force has become double if compared before and after the 4th wave of pandemic
- ❖ The unemployment increases more for female labor force more than it increased for male labor force
- ❖ Wage difference among female and male labor is also significant and persistent over the time even during the pandemic



Policy Recommendations and Way Forward (In General)

- ❑ Ongoing impact of COVID-19 needs to be studied along with recent flood disasters to get an effective situation analysis in the context of triple-C context, i.e., covid-conflict and climate change.
- ❑ Devolution of powers to provinces should be get reflected in their performance in socio-economic sectors
- ❑ Need for innovative models to boost public-private partnerships in health, education and digital access
- ❑ Information system requires substantive improvements
- ❑ International private sector should be motivated to invest in socio-economic sectors

Policy
Recommendations and Way
Forward
(Sector specific)



Health Sector

- Increase in human resource capacity along with medical supplies and medications
- Coordination between center and provinces needs to be enhanced
- Budget allocation should be increased for a few years to build a more resilient healthcare system, especially in the context of recent floods.

Education Sector

- Student engagement and teachers' capacity remains the challenge
- Special focus should be given to education which can result in increased livelihoods
- New models of blended learning should be implemented

Policy
Recommendations and Way
Forward
(Sector Specific)




Digital Access

- Gender and geographic inequalities in digital sector needs to decrease through digital literacy, especially in rural areas
- Barriers should be removed in laying down fiber optics
- Strict laws and their implementation needs to be done to improve cyber security

Female Labor Force Participation

- Flexible schedule and pro-women policies should be implemented
- Female labor force needs to be equipped with demand-specific skills
- Female labor-friendly laws should be introduced while focusing on their security and equal opportunities

The background of the image features a dense field of coronavirus particles. Each particle is spherical with a textured, reddish-brown surface and is covered in numerous blue, cylindrical spike proteins that protrude from the surface. The particles are scattered across the frame, with some appearing more prominent and in focus than others, creating a sense of depth and a microscopic environment.

Thank you
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