

Out of School Children

7th Pakistan Population and
Housing Census



PRESS RELEASE

Gallup Pakistan Analysis of the 7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census

As of 2023, 31% of the 5-9 age group had never been to school, compared to 69% in the over 60 age group – **Out of School Children – 7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census**

Islamabad, September 16th, 2024

Gallup Pakistan, as part of its Big Data Analysis initiative, is looking at Out of School Children for Pakistan. This data is part of a study conducted using the '7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census'.

The current edition looks at data from Out of School Children statistics, which can be found [HERE](#).

What is the Big Data Analysis Series by Gallup?

Gallup Pakistan's Big Data series was started by Bilal I Gilani, Executive Director of Gallup Pakistan. Bilal explains the rationale of the series: *"The usual complaint from academics and policy makers is that Pakistan does not have data availability. Our experience negates that. Pakistan has lots of data, but it is not available in a usable form and not widely accessible. At Gallup we plan to bridge this gap in terms of accessibility and use of data. The Gallup Big Data series has earlier worked with data sets such as [PSLM](#), [Labour Force Survey](#), and [Economic Survey reports](#) as well as [National Census Reports](#) and [Election Commission Data sets](#). The current series is using the [7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census](#), which provides a variety of health statistics. We hope that these series are useful, and we welcome both feedback as well as possible collaborations as we create a public good in the form of useful data sets in Pakistan."*

For more reports and dashboards on Pakistan please visit our dedicated website:

<https://www.galluppakistandigitalanalytics.com/>

What data points this current edition covers:

This series aims to present the important learnings from the 7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census, for policy makers, the public, as well as for marketers in an easy and understandable way. This edition looks at Out of School Children statistics for Pakistan. The series' main aim is to provide data. Implications of these data points for development sector as well as wider socio-political ramifications is something we would like to trigger in relevant circles.

Out of School Children

7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census

Out of School Children (5-16):

As per the 2023 Population Census, a total of 25.37 million children aged 5-16 are out of school, with more girls (13.41 million) than boys (11.96 million) affected.



**11.96
million**



**13.41
million**



Out of School Children, by province:

Punjab has the highest number with 7.83 million children, followed by Sindh at 4.69 million and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) at 2.94 million.

Punjab



**7.83
million**

Sindh



**4.69
million**

KP



**2.94
million**

Balochistan



**1.57
million**

Never been to School as a % of Out of School

Nationally, 67% of out-of-school children have never attended school, with rural areas (74%) having a significantly higher percentage than urban areas (59%).



Urban

59%



Rural

74%

Never Been to School, by age group:

31% of the 5-9 age group has never been to school, compared to 69% in the over 60 age group



**of the 5-9 age group
has never been to
school**

Source: 7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census, visualization by Gallup Pakistan

Today's topic is “**Out of School Children in Pakistan**” from tables 12 and 13a of the 7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census

Key Findings:

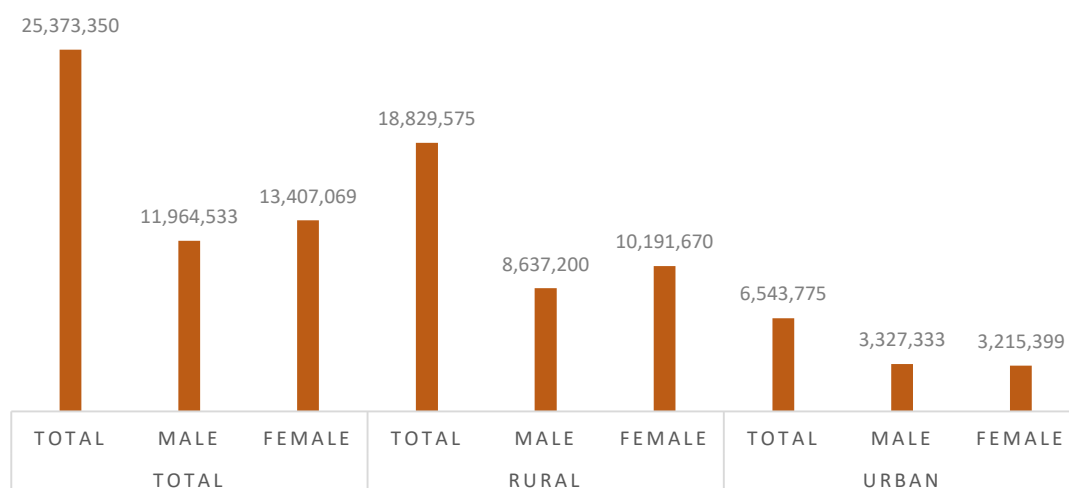
1. **Out of School Children (5-16):** As per the 2023 Population Census, a total of 25.37 million children aged 5-16 are out of school, with more girls (13.41 million) than boys (11.96 million) affected.
2. **Out of School Children, by province:** Punjab has the highest number with 7.83 million children, followed by Sindh at 4.69 million and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) at 2.94 million.
3. **Never been to School as a % of Out of School (5-16):** Nationally, 67% of out-of-school children have never attended school, with rural areas (74%) having a significantly higher percentage than urban areas (59%).
4. **Never Been to School, by age group:** 31% of the 5-9 age group has never been to school, compared to 69% in the over 60 age group.

1. Out of School Children (5-16)¹

As per the 2023 Population Census, a total of 25.37 million children aged 5-16 are out of school, with more girls (13.41 million) than boys (11.96 million) affected. The disparity is more pronounced in rural areas, where 18.83 million children are out of school compared to 6.54 million in urban areas. Rural girls account for the largest portion, with over 10.19 million out of school, while the urban numbers are lower, at 3.22 million for girls and 3.33 million for boys.

This data highlights the urgent need to address educational access, particularly for rural and female populations. The fact that urban areas have fewer out-of-school children suggests that urban education initiatives are more effective, and similar strategies could be adapted for rural settings.

FIGURE 1: OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN (5-16) - PAKISTAN



Source: 2023 Population and Housing Census, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics - visualization by Gallup Pakistan

2. Out of School Children by Province

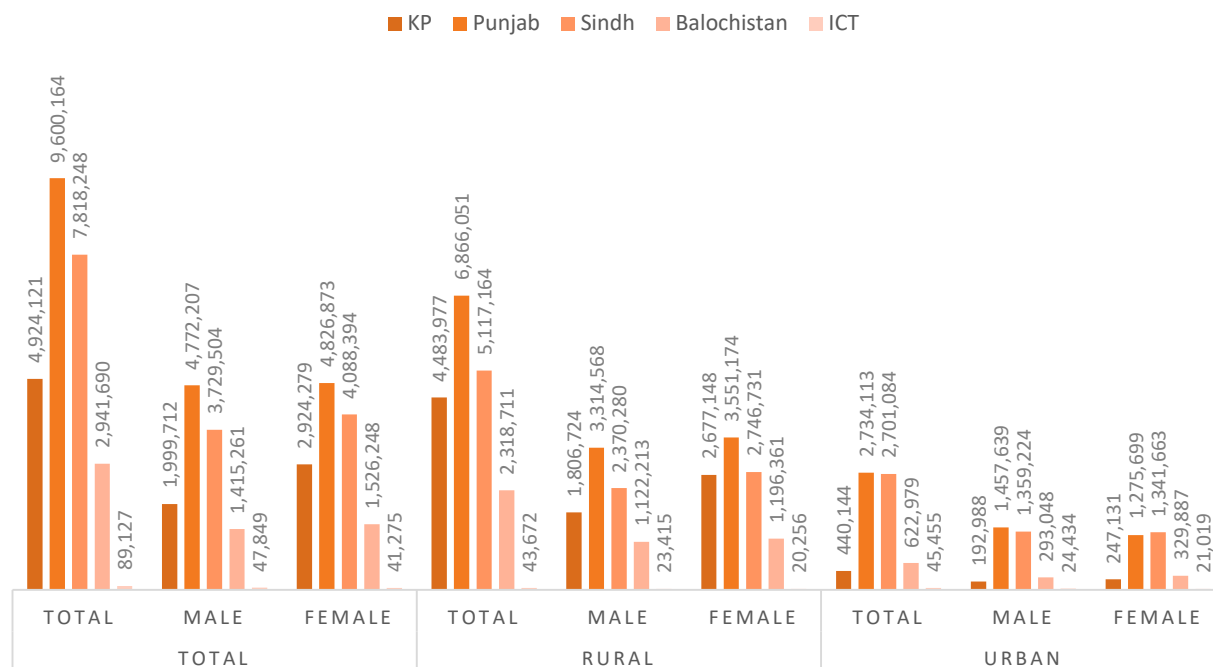
Within the provinces, Punjab has the highest number of out of school children aged 5-16, with 7.83 million children, followed by Sindh at 4.69 million and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) at 2.94 million (Figure 2). Balochistan and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) have significantly lower figures, with Balochistan at 1.57 million and ICT at around 41,275. The rural-urban divide is prominent, especially in Sindh and Punjab, where rural areas show much higher numbers of out-of-school children compared to urban regions. The gender disparity is also evident, with more girls than boys out of school across most provinces.

While high numbers of out of school children may seem bleak at first glance, there is still room for improvement and development. Punjab, given its large population, holds the potential for impactful reforms—by addressing the rural-urban divide, the province could significantly reduce national out-of-school figures. Sindh, with its rural focus, can benefit from programs that replicate successful urban education models in rural settings. The

¹ Population numbers have been rounded to the nearest million for the sake of analysis. For complete tables, visit: <https://www.galluppakistandigitalanalytics.com/7th-population-and-housing-census-detailed-results/>

relatively lower figures in ICT offer an opportunity for rapid improvement, where more localized and smaller-scale interventions can yield faster results.

FIGURE 2: OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN (5-16) - BY PROVINCE



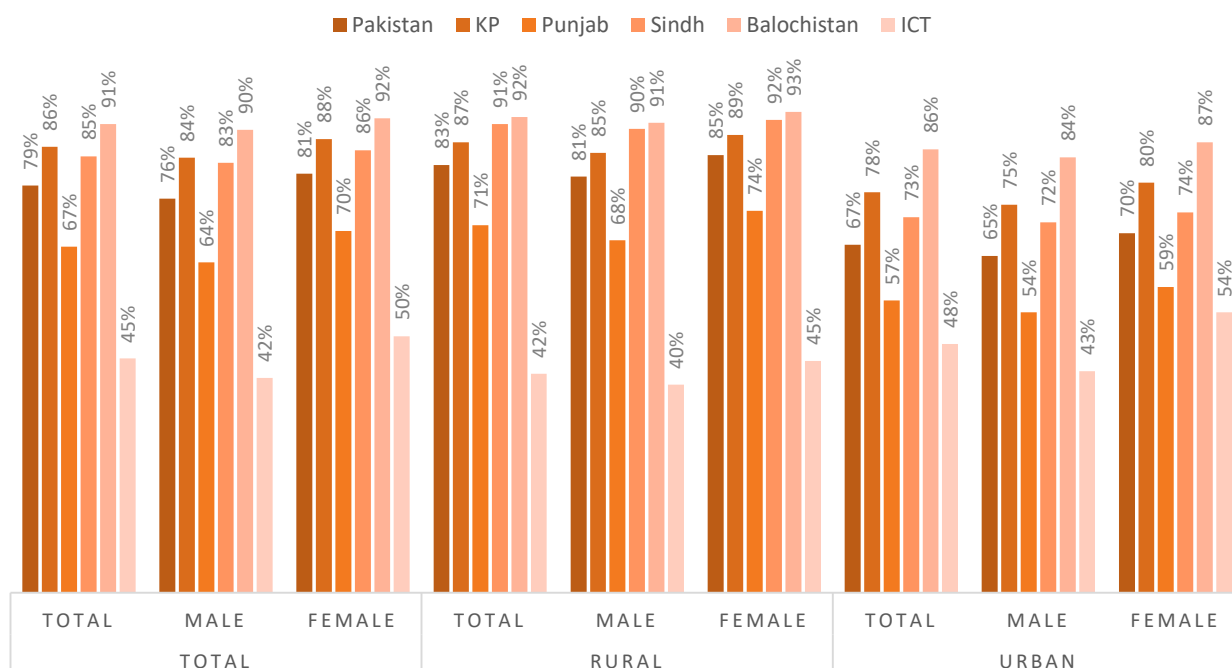
Source: 2023 Population and Housing Census, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics - visualization by Gallup Pakistan

3. Never been to School as a % of Out of School (5-16)

Figure 3 shows the percentage of children aged 5-16 who have never attended school, as a subset of the total out-of-school children population, broken down by province, gender, and region. Nationally, 67% of out-of-school children have never attended school, with rural areas (74%) having a significantly higher percentage than urban areas (59%). This disparity is particularly pronounced in provinces like Balochistan, where 81% of children have never been to school, compared to 50% in ICT. A stark gender gap also exists, with a higher proportion of girls never having attended school across most provinces, particularly in Balochistan (83%) and Sindh (80%).

While a cause for concern, this also provides a clear focus for policymakers: efforts to improve school access and attendance in rural and underserved regions can significantly reduce the national figures of out-of-school children. Programs aimed at community awareness, reducing barriers for girls, and improving school infrastructure in areas like Balochistan and Sindh could create a transformative impact. The relatively lower rates in provinces like ICT offer opportunities to replicate best practices nationwide.

FIGURE 3: NEVER BEEN TO SCHOOL AS A % OF OUT OF SCHOOL (5-16)



Source: 2023 Population and Housing Census, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics - visualization by Gallup Pakistan

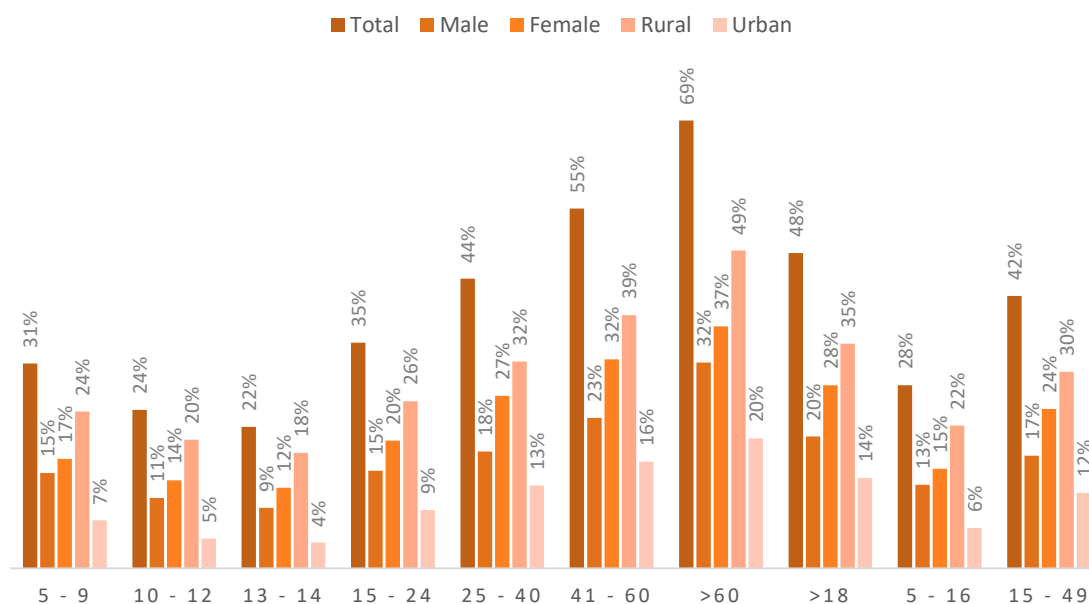
4. Never Been to School, by age group

Figure 4 illustrates the percentage of the population in various age brackets that have never attended school, broken down by gender (male, female) and locale (rural, urban) based on data from the 7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census. The overall trend shows a decrease in the percentage of people who have never attended school as we move to younger age brackets. For instance, 31% of the 5-9 age group has never been to school, compared to 69% in the over 60 age group.

However, the rural-urban divide is particularly striking. For instance, in the 25-40 age group, 32% of the rural population has never been to school, compared to just 13% in urban areas. This suggests that urban areas have benefited more from educational reforms, likely due to better infrastructure and resources. To bridge this gap, expanding educational infrastructure in rural areas—such as building more schools, improving transportation options, and providing better training for teachers—could be crucial.

Furthermore, in the 15-49 age group, 24% of women have never attended school, compared to 17% of men. Even in the 13-14 age group, 12% of females have never been to school compared to 9% of males. This implies that while gender gaps have narrowed over time, they remain significant. Addressing this requires not only improving access to education for girls but also tackling cultural and societal norms that may discourage female education.

**FIGURE 4: NEVER BEEN TO SCHOOL AS % OF TOTAL POPULATION
IN AGE BRACKET**



Source: 2023 Population and Housing Census, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics - visualization by Gallup Pakistan

The data suggests that targeted educational interventions have had a positive impact on younger populations, but rural and female education requires further focus. Expanding access to education in rural areas, perhaps through mobile schools or e-learning initiatives, could help bridge this gap. Additionally, cultural and social barriers that prevent girls from attending school need to be addressed through community engagement and incentives for families.

Investing in adult education programs, particularly for women in rural areas, could also help uplift older generations who missed out on education. By tackling these disparities head-on, Pakistan can make significant progress in achieving universal education and empowering its entire population, regardless of gender or location. This approach not only enhances individual lives but also contributes to the country's overall socio-economic development.

Wish to know more about 2023 Census?

The 7th Population and Housing Census of Pakistan started self-enumeration from February 20th and field operations from March 1st, 2023, with results delivered by April 30th, 2023. It was Pakistan's first digital census under the vision of "Digital Pakistan". The technology architecture for this first-ever digital census was developed after extensive research and learning from other countries that have digitized their censuses, and tailored accordingly to Pakistan's specific conditions and available resources. The digitization of the census makes the process more inclusive, accessible, and user-friendly. This international standard census has provided timely data for policy planning and enabled real-time monitoring for the provision of quality data.

You can find more information on the national census and complete tables on www.pbs.gov.pk

2017 Census Series

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Wish to Contribute to Gallup Big Data Analysis?

Gallup Pakistan is looking for collaboration with researchers to expand both the Big Data Analysis project as well as this study of national level data. If you have any ideas, please write to Bilal I Gilani, Project Director of the Big Data Analysis Series at Gallup Pakistan.

Methodology:

The data for this analysis is based on the “7th Population and Housing Census” by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan.

The 2023 Census, or the “7th Population and Housing Census”, by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics can be accessed at: <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/digital-census/detailed-results>

The 2017 Census, or the “6th Population and Housing Census 2017”, by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics can be accessed at: <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/final-results-census-2017>

For more survey data, see our website <http://www.gallup.com.pk/> or contact Gallup Pakistan at caf@gallup.com.pk

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