

Ever Attended School

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



PRESS RELEASE

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The gender gap in school attendance is wider among the 25-40 age group (64% males vs. 47% females), narrows in the 5-9 age group (71.5% males vs. 65.4% females), showing progress in gender parity – **Ever Attended School – 7th Pakistan Population and Housing Census**

Islamabad, October 02nd, 2024

Gallup Pakistan, as part of its Big Data Analysis initiative, is looking at Ever Attended School statistics 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 Ever Attended School 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.galluppakistanandigitalanalytics.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 Ever Attended School 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.

Ever Attended School

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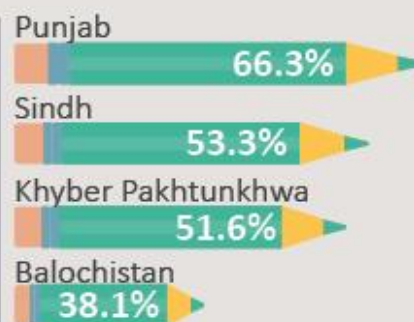
Ever attended school - overall:

According to the 2023 Population Census, 121 million individuals representing 59% of the population aged over 5—have attended school at some point in their lives.



Ever attended school – by province:

In terms of overall school attendance, Punjab leads with 72.28 million individuals having attended school, followed by Sindh with 25.05 million, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 17.95 million, and Balochistan with 4.58 million.



Gender gap:

In Punjab, 71.5% of males have attended school, compared to 60.9% of females. Balochistan shows the widest gender gap, with only 29.3% of females having attended school, compared to 46.1% of males.



Ever attended school – by age group

In the 15–49 age group, 67 million people have attended school, representing 58% of that cohort. Meanwhile, for the 5–16 age group, 51 million people (72%) have attended school, illustrating an increase in school attendance in more recent years.



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

Key Findings:

- 1. Ever attended school - overall:** According to the 2023 Population Census, 121 million individuals—representing 59% of the population aged over 5—have attended school at some point in their lives.
- 2. Ever attended school – by province:** In terms of overall school attendance, Punjab leads with 72.28 million individuals having attended school, followed by Sindh with 25.05 million, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 17.95 million, and Balochistan with 4.58 million.
- 3. Gender gap:** In Punjab, 71.5% of males have attended school, compared to 60.9% of females. Balochistan shows the widest gender gap, with only 29.3% of females having attended school, compared to 46.1% of males.
- 4. Ever attended school – by age group:** In the 15–49 age group, 67 million people have attended school, representing 58% of that cohort. Meanwhile, for the 5–16 age group, 51 million people (72%) have attended school, illustrating an increase in school attendance in more recent years.
- 5. Ever attended school – by demographics:** 71.5% of males and 65.4% of females in the 5–9 age group have attended school, and the gap widens in older groups like the 25–40 bracket, where 64.0% of males and 47.0% of females attended.

1. Ever attended school - Overall¹

According to the 2023 Population Census, 121 million individuals—representing 59% of the population aged over 5—have attended school at some point in their lives. This includes 70 million men and 52 million women, reflecting school attendance rates of 66% for men and 52% for women, respectively. These figures highlight significant strides in education access across genders, though opportunities remain for further improvement, particularly in bridging the gender gap.

In rural areas, 63 million people have attended school, with males (38 million) attending in greater numbers than females (25 million). Urban areas show a more balanced figure, with 58 million attendees overall, of which 32 million are males and 26 million are females. This narrower gender gap in urban regions highlights the positive impact of educational initiatives in cities.

Figure 1: Ever Attended School

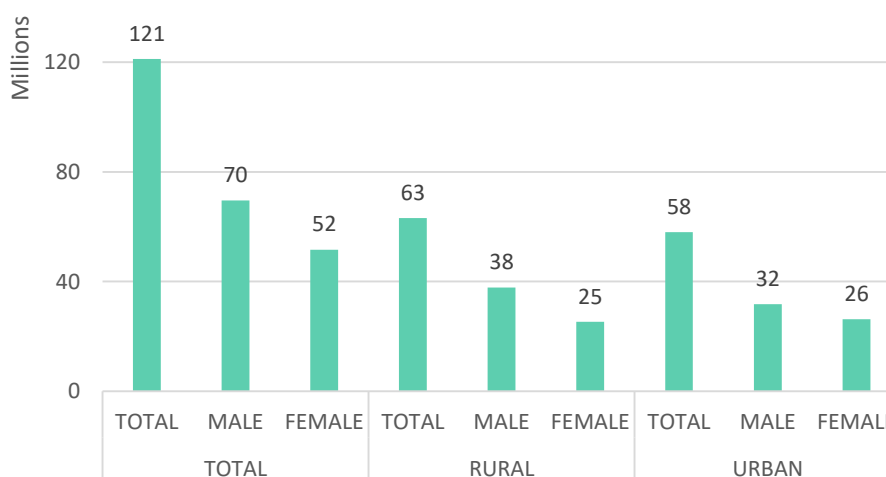


Table 1: Ever attended as a % of total population >=5

TOTAL			RURAL			URBAN		
TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
59.4%	66.2%	52.2%	51.1%	59.8%	41.9%	72.2%	75.9%	68.3%

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

2. Ever attended school – By Province

In terms of overall school attendance, Punjab leads with 72.28 million individuals having attended school, followed by Sindh with 25.05 million, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 17.95 million, and Balochistan with 4.58 million. Notably, Balochistan lags behind other provinces, with a much lower total attendance, particularly among females. The disparity between male and female attendance is consistent across all provinces. In Punjab, for example, 71.5% of males have attended school, compared to 60.9% of females. Balochistan shows the widest gender gap, with only 29.3% of females having attended school, compared to 46.1% of males.

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/>

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also displays a significant disparity, with 64.1% of males attending school compared to only 38.6% of females. These figures suggest that while educational access has improved, there is still a substantial gap in school attendance between genders, especially in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

FIGURE 2: EVER ATTENDED SCHOOL - BY PROVINCE

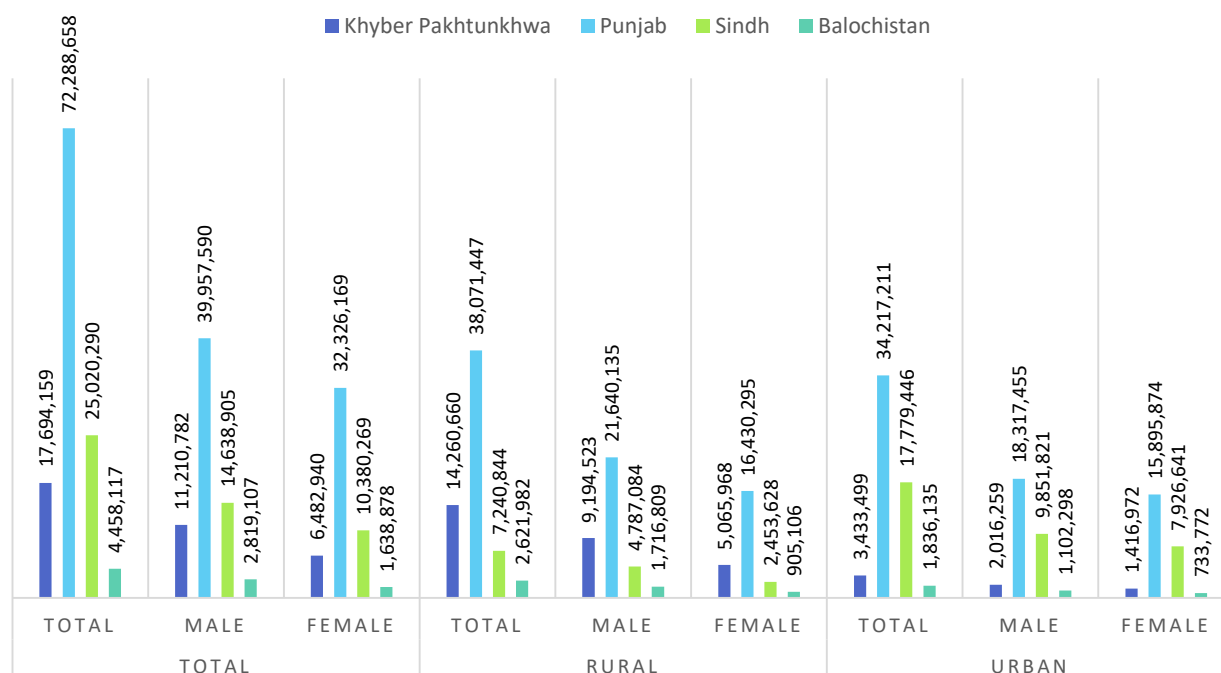


Table 2: Ever attended as a % of total population >=5

	TOTAL			RURAL			URBAN		
Ever attended as a % of total population >=5	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	51.6%	64.1%	38.6%	49.2%	62.3%	35.5%	65.0%	74.0%	55.5%
Punjab	66.3%	71.5%	60.9%	59.2%	66.0%	52.1%	76.5%	79.3%	73.7%
Sindh	53.3%	59.8%	46.3%	34.4%	44.0%	24.2%	68.7%	72.5%	64.6%
Balochistan	38.1%	46.1%	29.3%	32.1%	40.2%	23.2%	51.7%	59.7%	43.0%

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

Urban and rural divisions further underscore the disparities in educational access. In all provinces, urban school attendance is significantly higher than in rural areas. For instance, in Punjab's urban areas, 76.5% of individuals have attended school, while in rural areas, this figure drops to 59.2%. Sindh follows a similar trend, with 68.7% attendance in urban areas compared to 34.4% in rural areas. Although Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan show smaller urban-rural gaps, the differences are still pronounced. In Balochistan, for example, urban attendance stands at 51.7%, while rural attendance is only 32.1%. This data highlights the persistent rural-urban divide in education, with urban populations benefiting more from educational resources and opportunities.

One of the more concerning trends is the low rate of female school attendance in rural areas. Balochistan has the lowest rural female attendance rate, with only 23.2% of women in rural areas having attended school. Similarly, Sindh's rural female attendance rate stands at 24.2%.

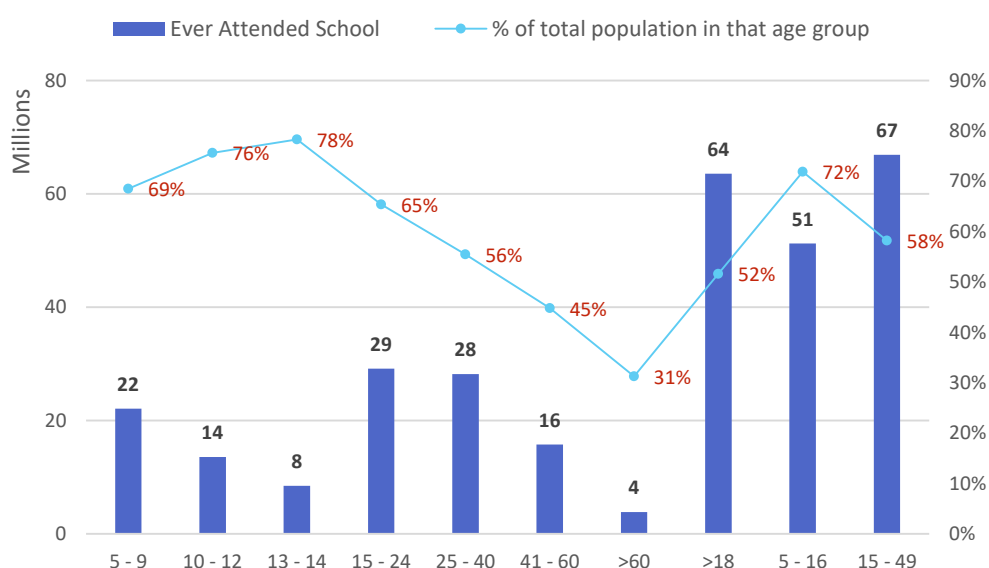
Even in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where overall attendance figures are higher, rural female attendance remains a challenge, with 52.1% and 35.5% of rural females attending school, respectively. These figures point to the need for focused interventions in rural areas, particularly to improve female access to education.

While there are significant gaps in educational access, particularly among females and rural populations, the data also reflect positive trends. Over half of the population in several provinces has attended school, with Punjab and Sindh showing strong progress, especially in urban regions where school attendance is around 70%. These provinces demonstrate that continued efforts to expand educational access can yield significant results.

Despite the challenges, a clear path can be drawn for improving educational access across Pakistan. Targeted initiatives to reduce the gender gap and increase rural school attendance, especially for girls, will be essential in driving further progress.

3. Ever attended school – By Age Group

Figure 3: Ever Attended School - All Pakistan



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

Figure 3 provides a broad overview of school attendance across different age groups in Pakistan. The graph includes two data points: the number of individuals in millions who have ever attended school and the percentage of the total population within each age group that has attended school.

The data reveals significant variation in educational access across age groups. Among the youngest cohort (ages 5–9), 22 million individuals have attended school, representing 69% of the total population in that age group. As age increases, the number of people who have attended school decreases, with 14 million in the 10–12 age group (76%) and only 8 million in the 13–14 age group (78%). These high percentages among younger age groups suggest that school enrollment has improved over time, particularly for children.

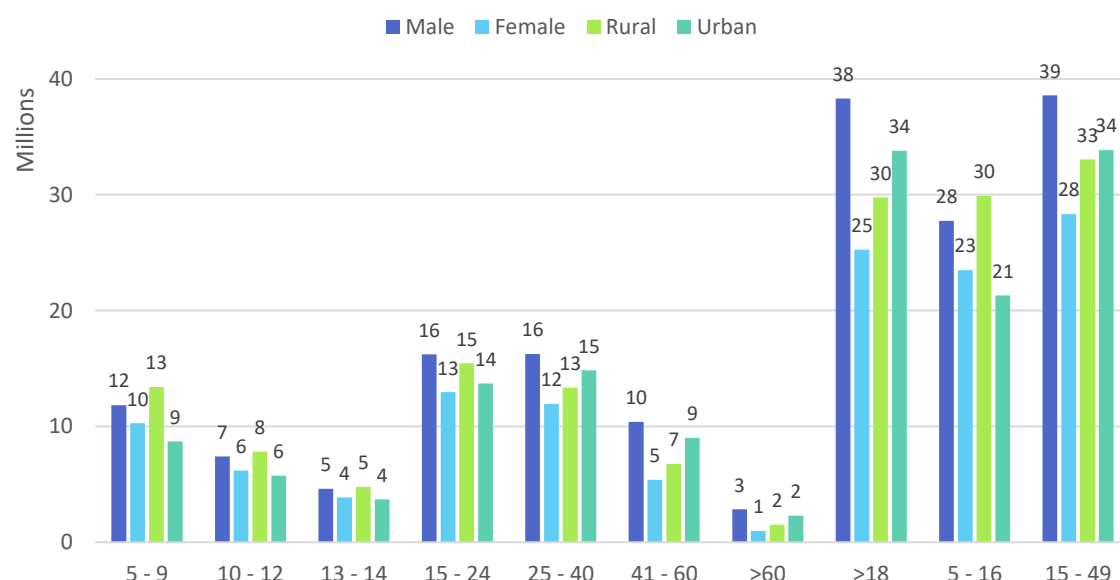
The trend shifts notably as we move to older age groups. In the 15–24 age range, 29 million individuals have attended school, though the percentage of the population in that group who have attended school drops to 65%. This decline continues in older age brackets, with only 28 million individuals in the 25–40 age range having attended school (56%) and 16 million in the 41–60 range (45%). The sharpest decline is seen in the 60+ age group, where only 4 million individuals (31%) have attended school. This trend indicates that access to education was significantly more limited in previous generations.

When considering broader age categories, individuals over 18 show strong attendance numbers, with 64 million having attended school, accounting for 52% of that population. In the 15–49 age group, 67 million people have attended school, representing 58% of that cohort. Meanwhile, for the 5–16 age group, 51 million people (72%) have attended school, illustrating an increase in school attendance in more recent years.

The data indicates an overall positive trend in educational access for younger generations, suggesting that schooling opportunities have expanded in recent decades. This improvement is particularly evident in the 5–16 age group, where school attendance exceeds 70%. However, the lower attendance rates in older age groups underscore the educational challenges faced by earlier generations, pointing to the need for continued efforts to increase access to education for all age groups, particularly through adult education initiatives.

4. Ever attended school – by demographics and age group

Figure 4: Ever Attended School - by demographics and age group



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

According to the 2023 Census, male attendance generally surpasses female attendance in all age groups. However, the gap is smaller in younger age groups and appears to increase for older groups. For example, in the 5–9 age group, 13 million males and 10 million females have attended school, while 16 million men had ever attended school compared to 12 million women in the 25–40 age group. On the other hand, more of those living in rural areas in the 5–24 group had attended school compared to their urban counterparts – this could be attributed

to a larger rural population in the country, and requires a deeper analysis of the percentage of total population in these age brackets that had been to school.

Table 3: Ever attended as a % of population in that category

% of total population in that category	5 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 24	25 - 40	41 - 60	>60	>18	5 - 16	15 - 49
Male	71.5%	79.2%	82.1%	70.8%	64.0%	56.1%	42.4%	60.6%	75.2%	66.0%
Female	65.4%	71.8%	74.2%	59.7%	47.0%	32.2%	17.7%	42.2%	68.3%	50.2%
Rural	63.3%	68.8%	71.3%	57.4%	45.3%	33.1%	20.3%	41.2%	65.7%	48.8%
Urban	78.6%	87.5%	89.6%	77.4%	69.6%	61.0%	48.6%	66.4%	82.8%	71.7%

Source: 2023 Population and Housing Census, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

Table 3 highlights just that. Male attendance rates are consistently higher than female rates across all age groups. For example, 71.5% of males and 65.4% of females in the 5–9 age group have attended school, and the gap widens in older groups like the 25–40 bracket, where 64.0% of males and 47.0% of females attended. The rural-urban divide is also clear: in the 5–9 age group, 63.3% of rural children have attended school compared to 78.6% in urban areas. This gap persists across all age groups, with only 20.3% of rural individuals over 60 having attended school compared to 48.6% in urban areas.

The data illustrates significant progress in school attendance for younger age groups, particularly in urban areas. However, gender and rural-urban disparities remain stark, especially for older generations.

In conclusion, the 2023 Population Census reveals notable improvements in educational access for younger generations, with high attendance rates among children aged 5–16, particularly in urban areas. However, significant disparities persist, with males attending school at higher rates than females across all age groups, and rural residents lagging behind their urban counterparts. For instance, only 47% of women aged 25–40 and 20% of rural individuals over 60 have ever attended school. Addressing these gaps through targeted interventions—such as increasing female enrollment and improving rural education infrastructure—will be essential for creating equitable educational opportunities nationwide.

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

Volume 1: Male Literacy Ratio: <https://www.gallup.com.pk/post/32297>

Volume 2: Female Literacy Ratio: <https://www.gallup.com.pk/post/32361>

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Volume 7: Sources of Information/Communication: <https://www.gallup.com.pk/post/32496>

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Volume 12: Number of Persons Living Abroad: <https://www.gallup.com.pk/post/32720>

Volume 13: Homeless Population: <https://gallup.com.pk/post/32888>

Volume 14: Mother Tongue: <https://gallup.com.pk/post/33151>

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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