



Gallup Pakistan Analysis of Punjab Development Statistics (50 Years) Health



PRESS RELEASE

Gallup Pakistan Analysis of Punjab Development Statistics (50 Years)

Hospitals Increase from 204 to 391, Doctors from ~5,300 to 236,789, and Patients Treated Rise from 13.6 Million to 148 Million in Punjab Over Five Decades

Islamabad, May 11th, 2026

Punjab's healthcare system has expanded significantly over the past five decades, with substantial increases in health infrastructure, medical workforce, and patient care utilization. Analysis of official data from the Bureau of Statistics Punjab shows that growth in healthcare facilities and service delivery has broadly kept pace with rising population needs, though the scale of demand has increased even more rapidly.

What is the Big Data Analysis Series by Gallup?

Gallup Pakistan's Big Data series was initiated by Bilal I. Gilani, Executive Director of Gallup Pakistan. As he explains: *"Pakistan does not suffer from a lack of data, but from limited accessibility and weak translation of numbers into understanding. Gallup Pakistan bridges this gap by analyzing large, often under-used datasets — from PSLM and Labour Force Surveys to Economic Surveys and National Census data — so these statistics can meaningfully inform policy and public discourse."*

What data points this current edition covers:

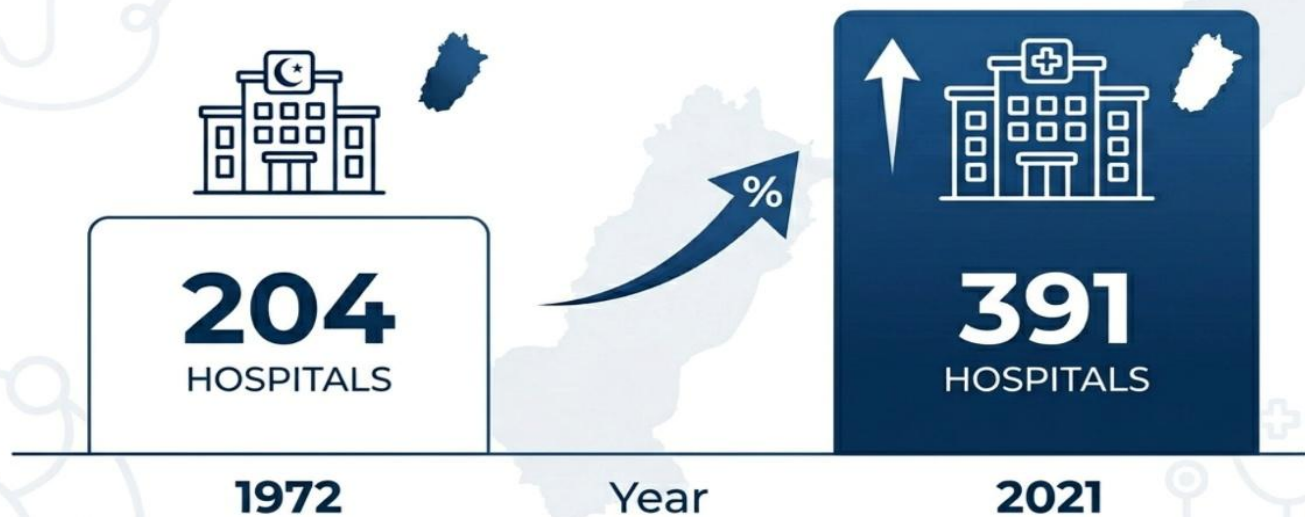
Tables used:

- Table 11.1a: Health institutions
- Table 11.1b: Bed strength of health institutions
- Table 11.2: Hospitals by management group
- Table 11.3: Patients treated by health institutions
- Table 11.4: Indoor and outdoor patients by management group

Indicators covered: i. Number of health institutions ii. Hospital bed capacity iii. Healthcare workforce (doctors, nurses, LHV's) iv. Patients treated in health facilities v. Distribution by management type. **Time period:** 1972–2021

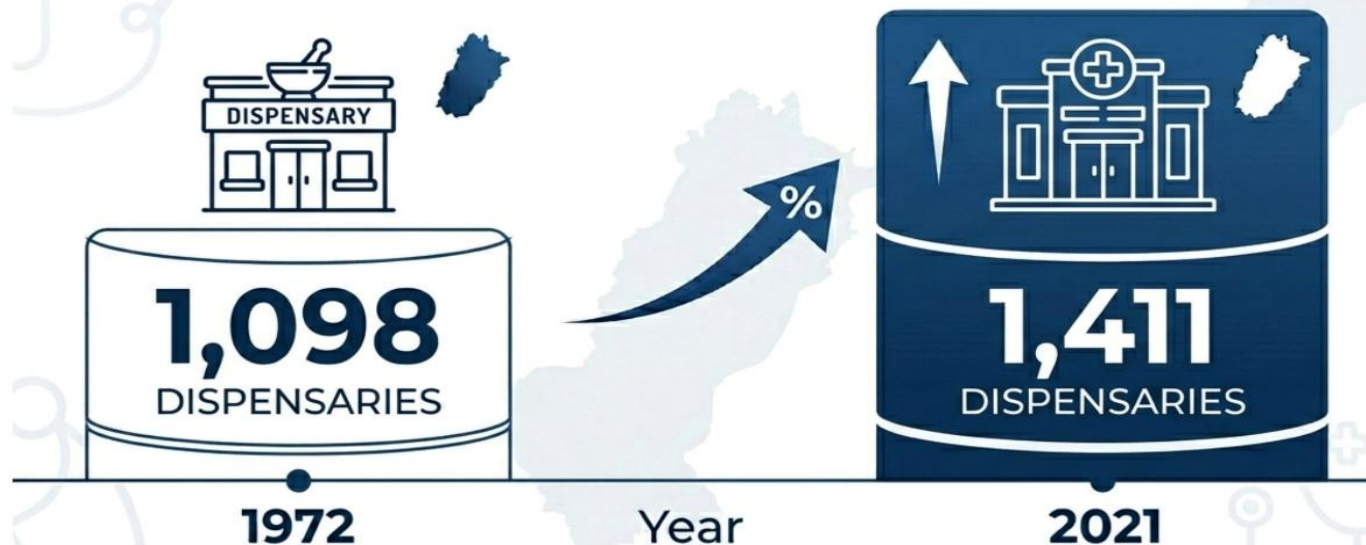
Hospitals Increase from 204 to 391, Doctors from ~5,300 to 236,789, and Patients Treated Rise from 13.6 Million to 148 Million in Punjab Over Five Decades

Expansion of Health Infrastructure in Punjab



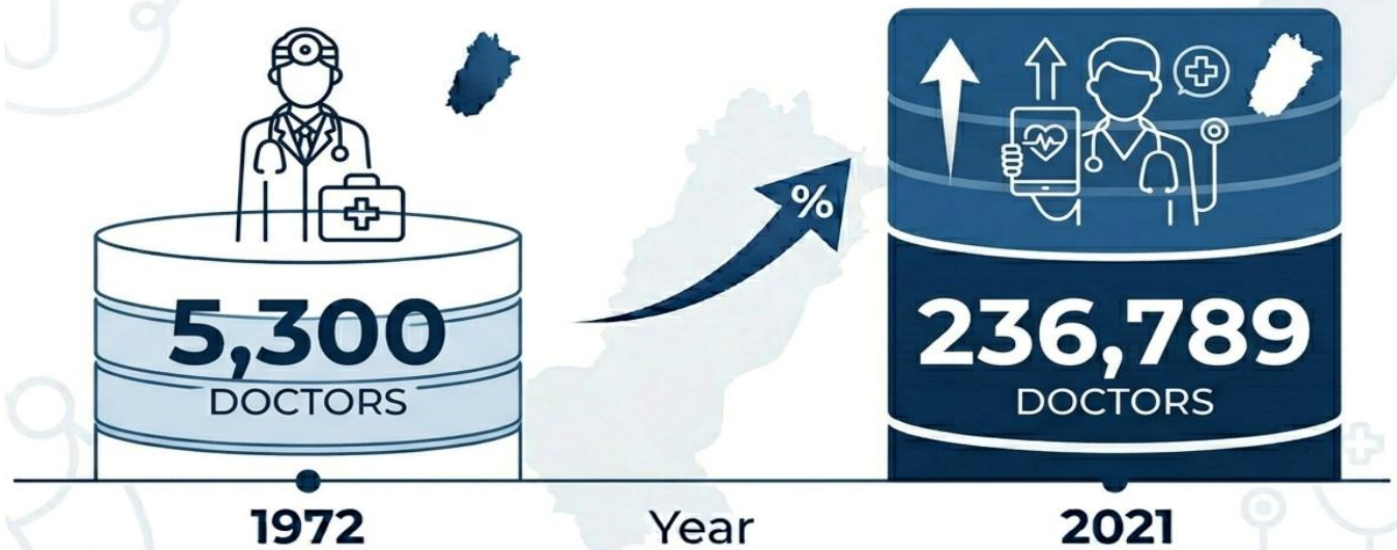
The number of hospitals increased from 204 in 1972 to 391 in 2021.

Expansion of Health Infrastructure in Punjab



Dispensaries expanded from 1,098 to 1,411 over the same period.

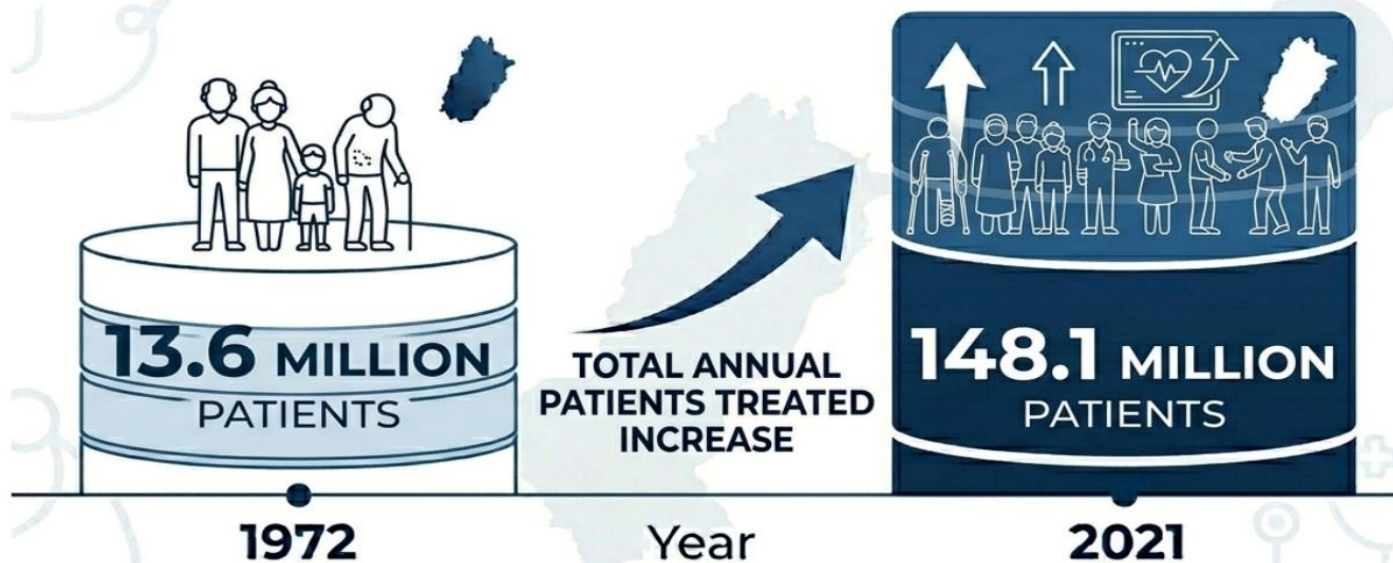
Expansion of Healthcare Workforce



The number of available doctors rose from 5,300 in 1972 to 236,789 in 2021.

Nurses increased from 2,780 to 83,760, reflecting expansion in healthcare staffing.

Patient Volume



Total patients treated annually rose from 13.6 million in 1972 to 148.1 million in 2021.

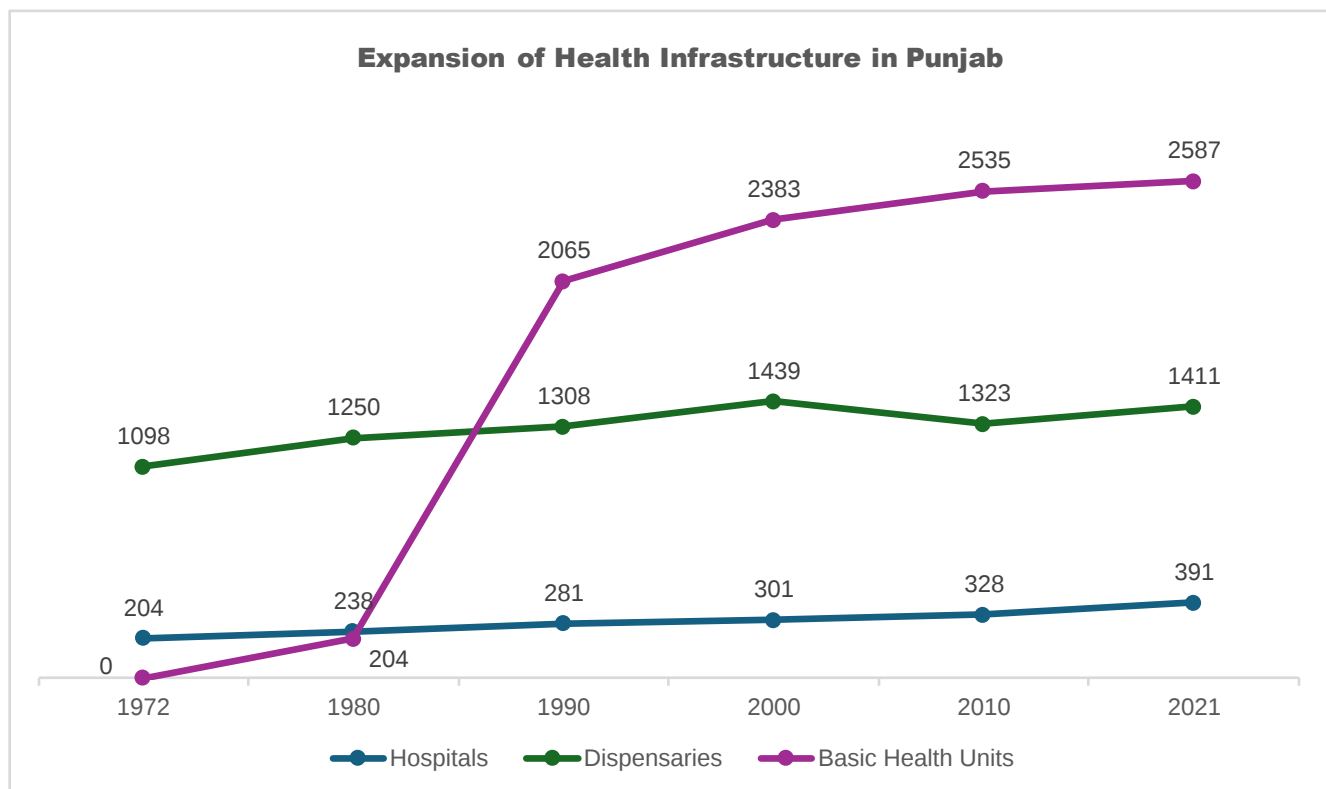
Key Findings:

1. The number of hospitals increased from 204 in 1972 to 391 in 2021.
2. Dispensaries expanded from 1,098 to 1,411 over the same period.
3. The number of available doctors rose from 5,300 in 1972 to 236,789 in 2021.
4. Nurses increased from 2,780 to 83,760, reflecting expansion in healthcare staffing.
5. Total patients treated annually rose from 13.6 million in 1972 to 148.1 million in 2021.

1. Healthcare Infrastructure Expands but at a Gradual Pace

The number of healthcare institutions in Punjab shows steady but moderate expansion over five decades. Hospitals increased from 204 in 1972 to 391 in 2021, while dispensaries rose from 1,098 to 1,411. Similarly, rural health centers and basic health units expanded gradually, reflecting incremental strengthening of primary healthcare infrastructure.

However, the pace of institutional expansion appears relatively modest when compared to the rapid increase in population and healthcare demand over the same period. This suggests that while physical infrastructure improved, the system increasingly relied on higher utilization of existing facilities rather than proportionate expansion in the number of institutions.



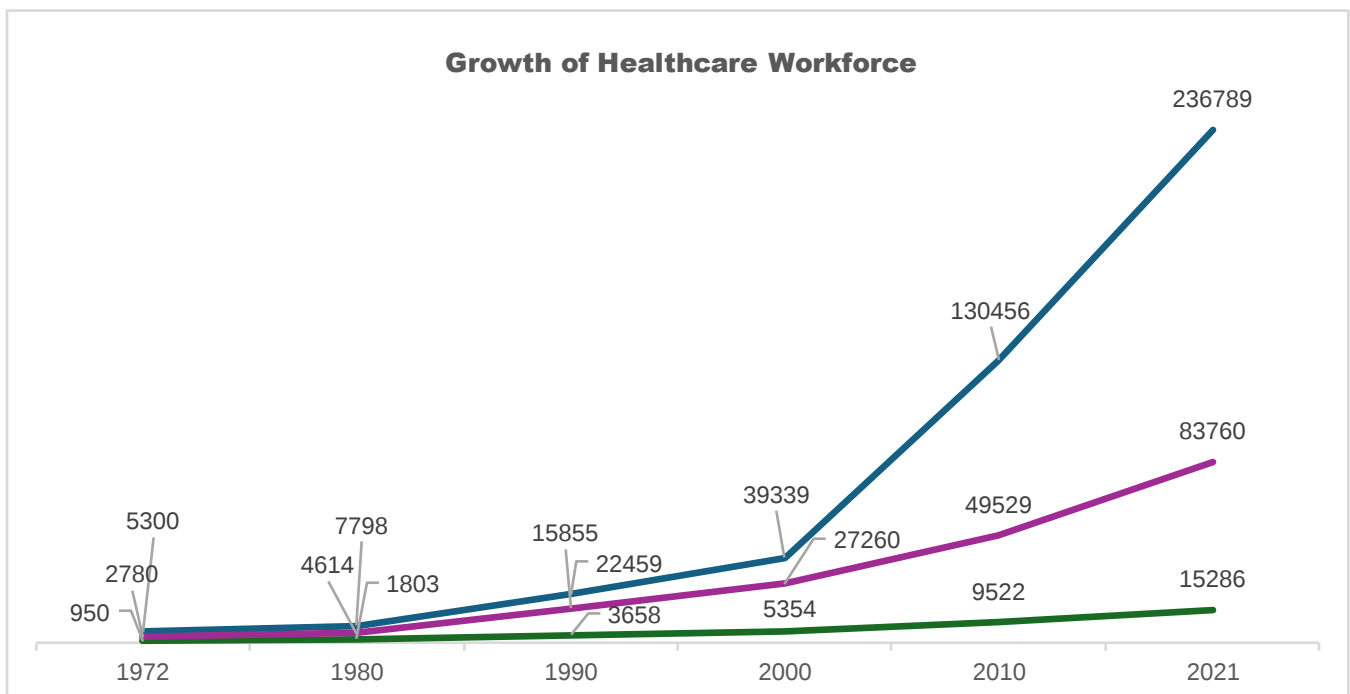
Source: Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Board, Government of the Punjab — Punjab Development Statistics for 50 Years (1972–2021).

2. Healthcare Workforce Expands Dramatically, Especially Doctors

The most significant growth within the healthcare system is observed in human resources. The number of available doctors increased sharply from approximately 5,300 in 1972 to 236,789 in 2021, representing one of the largest expansions across all health indicators.

Similarly, the number of nurses grew from 2,780 to 83,760, while Lady Health Visitors (LHVs) also increased substantially over time. This rapid expansion reflects both increased investment in medical education and the growing complexity of healthcare delivery.

The disproportionate growth in workforce relative to infrastructure suggests a shift toward more service-intensive healthcare delivery, with greater emphasis on medical personnel rather than physical expansion alone.



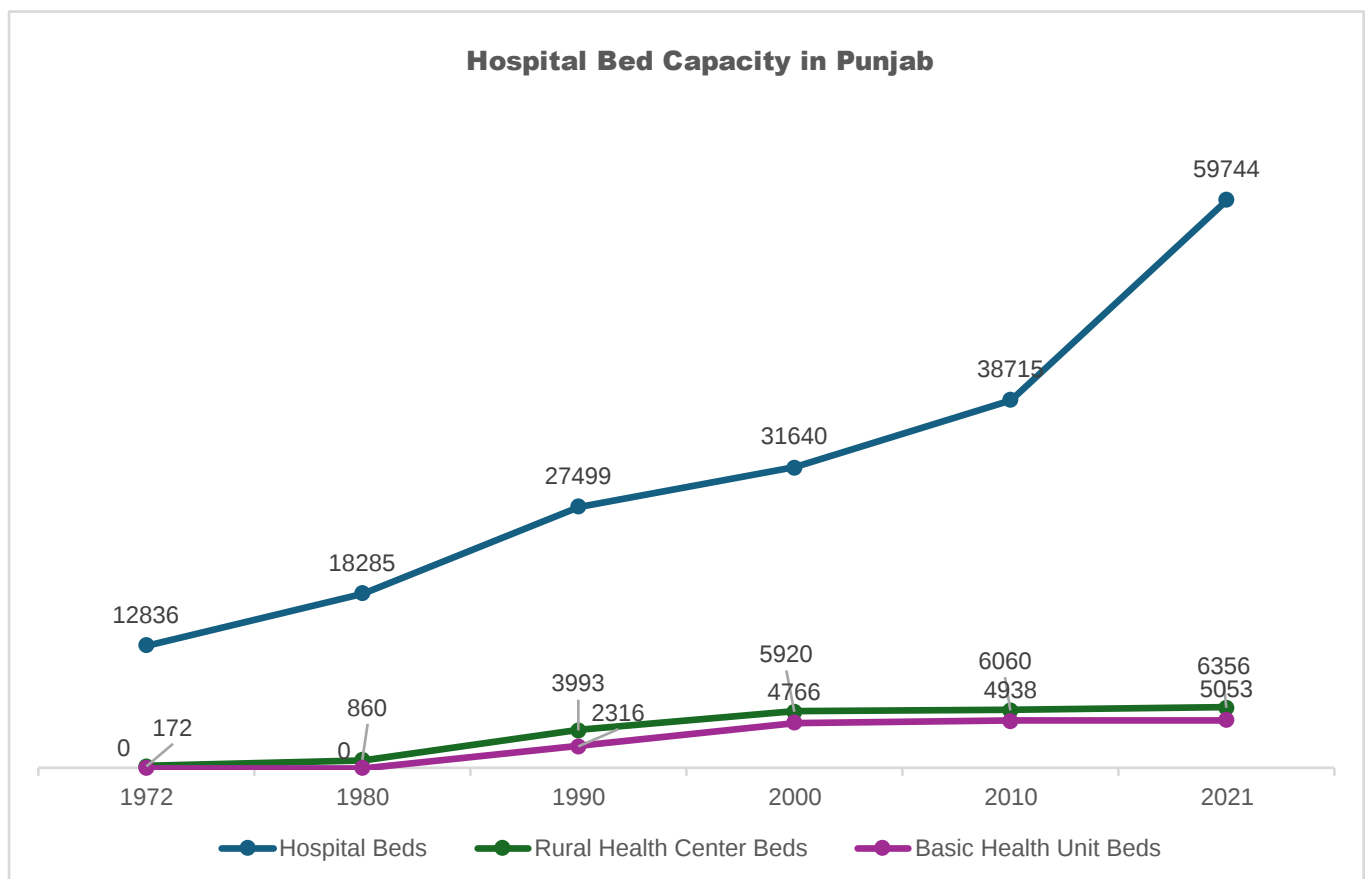
Source: Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Board, Government of the Punjab — Punjab Development Statistics for 50 Years (1972–2021).

3. Hospital Bed Capacity Expands but Shows Structural Constraints

Hospital bed capacity also increased over time, particularly in hospitals and rural health centers. For example, hospital bed strength rose from 12,836 in 1972 to 59,744 in 2021.

Despite this increase, the growth in bed capacity appears slower relative to both population growth and patient volumes. This indicates persistent capacity constraints within the system, where higher patient loads are increasingly managed within limited physical infrastructure.

The data suggest that while Punjab expanded its healthcare footprint, the system has had to absorb rising demand through efficiency gains and increased utilization rather than proportional expansion in bed capacity.



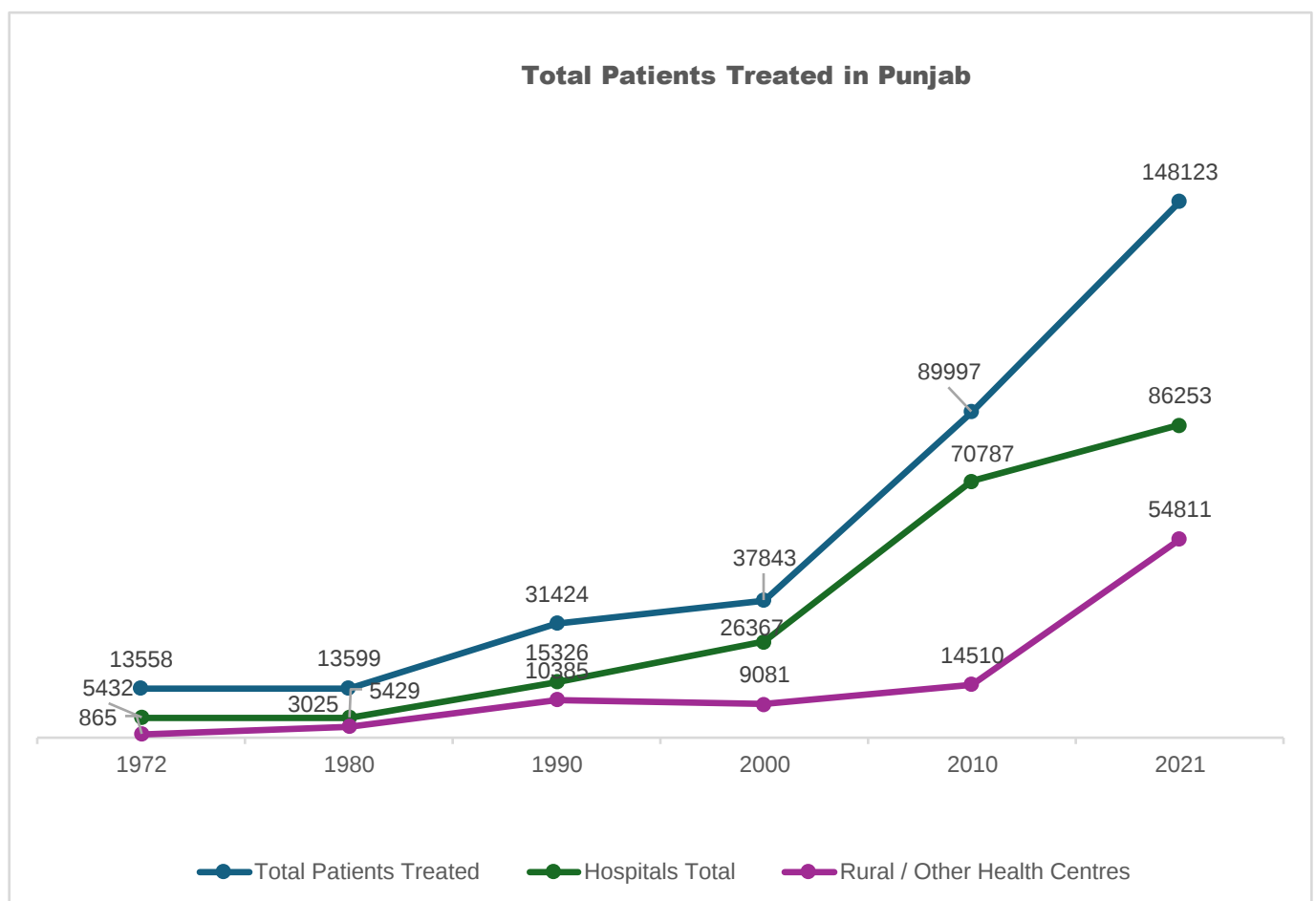
Source: Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Board, Government of the Punjab — Punjab Development Statistics for 50 Years (1972–2021).

4. Patient Volumes Surge More Than Tenfold

The most striking trend is the dramatic increase in patient utilization. Total patients treated rose from 13.6 million in 1972 to 148.1 million in 2021, representing more than a tenfold increase.

Both indoor and outdoor patient volumes increased significantly, with outpatient services accounting for the majority of this growth. This reflects a combination of factors, including population growth, improved access to healthcare, and rising healthcare needs due to epidemiological transitions.

The rapid increase in patient volumes relative to infrastructure growth highlights increasing pressure on healthcare facilities and underscores the importance of system efficiency and workforce expansion.



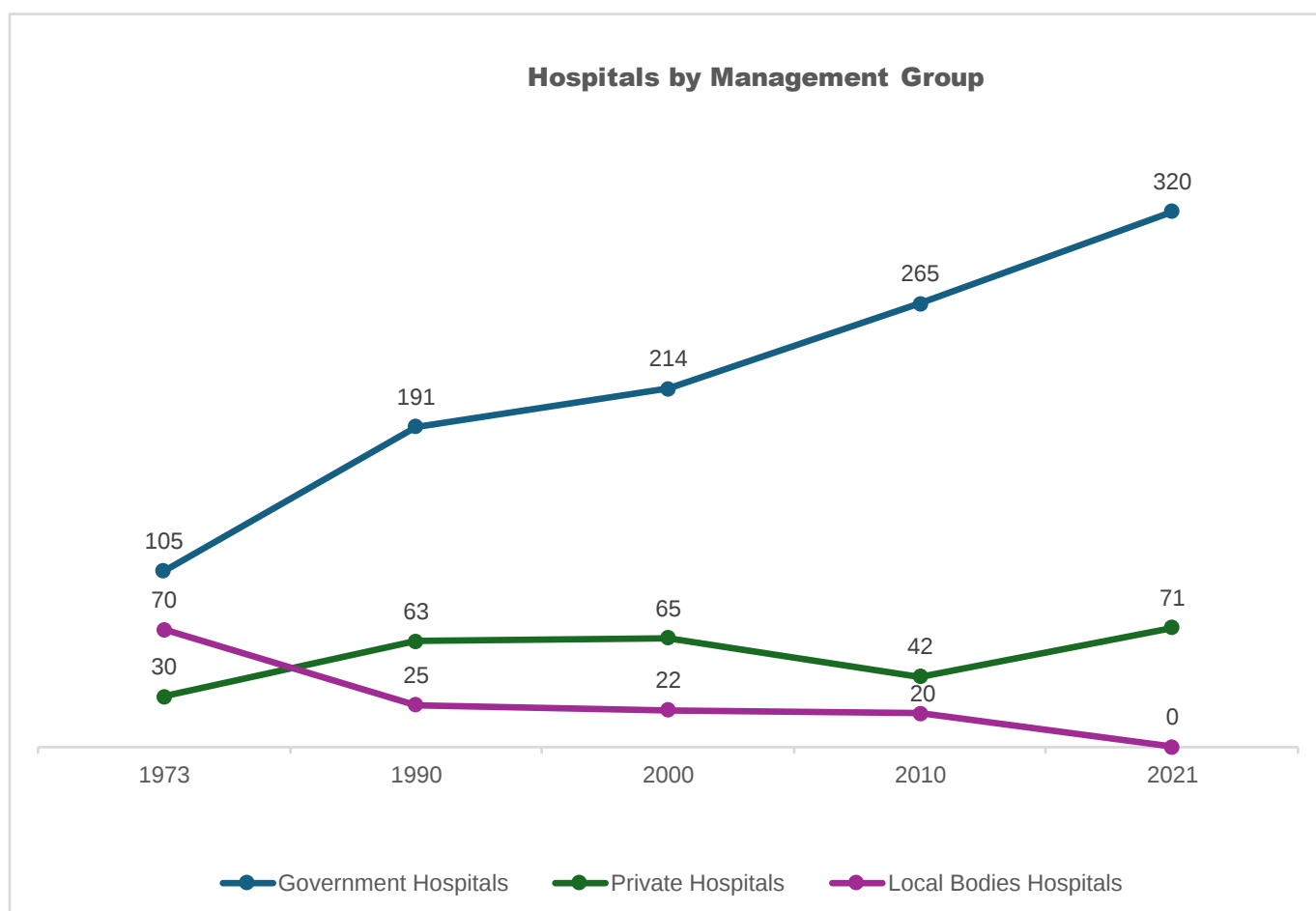
Source: Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Board, Government of the Punjab — Punjab Development Statistics for 50 Years (1972–2021).

5. Public Sector Dominates but Private Sector Gains Importance

Government hospitals continue to dominate healthcare provision in Punjab, accounting for the majority of hospital infrastructure and patient care. However, private sector participation has increased over time, particularly in urban areas.

Data from hospital management groups show that while public facilities remain central to healthcare delivery, private hospitals contribute meaningfully to service provision, especially in outpatient and specialized care.

This dual structure indicates a mixed healthcare system where public infrastructure forms the backbone, complemented by private sector expansion to meet growing demand.



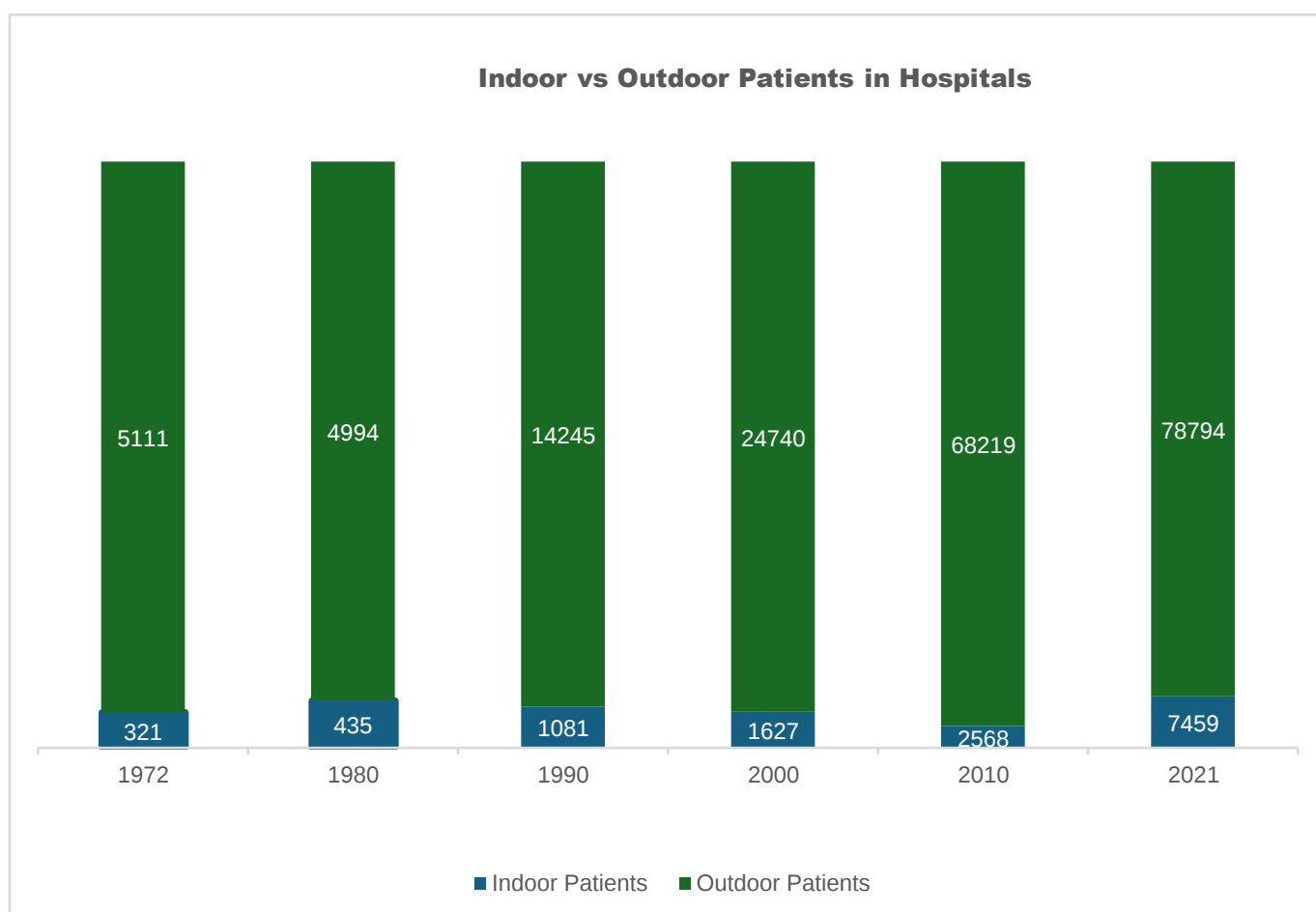
Source: Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Board, Government of the Punjab — Punjab Development Statistics for 50 Years (1972–2021).

6. Conclusion: A System Expanding Under Rising Demand Pressure

Over the past fifty years, Punjab's healthcare system has expanded significantly in terms of infrastructure, workforce, and service delivery. However, the data reveal that growth in patient demand has outpaced expansion in physical infrastructure, placing increasing pressure on the system.

The strong growth in healthcare personnel and patient utilization suggests a transition toward a more service-intensive healthcare model. At the same time, the relatively slower expansion in facilities and bed capacity highlights ongoing structural constraints that may require further investment and policy attention.

Overall, the long-term data illustrate a healthcare system that has scaled substantially but continues to adapt to rapidly rising demand.



Source: Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Board, Government of the Punjab — Punjab Development Statistics for 50 Years (1972–2021).



Wish to Contribute to Gallup Big Data Analysis?

Gallup Pakistan is looking for collaboration with researchers to expand the Big Data Analysis project. If you have any ideas, please write to Bilal I Gilani, Project Director, Big Data Analysis at Gallup Pakistan.

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