

Policy Brief

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Global Gender Gap Report 2021

Gender Gaps, Covid-19 and the Future of Work

The pandemic repercussions has brought a high frequency decline in the gender gaps in the (Global Gender Gap Report 2021, 2021). The LinkedIn, ILO and Ipsos has provided a timely analysis on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the gender gaps in economic participation. The ILO early projection suggest 5% of all employed women lost their jobs and 3.9% of employed men. LinkedIn data shows a decline of women's hiring into leadership roles. This has created a reversal progress of 1-2 years in women participation across multiple industries.

Additionally, the Ipsos data from January 2021, shows an increase of stress, anxiety, around job insecurity because of longer "double shift" of paid and unpaid work in a context of school closures and limited availability of health services. It is very difficult to maintain work-balance among women.

Disruptive technical skill brings a gender gap in different sectors. For instance, in Engineering, women make up 20% of workforce; in Cloud Computing 14%; and in Data and AI, 32%. While the eight jobs cluster typically experience a high influx of new talent, at current rates those inflows do not re-balance occupational segregation, and transitioning to fields where women are currently under represented appears to remain difficult. For example, the current share of women in Data and AI roles is 32.4% with a mild decline of 0.1% in the figure, and in Cloud Computing the share of women is 24.2% and that figure has only improved by 0.2 percentage, points since February 2018.

In collaboration with LinkedIn Economic Graph the report also premieres a new measure which captures the difference between men and women's likelihood to make an ambitious job switch. In the potential-based job transitions in field where women are currently under-represented the indicators shows that women experience a bigger gender gaps. Such as, Cloud Computing, where the job switching gap is 58%; Product Development, where the gap is 19%; and Engineering, where the gap is 42%.

Through the combined effect of accelerated automation, the growing “double shift” and the occupational segregation on the other labour market dynamic, the pandemic is likely to have a scarring effect on the future economic opportunities for women, risking inferior re-employment prospects and a persistent drop in income.

Pakistan ranks 153rd out of 156 countries assessed on the index this year. The gender gap is widened in this edition by 0.7 percentage points, to 55.6%. Pakistan features among the bottom 10 countries in two of the four subindexes: Economic Participation and Opportunity (152nd) and Health and Survival (153rd). Where Iceland stands at the top first from the past twelve years in the Global Gender Gap Index.

Sub-Index Performance of Pakistan

The performance of Pakistan in Sub-index in the Education Attainment, the gender gaps in primary education enrollment is 15% or more. Pakistan’s Educational Attainment has been closed just 81.1%, with gender gaps as large as 13% or more across all levels of education. These gaps are the widest at lower education levels (84.1% primary enrolment gap closed) and are somewhat narrower for higher education levels (84.7% gap closed in secondary enrolment and 87.1% closed in tertiary enrolment). Further, only 46.5% of women are literate, 61.6% attend primary school, 34.2% attend high school and 8.3% are enrolled in tertiary education courses.

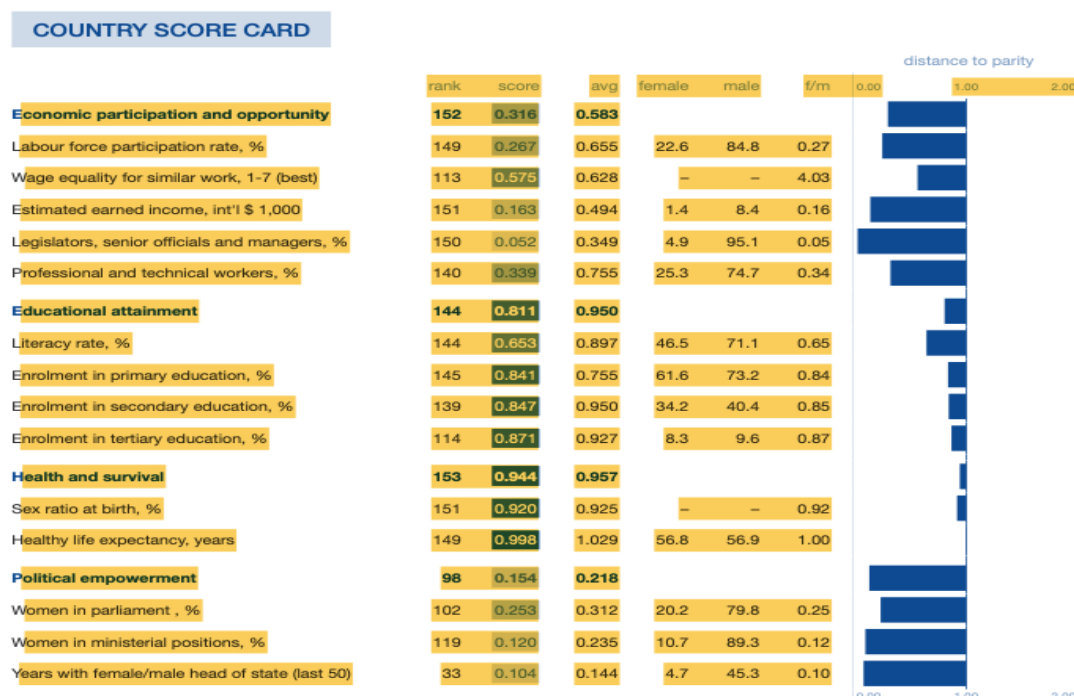
In the Health and Survival Sub-index Pakistan have achieved the scores that are lower than 94% with a parallel level with India, Azerbaijan. In Pakistan the ratio of female birth for every male birth is 92%, lower than a natural and biological relatively constant ratio of about 94% and excess female mortality rates (below age 5) in Pakistan, China and India. These ratios can be attributed to the norms of son preference and gender-biased parental sex-selective practices. Where 85% of women have suffered intimate partner violence.

In the Sub-index of Economic Participation and Opportunity, Pakistan stands at the largest economic gender gaps with 31.6% and the smallest gaps include the Lao PDR with 91.5%. Few women participate in the labour force (22.6%) and even fewer are in managerial positions (4.9%). This meant that only 26.7% and 5.2%, respectively, of these gaps have been closed so far, translating into very large income disparities between women and men: on average, a Pakistani women do not have equal access to justice, ownership of land and non-financial assets or inheritance rights. The signs of positivity is also noted with an improvement

in the share of women who are in professional and technical roles (25.3%), up from 23.4% in the previous edition of the index.

Pakistan's rank is relatively higher for Political Empowerment (98th), yet only 15.4% of this gap has been closed to date. With just 4.7 years (in the last 50) with a women as head of state, Pakistan is one in the top 33 countries in the world on this indicator. However, women's representation among parliamentarians (20.2%) and ministers (10.7%) remains low.

Resultantly, in the subindex of Global Gender Gap Index 2021, Pakistan stands at 144th position in the Educational Attainments with the score of (0,811) and Argentina stands at the top first with score of (1,000). In the Economic Participation and Opportunities, Pakistan stands at 152nd position with the score of (0,316) and the Lao PDR stand at the top first with the score (0,915). In the subindex of Health and survival Pakistan stands at 153rd position with the score of (0,944) and Bahamas is at the top first position with the total score of (0,980). In the Political Empowerment, Pakistan has a tremendous increase in its position from the bottom ten to the total ranking of 98th with the score (0,154) and Iceland is at the top with the score (0,760). All score ranks from 0-1 and the total countries include 156 in the subindex except the political empowerment where the total number of countries is 155.



1. Performance by Region

In the regional performance overview the South Asia stand at the second position from the bottom with (62.3%) and the Western Europe has the narrowest gender gap with (77.6%) and is ranked at the top first position.

Policy Suggestions

To tackle these potential challenges Gender-positive recovery policies and practices are much needed. First, the report recommends further investments into the care sector for both men and women into equitable access to care leave.

Second, a proactive focus is needed in the policies and practices to overcome the occupational segregation by gender.

Third, effective mid-career reskilling policies, combined with managerial practices, which embed sound, unbiased hiring and promotion practices, will pave the way for a more gender-equal future of work.

Policy Alternatives for Pakistan

1. Government in Pakistan needs to provide education for every citizen of Pakistan. According to the statistics of UNICEF, an estimated 22.8 million children aged 5-16 are out of school with around 60% children are girls To increase the enrollment ratio in the primary and secondary education, the government shall facilitate with building new schools and providing training to the teachers before recruitment for addressing the drop-out issues.
2. Regularize the informal economy with a specific focus into the rural economy of the country where women can easily avail the economic opportunities and contribute in Pakistan economy.
3. Encourage entrepreneurship for educated and business women to actively participate in ecommerce businesses.
4. Protect women from all kinds of harassments during jobs in time of hiring and promotions, which reduce the labour force participation of women in the economic activities.
5. Provide technical opportunities for the use of modern technologies that they can participate online from their homes in the economic activities.

Bibliography

(2021). *Global Gender Gap Report 2021*. World Economic Forum.