YOUTH MATTERS SURVEY 2023

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Introduction and objective

BYLC conducts a survey every five years, especially before the national elections, for providing Bangladeshi youth the space to voice their aspirations and concerns about the present state and future of the country. This year, BYLC collaborated with BRAC University’s Center for Peace and Justice (CPJ) for conducting the survey. The findings of the last survey shaped a Youth Manifesto in 2018.

This year’s survey had a similar objective and aimed to provide youth an opportunity to voice their opinions regarding issues that affect their lives, the effectiveness of the education system, the impact of climate change, their perceptions of justice and peace, as well as their outlook on the future of Bangladesh.
Methodology

• The exploratory survey identified the perspectives of youth in Bangladesh, categorized as individuals aged 16-35;

• Conducted via social media platforms, the survey gathered 5,609 responses over 15 days, using a clustered sample from all administrative divisions;

• The structured questionnaire consisted of 11 demographic and 22 thematic questions;

• Population proportion and internet usage scenarios in the respective divisions determined the natural responses;

• Ethical considerations were prioritized, with informed consent and the safeguarding of respondents’ identities.
Demographic details

Gender:
- Female: 21.8%
- Male: 78.2%

Area-wise responses:
- Urban: 59.5%
- Suburban: 14.9%
- Rural: 25.6%
Division-wise responses

- Dhaka: 31.4%
- Rangpur: 8.6%
- Sylhet: 6.2%
- Khulna: 9.7%
- Barishal: 5.4%
- Chattogram: 21.1%
- Rajshahi: 11.0%
- Mymensingh: 6.5%
## Employment status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic variable</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Currently in study or training and not looking for a job</td>
<td>2,128</td>
<td>29.74</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>37.94</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Currently in training and looking for a job</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>3.14</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Currently studying and looking for a job</td>
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<td>22.27</td>
<td>8.04</td>
<td>30.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>Employed (full-time)</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>8.38</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>9.47</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-employed (full-time)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>1.16</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employed (part-time)</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>3.44</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-employed (part-time)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>1.60</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unemployed (NEET)</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>9.22</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>12.09</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,609</td>
<td>78.18</td>
<td>21.72</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note: The percentage has been calculated based on the overall sample size)
What career pathways are preferred by the youth?

- Entrepreneurship: 48.7%
- Salaried employment: 51.3%

- 60.8% of female participants aspire for salaried employment.
- 62.3% of respondents who chose ‘Salaried employment’ are mostly interested in Government jobs.
- 24.1% of respondents prefer Non-profit/NGO sector as their career choice.
youth believe that their personal economic conditions will improve in the coming years
Have the youth faced any negative impact of climate change?

- Yes: 73.4%
- No: 26.6%

Percentage of respondents from different parts of the country:

- Suburban: 75.2%
- Urban: 74.1%
- Rural: 70.8%
Major factors affecting youth’s experience of climate change

- **59.5%** Extreme heat
- **35%** Natural disaster
- **33.8%** Health problems
- **26.1%** Bad air quality
- **16.6%** Food & water shortage

*Multiple responses*
Does our curriculum teach the necessary skills to secure a good job or pursue entrepreneurship?

- Yes: 68.6%
- No: 31.5%

- Yes: 30.4%
- No: 69.6%

68.6% youth feel that the education system needs to improve to prepare them for jobs.

69.6% youth feel that the education system needs to improve to prepare them for entrepreneurship.
Main areas for education system improvement include

- **Teacher quality enhancement**: 57.7%
- **Leadership, communication, and soft skills training**: 44.4%
- **Digital literacy**: 41%
- **Critical thinking**: 35%

*Multiple responses*
Main factors impacting physical and mental health

- Job insecurity: 40.2%
- Academic pressure: 31.8%
- Societal expectations: 33.1%
- Price hikes: 61.8%
- Socio-political & economic condition: 45.1%

Youth opinion on factors that positively contribute to their health and well-being

- Learning new skills: 57.7%
- Supportive relationships: 44.4%
- Prioritizing self-care: 41%
- Helping others: 35%
Do youth feel comfortable expressing their opinion on Social Media?

- Yes: 71.5%
- No: 28.5%

Are youth interested to vote in the next parliamentary election?

- Yes: 74.2%
- No: 25.8%

74.2% youth are willing to cast their votes in the upcoming parliamentary election.

71.5% youth do not feel safe while expressing their opinion on public platforms.
Challenges identified by youth for Bangladesh’s development

- Corruption: 88.8%
- Unemployment: 67.3%
- Inflation and economic crisis: 50.5%
- Security: 47.3%
- Eroding democratic rights: 29.1%

*Multiple responses*
44.7% agreed that Bangladesh is a peaceful country
Has peace increased in the past five years?

- Yes: 37.0%
- No: 63.0%

Has the state of justice deteriorated in the last five years?

- Yes: 42.7%
- No: 57.3%

63% youth feel that peace has deteriorated in the last 5 years

57.3% youth feel that justice situation deteriorated in the last 5 years
Do the youth plan to move abroad?

- Yes: 42.4%
- No: 57.6%

42.4% youth plan to settle abroad
Factors influencing youth’s migration decision

- Insufficiency of jobs according to skills: 50.9%
- Uncertain socio-economic and political future: 75.5%
- Lack of innovation or entrepreneurship: 40.8%
- Limited opportunities for education or training: 42.3%
- Concern about personal security: 33.9%

85.5% youth are willing to return to the country if these concerns are resolved

*Multiple responses
INFORMATION AND PERCEPTION

Source of information for youth

- Online news portals: 22.4%
- TV news: 8.4%
- Social media: 58.6%
- Discussion with friends/family: 7.7%
- Other sources: 1.8%
- Newspapers: 1.2%

58.6% youth receive information from social media

22.4% youth receive information from various online news portals
56.8% youth are positive and hopeful about the future of Bangladesh based on the information they receive.
The Youth Matters Survey was conducted collaboratively by Dr. M Sanjeeb Hossain, Arafat Reza, Tasnia Khandaker, Hossain M Omar Khayum, and Al Muktadir Elahi Esmam from BRAC University’s Center for Peace and Justice (CPJ) and Tahsinah Ahmed, Imtiaj Uddin Ahmed, Abul Khayer Shajib, Sakir Ahmed from Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC).

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