



Youth
Economic
Forum

Bridging the Gap Between
Youth and Policy Makers

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PRESS RELEASE

June 5, 2020: Fifth session of the YEF Live Session Series was held on the topic, “Undergraduate & Post-graduate Education Abroad during a Pandemic”. Youth is the core focus of Youth Economic Forum’s Live Sessions and aspiring for an education abroad is an integral part of our youth’s goals. Every year in Pakistan, nearly 10,000 student visas are granted. Countries like Germany, China, USA and UK receive the highest number of Pakistani students every year. However, this year is not the same. We have been hit by a Pandemic that has totally altered the course of the world. All the students planning to go for education abroad have been really affected. The motive of this session was to guide the youth to process their application in time of pandemic and to learn about their experience with the universities, in regards of their application process.

Jalil Hamdani moderated the session. Keeping up the norm, we had our mix of students and experts. In terms of experts, we had Ms. Narmeen Fayyaz, counselor for education abroad and a mentor at Kestrel. She is an alumnus of University of York. Next, we had Mr. Shahih Zaidi, Academic Advisor and Career Counselor. For our student participation, we had Ainnudin Siddiqui, an undergraduate student at University of California. Then we had Amal Khurram, a final year undergraduate student of Public Administration at NUST and aspiring for her post-graduate education abroad.

The session started with a brief recap of the previous session and general overview of the topic. The discussion on the topic started as Amal Khurram briefed the panel about the status of her application for education abroad and her experience with the universities in this pandemic. According to Amal, the universities have been lenient in terms of application. Although there will be delay but applications will not be cancelled. Further, Narmeen enlightened the panel with her experience. According to her, the universities have assured that they will not be cancelling the applications.

Further, the panel discussed how this pandemic would change the future of having an education abroad. According to our experts, there will be a decrease in on-campus classes and activities. There will be a consistent shift towards online mediums of education. However, there will be a momentous shift in terms of how we view education abroad. There might be great decrease in students who want to study abroad because of the online education. As it will not allow them to experience the culture and charm of studying abroad. Most importantly, the quality of education might be at stake. However, according to Narmeen, there will not be compromise on quality of education because of the strict rules and norm abroad. But, students will be deprived of the learning and cultural experience of studying abroad. Amal Khurram further shared her positive experience with the universities abroad.

Next, the panel discussed whether, the nations will provide ease in forms like immigration policies, less fee, free dorm facilities or better job opportunities, with the sole purpose of attracting the students. 40% of the students across the globe have changed their plans of studying abroad. According to the panel, it more depends on the universities than the governments. Ainnudin shared the positive step of his university, University of California that has removed the requirement of SAT for the next four years.

The discussion concluded on the point that students must apply for education abroad. Because as soon as the pandemic is over, they can continue with their education. Students in this time of lockdown can reconsider their options; can work on their skillset, use this time more productively by working online. Mr. Shahih Zaidi brought a very crucial point of importance of skills in the future. According to Shahih, students must work on their skill set according to the need of the future in this time and work on the habit of adaptability. However, students focus on their education and must continue with their applications. Most importantly, we have to be optimistic.