

Teachers' Perceptions of the Impact of Political Decisions on Education in Pakistan

Nazar Abbas ¹

¹ PHD Student. Email: abbasnazar527@gmail.com

Abstract

The role of politics cannot be limited to education because the political system directly affects all the systems of society, and education is also one of the subsets that is directly influenced by the political system. In Pakistan, political commitments for the aspiration of the nation have been extractive. Once political leaders get a higher position, they forget their responsibilities and use resources and power for personal benefits. Education is the road to national development. However, it creates a sense of responsibility among the people. On the basis of education, people not only realize their duties but also know how to achieve their national goals. One of the important goals of education is to enable people by enhancing their general consciousness regarding their national and international position as global citizens. Unfortunately, Education has mostly remained neglected in Pakistan for the last 76 years; however, a strong political demand for education has not been created. The main purpose of this article is to highlight the effects of politics on the education system of Pakistan and find possible ways to address educational problems. This research was qualitative by method and descriptive by nature. Non-probably data sampling technique was used, and teachers were selected purposively. Data were collected from all the political science teachers of schools, universities, and madrassas in Islamabad Urban 1. Data were analyzed thematically, and the majority of respondents agreed that political influence is a cause of weak Education. According to the respondent, political influence should be limited in educational institutions, especially in madrasas and universities. It was recommended to create one strong, modern national curriculum for all schools, public, private, and madrassas. It should focus on critical thinking, science, civic values, and Pakistan's rich cultural diversity.

Keywords: Political Instability, Educational Problems, Political Problems, Influence, Effects, Madrassas,

1. Introduction

The politics of any country directly or indirectly influence all fields of life, including health, the economy, education, and many others. Politicians are directly involved in legislation, policymaking, and curriculum development. Although they are often perceived as incompetent and corrupt, it is not possible to limit the role of politics and politicians in education. Effective education is a priority for every country, as national goals cannot be achieved without it. According to the Constitution of Pakistan, access to effective and quality education is the basic right of every child. The Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, emphasized the importance of education during the Education Conference held in Karachi in 1948, where he stated that education is a matter of life and death for our nation. without education, we will lose our identity. Pakistan is a developing country that cannot allocate a budget for education comparable to that of developed nations. According to UNESCO (2025), developing countries should allocate at least 5% of their GDP to education. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, the education budget is less than 2% for the fiscal year 2025–2026. Incompetent political leadership has continuously neglected the education sector, and this has been the case since Pakistan's independence. Consequently, education spending has remained among the lowest in the region.

Although all South Asian countries share a similar colonial history and common aspirations for development, their education expenditures differ significantly. According to data from 2023, India allocated 2.9% of its budget to education, while Sri Lanka devoted 1.8% during 2022–2023. In 2025, Pakistan allocated only 1.7% to education, making it one of the lowest in the region. The dropout rate of children from schools remains alarming; unfortunately, the Federal Ministry of Education, along with the provincial education departments, has no comprehensive plan to address this challenge.¹

All the promises made by politicians fail once they are elected for a five-year term, as they do not stand by their commitments. They use their power and resources for personal gain rather than for the benefit of the nation. Political slogans are often deceptive and mislead the people. All political parties exploit madrassas and universities for their political purposes. The appointment of university heads entirely depends on the consent of the ruling political party. Similarly, appointments across the education sector, from primary school teachers to university vice chancellors, are heavily influenced by political interference. Merit is frequently ignored in the selection of teachers and other educational staff.²

The most distressing aspect is that religion has also been used for political purposes. Politicians exploit religion to gain public support and legitimacy. The true purpose of religion is to stand against the vices of society; unfortunately, it has been manipulated for political gain. The primary concern of many university and school heads has become pleasing politicians rather than formulating rational policies for the advancement of education. University chancellors often focus on satisfying political leaders in hopes of securing extensions in their tenure, rather than prioritizing educational development. Girls have been exploited for unethical purposes due to the complicity of university and college administrations, who seek to appease political leaders. It is deeply distressing to witness the moral decline of our education sector. The education system has increasingly become a mechanism designed not to cultivate critical thinking or integrity, but to produce obedience and compliance for the benefit of the elite. As a result, conflicts among student groups erupt each year, leading to the tragic loss of young lives. According to reports, between 2010 and 2022, 18 students lost their lives due to clashes among student groups.³

The purpose of madrassas is to serve the community for the eternal success, success in the world, and success after the world. Unfortunately, political parties and the establishment use these madrassas for their unethical purpose, which results in terrorism, sectarianism, and radical extremism in the country. Islam has been used and tried to defame it, which was actually the agenda of non-Muslims unfortunately our government and elite have been use for this purpose. Since country is unstable politically, economically and social then social vices are increased. Government are fail to protect citizens and people have fear that's why they allocated more and

¹ Bahrul Amin, Muhammad Babar Akram, Zaheer Abbas, and Shadab Iqbal, "The State Of Education In Pakistan From 1947 To 2019: A Content Analysis Of The Three Selected English Newspapers Of Pakistan," *ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online* 20, no. 1 (2021): 6549, <https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.01.678>.

² Benz, Andreas. 2013. "Education and Development in the Karakorum: Educational Expansion and Its Impacts in Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan." *Erdkunde* 67 (2): 123–136. <https://doi.org/10.3112/erdkunde.2013.02.02>.

³ Ashraf, M. A., and H. I. Ismat. "Education and Development of Pakistan: A Study of Current Situation of Education and Literacy in Pakistan." *Journal of Education and Human Development* 5, no. 11 (November 2016).

more money for national security purpose which was miss used by military goons. Due to all these reason health, education, social development etc. was continuously neglected during the allotment of budget. The only solution of all these problems are potential and effective education system. According to philosophers especially Aristotle education create responsible citizens, education encourage sense of responsibility among citizens. Quality and equal education promote national and economic development unfortunately we are suffering basic problems like gender discrimination in education. According to Quaid azam no nation can rise the high of his glory unless their women's are step by step with them. The primary purpose of madrassas is to serve the community by guiding individuals toward eternal success, success in this world and in the hereafter. Unfortunately, political parties and certain elements within the establishment have exploited these institutions for unethical purposes, resulting in the rise of terrorism, sectarianism, and radical extremism within the country. Islam has been misused and deliberately defamed, a narrative initially propagated by non-Muslims but regrettably facilitated by our own government and elite. Due to persistent political, economic, and social instability, various social vices have intensified. The government has repeatedly failed to ensure the safety of its citizens, leading to widespread fear and the continuous allocation of excessive funds toward national security or military resources that are often misused by corrupt officials and military figures. Consequently, vital sectors such as health, education, and social development have been persistently neglected during budget allocations. The only sustainable solution to these problems lies in the establishment of a strong, inclusive, and effective education system. As philosophers, particularly Aristotle, have emphasized, education cultivates responsible citizenship and fosters a sense of accountability among individuals. Quality and equitable education drive both national and economic progress. Unfortunately, our nation continues to face fundamental challenges such as gender discrimination in education. As Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah rightly stated that no nation can be success until there women's are step by step with man. In the modern era, humans require special skills to survive, and these skills are acquired through education. Education plays a vital role in the progress of both individuals and communities. However, in Pakistan, political instability has directly affected the education system. The outdated system has failed to meet national aspirations. History shows that both India and Pakistan were colonized by the British and gained independence in 1947. Unfortunately, even after independence, Pakistan's institutions, including its political, military, and educational structures, continued to reflect colonial influences. The education system, originally designed by the British to control the people of the subcontinent, still largely exists in the same form today. The education system has become a source of helplessness, anxiety, and psychological problems among the youth, who struggle to find progress and opportunity after graduation. For example, many graduates aspire to leave the country because they have lost hope in its current situation. Every problem has a solution, yet our education system fails to train students to resist injustice and work toward reform. Instead of fostering resilience and critical thinking, it indirectly teaches them to abandon their homeland in search of better prospects abroad.⁴

1.1 Objective of the study

⁴ Bahrul Amin, Muhammad Babar Akram, Zaheer Abbas, and Shadab Iqbal, "The State Of Education In Pakistan From 1947 To 2019: A Content Analysis Of The Three Selected English Newspapers Of Pakistan," *ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online* 20, no. 1 (2021): 6549, <https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.01.678>.

1. To assess teachers' perceptions regarding the influence of national political decisions on the content, design, and implementation of the national curriculum.
2. To examine the extent to which teachers believe political instability affects student academic achievement and the effectiveness of institutional governance within schools.
3. **To explore teachers' views on their salary and financial remuneration** and its impact on their professional motivation.

2. Research methodology

This chapter explains the research methodology employed in this study. It details the population, sample, research instruments, and procedures used for data collection and analysis. This research was **descriptive in nature** and **qualitative in method**. The description of the research methodology was as follows in detail.

2.1 Research design

The qualitative approach was employed to gain a deeper understanding of the issue through the **thoughts, perceptions, and ideas of the respondents**. As qualitative research involves the collection of **non-numerical data, semi-structured interviews** were conducted with **30 respondents** drawn from **secondary schools, universities, and madrassas**.

2.2 Population of the study and sampling

The population of the research consisted of all the teachers of universities, schools, and madrasas in Islamabad. The target population of the study consisted of 30 teachers from madrassas, 30 from secondary schools, and 30 from universities in Islamabad. It was difficult to take an interview from all the respondents, that why the researcher chose a purposive sampling technique for collecting data.

2.3 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Semi-structured interview guide was used to collect **qualitative data**. This format allowed for consistent questioning while providing flexibility to probe deeper into participants' responses and gather rich, detailed narratives.

2.4 Data Analysis

The interview transcripts were analyzed using **thematic analysis**. This involved a systematic process of reading the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming them to identify patterns of meaning across the dataset.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

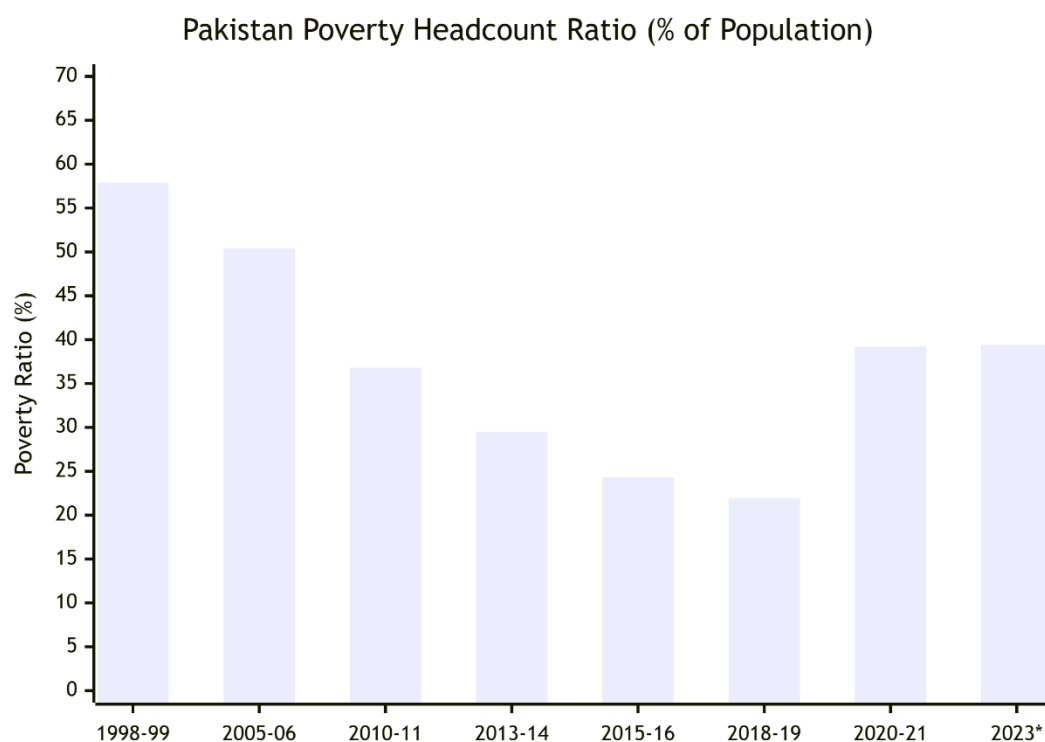
Research that involves human subjects or participants raises unique and complex ethical, legal, and social issues. The researcher was vigilant in this regard. Anonymity and information consent were ethical concerns of the research during the conduct of this study.

3. Literature Review

Every social problem is directly or indirectly influenced by the government, and the solution to these problems lies in achieving political stability. As long as political instability persists, the education system will not progress. Each new government tends to reject the policies of the previous one, regardless of whether they were effective or not. Consequently, every incoming administration introduces new educational policies while discarding the old ones, which creates confusion and disruption in schools, colleges, and universities. In Pakistan, many teachers are already underqualified, and frequent policy changes make it even more difficult for them to effectively implement new reforms. Due to political interference, the education system lacks uniformity. Currently, there are three parallel education systems in Pakistan: The O-Level system

designed for the elite, government schools, which serve underprivileged students, and madrassas, which cater primarily to religious families and economically disadvantaged groups who prefer religious over modern education. The outcomes of these systems are vastly different. Students from madrassas often believe they are following the only righteous path, while O-Level graduates tend to consider themselves superior and entitled. Meanwhile, students from government schools often perceive both the O-Level and madrassa groups as contributors to social and political instability. This division within the education system ultimately benefits the ruling elite, as it allows them to maintain control over society by keeping the population fragmented. Furthermore, every political party exerts influence over one or more of these systems and uses them for its own political purposes. As a result of social injustice and political instability, the economic condition of the people continues to deteriorate. According to the World Bank's 2021 report, Pakistan's poverty rate was 39.4%. However, government statistics report that around 22% of the population lives below the poverty line.⁵

This bar chart shows the statistics of poverty over time, which is as under:



Source: <https://www.uis.unesco.org/en>

⁵ World Bank. 2023. "Literacy Rate, Adult Total (% of People Ages 15 and Above) - Pakistan." World Development Indicators. Accessed December 2023. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=PK>.

A significant challenge facing Pakistan's development is the interconnected cycle of poor governance and poverty, which has a direct and severe impact on education. A key issue is that electoral processes are often influenced by financial power rather than merit. This can lead to the election of individuals who may lack the necessary competence or integrity. Once in power, such officials may engage in the misuse of state resources and funds, demonstrating a lack of emotional investment in public welfare and a failure to understand their core responsibilities.⁶

The details of poverty with reason are as under, which shows the clear image.

Year	Poverty Ratio	Key Context
1998-99	57.9%	Very high poverty, economic sanctions
2005-06	50.4%	Gradual decline, economic reforms
2010-11	36.8%	Post-floods, security challenges
2013-14	29.5%	Continued decline, IMF program
2015-16	24.3%	Lowest recorded poverty rate
2018-19	21.9%	Pre-COVID historic low
2020-21	39.2%	COVID-19 impact peak
2023	39.4%	Inflation, economic challenges

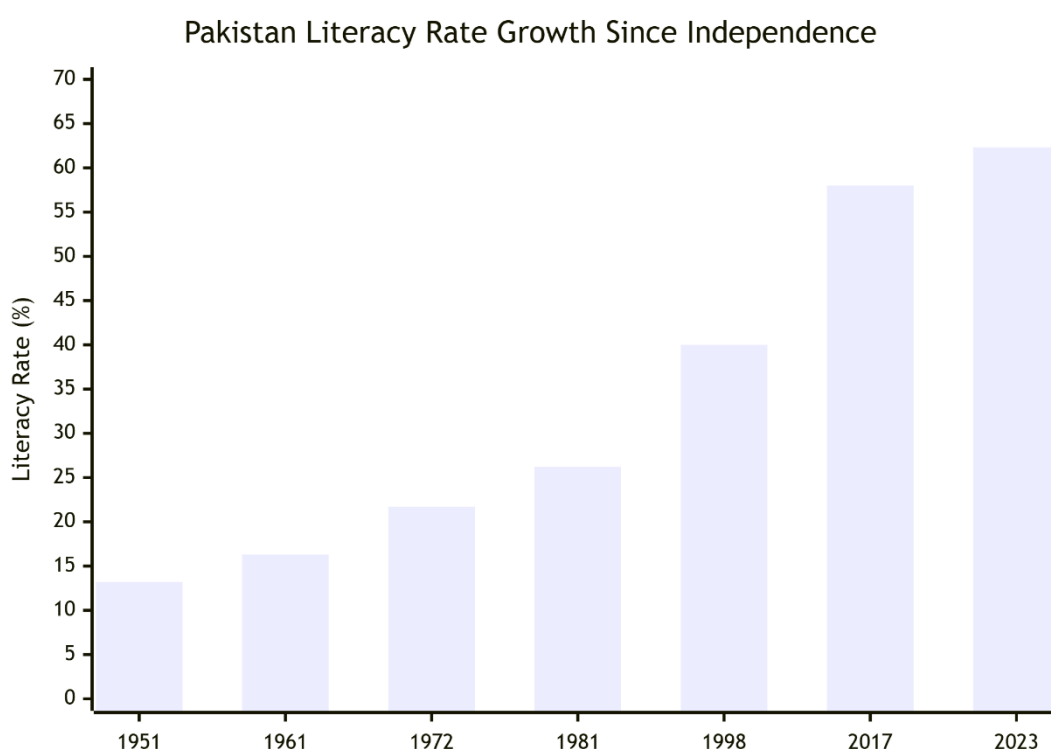
The economic mismanagement that follows deepens poverty. When families struggle to meet basic needs like food and shelter, their choices become limited. Faced with this economic pressure, many parents are forced to prioritize immediate income over long-term investment in their children's future. As a result, sending a child to work can appear to be a more urgent necessity than sending them to school. In this way, failures in governance directly fuel poverty, and poverty, in turn, creates a barrier to education. This cycle undermines the country's social and economic

⁶ UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2023. "Pakistan Education and Literacy Profile." <https://www.uis.unesco.org/en>.

progress, as a generation of children without schooling will lack the skills needed to contribute to the nation's future development.⁷

Pakistan's educational development continues to be adversely affected by a combination of political and economic instability. While progress has been made, the pace of improvement remains unacceptably slow, particularly when compared to regional benchmarks. This slow progress is evident in the national literacy rate, which currently stands at approximately 62%. This figure is regrettably low when compared to neighboring countries such as Iran and China, which have achieved literacy rates exceeding 95%.⁸

According to this bar chart literacy rate of Pakistan is improving very slow which is as under:



Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=PK>

A historical view reveals both achievement and shortfall. At the time of independence, Pakistan had only two universities; today, that number has grown to more than 250. Similarly, the primary school enrollment rate has risen from about 20% in 1947 to roughly 70% in 2024. While this

⁷ Asian Development Bank. 2022. "Pakistan: Country Partnership Strategy Education Sector Assessment." <https://www.adb.org/countries/pakistan/education>

⁸ Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. 2023. "Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2022-23." Government of Pakistan. Accessed December 2023. <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/pslm-survey-2022-23-provincial-district>.

expansion of infrastructure and access is commendable, the rate of growth has not kept pace with the population or global standards. Furthermore, significant gender disparities persist. Although female literacy has seen notable improvement from its minimal base in 1947, the current figures, a 72% literacy rate for males compared to 52% for females, reveal a 20-percentage-point gap. This indicates a deep-seated gender inequality in access to education that requires urgent and focused attention.⁹

The detail literacy rate improvement was as under which shows clear image which are as under:

Year	Literacy Rate	Key Events
1951	13.2%	First census after independence
1961	16.3%	Early development phase
1972	21.7%	After Bangladesh separation
1981	26.2%	Population growth outpacing education
1998	40.0%	Significant education policies
2017	58.0%	Digital initiatives begin
2023	62.3%	Current official estimate

Education is expensive, as almost 40% of the population lives in poverty. Parents often prefer to send boys to school because they cannot afford to educate both sons and daughters, forcing them to choose one. This situation creates gender discrimination in the country. Many parents send their children to madrassas because they cannot afford other forms of education. The curriculum of madrassas is outdated and different from that of regular schools; therefore, madrassa students face greater difficulties in the real world. Madrassas are also heavily influenced by politics. Politicians use them for negative purposes, which has damaged their image in society. Almost all curricula are revised every 10 years; however, the national curriculum of 2006 was not revised after 10 years. Changing the curriculum is a major challenge in Pakistan. Since there are three distinct

⁹ Ashraf, M. A., and H. I. Ismat. "Education and Development of Pakistan: A Study of Current Situation of Education and Literacy in Pakistan." *Journal of Education and Human Development* 5, no. 11 (November 2016).

groups in society, each with its own goals and interests, everyone wants the curriculum to be designed according to their own preferences.¹⁰

It is a common perception in the country that speaking English is a symbol of prestige. However, students who receive education from government schools always face language problems and develop an inferiority complex. The colonized structure in schools and the outdated curriculum are the causes of this social problem. Education is the light that leads individuals toward success; unfortunately, in all developing and poor countries, including Pakistan, the education system is a framework designed to make people obey the elites, capitalists, and ruling classes. According to the census of 1950, the overall literacy rate of Pakistan was 14%, while that of India was 20%. The literacy rate in Pakistan is still low, and its growth remains slow. According to the 2025 report, the literacy rate of Pakistan is 62.8%, whereas India's literacy rate is 77.7%. The reasons for Pakistan's low literacy rate include poor governance, ineffective educational policies, an outdated curriculum, and corrupt politicians.¹¹

At the time of independence, there were 245 madrassas in Pakistan. Over time, this number has increased, and according to a 2014 report, 13,405 madrassas were functioning in the country a number that continues to rise rapidly. Millions of students are studying in these madrassas; unfortunately, their curricula are not designed by the government. Each madrassa follows its own curriculum, which produces individuals who serve the interests of specific groups rather than contributing to the welfare of the entire nation. This system promotes individualism and sectarianism, dividing the nation into different groups. Some madrassas are highly politicized and are used for political purposes, which leads the country toward destruction. Moreover, certain madrassas are influenced by foreign countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, thereby undermining national sovereignty. Pakistan's education system faces deep-rooted issues, including low literacy, inadequate funding, and political neglect. While madrassas expanded after being used in the Afghan jihad, many became politicized or linked to extremism. Excessive religious content in textbooks and a lack of critical thinking persist. Despite constitutional guarantees and international commitments to education, conflicts, terrorism, and military prioritization over education have hindered progress. Educational inequalities remain high, especially in rural areas and among females, while the elite continue to benefit from separate, foreign-based schooling systems.¹²

¹⁰ Farooq, Muhammad Shahid. 2018. "Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Quality Education Situation in Pakistan at Primary Level." *International Online Journal of Primary Education* 7 (1): 1–23.

¹¹ Masitoh, D., and F. A. Pramesti. 2020. "Gender Inequality in Pakistan Caused by Domestic Factors and Conflict Resolving Based on CEDAW." *Nation State Journal of International Studies* 3 (2): 240–257. <https://doi.org/10.24076/nsjis.2020v3i2.241>.

¹² Rabia, M., F. Tanveer, M. Gillani, H. Naeem, and S. Akbar. 2019. "Gender Inequality: A Case Study in Pakistan." *Journal of Social Sciences* 7 (3): 369–379. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2019.73031>.

3.1 Political Effects on Educational Institutions

Political influence is more in universities and madrassa as compare to schools and madrassas. Students are actively involved in political activates in universities which have serious consequences. Appointment of teachers and their promotion is based on political influence. Merit have been ignoring in all matters. Even some times students get more grades duet to the influence of politics. Justice, honesty, responsibility and other Islamic and cultural values are ignoring. Talented students and teacher have always been ignoring. Every education institute belong to special set and political parity which support their supporter. Neutral education institute are not existing in the entire country. The education system in Pakistan is heavily politicized. It is led by politicians, not educators, leading to policies shaped by the ruling party's agenda. This results in widespread corruption, particularly in Higher Education and in the funding of radical madrassas. Political influence controls budget allocation and deeply infiltrates universities and religious schools, where youth are often recruited for political support. The purpose of politics is to advance national progress and promote civic life within a state. As a mechanism for resolving social problems, it is intended to serve the public good. However, in Pakistan, politics has become the source of numerous societal issues.¹³

The curriculum functions as a political instrument through which authorities can shape citizens who comply with the interests of the state and dominant economic systems. Teachers play a key role in implementing government policies that aim to cultivate such compliant citizens. the syllabi particularly in subjects such as Social Studies and Pakistan Studies are frequently revised to reflect the ideological priorities of the incumbent government rather than evolving global educational standards. This results in a cycle of instability, requiring educators to continuously adapt to new content. More importantly, many teachers expressed concern that this politicization of the curriculum may restrict critical thinking and limit the presentation of balanced historical narratives, placing them in the challenging position of reconciling official directives with their professional judgment.¹⁴

3.2 Education is Solution of Social Problems

Education is a fundamental pathway through which nations achieve success. It cultivates responsible citizens and enables both individuals and nations to attain their objectives. Educated citizens contribute effectively to national development. As the world has transformed into a global village, our responsibilities have increased. Every individual has a role to play in national and international development as a global citizen. Quality education is the key to economic development; however, the current education system lacks the quality necessary to build individuals capable of fostering such development. Graduates often struggle because they lack marketable skills, having not been prepared for practical life. Gender discrimination significantly weakens the economy. Given that women constitute nearly half of the population, and the majority do not participate in economic growth, this represents a major impediment. Sectarianism, gender discrimination, corruption, and terrorism are perpetuated by a weak, polarized, and non-unified

¹³ Amir, Saeed. 2020. *Pakistan's Education System: An Analysis of Education Policies and Drawbacks*. January.

¹⁴ Rabia, M., F. Tanveer, M. Gillani, H. Naeem, and S. Akbar. 2019. "Gender Inequality: A Case Study in Pakistan." *Journal of Social Sciences* 7 (3): 369–379.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2019.73031>.

education system. Numerous problems persist in society today, including poverty, insecurity, and the violation of basic human rights.¹⁵

Education has been neglected since 1947, which is a primary cause of the low level of development across all sectors. Students in schools, colleges, and universities lack proper facilities due to insufficient budgetary allocations. The government has consistently prioritized other sectors, continuously overlooking education. Inadequate funding is one issue; corruption and the misuse of allocated funds are others, and these practices have severely damaged educational institutions. From 1947 to the present, over twenty-five educational policies have been adopted, yet all have failed to extricate the nation from its deepening economic, political, and social crises. A lack of management and planning is a serious issue within the political sphere, exacerbated by an unstable political system where governments have often been changed by the consent of developed nations, preventing the consistent implementation of educational policies. Each successive government introduces new policies while disregarding previous ones, resulting in significant losses of capital, time, and effort. These challenges could be resolved by modernizing the curriculum and formulating rational policies. New governments should be obligated to implement the educational policies of their predecessors.¹⁶

3.3 Problems of Education in Pakistan

Following are the main problems which are as under:

3.3.1 Lack of Uniformity

The education system in Pakistan is characterized by a lack of uniformity and coherence, as multiple parallel systems function concurrently across the country. The absence of a standardized curriculum has resulted in the emergence of distinct pedagogical approaches and ideological orientations, leading to considerable disparities among students educated in public institutions, Deeni Madaris, and elite private schools. This fragmentation has produced a pronounced socio-cultural divide that has deeply permeated the national fabric. The recent escalation of terrorism and the intensification of sectarian divisions can, to a significant extent, be viewed as the logical outcomes of this polarized educational framework. Consequently, the existing system has engendered profound social stratification along political, economic, and cultural lines, thereby impeding the development of a cohesive national identity. This enduring educational polarization undermines the ideological and social foundations of the state and poses a serious threat to

¹⁵ Bahrul Amin, Muhammad Babar Akram, Zaheer Abbas, and Shadab Iqbal, "The State Of Education In Pakistan From 1947 To 2019: A Content Analysis Of The Three Selected English Newspapers Of Pakistan," *ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online* 20, no. 1 (2021): 6549, <https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.01.678>.

¹⁶ Ashraf, M. A., and H. I. Ismat. "Education and Development of Pakistan: A Study of Current Situation of Education and Literacy in Pakistan." *Journal of Education and Human Development* 5, no. 11 (November 2016).

national integration by reinforcing divisions based on linguistic, regional, and sectarian affiliations, ultimately jeopardizing the social cohesion essential for sustainable national unity.¹⁷

3.3.2 Education without Direction

A sound education system is indispensable for every nation. Nations develop their citizenry through rigorous training and education grounded in social, political, economic, and ideological principles. However, the education system in Pakistan, being directionless and weak, has failed to develop and guide its populace on sound political and social foundations. A lack of cohesion characterizes the system, which disproportionately emphasizes general education and consequently fails to produce skilled manpower for the market. This results in rising unemployment, a condition that may foster a sense of deprivation among the masses. Consequently, cultural and political unrest pervades society.¹⁸

3.3.3 Outdated Curricula

The curriculum serves as the primary instrument for achieving educational objectives. The curriculum within Pakistan's education system fails to align with contemporary demands. It is an outdated and conventional framework that compels students to memorize facts and figures, disregarding the principle that education entails the holistic development of the individual. An effective curriculum must also accord significant emphasis to the psychology of the learner, a factor that is indispensable to the teaching and learning process. Educational objectives must be formulated upon the psychological, philosophical, and sociological foundations of education. The present curriculum in Pakistan does not satisfy these modern standards of education and research. Consequently, it fails to cultivate student interest in practical application.¹⁹

3.3.4 Lack of Professional Development of Teachers

Training is fundamental for ensuring quality performance. Teaching is a professionally demanding role; however, in Pakistan, appointments are frequently based on recommendations, nepotism, and religious or political influence, practices which have undermined the foundations of the education system. Furthermore, a significant deficiency exists in training opportunities for educators. Although various teacher training institutes are established throughout the country, they are often inadequately resourced or poorly managed due to insufficient funding and a shortage of

¹⁷ Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. 2023. "Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2022-23." Government of Pakistan. Accessed December 2023. <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/pslm-survey-2022-23-provincial-district>.

¹⁸ Amir, Saeed. 2020. *Pakistan's Education System: An Analysis of Education Policies and Drawbacks*. January.

¹⁹ Asian Development Bank. 2022. "Pakistan: Country Partnership Strategy Education Sector Assessment." <https://www.adb.org/countries/pakistan/education>.

qualified trainers and administrators. The existing institutes lack proper training standards, and a majority have been compelled to close as a direct consequence of financial constraints.²⁰

3.3.5 Alarming Dropouts

Due to a lack of effective management of schools, there is a lack of discipline in schools and other educational institutions, which leads to high-scale dropouts of students. This trend has increased to such an extent that there are now 40 lac students out of school due to drop out in Pakistan. This trend, according to Hayes (1989), is due partly to the punishment in schools, poor motivation or an unattractive school environment, and partly due to weak parenting on the part of parents. Child labour and poverty are also one among the reasons for dropouts from schools. An estimated 30 percent of children enrolled in primary education reach to the matric level. This trend in Pakistan has added to the low literacy rate as well. The ineffective management of schools has resulted in a lack of discipline within educational institutions, contributing to a high student dropout rate. This issue has become so severe that approximately 40 lakh students in Pakistan are currently out of school. According to Hayes (1989), this trend is partly due to punitive disciplinary practices in schools, an unmotivating and unattractive school environment, and insufficient parental guidance. Child labor and poverty are also significant factors leading to students leaving school. It is estimated that only 30 percent of children enrolled in primary education continue their studies to the matriculation level. This persistent dropout trend in Pakistan has been a major factor in the country's low literacy rate.²¹

3.3.6 System of Examination

Examination serves as the method for evaluating student learning. It should employ both qualitative and quantitative techniques to assess student performance comprehensively. The standards for these examinations must guarantee that the assessment process is both valid and reliable. The fundamental purpose of this assessment is to measure student performance accurately. However, the examination system in Pakistan is not only outdated but also lacks the quality needed for a thorough evaluation of learners. This system primarily tests a student's memory rather than assessing the full range of their learning. Furthermore, examinations are susceptible to external and internal influences, which has encouraged the rise of malpractices. As a result, the system fails to measure the true achievements and performance of students.²²

2.3.9 Internal and External Influences

The education system in Pakistan is subject to significant external and internal influences. Externally, it faces considerable political interference, while internally, it is weakened by

²⁰ Benz, Andreas. 2013. "Education and Development in the Karakorum: Educational Expansion and Its Impacts in Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan." *Erdkunde* 67 (2): 123–136. <https://doi.org/10.3112/erdkunde.2013.02.02>.

²¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2023. "Pakistan Education and Literacy Profile." <https://www.uis.unesco.org/en>.

²² Farooq, Muhammad Shahid. 2018. "Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Quality Education Situation in Pakistan at Primary Level." *International Online Journal of Primary Education* 7 (1): 1–23.

bureaucratic mismanagement. Widespread favoritism and nepotism affect critical matters such as transfers, appointments, and promotions. Consequently, these issues have adversely impacted the fundamental infrastructure of the education system.²³

2.3.10 Lack of Resources

Educational resources, including books, libraries, and physical facilities, are essential for the effective operation of the educational process. However, a severe lack of these resources exists, as the provision of books, libraries, and reading materials is critically inadequate in educational institutions across the country. Furthermore, the system is characterized by overcrowded classrooms, a shortage of teaching staff, and poorly equipped laboratories.²⁴

2.3.11 Low Budgetary Allocation for Education

Financial investment is recognized as the fundamental driver of any system. The education system in Pakistan has been significantly weakened, primarily due to insufficient funding. Successive governments have allocated less than 2.5 percent of the budget to education, an amount that is inadequate for the nation's growing educational needs in the current era. While many developing regional countries, such as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, have increased their educational budgets, Pakistan's allocation is consistently declining. According to the International Crisis Group, Pakistan is among the twelve countries that spend the least on education globally. Furthermore, UNESCO recommends that developing nations allocate 5 percent of their budget to education; unfortunately, Pakistan allocates less than 2 percent.²⁵

2.3.12 Corruption

Among other contributing factors, corruption remains a primary issue that has profoundly compromised the education system in Pakistan. A weak framework of checks, balances, and accountability has enabled criminal elements to misappropriate funds, exercise authority illegally, and grant undue favors in matters of fund allocation, transfers, promotions, and decision-making. According to Transparency International, Pakistan is ranked among the most corrupt nations globally. Furthermore, due to inadequate salaries, educators seeking a decent standard of living and means of subsistence often resort to unfair practices concerning examinations, certifications, and degrees.²⁶

²³ Amir, Saeed. 2020. *Pakistan's Education System: An Analysis of Education Policies and Drawbacks*. January.

²⁴ Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2019. *School Education in Pakistan: A Sector Assessment*. June. Manila: Asian Development Bank. <https://doi.org/10.22617/TCS190039>.

²⁵ UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2023. "Pakistan Education and Literacy Profile." <https://www.uis.unesco.org/en>.

²⁶ Masitoh, D., and F. A. Pramesti. 2020. "Gender Inequality in Pakistan Caused by Domestic Factors and Conflict Resolving Based on CEDAW." *Nation State Journal of International Studies* 3 (2): 240–257. <https://doi.org/10.24076/nsjis.2020v3i2.241>.

4. Analytical discussion

The findings of this study paint a stark picture of an education system in Pakistan that is not merely neglected but actively compromised by political interference. The analysis reveals a cyclical and self-perpetuating crisis where political instability leads to poor educational outcomes, which in turn produce a citizenry ill-equipped to demand and enact meaningful political change. This creates a vicious cycle that benefits the ruling elite at the expense of national development. Several key themes emerge from the data that warrant deeper analysis:

1. **Politicization as a Tool of Control:** The research strongly suggests that the fragmentation of the education system into elite (O-Level), public, and madrasa streams is not an accidental failure but a functional strategy. By fostering different worldviews, values, and skill sets in each segment, the system prevents the emergence of a unified national consciousness. This division, as highlighted by the teachers, makes the population easier to manipulate and control, ensuring that social and political power remains concentrated.
2. **The Erosion of Merit and Morality:** The consistent reports of political interference in appointments, promotions, and even student grading point to a systemic erosion of meritocracy. This demotivates qualified educators and rewards loyalty over competence. Furthermore, the alarming accounts of moral decline, where institutional heads prioritize pleasing politicians over educational integrity, indicate that the damage is not just structural but also ethical, corroding the very moral fabric that education is meant to uphold.
3. **Curriculum as a Political Battleground:** The study correctly identifies the curriculum as a "political instrument." The constant revision of syllabi like Pakistan Studies to fit the ideological narrative of the incumbent government, rather than pedagogical needs, stifles critical thinking and creates a distorted historical narrative. This produces graduates who are compliant rather than inquisitive, effectively disarming them of the intellectual tools needed to question authority and contribute to genuine progress.
4. **The Paradox of Teacher Agency and Powerlessness:** Teachers are recognized as the key implementers of policy and shapers of character, yet they report feeling powerless and restricted. This paradox is central to the problem. They are expected to build the nation, but are denied the autonomy, resources, and protection from political pressure to do so effectively. This disconnect between their perceived importance and their actual agency is a major source of systemic failure.
5. **The Colonial Legacy and Neocolonial Reality:** The article's mention of the enduring "colonial structures" is crucial. The system, designed under British rule to create a subservient class of clerks, persists not by accident but because it serves a similar purpose for the contemporary national and international elite. The allegation that governments are "made and changed by the super power" and that educated people are kept out of politics to maintain this control points to a deeper, neocolonial dynamic where real sovereignty remains elusive, and education is a key site of this struggle.

5. Conclusion

According to the respondents, teachers are often restricted from implementing the policies assigned by the administration. Teachers not only influence the character and personality of individuals but also play a vital role in shaping the social life of a nation. Therefore, the government should recognize the importance of teachers for the better future of the country. It was observed that political parties frequently use students and school administrations for their own benefit, while teachers remain powerless and unable to take action due to their lack of authority. Madrasa teachers reported that these institutions have deviated from their original purpose of spreading the knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah. Owing to the country's social and political instability, some madrasahs are used by the government to promote sectarianism and extremism. Secondary school teachers highlighted that political interference has negatively

affected discipline and accountability in schools. Some teachers, due to political influence, neglect their duties and fail to follow administrative rules. Meanwhile, hardworking teachers are often overlooked during promotions, which demotivates those who are dedicated to improving student performance. Respondents emphasized that education should be a “supra system” guiding other sectors such as politics and the economy. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, the political system dominates the education sector. Many politicians, who often lack proper education, formulate irrational policies regarding education. Furthermore, politicians are influenced and controlled by the establishment, which uses them for its own purposes. As a result, genuine political leadership is absent in the country. Educated individuals are deliberately kept away from politics because they are more likely to question and criticize unjust systems, which the establishment resists. Respondents also noted that many teachers themselves do not fully understand the importance of their profession. Every classroom activity directly impacts students, and through education, social, political, economic, and national challenges can be addressed. Countries that lead the world today have achieved this position through quality education. Development, technological advancement, and globalization are all rooted in education. Unfortunately, Pakistan remains far behind in this global race. Although the country gained independence in 1947, colonial structures persist in education, politics, and governance, suggesting that true independence has not yet been achieved. Governments are often formed or removed under the influence of global powers rather than the will of the citizens, leaving little value in the people’s mandate. It is the responsibility of every individual to strive for genuine freedom from the indirect control of developed nations. Educators and citizens alike must raise awareness about the importance of education, as it is the only path toward political, economic, and social independence. Interviews with 10 madrasa teachers, 10 secondary school teachers, and 10 university teachers revealed that each group has its own vision and approach for national development. While their methods and perspectives differ, they all share a common goal—the progress of the nation. The researcher concluded that if all teachers were guided under a unified direction, it would be easier to achieve national objectives. Currently, Pakistan’s education system lacks clear direction. Students often graduate without practical skills, leaving them unprepared for professional life. To address these issues, teachers must receive proper training, and the education system should operate under a competent national administration that represents all communities fairly. Teachers’ moral values should also be strengthened, as unethical behavior negatively influences students. Low literacy rates, high dropout levels, and gender discrimination further hinder national progress. Moreover, the misuse of religion and educational institutions for political purposes has damaged both moral and intellectual development. Without adequate investment, teacher training, and modernization, the education system continues to fail in promoting critical thinking, responsibility, and national unity. Pakistan’s education system is deeply affected by political instability, corruption, and poor governance. Since independence, successive governments have failed to prioritize education, leading to insufficient funding, outdated curricula, and widespread political interference. Appointments, policymaking, and curriculum development are often based on political interests rather than merit. This politicization has divided the education system into elite private schools, government schools, and madrassas, each producing citizens with different worldviews and contributing to social division and inequality. True reform requires strong political will, equitable resource distribution, and a unified education policy based on merit, modern curricula, and accountability. As emphasized by Quaid-e-Azam and philosophers such as Aristotle, education is the foundation of responsible citizenship and national development. Only through an inclusive, impartial, and high-quality education system can Pakistan achieve stability, social harmony, and sustainable progress. Ultimately, the problems in Pakistan’s education system are not isolated issues but symptoms of a deeper political disorder. The system is not simply broken; it functions as it was designed: to maintain the status quo rather than empower citizens. Therefore, minor

technical changes, such as small budget increases or textbook revisions, will not be sufficient. Real improvement requires a complete reorientation of political priorities and power structures.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis, the following recommendations are proposed to address the deep-rooted crises in Pakistan's education system:

1. It is recommended that Educational institutions should operate independently, free from political pressure and favoritism in appointments, promotions, and policymaking.
2. Introduce a single, modern, and inclusive curriculum for public schools, private schools, and madrassas, focused on critical thinking, science, civic education, and cultural harmony.
3. Allocate at least 5% of GDP to education, as recommended by UNESCO, ensuring transparent and merit-based utilization of funds.
4. Establish continuous, well-funded training programs to enhance teachers' skills, ethics, and motivation.
5. Implement transparent recruitment and promotion systems based solely on merit and qualifications.
6. Integrate religious and modern education in madrassas to promote tolerance, employability, and national unity.
7. Remove social and financial barriers preventing girls from attending school to promote gender equality and economic growth.
8. Update curricula every 10 years in consultation with experts to meet global standards and market demands.
9. It is recommended that an independent body of educators and scholars to oversee education policy, free from political or sectarian influence.

References

- Bahrul Amin, Muhammad Babar Akram, Zaheer Abbas, and Shadab Iqbal, "The State Of Education In Pakistan From 1947 To 2019: A Content Analysis Of The Three Selected English Newspapers Of Pakistan," *ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online* 20, no. 1 (2021): 6549, <https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.01.678>.
- World Bank. 2023. "Literacy Rate, Adult Total (% of People Ages 15 and Above) - Pakistan." *World Development Indicators*. Accessed December 2023. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=PK>.
- Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. 2023. "Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2022-23." *Government of Pakistan*. Accessed December 2023. <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/pslm-survey-2022-23-provincial-district>.
- Asian Development Bank. 2022. "Pakistan: Country Partnership Strategy Education Sector Assessment." <https://www.adb.org/countries/pakistan/education>.
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2023. "Pakistan Education and Literacy Profile." <https://www.uis.unesco.org/en>.
- Government of Pakistan. 1998. "Population and Housing Census of Pakistan 1998." *Population Census Organization*. <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/final-results-census-1998>.
- Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. 2023. "Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2022-23." *Government of Pakistan*. <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/pslm-survey-2022-23-provincial-district>.
- Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. 2017. "Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2017-18." *Government of Pakistan*. <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/pakistan-social-and-living-standards-measurement-survey-pslm-2017-18-provincial>.

- Ashraf, M. A., and H. I. Ismat. "Education and Development of Pakistan: A Study of Current Situation of Education and Literacy in Pakistan." *Journal of Education and Human Development* 5, no. 11 (November 2016).
- Benz, Andreas. 2013. "Education and Development in the Karakorum: Educational Expansion and Its Impacts in Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan." *Erdkunde* 67 (2): 123–136. <https://doi.org/10.3112/erdkunde.2013.02.02>.
- Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2019. *School Education in Pakistan: A Sector Assessment*. June. Manila: Asian Development Bank. <https://doi.org/10.22617/TCS190039>.
- Creswell, John W. 2015. *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction*. 3rd ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Farooq, Muhammad Shahid. 2018. "Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Quality Education Situation in Pakistan at Primary Level." *International Online Journal of Primary Education* 7 (1): 1–23.
- Gay, L. R. 2012. *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*. 10th ed. United States of America: Pearson Education.
- Masitoh, D., and F. A. Pramesti. 2020. "Gender Inequality in Pakistan Caused by Domestic Factors and Conflict Resolving Based on CEDAW." *Nation State Journal of International Studies* 3 (2): 240–257. <https://doi.org/10.24076/nsjis.2020v3i2.241>.
- Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan. 2009. *National Education Policy*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Accessed January 4, 2017. <http://unesco.org.pk/education/teachereducation/files/National%20Education%20Policy.pdf>.
- Buehl, Doug. 2017. *Developing Readers in the Academic Disciplines*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
- GB Education Department. 2021. *Education Statistics Report 2021: District-Wise Census Report*. EMISE Directorate of Gilgit Region, Gilgit.
- Rabia, M., F. Tanveer, M. Gillani, H. Naeem, and S. Akbar. 2019. "Gender Inequality: A Case Study in Pakistan." *Journal of Social Sciences* 7 (3): 369–379. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2019.73031>.
- Amir, Saeed. 2020. *Pakistan's Education System: An Analysis of Education Policies and Drawbacks*. January.
- Verger, Antoni, and Xavier Bonal. 2011. "All Things Being Equal? Policy Options, Shortfalls, and Absences in the World Bank Education Sector Strategy 2020." *Educação & Sociedade* 32 (117): 939–958. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-73302011000400002>.
- Sk, Samiul, and Kausik Chatterjee. 2021. "Relationship between Principles of Modern Education and Islamic Education." *International Journal of Innovative Science, Engineering & Technology* 8 (11, November): 180–187. <https://doi.org/10.17265/2161-6248/2016.11.003>.