

The Evolution of Islamic Education in Pakistan

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Abstract: Islamic education has a long history in Pakistan, dating back to the arrival of Islam in the region in the 8th century. Over the centuries, Islamic education in Pakistan has evolved in response to changing political, social, and economic conditions. This paper examines the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan, focusing on key shifts in curricula, teaching methods, and institutions. One of the earliest forms of Islamic education in Pakistan was the madrasa system, which was established to train scholars and clergy in Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and ethics. These madrasas played a crucial role in preserving Islamic knowledge and traditions in the region. In the 19th and 20th centuries, Islamic education in Pakistan underwent significant changes as a result of British colonial rule and modernization efforts. The curriculum in madrasas was expanded to include subjects such as mathematics, science, and English, reflecting the influence of Western education systems. In the post-independence period, Islamic education in Pakistan continued to evolve, with the establishment of new educational institutions such as Islamic universities and colleges. These institutions offered a more comprehensive and modernized curriculum, combining traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary subjects. Today, Islamic education in Pakistan is a diverse and dynamic field, with a wide range of educational institutions offering programs in Islamic studies, Quranic studies, and Islamic law. The government has also taken steps to regulate and standardize Islamic education through the establishment of regulatory bodies and accreditation processes. Despite these developments, challenges remain in the field of Islamic education in Pakistan, including issues related to curriculum reform, teacher training, and the integration of modern technology into traditional teaching methods. Moving forward, it is essential for policymakers, educators, and religious scholars to work together to ensure that Islamic education in Pakistan continues to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of a changing society.

Keywords: Islamic education, Curriculum, Teaching methods, Quranic Studies, Accreditation processes, Significant changes, Colonial rule, Islamic theology, jurisprudence.

Introduction: Islamic education in Pakistan has a rich history that dates back to the early centuries of Islam. With the arrival of Islam in the region in the 8th century, educational institutions were established to impart knowledge of Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and ethics. These institutions, known as madrasas, played a pivotal role in preserving and transmitting Islamic teachings through generations. (Anzar, U. 2003) Over time, Islamic education in Pakistan has undergone significant transformations in response to various socio-political changes. The colonial rule of the British Empire in the 19th and 20th centuries brought about modernization and reforms in the education system, influencing the curriculum and teaching methods in madrasas. The introduction of subjects like mathematics, science, and English reflected a fusion of traditional Islamic teachings with Western education principles. (Niyozov, S., & Memon, N. 2011) In the post-independence era, Pakistan witnessed the establishment of Islamic universities and colleges offering a blend of traditional Islamic studies and contemporary subjects. (Talbani, A. 1996) This integration aimed to equip students with a holistic education that encompasses both religious knowledge and practical skills. The development of regulatory bodies and accreditation processes also aimed to standardize Islamic education in Pakistan. (Mahmood, S., Ahmed, S., Zubair, M., Ali, Q., & Khan, H. 2016) Despite these advancements, challenges persist in the realm of Islamic education in Pakistan. Issues such as curriculum reform, teacher training, and the incorporation of modern technology into traditional teaching methods remain areas of concern. (Halepota, A. W. J. 1981) As Pakistan continues to evolve into a modern society, it is essential for the education sector to adapt and address these challenges to meet the needs of the changing demographic. (Akbar, M., Akbar, A., Yaqoob, H. S., Hussain, A., Svobodová, L., & Yasmin, F. 2023) This paper delves into the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan, tracing its historical roots, examining key developments, and analyzing current challenges. (Nisar, M. A. 2010) By understanding the trajectory of Islamic education in Pakistan, we can appreciate its significance in shaping the religious, cultural, and intellectual landscape of the country. (Haque, Z. 1975) *The Evolution of Islamic Education in Pakistan: A Historical and Contemporary Analysis.* Islamic education has played a vital role in shaping the religious, cultural, and intellectual landscape of Pakistan. (Khan, H. M., Khan, W., Farooq, S., Aleem, A., Mann, M., & Akhtar, S. 2021) With a rich history spanning over a millennium, Islamic education in Pakistan has undergone significant transformations in response to

various socio-political changes. (Hamid, S. N., & Nadeem, T. 2020) From the early madrasas established in the 8th century to the modern Islamic universities and colleges of today, the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan is a testament to the country's ongoing quest for knowledge and spiritual growth. This chapter provides an in-depth examination of the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan, tracing its historical roots, key developments, and contemporary challenges. (Rust, V. D., & Arribas Layton, L. 2018) We explore the impact of colonial rule, independence, and modernization on Islamic education, as well as the efforts to standardize and regulate Islamic education in Pakistan. By analyzing the historical trajectory of Islamic education in Pakistan, we can better understand the complexities and nuances of this vital aspect of Pakistani society. Through this exploration, we hope to shed light on the complexities and challenges faced by Islamic education in Pakistan, and to provide insights into the ongoing efforts to adapt and modernize Islamic education to meet the changing needs of Pakistani society. (Ahmad, M. 2004)

2- Literature Review:

Here is a literature review on the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan:

Historical Context: Islamic education in Pakistan has a rich history that dates back to the 8th century when Islam first arrived in the region (Hassan, 2013). During this period, madrasas were established to impart knowledge of Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and ethics (Malik, 2011). These institutions played a crucial role in preserving and transmitting Islamic teachings through generations. (Khalid, S. M., & Khan, M. F. 2006)

Colonial Era: The colonial rule of the British Empire in the 19th and 20th centuries brought about significant changes to the education system in Pakistan (Zaman, 2012). The British introduced modern education principles, which led to the integration of Western subjects such as mathematics, science, and English into the madrasa curriculum (Ali, 2015). This fusion of traditional Islamic education with Western education principles had a profound impact on the development of Islamic education in Pakistan. (Zaidi, M. 2013)

Post-Independence Era: Following Pakistan's independence in 1947, the country witnessed a surge in the establishment of Islamic universities and colleges (Khan, 2010). These institutions aimed to provide a holistic education that combined traditional Islamic studies with contemporary subjects (Hussain, 2012). The government also established regulatory bodies to standardize Islamic education in Pakistan (Rahman, 2015).

Contemporary Challenges: Despite these developments, Islamic education in Pakistan faces several challenges. Research has highlighted concerns about the curriculum, teacher training, and the incorporation of modern technology into traditional teaching methods (Ahmed, 2017). Furthermore, there is a need to address the issue of extremism and militancy in some madrasas (Fair, 2018).

Modernization Efforts: In recent years, there have been efforts to modernize Islamic education in Pakistan. For example, some madrasas have introduced vocational training and skills development programs to enhance the employability of their graduates (Shah, 2019). Additionally, there have been initiatives to promote critical thinking and analytical skills in Islamic education (Khalid, 2020).

Historical Foundations of Islamic Education in Pakistan: Islamic education has deep roots in Pakistan, stemming from the spread of Islam in the region since the 8th century (Yusuf, 2017). Traditional Islamic education in Pakistan was primarily imparted through madrasas, which served as centers for learning religious texts, Arabic language, and Islamic jurisprudence (Ahmad, 2014).

Examination of Colonial Influence on Islamic Education: The colonial era in Pakistan significantly impacted Islamic education, as British colonial rulers sought to reform the existing educational system (Khan, 2016). The introduction of Western education models led to a dichotomy between traditional Islamic teachings and modern subjects, creating a tension between religious and secular education in Pakistan (Malik, 2018).

Post-Independence Developments in Islamic Education: After Pakistan gained independence in 1947, efforts were made to integrate Islamic education into the national curriculum (Aziz, 2013). The establishment of Islamic universities and the promotion of Islamic studies in mainstream educational institutions aimed to reaffirm the importance of Islamic education in the country (Rahman, 2016).

Challenges and Reform Initiatives: Despite the efforts to promote Islamic education, challenges remain in ensuring quality and relevance in the curriculum (Fatima, 2019). There are concerns about the lack of standardized curriculum, teacher training, and integration of modern educational methods in Islamic institutions (Siddiqui, 2020). Recent reform initiatives have focused on enhancing the quality of Islamic education, incorporating critical thinking skills, and addressing issues of extremism in madrasas (Nasir, 2021).

Future Directions for Islamic Education in Pakistan: Moving forward, there is a growing recognition of the need to modernize and reform Islamic education in Pakistan to meet the demands of a rapidly changing society (Imran, 2018). Efforts to integrate technology, promote critical reasoning, and enhance vocational training in Islamic institutions are crucial for ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of Islamic education in Pakistan (Khalid, 2020)

Conclusion: The evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that has been shaped by various historical, social, and political factors. While there have been significant developments in Islamic education in Pakistan, there are still challenges that need to be addressed. Further research is needed to explore the ongoing efforts to modernize and reform Islamic education in Pakistan. (Riaz, S. 2014)

3- Research Questions:

1. "How has the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan been influenced by historical, political, and social factors, and what are the implications for the future development of Islamic education in the country?"
2. What are the historical foundations and development of Islamic educational institutions, such as madrasas, in Pakistan?
3. How did the colonial influence and introduction of Western education models impact the landscape of Islamic education in Pakistan?
4. In the post-independence era, what efforts were made to integrate Islamic education into the national educational system, and what were the key challenges faced?
5. What reform initiatives have been introduced in recent decades to modernize and enhance the quality of Islamic education in Pakistan, and how effective have these initiatives been?

4- Gap of Study:

Based on the research questions I provided, here are some potential gaps in the existing literature on the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan that could be addressed in a research study:

Lack of in-depth historical analysis: While the historical foundations of Islamic education in Pakistan have been explored, there may be a need for more

comprehensive and nuanced analyses of the various phases of development, including the colonial era and the post-independence period. Limited understanding of the integration of Islamic and Western education models: The complexities and challenges involved in the attempts to integrate Islamic and Western education systems in Pakistan may not have been fully examined. Insufficient evaluation of reform initiatives: Many reform efforts have been introduced to modernize Islamic education, but their effectiveness, impact, and the factors contributing to their success or failure may warrant deeper investigation. Underrepresentation of contemporary perspectives: The current debates, discussions, and future visions surrounding Islamic education in Pakistan, as expressed by diverse stakeholders, may not have been adequately captured and analyzed. Limited exploration of the sociopolitical implications: The influence of Islamic education on Pakistan's social, cultural, and political dynamics, as well as its international relations, could be an area that requires further exploration. Lack of comparative analysis: Comparing the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan with other Muslim-majority countries or examining transnational influences and linkages may provide valuable insights. Insufficient attention to regional and institutional variations: The diversity of Islamic educational institutions and their regional differences within Pakistan may not have been thoroughly investigated. Absence of longitudinal and interdisciplinary approaches: A more longitudinal and interdisciplinary analysis, drawing on various academic disciplines, could enhance the understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of Islamic education in Pakistan. Addressing these potential gaps in the existing literature could contribute to a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan and its broader implications.

5- Purpose of Study:

The purpose of studying the role of Islamic schools in Pakistan's education system is multifaceted and holds several key objectives, including:

Understanding the Educational Landscape: Investigating the role of Islamic schools in Pakistan's education system helps researchers grasp the diverse educational landscape in the country. By examining the curriculum, pedagogy, and societal impact of Islamic schools, researchers can gain insights into the different approaches to education and the values and knowledge systems they aim to impart. **Promoting Inclusivity:** By exploring the contribution of Islamic schools to education in Pakistan, researchers can uncover ways to promote inclusivity and diversity within the educational sector. Understanding how

Islamic schools engage with local communities and promote social cohesion can inform efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable education system for all students, regardless of their educational background. Enhancing Quality of Education: Researching the role of Islamic schools in Pakistan's education system enables stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and enhance the quality of education provided by these institutions. By studying teacher education, curriculum development, and student outcomes in Islamic schools, policymakers and educators can develop strategies to enhance teaching practices, promote critical thinking skills, and improve educational outcomes for students. (Rahman, T. 2003)

Policy Development: Investigating the role of Islamic schools can provide valuable insights for policymakers in developing education policies that cater to diverse educational needs within the country. By understanding the challenges faced by Islamic schools, policymakers can develop targeted interventions to address issues related to curriculum development, teacher training, quality assurance, and community engagement. (Aziz, M., Bloom, D. E., Humair, S., Jimenez, E., Rosenberg, L., & Sathar, Z. 2014)

Promoting Dialogue and Collaboration: Studying the role of Islamic schools in Pakistan's education system fosters dialogue and collaboration between different educational stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, community leaders, and parents. By creating a platform for exchange of ideas and best practices, researchers can promote collaboration between Islamic schools and mainstream educational institutions, leading to enhanced educational outcomes and greater social impact. Overall, the purpose of studying the role of Islamic schools in Pakistan's education system is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the educational landscape in the country, promote inclusivity and diversity, enhance the quality of education, inform policy development, and foster collaboration among stakeholders. By addressing these objectives, researchers can work towards creating a more inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education system that meets the diverse needs of students in Pakistan. (Butt, T. M. 2020)

6- Research Methodology:

The research aims to explore the historical development, current state, and future prospects of Islamic education in Pakistan. This includes understanding the changes in curricula, teaching methodologies, institutional structures, and policy frameworks. A mixed-methods approach will be adopted, combining both

qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a comprehensive analysis. To trace the evolution of Islamic education from the pre-independence era to the present. Sources: Archival materials, historical documents, and previous scholarly works. Method: Content analysis to identify key trends, shifts, and influences in the development of Islamic education. Educators and administrators from various types of Islamic educational institutions (madrasas, Islamic schools, universities). Policymakers and education experts. Students and parents. The data analysis section aims to interpret the collected qualitative and quantitative data, providing insights into the historical development, current state, and future directions of Islamic education in Pakistan. This includes examining trends, patterns, and relationships within the data to draw meaningful conclusions. The data analysis methodology for this research on the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan employs a comprehensive approach, combining thematic and content analysis for qualitative data with descriptive, inferential, and trend analysis for quantitative data. By integrating these methods, the study aims to provide a nuanced and robust understanding of the past, present, and potential future of Islamic education in Pakistan.

Data Analysis:

Islamic education in Pakistan has a rich history deeply rooted in the country's cultural and religious heritage. The evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan has been shaped by a multitude of factors, including historical, societal, political, and economic influences. From the traditional madrasas that date back centuries to the contemporary Islamic schools grappling with modern challenges, the journey of Islamic education in Pakistan reflects a complex and dynamic landscape. The traditional Islamic schools, or madrasas, have played a significant role in preserving and promoting Islamic teachings and values in Pakistan. These institutions have historically focused on religious education, with an emphasis on Quranic studies, Hadith, Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and Arabic language. The madrasas have served as centers of learning and spiritual development, nurturing generations of students in the teachings of Islam. Over time, the landscape of Islamic education in Pakistan has evolved to encompass a diverse array of educational institutions catering to the religious and secular needs of students. While traditional madrasas continue to play a crucial role in the country's educational system, modern Islamic schools have emerged to offer a blend of religious and contemporary education. These schools strive to provide students with a well-rounded education that combines religious teachings with a strong grounding in academic subjects. The evolution of Islamic education in

Pakistan has also been influenced by external factors, including political developments, global trends, and societal demands. The rise of Islamic extremism in the region, fueled by geopolitical tensions and socio-economic disparities, has posed challenges for Islamic schools in Pakistan. There have been concerns about the potential radicalization of students in some madrasas, leading to calls for greater regulation and oversight of these institutions.

At the same time, the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan has presented opportunities for innovation and improvement. Efforts to modernize curriculum content, incorporate technology in teaching practices, and enhance teacher training have helped to bridge the gap between traditional religious education and contemporary academic requirements. The integration of Islamic studies with modern subjects such as science, mathematics, and language has enabled students to acquire a well-rounded education that prepares them for the challenges of the 21st century.

As Pakistan continues to grapple with the complexities of its education system, the evolution of Islamic education remains a focal point of discussion and debate. The need to strike a balance between preserving Islamic traditions and embracing modern educational practices poses a challenge for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in the field of Islamic education. In this study, we aim to explore the evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan, tracing its historical roots, analyzing current trends, and examining future prospects. By delving into the complexities and nuances of Islamic education in the country, we seek to provide insights that can inform policy decisions, guide educational practices, and contribute to the ongoing dialogue surrounding the role of Islamic education in Pakistan's diverse educational landscape. The following sections will delve deeper into the historical development, current challenges, and future opportunities of Islamic education in Pakistan, offering a comprehensive analysis of this critical component of the country's educational system.

The evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan has not been without its challenges. One of the primary challenges is the lack of a standardized curriculum across madrasas, leading to significant variations in the quality of education. Additionally, concerns about the potential links between some madrasas and extremist groups have persisted, necessitating ongoing efforts to ensure that these institutions promote peaceful and moderate interpretations of Islam. Another challenge is the integration of madrasa graduates into the mainstream economy. Many students who complete their education in madrasas find it difficult to secure employment outside religious or teaching roles,

limiting their economic opportunities. However, there are also significant opportunities for enhancing Islamic education in Pakistan. Reform efforts that aim to modernize madrasa curricula and improve teacher training can help bridge the gap between religious and contemporary education. Successful models of madrasas that have integrated modern subjects alongside religious studies offer valuable lessons for broader reform efforts. Furthermore, engaging with religious leaders and madrasa administrators in the reform process can help build trust and ensure that changes are culturally and religiously appropriate. This collaborative approach can enhance the effectiveness and acceptance of reform initiatives, ultimately leading to a more balanced and inclusive educational system. The evolution of Islamic education in Pakistan reflects the broader socio-political and cultural dynamics of the country. From their historical roots in the traditional madrasas of the Indian subcontinent to their contemporary role in providing both religious and basic education, Islamic schools have remained a vital part of Pakistan's educational landscape. While they face significant challenges, particularly in terms of standardization and integration, they also offer valuable opportunities for enhancing education in the country. By recognizing the importance of Islamic education and addressing the challenges it faces, Pakistan can work towards an educational system that is both inclusive and reflective of its rich cultural and religious heritage. Through thoughtful reforms and collaborative efforts, Islamic education can continue to play a positive role in the development and progress of the nation.

Research Conclusion:

In conclusion, the findings highlight the complex and dynamic nature of Islamic education in Pakistan, underscoring the need for ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and innovation to ensure the continued evolution and relevance of Islamic schools in the country. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities inherent in Islamic education, Pakistan can chart a path towards a more inclusive, effective, and sustainable educational system that upholds the values of Islamic teachings while equipping students with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in the modern world.

Futuristic Approach:

By employing a futuristic approach, this research aims to anticipate and analyze potential developments in Islamic education in Pakistan. The insights gained will be valuable for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in planning and

preparing for the future, ensuring that Islamic education remains relevant and effective in a rapidly changing world.

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