



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
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Madrasahs in Pakistan: A Threat to Enlightened and Moderate Pakistan?

2004 / 2005

CPS INTERNATIONAL POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ▲

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Abstract

Since independence in 1947 the number of religious schools – Madrasahs – in Pakistan has risen from 137 to estimates as high as 45,000. Essentially schools for the poor, they provide free religious education, boarding and lodging. The author of this study, however, a district administrator and magistrate in the Ahmad Pur East region, believes there are strong links between the proliferation of Madrasahs and a rise in sectarianism and violence. This is particularly true in underdeveloped areas, where many of the underprivileged see local Madrasahs as playing a more effective role than the local feudal political leadership. Despite government programs aimed at regulating the funding of Madrasahs a lack of concerted effort on the part of the institutions involved has resulted in little progress. Laws to curb the problem of religiously motivated philanthropy are conspicuous by their absence. The current Ministry of Education project to bring Madrasahs into the mainstream is fundamentally flawed, and it would be counter-productive to continue the scheme in its current form. The government needs to offer a viable alternative form of education and bring in a new legislative framework with a special law aimed at regulating Madrasahs.

This policy paper was produced under the 2004-05 International Policy Fellowship program. More details of their policy research can be found at <http://www.policy.hu>.

The views contained inside remain solely those of the author who may be contacted at shah@policy.hu. For a fuller account of this policy research project, please visit <http://www.policy.hu/shah/>

July 2006

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Contents

Chapter 1	4
1.1 <i>Are Pakistani Madrassahs Ensuring a System of Education and Non Violence?</i>	5
1.2 <i>Need for an Empirical Study of Madaris</i>	6
1.3 <i>Madrassahs in Pakistan</i>	7
1.3.1 <i>Methodology for the Research Study</i>	7
1.4 <i>Public Dissemination of Findings</i>	10
Chapter 2	10
2.1 <i>Ahmad Pur East</i>	10
2.2 <i>Findings of the research Survey</i>	13
2.3 <i>State of Public Education and Madrassahs</i>	17
2.4 <i>Involvement in Sectarianism</i>	19
2.5 <i>Location of Madaris and Sectarian “Hotspots”</i>	20
2.6 <i>Socio-economic Development of the Area and Madrassah Phenomenon</i>	22
2.7 <i>Socio Economic Development of the Area</i>	23
2.8 <i>Natural Resource Management</i>	24
2.9 <i>Madrassah’s in Islamabad</i>	26
2.10 <i>Windfall for Islamabad Madrassahs:</i>	28
2.11 <i>Legal, Financial and Institutional Aspects of Reform.</i>	29
2.11.1 <i>Present Regulatory Regime for Madrassahs</i>	29
2.11.2 <i>Funding of Madrassahs:</i>	30
2.11.3 <i>Mosque and Madrassahs Linkage</i>	33
2.11.4 <i>Is Madrassah a Faith based Institution or a Private Enterprise:</i>	34
2.11.5 <i>Madrassah and Politics</i>	34
2.11.6 <i>The Madrassahs Mass Appeal:</i>	35
2.11.7 <i>Institutional Audit of Madrassah Reform Strategy</i>	37
2.12 <i>Mainstreaming of Madaris – Madrassah Reform Project of Ministry of Education</i>	37
2.12.1 <i>Is it more fuel for fire?</i>	39
2.12.2 <i>Is reform based on correct analysis of the issue:</i>	40
2.12.3 <i>Is it advisable to pursue present reform agenda?</i>	40
2.12.4 <i>What other policy options are available?</i>	40
3 Recommendations	41
3.1 <i>Regulatory/Legal Framework</i>	41
3.2 <i>How to give Madrassah back to community</i>	42
3.2.1 <i>Funding Resource flow to Madrassahs</i>	43
3.2.2 <i>Educational or curricular reform</i>	43
3.2.3 <i>Institutional and organizational aspect of reform.</i>	43
References	45
Appendix	46

Chapter 1

It is increasingly being alleged that the Madrassah system of education has become a powerhouse of intolerance, violence, status quo, radicalism and conflict with in Pakistani society. Critics of these religious seminaries believe that the growing intolerance, violence and threat of extremism fueled by indoctrinated religious products of the Madrassah system are striking at the heart of free democratic moderate society in Pakistan.

Many influential academics contend that Pakistan's Madrassahs are producing a generation of citizens who are in the vanguard of movement of religious extremism and intolerance.¹ These religious extremists have no time for separation of church and state. They are engaged in what they perceive as a life-and-death struggle with the forces of pluralism and secularism. The economic progress and tolerant society are *sin quo non* for each other. The career work of Amartya Sen (1999), 1998 winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, focuses on the close connection between freedom and economic development. Freedom House and its Center for Religious Freedom annually publish a ranking of over fifty countries in terms of the level of religious freedom. The membership in its lowest two rankings ("unfree") is remarkably parallel to the countries at the bottom of The World Bank's ranking of countries in terms of their economic progress. In these countries capitalism exists only in name and usually operates almost exclusively to benefit the advantaged.

A practical manifestation of how Madrassah education in Pakistan, is influencing larger society is the sweeping election victory of radical religious parties in 2002 General elections. Recent political developments in Pakistan are expected to have immense impact on democratic polity. The fact that approximately 60 (25%) of newly elected parliamentarians are either Madrassah graduates or managers (this ratio in Senate is 35%). Chief Minister and the cabinet in the Northern province of NWFP belongs to religious parties dominated by Madrassahs graduates, in Baluchistan the province neighboring Afghanistan nine Ministers are Madrassah graduates and were actually managing Madrassahs before being elected to public office. These developments have serious implications for free debate, political dissent, secular thought, civil society and minority and women Rights in Pakistan.

¹ See Dr Tariq Rehman's essay.

The proliferation of Madrassahs or Islamist schools in much of the Muslim World has been noted with particular consternation following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (Stephens and Ottaway, 2002; Pritsch, 2001). The linkage between radical Islamic education and militant behavior, has led development agencies and governments to focus their resources on educational reform (Looney, 2002). Many critics believe that Pakistan's religious Islamic schools play a critical role in sustaining domestic sectarian terrorism, radical and extremist political parties and regional militant movements.

Madrassahs provide free religious education, boarding and lodging and are essentially schools for the poor. About a third of all children in Pakistan in education attend Madrassahs. A Madrassah student learns how to read, how to memorize, recite, and render the Quran properly. Madrassahs issue certificates. These seminaries produce indoctrinated clergymen of various Muslim sects, believing in radical Islam and Militancy. *The graduates of these Madrassahs epitomize intolerance, status qou, and regimented thinking.*

1.1 Are Pakistani Madrassahs Ensuring a System of Education and Non Violence?

Some researchers trace the tradition of Madrassah education back through nearly a thousand years of Islamic teaching (Singer, 2001). However there seems to be a consensus that Madrassahs are proving to be breeding grounds for religious intolerance and violence. Professor Akbar S Ahmad (2002) regards Madrassahs a "cheaper, more accessible and more Islamic alternative", Singer (2001: vi) calls them "Displacement of Public Education System", Jeffrey Goldberg (2000) terms them "Education of the Holy Warrior", Jessica Stern (2000) while describing them as emblematic of "Pakistan's Jihad Culture", uses epithets and sub-headings like: "Schools of Hate", "Jihad International Inc", "Exporting Holy War" and "Addicted to Jihad". But there is no intensive empirical study to prove diverging points of view.

A review of Madrassah syllabus shows that in the foundations of traditional Madrassahs are the seeds of factional, religious, political and cultural conflict. Defining feature of Madrassahs is an education that creates barriers to modern knowledge, stifling creativity and breeding bigotry (International Crisis Group, 2002).

1.2 *Need for an Empirical Study of Madaris*

Considering that Madaris are generating such divergent points of view, it is increasingly felt that deficiency of empirical research on this very important religious institution needs to be addressed. However, there is scant empirical research grounded in rigorous social science on the socio-environmental roots of this phenomenon and its consequences. While the topic has received widespread media coverage and has been discussed within the broader context of radical Islamization, the research has generally been predicated on observational accounts and anecdotes, that range from strongly positive to vehemently negative.

The present research study aims is to try and inform the discussion on this phenomenon through primary research of areas where Madrassahs are prevalent, and more consequentially to understand how these social institutions may have been co-opted by regional political struggles, giving rise to a vicious circle of conflict.

The objectives of the proposed study are three-fold:

- To document the demographic characteristics of areas where Madrassahs are prevalent using geographic information systems thereby providing some context to the rise of this phenomenon.
- Use the data gathered to address the following research question: what are the linkages between Madrassahs and regional conflict, based on the recruitment and “career” placement dynamics of Madrassah graduates?
- Inform the public debate in Muslim and non-Muslim countries on educational reform initiatives based on a systematic, rather than a symptomatic, understanding of the phenomenon.

In addition, the research project will also try to propose educational reform in Madrassahs. While some social science studies of Madrassahs have been carried out in Africa no systematic study has currently been conducted in South Asia. There is a tremendous need for analysis of Madrassahs in Pakistan, especially its domestic implications and also due to the proximity to Afghanistan – the focal area of America’s war on terrorism, and India’s claimed linkage between Madrassah graduates and the regional conflict in Kashmir. An understanding of the Madrassah phenomenon in Pakistan can thus also lead to ways of reducing conflict between two nuclear adversaries.

1.3 Madrassahs in Pakistan

At the time of independence in 1947, there were only 137 Madrassahs in Pakistan. According to a 1956 survey, there were 244 Madrassahs in all of Pakistan (excluding East Pakistan, which became Bangladesh in 1971). Since then, even by official accounts, the number of Madrassahs has doubled every ten years, with current estimates as high as 45,000. A directory of Madaris (Ministry of Education, 2003) recently brought out by Ministry of Education documents 10000 Madaris. It is based on secondary data and only compiles the name and addresses of Madrassahs. An analysis on basis of findings of our research study has shown that data of urban Madaris is by and large accurate, for example the total number of Madaris in Karachi and Islamabad are same as shown in reports by many other sources. However the data of rural Madaris is way off the mark. To quote an example the directory lists 240 Madaris in whole of Bhhawalpur district, whereas a survey conducted in Bhawalpur by one of our researchers had documented more than 400 Madaris in 1994, our present study has surveyed 363 Madaris in only one Tehsil of Bhawalpur. An analysis of number of other rural areas shows that data on Madaris in the official directory is far from factual, especially in rural areas.

1.3.1 Methodology for the Research Study

Considering the complexity of the issue, multiple research methodologies have been employed to achieve the research and policy objectives of the project. Apart from extensive literature review, interviews with informed experts especially leaders of Madaris movement, the major thrust of the research project is survey of Madaris in two sample project areas, Islamabad Capital Territory and Ahmad Pur East Sub-division in District Bhawalpur in Southern part of provinces of Punjab in Pakistan.

Ahmedpur East is an area which has gained notoriety for being hub of sectarian terrorism and violence. One of the recently banned religious organizations "Jaish-e-Muhammad" (Army of the Prophet) has its headquarter and major following in the area, it is also regarded as a strong-hold of another banned organization "Sepah-e-Sahaba" (Army of Companions of the Prophet). These organizations had very close institutional linkages with the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Workers of these organizations have been charged with targeted violence against western targets in Pakistan after fall of Taliban. The key people belonging to Jaish-e-Muhammad have been charged with murder of

Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl in year 2002. Both these organizations along with number of others have been declared illegal and banned in Pakistan in 2002.

The present researcher had done a research on Madaris in Ahmad Pur East in 1994, this study in many ways was ahead of time; it uncovered many alarming trends and dimensions in the Madrassah movement, which subsequently proved correct. Yet it was a relatively modest undertaking with limited resources. Nevertheless, the presence of this data and the renewed effort proposed in this study provides a rare temporal comparison of data over a decade.

The growth of Madrassahs has also been hypothesized to be a result of deeply embedded poverty in Pakistani society, specially rural areas and a breakdown of state services. In order to test this hypothesis, a specific analysis will be made of Madrassahs in Pakistan's capital Islamabad in comparison to data from Ahmedpur. Unlike Ahmedpur, Islamabad is an urban center and relatively prosperous and rich in terms of economic opportunities and social services like health, education and employment. Yet, large number of Madrassahs is also found here.

Islamabad has been chosen as the urban case study region for studying Madrassahs because of the relatively high income and literacy of the area, in comparison to Ahmedpur and the influence of Pathan immigrants in this area. Furthermore, Islamabad is the capital and will most likely be the first area where government reforms will be implemented. A sub-division (basic administrative unit in Pakistan) such as Ahmedpur, on average, has a population of approximately one million. Islamabad also has a population of about a million people. We can safely regard the two areas in which study will be conducted as representative samples of rural-urban dynamics.

Apart from survey of Madaris in the two project research areas, wherein effort has been made to document each and every Madrassah. Following tools and research methods have been used during the research project.

a) Geographical Information System (GIS) Based Analysis

The geographic location of Madrassahs in each of the two study regions have been mapped using *ESRI-Arc* software. Data of population, number of Madaris and public schools in the village, literacy, environmental factors (agricultural productivity, access to land, water and food), will be overlaid onto the Madrassah data set for demographic comparison and to establish any spatial clustering trends. The nexus between poverty and poor public sector educa-

tion services on one hand and the mushrooming of Madaris on other has been explored using the GIS.

b) Survey/Primary Data Collection

Primary data collection by actual physical survey of all Madrassahs in the two geographical regions – Ahmedpur and Islamabad has been carried out. Two groups of field workers/interns collected the data, on a pre-designed performa. The field workers were trained in a workshop in order to ensure integrity and uniformity of data. All survey data was collected using interview transcription to avoid comprehension error in linguistically diverse areas. Mechanism for cross checking was provided in data collection and the survey design. Data on the following key variables has been collected:

- Number of Madaris: sect wise data collected.
- Number of students, residential and day scholars.
- Whether registered under any law or not?
- Whether receiving zakat funds or not?
- Unit of consolidation of data and analysis has been the police station since police station is the basic administrative unit in Pakistan.
- Whether constructed on State (public land) or not? (Islamabad ICT)
- Sources of funding from such as local landowners, foreign donations, political parties and other sources.

c) Interviews with other stakeholders:

Structured and semi-structured interviews were held with the following stakeholders: managers and teachers at Madrassahs and schools; leaders and officials of local government; alumni of Madrassahs and notable donors from the community; senior government officials dealing with the issue at Federal and Provincial level, in Ministry of Interior, Home, Education and Religious Affairs. Members of newly established Pakistan Madrassah Education Board and law-enforcement officials who have records of any complaints of sectarian violence from Madrassahs. Special arrangements have been made for anonymous interviews with the Criminal Investigation Department and Crises Management Cell (departments responsible for anti-terrorism operation) to determine any direct linkages between Madrassah graduates and terrorist/criminal activity.

d) Focus Group Discussions:

Once data was compiled, and analyses done focused group discussions were held, with leading religious leaders, government functionaries and officials of law enforcement agencies in order to revalidate the findings. The hypoth-

esis that Madrassahs are filling the void created by poor delivery of education and social services has not been addressed in any previous analysis. This important proposition has been further tested through in-depth oral histories and feedback in focus group sessions.

The methodology of the present research is primarily based on “case study” approach, trends and different manifestations of Madrassah phenomenon have been analyzed and explored at micro-level and the macro-level policies and trends has been analyzed in light of such local and micro level findings.

1.4 Public Dissemination of Findings

The report prepared at the end of the project will be launched at a meeting of academics, religious scholars and educational officials from Pakistan. The workability of a proposed strategy of the government to reform the Madrassahs has been critically analyzed and is the key focus of the project.

Chapter 2

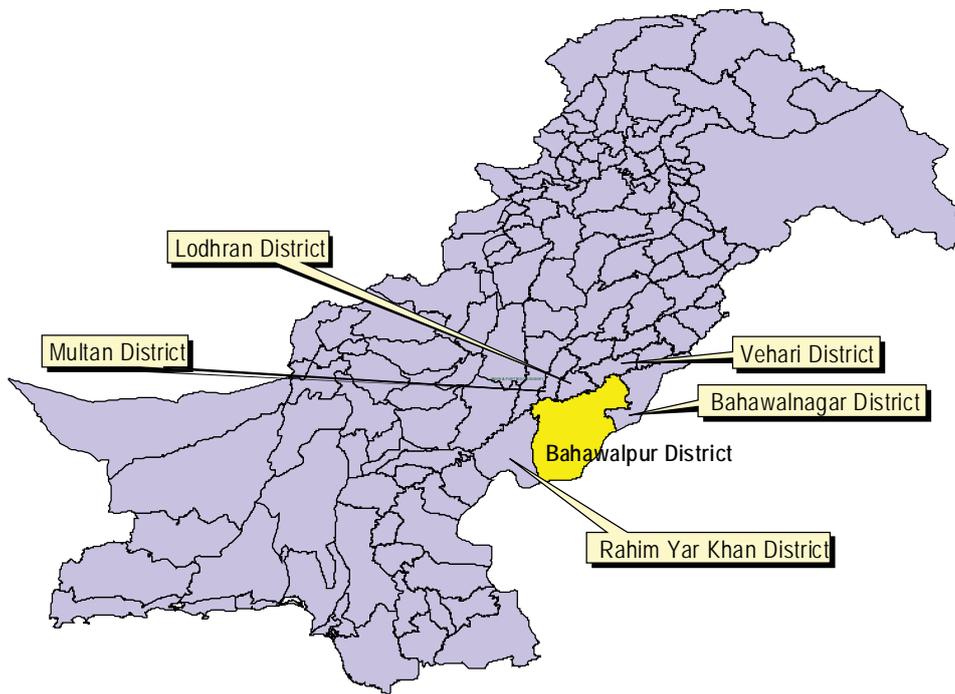
Case Studies of Ahmad Pur East and Islamabad Capital Territory.

Our research is primarily based on micro-level research of two distinct geographical areas, one being a typical rural region which can be representative of any administrative region in Pakistan which has substantial Madrassah population, the second area selected for research is the federal capital territory of Islamabad, which is highly urbanized, and offers business, employment, education and other economic opportunities.

The trends and micro-level dynamics discovered in the research will be used for making future projections and developing the framework for analysis of the Madrassah reform strategy of Government of Pakistan, which promises to reform the legal, financial and curricular aspects of Madrassah education.

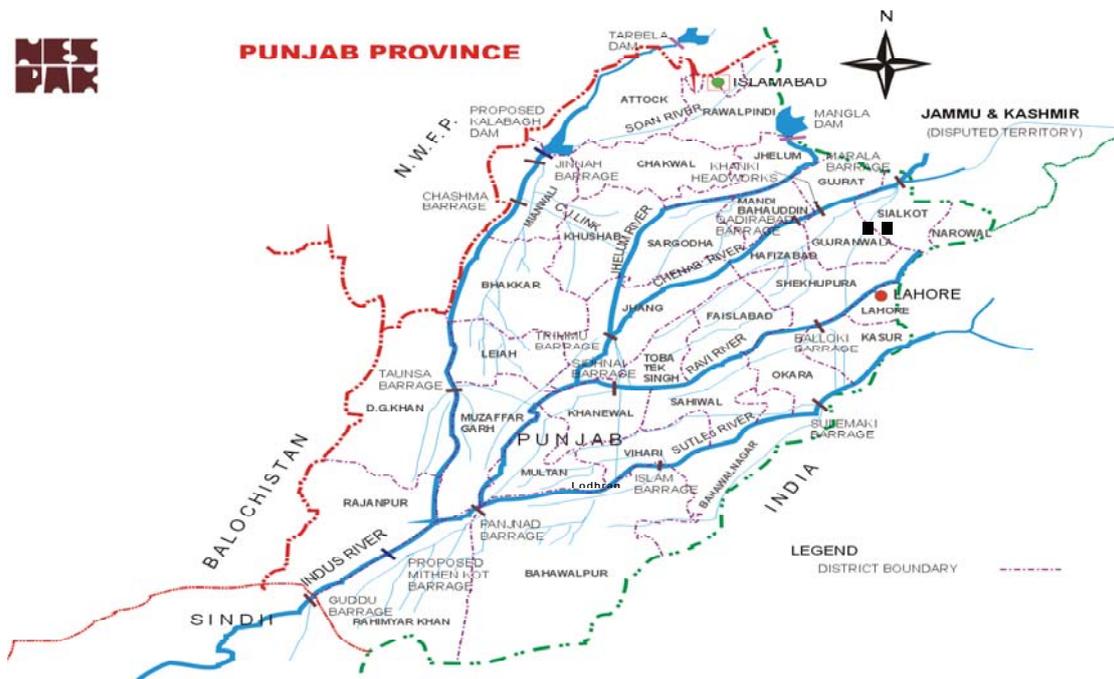
2.1 Ahmad Pur East

Ahmadpur East Sub-Division, in Bahawalpur district, of Punjab (Pakistan) has an area of approximately 6000 sq: kilometer, and a population of 1000,000 (projected), of the total population 8,00,000 is rural and 2,00,000 urban. Ahmadpur East comprises of 187 villages, and six Police Stations. It is situated on the left bank of river Sutlej in southern most part of Punjab.



During last decade with the rise of sectarian organizations, sectarian problem also cropped up in this Sub-Division. This region has history of many fatal and violent incidents involving Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP-*Deobandis*) and Tehrik Jafferia Pakistan (TJP-*Shias*). Ahmadpur East Sub-division is considered to be a stronghold of SSP, the following enjoyed by this

During last decade with the rise of sectarian organizations, sectarian problem also cropped up in this Sub-Division. This region has history of many fatal and violent incidents involving Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP-*Deobandis*) and Tehrik Jafferia Pakistan (TJP-*Shias*). Ahmadpur East Sub-division is considered to be a stronghold of SSP, the following enjoyed by this organization can be gauged from the fact that during National Elections of 1993, candidate of SSP bagged approximately 24,000 votes, despite the fact that the candidate was from an other province. Mushroom growth of Madrassahs has happened in this area during the last two decades in this area. A manifestly militant organization “Harkat Al Ansar”, which has “Kalashnikov-AK-47” as its logo, had started its operations from same area, it was banned by government of Pakistan and declared a terrorist organization by US. Another militant organization Jaish-e-Mohammad also got many of it founding members from this area, the key suspect in New York Times murdered reporter denial Pearl also belonged to this sub-division.



It is generally believed that phenomenal growth in the number of “Madrassahs/Religious Schools” of different sects has a direct relationship with rise of sectarianism/religious violence and cropping up of number of militant organizations. In order to objectively assess the impact of this phenomenon, a detailed survey of all the “Madrassahs/Religious Schools” in Sub-Division was conducted and its results were analyzed. The location of Madrassahs was mapped with the incidents of sectarian violence, and with communities and villages considered sensitive in the context of sectarian violence.

The aims and objectives of the field research components of the project were generally the ones enunciated in the foregoing chapter. However the field data collection had following specific objectives.

The uniform proforma was devised for the purpose of data collection, it contained following information:

- Name of Police Station. (key unit of administration and research analysis)
- Name of Madrassah.
- Name of Manager in charge.
- Location (Village/street).
- Year of establishment.
- Number of students- residential and non-residential.
- Sect to which Madrassah belongs.
- Whether receiving monetary aid from Government (from Zakat fund).²

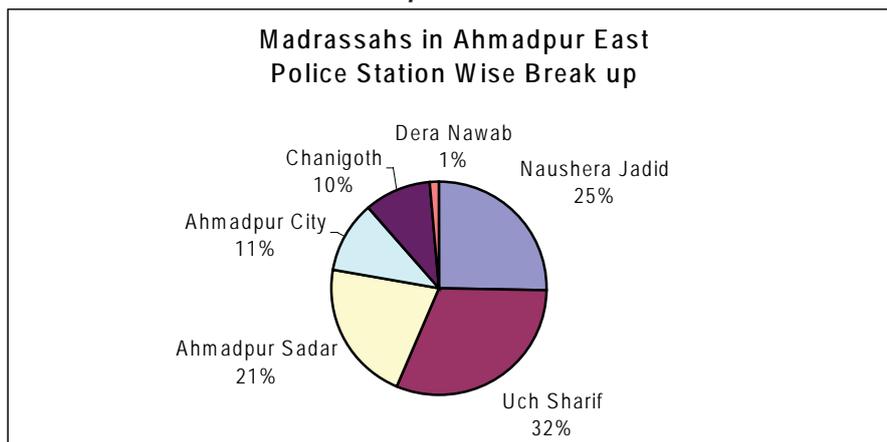
² Zakat is an Islamic religious tithe collected through mandatory deduction from saving accounts of people from banks and than spent on certain ordained purposes, aid to Madrassahs being one of them. Record of district Zakat office was also consulted for this information.

- Involvement in sectarianism. (This aspect was assessed on following grounds: any Madrassah, which is visited by leading sectarian leaders, or if its students/charges participate in sectarian processions/gatherings, or if its management lobbies for, or provides leadership to sectarian issues, or its managers or students were involved in reported violent sectarian crimes, it has been labeled positive as for as sectarianism is concerned.)

The field researcher visited approx. 40 Madrassahs and interviewed managers, teachers and students. Representative of Special Branch (provincial intelligence agency), local police and administration was also consulted for determining sectarian involvement of Madrassahs. The survey was conducted by a team of field workers, they were trained and hawkishly supervised in order to ensure integrity of data collected.

2.2 Findings of the research Survey

Figure 1 Madrassahs in Ahmad pur East Police Station wise break up



Total number of Madrassahs in Sub-Division is 363, of this 166 belong to Deobandi sect, 166 to Brelevi, 21 to Ahl-e-Hadith and 10 to Ahl-e-Tashee sect. Percentage-wise distribution between different sects is 45.8%, 45.8 %, 5.7 %, and 2.75 % respectively. It is seen that only 9.3 % of Madrassahs (34 out of 363) are receiving monetary aid from the Government/Zakat fund (Table 4.1). It is worthwhile to compare this data with the survey done by our principle collaborator in 1994, in the same area, this will provide a rare comparison of data pertaining same area after ten years, table: 2 provides the 1994 data (*for Table 1 and Table 2 see Appendix*).

A comparison of the two tables showing 1994 and 2004 data shows that during last ten years number of Madrassahs has increased from 266 to 363,

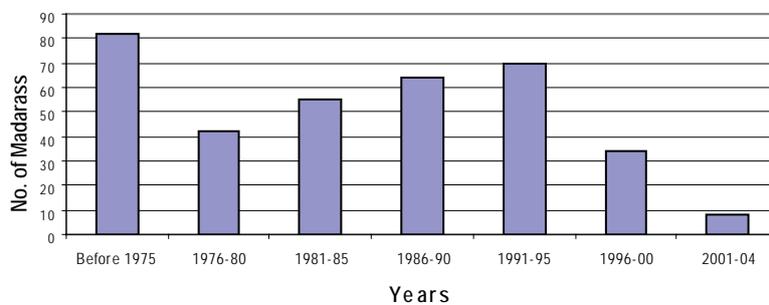
there has been a marked increase in number of Deobandi and Brelevi Madrassahs, however the rate of increase in Brelevi Madrassahs has been more in last ten years, previously there number was less which now is exactly same as Deobandi Madrassahs, this finding also matches the information gathered during the interviews which suggests that a tendency of resurgence and militancy has also started showing up in Brelevi Madrassahs with rise of Deobandi Madrassahs. It is seen that coverage of zakat to Madrassahs remained by and large similar i.e around 9 % of Madrassahs getting monetary support from the Zakat system.

A study of results shows that major concentration of these Madrassahs is in area of Police Station Uch Sharif and Naushera Jadid.

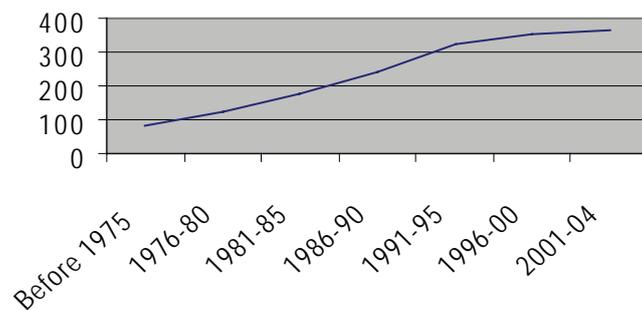
These two Police Stations account for 55% of Madrassahs and 58% of students in the Sub-Division. It is worth mentioning that 68% of Madrassahs in Police Station Naushera Jadid are Deobandi, and incidentally this area is main support base of Sapeh-e-sahaba Pakistan (SSP), recently banned religious party. The same can be said about the Madrassahs situated in villages of Northern half of Police Station Uch Sharif.

Figure 2 Growth of Madrassahs

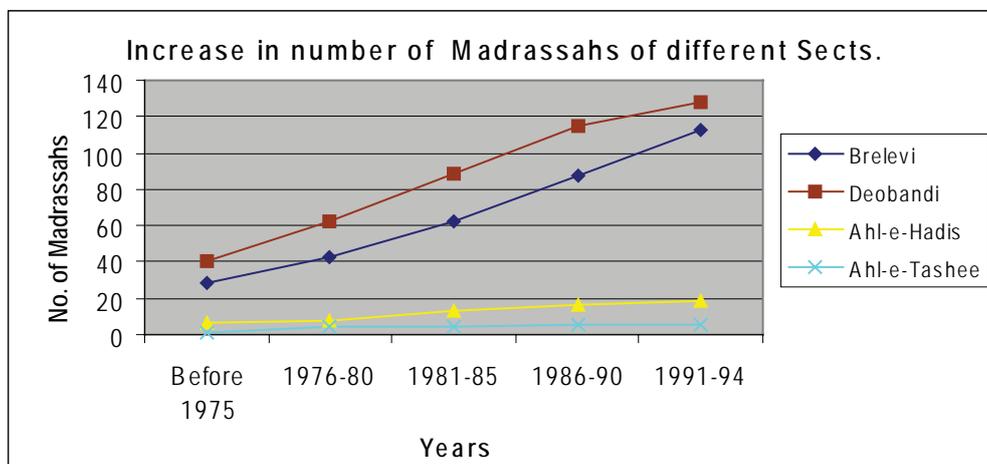
Growth of Madarass During 1975 to 2004



Growth of Madrassahs



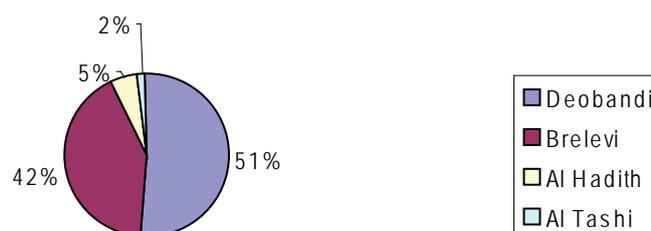
An analysis of growth of Madrassahs shows that prior to 1975 and 1980 there were 82 and 124 Madrassahs respectively in Ahmad Pur East. Bulk of growth was experienced between 1980-1995, it is seen that growth of Madrassahs has greatly slowed down after 2001, only 8 Madrassahs were set up between 2001-2004. This slow down in growth can be attributed to a general administrative policy wherein new Madrassahs are being registered after an inquiry, and a ban imposed on registration of Madrassahs till September 2004, it has been recently lifted. These findings also are line with the latest policy of government. The reform policy of government has placed a higher premium on setting up a Madrassah, the local administrators are much more vigilant and pro-active in stopping construction of Madrassahs on public/state land

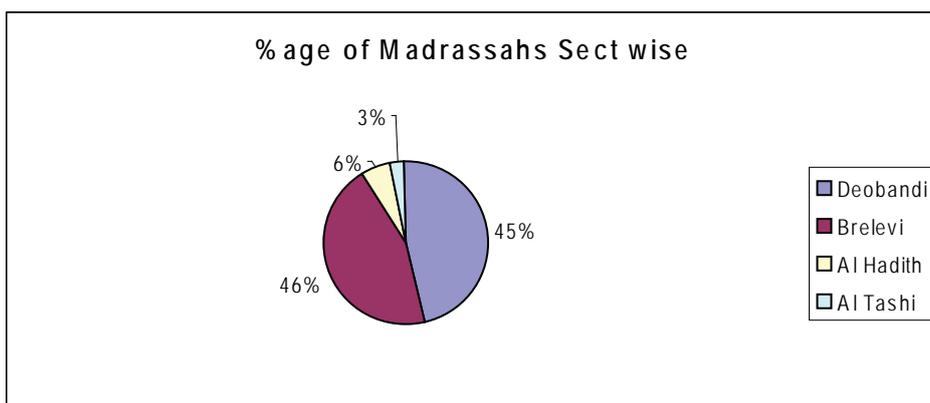


Student Population in Madrasahs:

Total number of students studying in these Madrassahs, is 26169, share of Deobandi's, Brelvi's Ahle-e-Hadith and Ahl-e-Tashee is 13332,11045, 1366 and 436 respectively. Percentage-wise share of different sects is 51%, 42%, 5.2%, and 1% respectively (for Table 3 see Appendix).

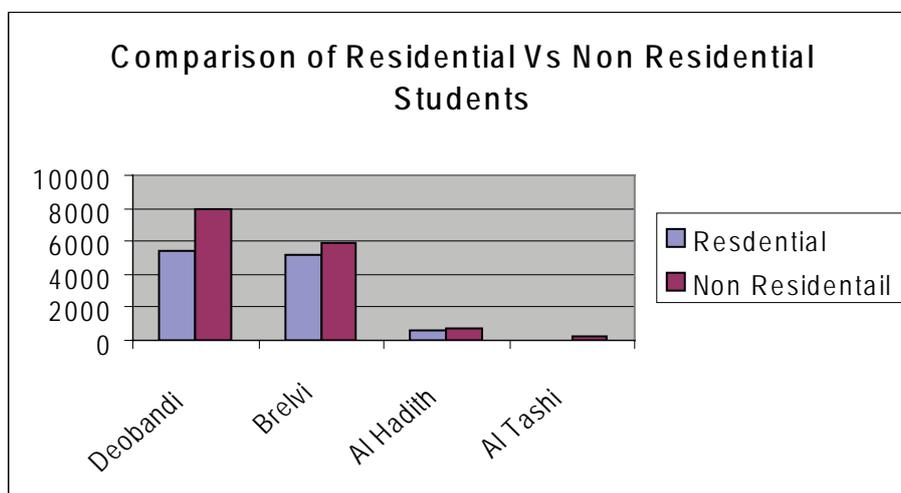
Profile of Students (Sect wise)





Sect	Residential	Non Residential	Total
Deobandi	5374	7958	13332
Brelvi	5153	5892	11045
Al Hadith	631	735	1366
Al Tashi	57	230	287
Total	11215	14815	26030

Almost 40 % students were living in the Madrassahs and Deobandi Madaris although equal to Brelvi Madrassahs in number had more student enrollment, particularly residential students in deobandi Madaris greatly out number Brelvi's.



Registration of Madrassahs: (for Table 4 see Appendix)

Above table shows very important information from the regulatory framework point of view. It is seen that only 39 Madrassahs out of 363 were registered. The registration is under the Societies Act 1860, it was previously done

by Registrar Joint Stock companies on the report and clearance by district administration. After the administrative reforms call "Devolution Plan 2001" the authority to register any organization under the Societies Act 1860 has been delegate to the Executive District Officer (Finance and Planning) in the province of Punjab, in the other provinces this authority still remains with Directorate of Industries at provincial level.

It is seen that proportionate to their number Brelvi and Al Hadith Madaris registered are more. It is also observed that generally large Madrassahs, having an elaborate infrastructure and assets get registered, small Madrassahs are mostly not registered. The role of regulatory agencies and how affective is the role of departments responsible for registering the Madaris will be discussed when we look at the Islamabad Capital territory case study.

2.3 State of Public Education and Madrassahs

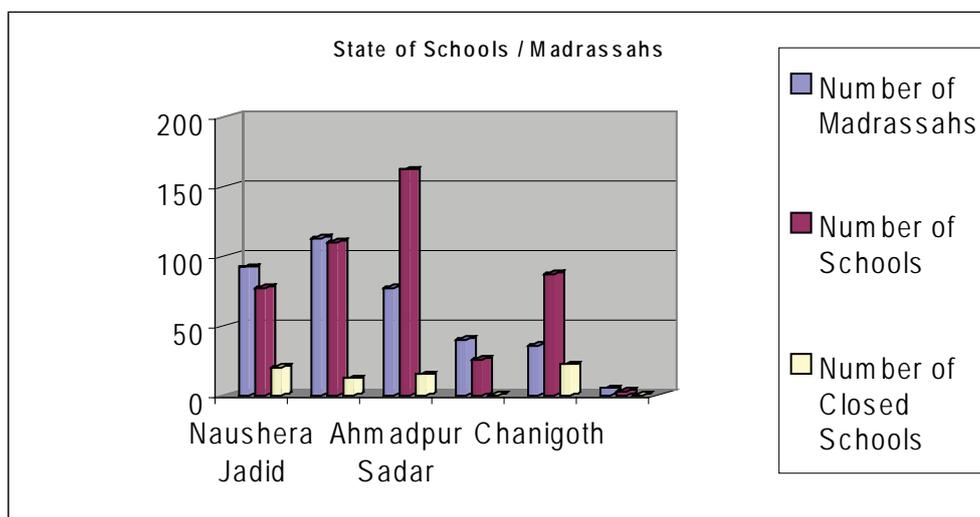
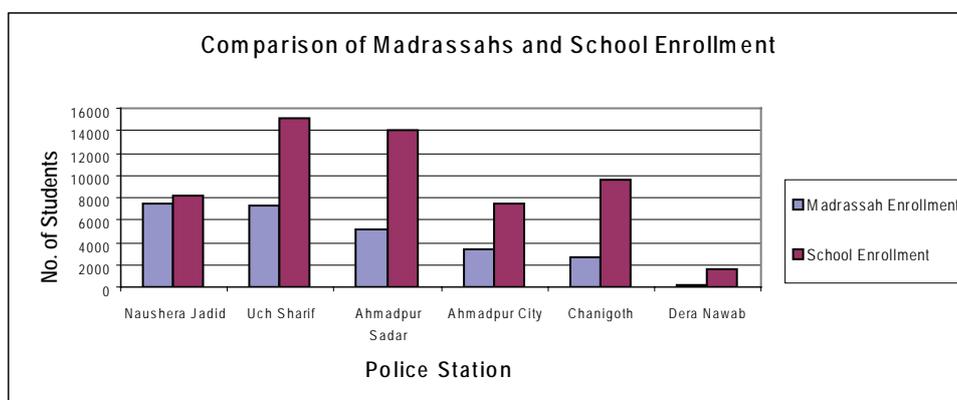
A very interesting feature of the research has been to study the relationship of the public sector education system and the Madrassahs. Following table shows a comparison of number Madrassahs and student enrollment in different police station areas. It also shows how many schools are closed. It has to be noted that figures pertain to government schools only and include boys and girls schools of primary, middle and higher standard, whereas Madrassahs data shows only male students studying in Madaris since there were very few girls students in Madaris of Ahmad pur East.

The data shows that as compared to 363 Madaris there are 465 schools, of which 69 (almost 13 %) are closed due to non-availability of teachers or teacher absenteeism. A total of 55892 boys and girls were studying in public schools as compared to 26169 Madrassahs.

It is worth noting that two police station areas having less Madrassahs have comparatively more schools and hence more student enrollment. However in Police stations Nushera Jadid and Uch Sharif the number of Madrassahs is more than government schools. The student enrolment in Naushera Jadid area is almost comparable in Madaris and public schools. It is seen that student enrolment in Madaris is almost half of the school system. If one accounts for the girls students, the number of students studying in Madaris and public schools becomes comparable.

SYED TAUQIR HUSSAIN SHAH: MADRASSAHS IN PAKISTAN

Police Station	Madrassah Enrollment	School Enrollment	No. of Madrassahs	No. of Schools	No./% of Closed Schools
Naushera Jadid	7521	8166	92	77	20 (20 %)
Uch Sharif	7230	15032	113	110	12 (9.8 5)
Ahmadpur Sadar	5184	14001	77	162	15 (8.4 %)
Ahmadpur City	3396	7554	40	26	0
Chanigoth	2606	9574	36	87	22 (20 %)
Dera Nawab	232	1565	5	3	0
Total	26169	55892	363	465	69 (13 %)



2.4 Involvement in Sectarianism

Involvement in Sectarianism is another important feature of this research. This aspect was assessed using the principle of proxy indicators, certain features or mode of behavior was picked to classify a Madrassah as being involved in sectarianism. Following are some of the indicators used for the purpose.

- Any Madrassah, which is visited by leading sectarian leaders,
- If the students/charges of a Madrassah participate in sectarian processions/gatherings.
- If management of a Madrassah lobbies for, or provides leadership to sectarian issues.
- If managers or students were involved in reported violent sectarian crimes.

Any Madrassah exhibiting any of the above features, it has been labeled positive as far as sectarianism is concerned. The labeling was done after extensive interviews with local police officials, district administration officers and consulting the record of sectarian sensitive points.

It was seen that Madrassahs situated in Police Station Naushera Jadid and Uch Sharif and Ahmadpur City have an involvement rate of 100%, 57 % and 45% respectively.

Police Station	Total No. of Madrassahs	No. of Madrassahs Involved in Sectarianism	Percentage
Naushera Jadid	92	92	100%
Uch Sharif	113	65	57%
Ahmadpur City	40	18	45%
Ahmadpur Sadar	77	12	15%
Chanigoth	36	04	11%
Dera Nawab	05	03	60%
Total	363	194	52.8%

It is also seen that Madrassahs belonging to Deobandi and Ahl-e-Tashee sects have very high rates of involvement in violence and sectarianism. Traditionally Deobandi and Shia sects are in conflict, hence it is seen that involvement of Madaris belonging to these two sects are overwhelmingly sectarian. However it is seen that off late even the Brelvi Madaris that were traditionally very tolerant and non-controversial institutions have also started showing violent and sectarian tendencies. It is seen that in many instances this is a response to violent and aggressive attitude of Deobandi institutions and their managers.

On GIS analysis it is seen that most of the sectarian Madrassahs are located in Naushera Jadid, Ahmad Pur East city and Northern half of Uch Sharif police station area.

Madrassahs Involved in Sectarianism

Sect	Total Madrassahs	Involved in Sectarianism	Not Involved in Sectarianism	Percentage Involvement
Deobandi	166	133	33	80%
Brelewi	166	42	124	25%
Ahl-e-Hadis	21	03	18	14%
Ahl-Tashee	10	07	03	70%
Total	363	185	178	51%

2.5 Location of Madaris and Sectarian “Hotspots”

The survey and its analysis on the Geographical information system (GIS) has shown another very interesting trend. The location of Madaris and Troubles spots has been plotted on the map and it has show flowing trends.

What is a Trouble Spot or Hotspot?

The hotspots are administratively also called trouble spots, the local administration, intelligence agencies in consultation with local police authorities classify the trouble spots or hotspots in A, B and C category. This categorization of trouble spots is an administrative tool used by local police authorities for vigilance, monitoring of sectarian violence and local law and order. It is used for keeping a vigil and deploying proper manpower and force for prevention of serious conflict on different religious occasions. The trouble spots categorization can be general and day or event specific. It helps local police to monitor situation and make adequate prevent measures.

The categorization or classification record is maintained at every police station. It is used for ensuring proper deployment of force and other preventive measures.

This categorization or classification is on following criteria.

A category: Any location where a serious sectarian conflict has happened in past, and it resulted in death of a person(s), such location is labeled A category. Such locations are specially monitored on special occasions and are closely

watched by supervisory officers on religious events. At many A category trouble spots military or para-military forces are deployed before hand.

B category: These are locations where in past there has been conflict between different religious sects. The reason could be holding of a religious event, religious procession and reason for conflict could be route of procession. Although there has been a conflict but no one has been killed.

C category: These are locations where there is potential for clash or conflict, based on the fact that verbal brawls has occurred in past, or rival sects have been agitating against each other. Reason is again mostly objection to religious festivities of rival sect.

In Ahmad pur east there are 90 trouble spots, of A, B and C category. More that 90% of this are situated in police station areas of Noshera Jadid, Uch Sharif and Ahmad pur city. Nauhera and Uch have major share of trouble spots

GIS analysis has shown that there are eight "A" category trouble spots in Ahmad pur sub-division, these are located in Naushera Jadid, Ahmad Pur east city and Uch Sharif police station areas. The trouble spots or hot spots are invariably situated in areas that have more concentration of Deobandi and Shia Madrassahs. A closer analysis and study of background of trouble spots showed that management and students of particular Madrassahs were instrumental in history of conflict pertaining to that trouble spot. Another finding is that location of "A" category trouble spots is invariably linked to highly sectarian Deobandi and Shia Madrassah

Location of Troubles Spots

Police Station	Category "A"	Category "B"	Category "C"
Uch sharif	2	0	23
Naushera Jadid	3	2	26
Ahmad Pur East City	2	0	18
Ahmad Pur East Sadar	0	0	3
Dera Nawb	0	1	6
Chanigoth	0	0	3
Total	8	3	79

2.6 Socio-economic Development of the Area and Madrassah Phenomenon

Access to Land and Madrassahs

Area	Total no. of land-owners	% age of persons holding more than 5 acres	% age of persons holding less than 5 acres
Naushera Jadid	52587	1697 (3 %)	50890 (97 %)
Uch Sharif	59432	3845 (7 %)	55587 (93%)
APE Saddar	21700	699 (3.3%)	21101 (96.7 %)
Chanigoth	23258	582 (2.5 %)	22676 (97.5 %)
Total	156977	6823	150254
% of total		4%	96%

In rural Pakistan and particularly South Punjab, political , economic and social power is closely linked to Land Ownership. Access to land or land ownership determines the social and political standing of an individual or a group of people in a society.

It is observed that extremist and sectarian groups and religious parties have more following in areas where in the local feudal landowners have been controlling political and economic (land) power. Districts of Jhang, Khanewal, Multan, Vehari (Mailsi) Bhawalpur are a case in point. This reaction has been more radical and severe in areas where in the local political power was with Shia landed gentry.

Madrassah and its leadership was the focal point of this movement against traditional feudal leadership particularly where it was Shia. For the downtrodden and politically, socially and economically marginalized people the religious political parties were a means of turning the tables on the traditional elite.

The state functionaries were particularly receptive and obliging to religious/sectarians leaders, thus adding to their mass appeal. The particular disposition of administrative machinery towards religious leaders particularly those belonging to militant radical Deobandi groups has been a post afghan Jihad phenomenon. Since these leaders belonged to groups who were "Strategic Partners" of government and the west led by United States. The administrative functionaries extended patronage to these groups accordingly. This phenomenon brought a sea change in the social standing of Madrassah and its graduates. It began to symbolize a revolution against oppressive feudal social set up.

In our case study it is revealed that land holding patterns in Ahmad pur East are also extremely eschewed it shows that of the total 156977 land owners only 4 % land owners own more than five acres of land, where as 96 % land owners have less the 5 acres of land. In Pakistan the official economic subsistence holding size is 12.5 percent. This shows that person holding less that five acres would be living an extremely hard life.

In our survey area this phenomenon is seen across the whole sub-division. However it is observed that in Chanigoth and Ahmad Pur East Sadar police station areas, although land holding patterns are similar the phenomenon of sectarian Madaris is less. One reason could be the fact the above two areas are around the national highway, thus giving many other economic opportunities and exposure.

2.7 Socio Economic Development of the Area

Electrification

	Uch Sharif	Naushera Jadid	Chanigoth	APE Sadar	Total villages
No of Villages	53	31	49	52	185
No electricity	11	2	4	7	24 (13%)
1-25 % HH	17	11	5	13	46 (25%)
26-50 % HH	11	11	21	14	57 (30%)
51-75 % HH	4	6	9	12	31 (17%)
76-100% HH	10	1	10	6	27 (15%)

Access to electricity is an important indicator of poverty and standard of living, it is seen that access to electricity pattern of Ahmad pur East shows that it is extremely poor and underdeveloped area.

Almost 13 % villages are with out electricity, in 25 % villages less than 25% households have electricity, in another 30 % the access to electricity is available to 25-50% households.

The area of Naushera Jadid which is worst hit by sectarianism and proliferation of Madrasshas, in 75 percent villages electricity is available to less than 50% households.

Infrastructure Facilities

	Uch Sharif	Naushera Jadid	Chanigoth	APE Sadar	Total villages
No of Villages	53	31	49	52	185
With water supply scheme	7	0	1	1	9
Without water supply scheme	46	31	48	51	176
No farm to market road	14	2	6	14	36
With Farm to market road	39	29	43	38	149

Two other indicators which were surveyed in Ahmad pur East are the availability of potable water through government provided safe drinking water supply schemes, it is seen that out of total of 185 villages only 9 villages have drinking water schemes. Considering that incidence of water borne diseases is extremely high in the area. The non availability of safe drinking water is another development indicator. Here also we see that not single water supply scheme is provided in Naushera Jadid and Northern half of Uch Sharif.

The provision of road connectivity has also been documented, in terms of mobility and providing access to market for agricultural produce, farm to market roads are an important provision. Although generally better than other socio-economic indicators, but still approx 20% villages are not connected to the farm to market roads.

*2.8 Natural Resource Management**Agriculture productivity*

	Uch Sharif	Naushera Jadid	Chanigoth	APE Sadar
Average Yield In Rabi (Wheat) maunds per acre	15	16	15	16
Range	30-10	20-10	25-5	30-7
Average Yield In Kharif (cotton) maunds per acre	12	12	12.7	12
Range	20-10	16-10	20-5	20-7

In terms of agricultural productivity although no major variation is seen between different regions of Ahmad Pur Sub division, the average yield of Wheat and Cotton is almost half of the average yields expected of subsistence farms.

The average yield of 15 maunds (one maund =40 Kg) of wheat and 12 maunds of cotton is half of what some farmers get in same sub division. This data shows that agriculture productivity in the region is at sub-optimal or low productivity level. With almost 100% agrarian economy this is a major contributing factor to the economy of the area.

Canal Water supply and quality of sub-soil water

	Uch Sharif	Naushera Jadid	Chanigoth	APE Sadar	Total villages
No of Villages	53	31	49	52	185
Extreme Water Shortage	35	31	34	50	150
Mild Shortage	8	0	15	2	25
No Shortage	8	0	0	0	8

The perennial shortage of irrigation water is one of the key reasons contributing to low productivity and poverty of the area. The agriculture being highly dependent on the irrigation water, 150 out of 185 villages experience extreme water shortage. Only eight villages have no scarcity of canal water and another 25 villages have mild shortage.

In Naushera Jadid the water shortage is most acute, all 31 villages have extreme shortage of canal water

Quality of Subsoil water

	Uch Sharif	Naushera Jadid	Chanigoth	APE Sadar
No of Villages	53	31	49	52
Villages with subsoil water sweet	53	31	45	23
villages with subsoil water brackish	0	0	4	29

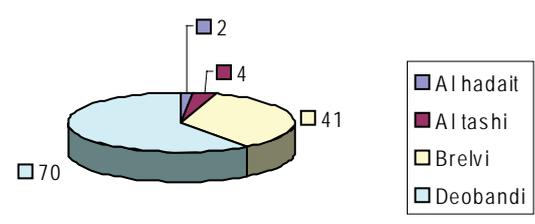
Subsoil water can be a very important resource in case of canal water shortage and absence of government provide potable water. APE has large area where in the sub soil water is sweet. However due to non availability of electricity and no public sector support to access the sweet water people cannot benefit from this extremely useful resource.

S No	Police Station	Deobandi	Brelewi	Ahl-e-Hadith	Ahl-e-Tashee	Police Station wise Total
1	Appara	3530	290	25	0	3845
2	Khosar	3257	305	0	95	3657
3	Margalla	1780	305	0	0	2085
4	Golra	1245	475	40	0	1760
5	Tarnol	40	149	0	0	189
6	Bharkau	687	191	0	0	878
7	I-9	255	385	250	0	890
8	Sihala	20	0	0	28	48
9	Secretariat	391	337	0	144	842
	total	11205	2437	315	267	14194

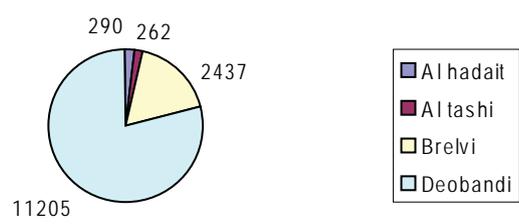
The Madrasahs in Islamabad were also surveyed and documented, it revealed that there are 117 Madrasahs in Islamabad the Federal Capital, of these 70 belong to Deobandi sect and 41 to Brelewi, hardly a couple of Madrasahs belong to Al-e-Teshi or Al Hadith.

Another very distinguishing feature of Madrasahs in Islamabad is that these are by and large residential institutions providing complete boarding and lodging to students. It is also seen that number of student can range from 2000 g feature is girls Madrasahs, some of the large Madrasahs with about 500-2000 students (residential) were for girls.

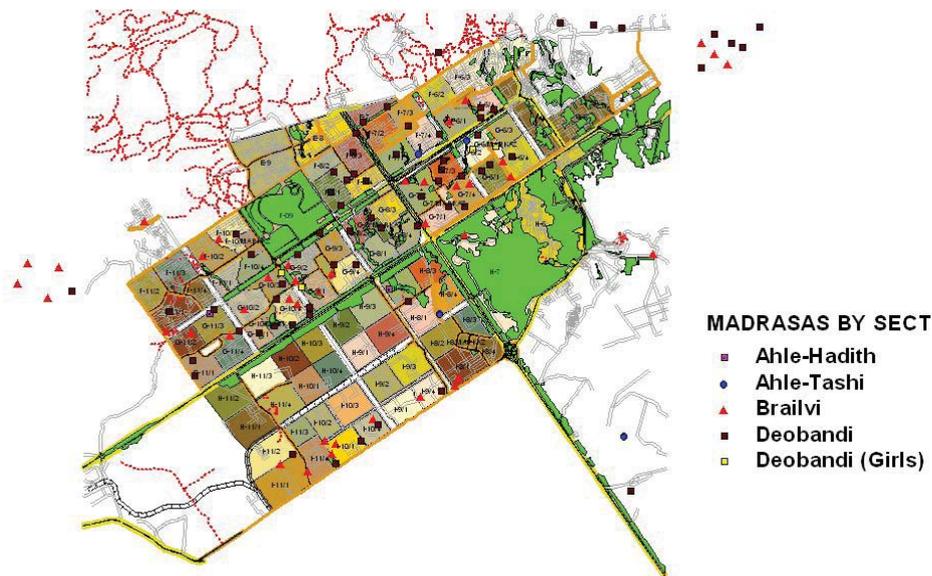
Sect-wise break up of Madrasahs in Islamabad



Sect wise Number of Student in Madrasahs of Islamabad



ISLAMABAD MADRASAS MAP



The Madrassahs in Islamabad are mostly located in Urban areas (sectoral areas) and are located at prime commercial and residential locations. A unique and extremely intriguing feature of Madrassahs in Islamabad is that 90 % of them are located on state land, in urban areas out of 103 Madrassahs 100 are located on state /public land. The larger ones are situated on green belts along main avenues, or reserved or protected areas. It is seen that during the Afghan war when Madrassahs had complete patronage of West led by US and government in Pakistan, which resulted in this free for all, Islamabad otherwise is the most regulated city as far as urban and regional planning is concerned.

It is also seen that there are hardly any local students studying in Islamabad Madrassahs, they are mostly from Northern areas, Northern districts of NWFP like Buner, Swat, Manshera, Kohistan, etc. This creates a strange detached relationship of these institutions and students towards local communities. This is what Tariq Rehman (2004) calls "Denizens of Another World".

Since there is no sense of belonging or obligation towards the community, it has resulted in uncontrolled violence and riots on couple of occasions when the religious groups decided to bring the Islamabad madrassah students on the streets.

2.10 Windfall for Islamabad Madrassahs:

During the last couple of years the Madrassahs in Islamabad specially the ones located in major urban sectors are undergoing extensive expansions, and increase in enrollment. Manager of one of the larger Madrassahs was of the view that this increase in enrollment is a post 9/11 phenomenon and a reaction to western and governmental policies towards Islam and religious education.

The phenomenon of extensive high cost building activity occurring in Islamabad Madrassahs is worth exploring. In times when financial flows to Madrassahs are being regulated. It is needs serious exploration that what is the source of this massive funding.

This also brings the efficacy of Government of Pakistan,s field formations to lime light, this irregular and un authorized extensions in Madrassahs is being done with out sanction or permission from local municipal authorities, and local police and administration are looking the other way.

It is a classical example of where field formations are failing vision and leadership of President of Pakistan.

Government Madrassah Reform Effort-Salient features

The Madrassah Reform Strategy of Government of Pakistan is informed by overarching objective of eradication sectarianism and extremism in the country and thus develop friendly atmosphere and national cohesion in the society. The Government has initiated Madrassah Reforms in Pakistan to bring the Madaris into mainstream education system. The Madrassah Reform Strategy is based on the belief that Madrassah is an indigenous community institution and is performing a commendable service, hence it needs to be fostered and brought into the mainstream educational movement. However some Madaris (a small minority do indulge in sectarianism) indulge in undesirable activities and these need to be reformed, thorough peer pressure and persuasion. Another important feature of reform strategy is that government wants a “hands off” approach while dealing with Madaris and is committed to maintaining the autonomy and independence of Madaris. It plans to mainstream them but by teaching formal subjects in Madaris, and doesn’t intend to review the syllabus and internal systems of Madaris.

2.11 Legal, Financial and Institutional Aspects of Reform.

If one examines the issue of Madaris and allied reform strategy it is seen that Madrassah Reform has following major aspects:

- *Legal Framework* for Registration of Madaris
- *Financial Aspects*, since large amounts of philanthropic donations and charity money is given to Madaris.
- *Institutional aspect of reform*: which Ministry at Federal level and which department at provincial and district level is responsible for Madrassah Reform.

A review of “Madrassah Reform Strategy” shows major hiatuses on all the above-mentioned aspects. The proposed “Deeni Madaris (voluntary Registration) Ordinance, 2002 which catered for major area of weakness i.e registration of Madaris has been shelved. Despite having been debated in Federal Cabinet (Klasra, 2002), the proposed law on registration has been dropped, and previous law catering for registration of Madrassahs, the Societies Act 1860, has again been made operational, although the Ministry Interior has imposed a ban on registration of Madaris under this law, which is a very lax law primarily framed for registration of community based activities like NGOs, libraries, and professional associations.

2.11.1 Present Regulatory Regime for Madrassahs

The Madrassahs movement leadership has always been contending that they are registered entities and there should be no required for registration under a new law. Of late Ministry of Religious Affairs seems to have bought the idea, and new proposed legislation on Madaris regulation has been placed in limbo.

The survey and analysis of Madrassahs in APE and Islamabad has shown that out of 363 and 117 Madrassahs only 39 and 31 Madrassahs respectively are registered under the Societies Act 1860. This is the same law, which provides the legal framework for registration of NGOs.

The efficiency and effectiveness of Societies Registration Act 1860, is extremely doubtful, a study done by Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy in 2003 (unpublished), revealed that approx 324 organizations, including NGOs, Housing associations, Madrassahs were registered with administration of Federal Capital, under the SRA 1860. Defining compliance to regulatory requirements, as any exchange of correspondence between registered entity and the institution

registered, it could be annual report, notification of change of address, or any other correspondence.

Making such a lax and liberal compliance requirement acceptable. A rapid assessment was made of every four file of registered entity.

Even on such a relaxed criteria the compliance to registration obligations came out to be 4 %. Accepting Madrassahs or any other institution whose regulation is desirable, under such regulatory frame work is undesirable.

2.11.2 Funding of Madrassahs:

Funding to Madaris has always been a major focus of reform agenda, madras primarily get their funding from “religiously motivated philanthropy” i.e Sadiqa and Khairat”, how ever there has been extensive criticism for funds being channeled from gulf countries to certain Madrassahs. Accounting and proper utilization of funds being given to Madaris has been a major concern of reform agenda, however this is intricately linked to the “Regulatory legal framework” since the law has been shelved, the issue of monitoring of finances has also been relegated to back burner. However interviews with Madaris managers, and government officials in Zakat Administration shows following major sources of income for Madaris.

Local Philanthropy?

Philanthropic donations by local well off people, particularly urban based trading community and rural land owners is the major source of funding for most of the Madaris. Every Madrassah has certain identified and known local funders, this is more so in rural areas or small urban towns. These donations are mostly motivated by feeling of charity called “Sadiqa and Khairat”. A study conducted in 2000 by Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy claims that approx Rs 7 Billion are given in local philanthropy nationally in Pakistan, out of this considerable proportion is given to local mosques, Madaris and religious shrines.

It is writers personal experience as district administrator and magistrate in Ahmad Pur East that local traders and small land owners provide financial patronage to local Madaris and in the process wield considerable influence over the management of the madrassah, particularly in rural areas and small urban towns. The Madaris whose management, teachers or students indulge in sectarianism are a major source of polarization and sectarian strife, at times being violent and bloody. Such institutions are a constant source of worry for local administration during holy month of Muharram and at times of other religious festivals. During such times the local administration seeks assistance of local

patrons or funders of these Madaris, for seeking cooperation and assurance of good conduct from such Madrassahs and their managers.

These local financial patrons have stakes in local politics and are more of local power brokers. By investing in these Madaris they create immense clout with local police and administration. The land owners and traders on every harvest make in kind donations of wheat and cotton to local Madrassah. The local officers knowing and appreciating the influence that these local financiers wield over a particular Madrassah, always keep these local influential people in good humour. These people seek a premium from local administration in form of requests for favours in land cases, municipal licensing issues, police cases, and different issues. This creates a vicious cycle where in local philanthropy pays heavy dividends for the investors and in the process creates more influence with the Madrassahs and their managers.

Contribution by Madrassah Alumni?

The writer interviewed approximately 40 Madrassah managers/owners and most of them mentioned that some of their students are working in big cities, particularly Karachi and they send regular subscription to their Alma Mater. It was mostly cited by Madrassah managers that soon after graduation many of these students preferred destination is Karachi. There these young Molvi's seek employment in affluent neighborhoods as teachers of Koran Sharif (Nazarah Quran). It is tradition in muslim families (mostly middle class urban sections) that at age of four or five children are taught to read the Holy Quran, a religious teachers comes to teach recitation of holy Quran to groups of children in their homes. This is occasionally done in groups.

Young Madrassah graduates provide these services to begin with. As they establish their influence in the new neighbourhood, they are on the watch for an opportunity to get a Pesh Imams position in local mosque or spot a piece of public land mostly green belts or community purpose plots and squat on it and set a Mosque-cum- Madrassah of their own.

Many managers said these alumni from the Madrassah are sending a regular subscription to the Madrassah..

Zakat

Zakat is a religious tithe that well off Muslims are obliged to pay, the rate for its payment is ordained by religious dictates. It is 2.5 % of a wealth that a person holds. Previously it was a private affair, in 1979 the Government of General Zia Ul Haq, levied Zakat officially and set up an elaborate Federal Zakat Adminis-

tration, with provincial Zakat Councils and even district Zakat Administrations, the whole system is governed by the Zakat Ordinance.

Zakat is a welfare levy that Islam expects the well off to pay for welfare of certain marginalized sections of society. The purposes for which zakat funds can be spent are clearly mandated by Islamic injunctions of Quran and Sunnah. One of the purposes is welfare of Orphans and Destitute. Using this provision as an enabling opportunity. The Central Zakat Administration which is traditionally dominated by religious leader devised a policy in 1980's, through which Zakat funds are given to Madaris specially those that give services to residential students. It is regulated by a policy called "Revised Zakat Disbursement Procedure for Deeni Madaris" as approved by Central Zakat Council on 18th May 2002.

It is generally believed that Zakat funding provided the major impetus for growth of Madaris in 1980's and 1990's. However the research in Ahmadpur East and Islamabad does not support this point of view. Our survey showed that out of total of 363 Madaris in Ahmad Pur East only 34 ever got Zakat funding, this figure was 29 out of 266 Madaris during the survey done in 1994. The official data of Islamabad Zakat Administration reflected in table below show the quantum of Zakat funding to Madrassahs, it is worth noting that maximum of 22 Madrassahs out of a total of 117 got zakat funding.

The total quantum of funding can be gauged from the fact that Rs 2.00 Million (USD 35000) were distributed among 20 Madaris in Islamabad in year 2005. There are approx 100 district zakat administrations in Pakistan, which between them distribute approx Rs 200 -300 Million to Madaris. The funding to Madaris is at district level, however the policy parameters are decided at Federal level.

A special facility was created for Madaris funding from Zakat. In principle the Zakat funding is given directly to the entitled individual beneficiary. However in case of Madaris, the quantum of funding is decided on basis of number of students, but funds are not given to individual students, but payments are made directly to the manager of the Madrassah, this gives him authority and freedom to spend the funding according to his on liking, such funding is mostly used for physical improvements and extensions in Madrassahs and rarely used for food, lodging and clothing of students, which is its authorized purpose.

Fund raising during Eid Festival (Scarified animals Hide collection)

This is one of the largest and least researched and documented source of funding to Madrassahs. The scale of funds generated through this source is so huge that large political parties, charitable trusts and foundations and many hospitals launch a special campaign for collection of raw animal hides of scarified animals.

It is a religious practice that on day of Eid Ul Aza, a day after the annual pilgrimage of Mecca, every Muslim who can afford to buy an animal, will sacrifice/ slaughter an sheep, goat or cow/bull or even a camel. The meat of slaughtered animal is distributed among poor people and close neighbors.

The Madrassahs launch very vigorous campaign for collecting the raw hides of scarified animals. These hides fetch a very good price in the market. Which is approximately USD 20 per hide. It is estimated that approx ---- animals are scarified every year in Pakistan.

Overseas Funding

During visits to Madaris in Ahmad Pur and interviews with local managers revealed that well established Madrassahs, or ones having elaborately constructed infrastructure showing huge investment, would mostly state overseas funding.

They would invariable state that many of our talented students have gone to gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia and they are sending regular subscription to their Alma Mater. In our view this could be a conduit for over seas funding and need greater probe on part of government.

Land Grants or squatting on Public Lands

The largest resource transfer to Madrassahs is the land grants by state for construction of Madrassahs in few cases, and encroachment and squatting on state land, public purpose lands, green belts and along roads and highways (on the right of way) in most of the cases.

In the federal capital Madrassahs have encroached upon prime real estate and green belts , our survey showed that 90 percent of Madrassahs in Islamabad Capital territory are built on state/public land and invariably in violation of building and land use regulations.

2.11.3 Mosque and Madrassahs Linkage

It is seen that invariably a Mosque is attached to a Madrassah, this coupling of Mosque with Madrassah greatly hampers any regulatory initiative by state. Any pro-active initiative will be taken as (or portrayed as) an interference by

government in the affairs of the mosque. It is even dubbed as a sacrilegious action. Thus mosque is very cleverly intertwined with Madrassah which makes any regulatory effort extremely difficult and complex.

The issue of joint Madrassah and mosque came to fore as a regulatory challenge during government's recently launched legal reform.

2.11.4 Is Madrassah a Faith based Institution or a Private Enterprise:

It is seen that most of Madaris are "owned" by an individual religious leader, they may have a paper management committee or a board of governors, just for fulfillment of regulatory requirements. In fact even the management committees or Boards of governors are close relatives and hand picked associates of the religious leader. This proprietorship dimension of Madrassah management brings in the very important monetary or economic factor. Since it is a private enterprise, which apart from giving political, religious and even administrative clout to the owner, even fetches huge economic benefits, the stakeholder interest get more entrenched. Many Madrassahs since they are built as encouragements on highways and main roads have commercial properties attached to them.

The most preferred location for Madrassahs is main highways, large roads and commercial area. One seldom finds a Madrassah in a locality away from areas of economic activity. Such locations reduce their influence and power.

2.11.5 Madrassah and Politics

Madaris although religious schools are most political institutions. Every Madrassah is invariably attached or affiliated to a religious political parties

In my view as the religious political parties and even local pesh imams (prayer leaders) started losing the mass following. They decided to reduce their dependence on popular support, and recruit a standing body of supporters in form of thousands of Madrassah students. They are much more ardent supporters, extremely indoctrinated, and readily available rather always at beck and call.

It is seen that most frequent street agitations, violent demonstrations are organized by religious parties, and overwhelming number of participants in these street show of power are Madrassah students. In recent past it is seen that all the major demonstrations organized by the Mutahda Majilis e Amal, the major component of rallies is Madrassah students. These students take to the streets in seconds, thus making themselves an invaluable asset for religious parties.

It for this particular reason among others, that religious parties are total opposed to any Madrassah reform initiative. The ban imposed by federal government on registration of Madrassahs under the Societies Act 1860 in 1994, has been recently lifted on the persistent demand of MMA dominated governments of NWFP and Baluchistan.

2.11.6 The Madrassahs Mass Appeal:

What attracts poor people to a Madrassah? Is it poverty, or religious fervor or Power of Madaris. Our analysis shows that it is all the three, but more of the last factor, the social power attached to Madaris movement.

In rural Pakistan and particularly South Punjab, political, economic and social power has been traditionally linked to Land Ownership. Access to land or land ownership determines the social and political standing of an individual or a group of people in a society.

It is observed that extremist and sectarian groups and religious parties have more following in areas where in the local feudal land owners have been controlling political and economic (land) power. Districts of Jhang, Khanewal, Multan, Vehari (Mailsi) Bhawalpur, Muzzafergarh are a case in point. This reaction has been more radical and severe in areas where in the local political power was with Shia landed gentry, or liberal brelevi Sunnis.

Madrassah and its leadership was the focal point of this movement against traditional feudal leadership particularly where they were shias. For the down trodden and politically, socially and economically marginalized people the religious political parties were a means of turning the tables on the traditional elite.

Historically the Feudal leadership has been playing the role of a broker between state and the poor citizens. And they have been extremely dishonest and inefficient brokers. The poor people had to beg the local fuedals (who had political power also) for getting small favours or personal grievances redressed by local administration and police. These fuedals were impossible to access, if after months of begging and at time forced and unpaid labour a poor person managed to get a audience with a local feudal, at best he would scribble a non decipherable recommendatory letter to local administration or police. It was unimaginable for the local feudal political leader to accompany a poor person to government office or call up an official.

While suffering the debouched feudal and corrupt and inefficient state functionary, the poor, and faceless people saw the rise of religious leaders. They

silently observed that this local manager of Madrassah, who at times may even be an outsider from NWFP or Baluchistan, or another district, is commanding immense influence with local state functionaries particularly police and administration.

More over he was always available to help, readily accompanying people to police stations and local offices, he was neither charging people for this service nor treating them in a demeaning manner. Moreover it is seen that he is more effective than the feudal political leadership.

The state functionaries were particularly receptive and obliging to religious/sectarians leaders, thus adding to their mass appeal. The particular disposition of administrative machinery towards religious leaders specially those belonging to militant radical deobandi groups has been a post afghan Jihad phenomenon. Since these leaders belonged to groups who were "Strategic Partners" of government and the west led by United States. The administrative functionaries extended patronage to these groups accordingly. This phenomenon brought a sea change in the social standing of Madrassah and its graduates. It began to symbolize a revolution against oppressive feudal and social set up.

One of the reasons the local administration carried so much deference for these Madrassah managers was that they would invest in such relationships, so that in times of sectarian strife they would be amenable and cooperative. As time passed and these religious leaders got more militant, the deference of local administration is now more out of fear than relations building.

Ahmad pur East is a classic example of this phenomenon, here political leadership for decades have been with the Nawabs of Bhawalpur (based in Ahmad pur City and Dera Nawab) and the Makhdums of Uch Sharif (Gilanis and Bukharis). The religious leadership that rose from Madaris challenged these ruling families.

One of the factors for huge growth and influence of Madaris in Ahmad Pur East City, Uch Sharif and Naushera Jadid is the typical social response to feudal social structures narrated above.

Similar trends are seen in administrative regions of APE Sadar and Chanigoth, but not as manifest for number of reasons. One these areas are near the National highway, thus opening up many other economic and social opportunities. Secondly in these areas there were many other upwardly mobile social groups, like considerable number of medium size land owners, government officials and people from other areas having land grants given by state. More over historically this area had less Deobandi population.

2.11.7 Institutional Audit of Madrassah Reform Strategy

A very important aspect of Madrassah reform Strategy is the institutional mechanism required for successful reform. Ministry of Interior, Education and Religious Affairs have dealt so far the reform efforts. All three have different approach and understanding of the issue. Even on the formulation of the shelved law Ministry of Interior and Religious Affairs had diametrically opposed point of view. MOI advocated an effective and foolproof law, where as Ministry religious affairs (MRA) lobbied for an enabling law which should nurture and develop Madaris. At present there is serious lack of concerted effort as far as Madrassah reform is concerned. The leadership on the issue is being provided by MRA, where as in the provinces and districts where the reform strategy actually has to be implemented there is no one institution or department responsible for the implementation of reform strategy. Resultantly the whole reform strategy is now reduced to the “Mainstreaming of Deeni Madaris” project of MOE, even the ownership of which is provinces and districts warrants serious analysis.

2.12 Mainstreaming of Madaris – Madrassah Reform Project of Ministry of Education³

In line with government of Pakistan’s declared objective of reforming the Madaris, a comprehensive project was initiated by the Ministry of Education at the cost of Rs 5759.395 million (US\$ 100 million). The project is planned to be implemented in phases spread over five years (as part of the Public Sector Development Programme). The Major Objectives of the Madrassah Reforms are:

- To introduce/teach formal subjects in 8000 Deeni Madrassahs.
- Introduce the subjects of English, Mathematics, Social Studies and General Science in 4000 Madrassahs at Primary Level and in 3000 Madrassahs at Middle and Secondary Level. English, Economics, Computer Science and Pakistan Studies at the intermediate level in 1000 Madrassahs.
- To open lines of communication with Ulema (Religious Scholars). To improve and update knowledge of religious teachers in formal subjects through workshops.
- To improve quality and scope of education by bearing cost of salaries, textbooks, stationary and sports item etc.
- To provide computers and printers at intermediate level in 1000 Madrassahs.

3 Ministry of Education-PC-I of “Mainstreaming of Madaris Project”

The salient features of the project are, to prescribe textbooks in formal subjects in Madrassahs. Examinations will be conducted by the relevant Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) at Secondary and Higher Secondary, Levels in the formal subjects. Madrassahs will be selected by Ministry of Education and Provincial Governments. Funds will be released to provinces, Islamabad Capital territory, Tribal Areas, Northern Areas and Azad Kashmir and other independent areas for distribution amongst the registered Madrassahs as under:

Punjab 46.458%, Sindh 19.206%, NWFP 15.696%, Balochistan 8.640%, Islamabad Capital Territory, 10% and Tribal Areas, Northern Areas and Azad Kashmir.

Total of 8000 Madrassahs will be facilitated phase-wise as 3000, 3000, and 2000 during first, second and third year of project respectively. Total period of the project is 5 years while each institute will be facilitated for three years. Four teachers will be provided to each institution. Appointment of teachers will be made by a committee comprising representatives from Education Department, Wafaq/Tanzeem/Rabita and a representative of the Madrassah concerned.

One-time grant will be released to all Madrassahs for purchase of reference books, furniture, computers and for the improvement of their libraries and buildings etc. Monitoring and evaluation of the Madrassahs will be the responsibility of education department in the provinces. Operational staff will be recruited on whole-time basis for 5 years duration. Monitoring and Evaluation of the project would be carried out by Federal Project Implementation Unit (FPIU), Liaison Officers and Provincial/Area Governments. For this purpose, they may utilize the services of the Executive District Education Officer (EDEO) or assign this task to some other agency/organization considered appropriate. All Project Management Units (PMUs) and Liaison Officers would maintain the record of their provinces/areas and submit quarterly and annual implementation reports to the FPIU regularly.

A National Steering Committee comprising Education Secretary (Chairman), Joint Educational Advisor (Curriculum Wing), Director of Project, all Education Secretaries to the relevant Education departments including AJK, Northern Areas and Director FATA, Chief Education P&D Division, DFA (Education) will be constituted to look after and check the overall activities of the project and to solve the problems/policy matters faced during the implementation phase. Sub-Steering Committees will be set up in each province/area on the pattern of National Steering Committee. These Steering Committees may be headed by

respective Secretaries of Education Departments and include representation from Home and Planning Departments and also include such other Departments, persons/organizations, as the Provincial/Area Government concerned may consider necessary. These Steering Committees will seek guidance from the National Steering Committee on policy issues.

The Madrassah Reforms are expected to yield the following results: Project will strengthen lines of communication between Madrassahs and the Government. It will educate about 1.5 million students. It will provide an opportunity for employment of 32,000 teachers. It will provide incentives through books, furniture, computers, printers and sports facilities to improve education system of Madrassahs.

Will it address the issue and achieve the Objective?

A dispassionate and analytical review of the project reveals that there are major question marks as far as the MOE, "Mainstream of Madaris Project" is concerned. Apart from the very conceptual issue of "how many Madaris are desirable or needed?". It is seen that there are major structural defects in the project. If one traces the genesis of project, it is based on giving incentives to the Madaris, "Incentives for what purpose?". The project was conceived as a complementary arrangement to the proposed (now shelved law), since there was need to encourage the Madaris to register under the new law, this project based on incentive of one time grant and teacher salary was created. However although the law has been shelved the incentive regime has been implemented. Which with present project management and monitoring arrangement, is free floating money for Madaris without any concomitant arrangement to deliver on espoused "Madrassah Reform".

2.12.1 Is it more fuel for fire?

It is seen that in the project under review, there is hardly any concrete monitoring arrangement. Rs 5.7 billion have been practically placed at disposal of Madrassah managers, with out any institutional, management and monitoring system in place. For following reasons it is feared that Madrassahs will keep on doing what they are doing at present, with the difference that it will be on state expense.

- The project states that resources will be given to Madaris which are registered. It fails to mention under which law? And what obligations does this registration imposed on the registered entity?, how efficient and effective is the registering authority. Unfortunately answers to all these questions is a very discomfoting No. Rather the project does not address these issues.

- The authority to appointment the teachers to teach the formal subjects have been given to a committee dominated by Madrassah system nominees, i.e representative of “Wifaq” and the Incharge of Madrassah. The only outsider will be the representative of district education department. In all probability this Tehsil level education department functionary is not going to “stick out his neck”. The feared scenario is that mostly teachers already working in Madrassahs will get parked on the government salary being given under the project. The present teachers if otherwise eligible cannot be debarred.
- The project has no funding or plan for training of teachers, an institution can only be reformed if we reform the people managing it, since the teachers will be the same, it is feared that they will run the same soft wear on taxpayers money.
- The National and Provincial steering committees are very narrow based consisting of official nominees, no member is there from civil society or any independent expert having knowledge and experience of Madrassah movement is there on the committee.
- A key question is does the provincial implementing agency the Education department or the Education foundation have the capacity and political will to monitor this project. The political will issue is more pertinent in NWFP and Baliuchistan, where Madrassah movement leadership is in the government.

2.12.2 Is reform based on correct analysis of the issue:

The architecture of the Madrassah reform is based on the assumption that having more Madrassahs is desirable and that Madrassahs are doing a great social and community service and hence need to be nurtured and supported.

Any public policy issue can only be successfully addressed if the “issue analysis” or problem diagnosis is correct. In this case the basic analysis is “Madrassah is largest NGO” and hence it should be supported and mainstreamed in to society.

The basic issue that how many Madrassah graduates does the society need?, and all the negative effects of Madaris, by way of intolerance to people who think differently has been ignored.

2.12.3 Is it advisable to pursue present reform agenda?

Until and unless the project in question is radically reviewed vis-à-vis, recruitment teachers, their training, more proactive and broad based Steering committees, linking the project to the new law on registration of Deeni Madaris, it will be extremely counter productive to push forward to present reform package.

2.12.4 What other policy options are available?

Number of policy options to address the issue are available. Prime one being, providing quality alternatives to people sending their children to Madras-

sahs, if Madrassah is providing free education, boarding and lodging, state should also provide the same. The control of genuine community members be built into the regulatory framework of Madrassah registration law. In its present form Madrassah is an individual owned enterprise, exploiting the community, rather than serving it.

3 Recommendations

Following recommendations are being made for making the Madrassah reform strategy effective and geared towards long term national development and security objectives

3.1 Regulatory/Legal Framework

The government since early 2000 has been committed to bring in a law for registration and regulation law for Madaris. To begin with there was a conflict between Ministry of Interior , seeking an effective law, and Ministry of religious affairs, lobbying for a softer law, or non at all. As a result of this lack of consensus with in the government, number of drafts laws never saw the light of the day.

Soon after the July 2005 London bombings and alleged connection of one of the bombers to a Madrassah in Pakistan, the demand and need for regulatory law re-emerged. Government responded by bringing in amendments to the Societies Registration Ordinance 1860, (SRA 1860) the law under which many Madaris are already registered. A new section in form of section 21, was introduced in the 1860 law, this provided for mandatory registration and required the Madaris to submit annual performance report , give an account of funding, and get annual audits done. It also prohibited teaching resulting in sectarianism, and hatred towards other religions.

The federation of Madaris and cross sect platform of different sections called "Tanzeem is Difah Madaris –e- Dinnah, (organization for Defense of Madaris) reused to accept the amendments and even the dead line of 31 December 2005 for registration under the new law.

As a result of this dead lock the government has brought a fresh amendment to the section 21, of societies act of 1860, in December 2005. This amendment has further diluted the previous toothless and innocuous amendment. The requirement for reporting on funding has been removed, and provision has been

created for teaching comparative religions and study of different schools of thought, thus opening a window for preaching and propagating sectarianism and hatred for other religions and faiths.

In 1996 the federal government had imposed a ban on registration of Madaris under societies act 1860, it was for the reason that this law only registers the management committees of charitable or literary societies and is not for regulation of Madaris, at best it will register the management committee and not the Madrassah itself.

Previously when Madrassahs were registered under the SRA 1860, an elaborate due diligence procedure vis-à-vis the status of land , antecedents of organizers, views of majority residents of locality was laid down. In the registration process being implemented under the new initiative and the amended SRA 1860, executive instructions has been conveyed by ministry of religious affairs to do away with all the requirements, and simply register the Madaris through fast track

Key to any reform effort is in having the legal framework right. In case of Madrassah reform strategy sine quo non is to have a special law for regulation of Madrassahs, it should cater for registration, create concomitant statutory obligation on registered entity and its sponsors, by way of governance, financial accountability, and responsibility towards society.

The law should among other issues must provide for following elements.

- No Madrassah can be established or run with out been registered. The minimum threshold should be as low as possible.
- No Madrassah will be allowed to be constructed on state land, specially, right of way on highways, green belts, parks, public utilities.
- It will be mandatory to have local council representatives in the management committee or board of directors of Madaris.
- A cap is placed on maximum number of students that a Madrassah can take in, a figure of 500 as upper ceiling is proposed.
- Among the management committee or BOD 75 % members will be residents of the locality in which Madrassah is established.
- No more than 20% students of other districts can be residential students, 80% students have to be from the district in which Madrassah is established.

3.2 How to give Madrassah back to community

Although it is frequently said that Madrassah is a community owned indigenous institution, in practice Madrassahs particularly urban Madrassahs are completely divorced from the community. There is hardly any local student

studying in them, there is no representation of local residents in management of Madrassah. In fact management committee is the Madrassah Incharge and his relatives or associates, and he in most cases manages the Madrassah as a personal enterprise. Case in point is Madrassahs in Islamabad, where 90% students are from NWFP, Northern areas and districts other than Islamabad. Hardly any management committee of registered Madaris has local residents as members.

There is need to give this indigenous institution back to the community, the above suggested reforms can get the Madrassah back to the community.

3.2.1 Funding Resource flow to Madrassahs

Apart from the philanthropic donations the most substantial resource flow to Madaris has been gifting away of prime state/public land. This undocumented transfer of resources has been great source of growth of Madaris. As already proposed the construction of Madaris on state/public land is an offence and needs to be treated as such.

Zakat is also a substantial resource flow to Madaris, approximately 150 million rupees are given by over 100 district zakat committees⁴ to Madaris all over Pakistan. In Islamabad DZC gives approx 2.0 million rupees to different Madaris. These funds are meant for food and lodging of students, how ever the DZC's give these funds directly to the managers of Madrassahs, and these are mostly utilized for infrastructure development and other expenses. Proper utilization of zakat funds needs to be emphasized

3.2.2 Educational or curricular reform

The Deeni Madrassah Board was set up with the sole objective of reforming the curriculum of Madaris. The board so far has not really taken off, a full time chairperson has not been appointed since the first chairperson retired. The declared policy of government that it will not work on curriculum reform has undermined the rationale for setting up the Deeni Madrassah board. The performance of the board needs a critical review

3.2.3 Institutional and organizational aspect of reform.

The Madrassah reform cannot succeed until and unless the institutional mechanism for its implementation is in place. The cutting edge of any policy implementation is at district level. After devolution the regulatory functions of the state are under immense stress. Regulating Madrassahs at local and dis-

⁴ See the Annual Report 2002 of Central Zakat Council.

trict level, considering the political and social clout of Madaris managers, apart from street power at their command, is a big challenge.

At present Madrassah reform is not on agenda of any institution at district level. Education department can at best only manage the “Mainstreaming of Madaris” project. But considering that Madrassah reform has many other aspects. There is need to set up a interdepartmental committee headed by Nazim or DCO for steering the reform agenda.

At present the Madaris registration at district level under the amended SRA 1860 is done by the Executive District Officer (Finance and Planning) and secretariat support is given by the District officer (Investment Promotion and Enterprise Development). Both these officers have no field formation under them. The EDO(F & P) was made the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies, since small investors also register their partnership firms with him. He is thus doing the Madaris registration as a marginal job.

The policy directions of the federal government are being routed through Provincial Auqaf Department. This department hardly has any district level elaborate institutional presence, more over the Auqaf department was never decentralized. All these issues present an extremely fragmented picture. This will further dissipate impact of new law.

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Appendix

Table 1 Profile of Madrassahs in Ahmad Pur East in 2004

S.#	Police Station	Total # of Madaris		Number of Madrassahs				Number of Madaris Getting Govt. Aid Zakat	Total Villages in Police Station	Number of Villages without Madaras	No. of Registered Madaras
		% age of Total	Deobandi	Brelewi	Al-Hadith	Al-Tashree	Sect Wise Detail Number & %age				
1	Naushera Jadid	92	26	62 (68)	26 (28)	01 (01)	03 (03)	15	41	12	01
2	Uch Sharif	113	32	58 (51)	44 (39)	07 (06)	04 (04)	04	47	16	06
3	Ahmadpur Sadar	77	22	10 (13)	63 (82)	04 (05)	00 (00)	07	45	16	14
4	Ahmadpur City	40	09	15 (47)	16 (50)	09 (03)	00 (00)	04	07	02	06
5	Chanigoth	36	10	18 (50)	15 (42)	00 (00)	03 (08)	04	47	29	08
6	Dera Nawab	05	01	03 (60)	02 (40)	00 (00)	00 (00)	00	00	00	04
TOTAL		363	100	166 (45.8%)	166 (45.8%)	21 (5.7%)	10 (2.75%)	34	187	75	39

Table 2 Profile of Madrassahs in Ahmad PurEast in 1994

#	Police Station	Number of Madrassahs					Number of Madrassahs Getting Govt. Aid Zakat	Total Villages in Police Station	Number of Villages without Madrassahs	
		#	%	Sect Wise Detail Number & %age						
				Deobandi	Brelewi	Al-Hadith	Al-Tashee			
1	Naushera Jadid	63	24	56 89%	05 08%	00 00%	02 02%	13	41	12
2	Uch Sharif	93	35	37 40%	50 54%	05 05%	01 01%	03	47	16
3	Ahmadpur Sadar	46	17	07 15%	35 77%	04 08%	00 00%	05	45	16
4	Ahmadpur City	31	12	11 35%	10 32%	10 32%	00 00%	04	07	02
5	Chanigoth	32	12	16 50%	13 41%	00 00%	03 09%	04	47	29
6	Dera Nawab	01	00	01 100%	00 00%	00 00%	00 00%	00	00	00
	TOTAL	266		128 48%	113 42%	19 07%	06 02%	29	187	75

Table 3 Student Population in Madrassahs

#	Police Station	Number of Students (Break-up of different sects)												Police Station Wise Total
		Deobandi			Brelevi			Ahl-e-Hadith			Ahl-e-Tashee			
		Res	Non Res	Total	Res	Non Res	Total	Res	Non Res	Total	Res	Non Res	Total	
1	Naushera Jadid	3149	2117	5266	1576	490	2066	30	10	40	104	45	149	7521
2	Uch Sharif	759	3366	4125	667	1796	2463	270	265	535	52	55	107	7230
3	Ahmadpur Sadar	274	343	617	2185	2111	4296	91	180	271	0	0	0	5184
4	Ahmadpur City	768	1138	1906	446	524	970	240	280	520	0	0	0	3396
5	Chanigoth	324	974	1298	207	931	1138	0	0	0	5	175	180	2606
6	Dera Nawab	100	20	120	72	40	112	0	0	0	0	0	0	232
	TOTAL	5374	7958	13332	5153	5892	11045	631	735	1366	161	275	436	26169

Table 4 Status of Registration

S.#	Police Station	Number of Madaras								No. of Registered Madaras
		Sect Wise Detail Number & Registration								
		Deobandi		Brelevi		Al-Hadith		Al-Tashee		
		Total Madaras	Reg.	Total Madaras	Reg.	Total Madaras	Reg.	Total Madaras	Reg.	
		% age of Total								
		Tot. # of Mad								
1	Naushera Jadid	62	01	26	00	01	00	03	00	01
2	Uch Sharif	58	02	44	04	07	00	04	00	06
3	Ahmadpur Sadar	10	01	63	13	04	00	00	00	14
4	Ahmadpur City	15	03	16	03	09	00	00	00	06
5	Chanigoth	18	04	15	03	00	00	03	01	08
6	Dera Nawab	03	02	02	02	00	00	00	00	04
	TOTAL	166	13	166	25	21	00	10	01	39

Table 5

S #	Police Station	Tot. # of Mad	Located on State land	% age of Total	Number of Madaras				No. of Registered Madaras
					Sect Wise Detail Number & %age			No. of Registered Madaras	
					Deobandi	Brelewi	Al-Hadith		Al-Tashee
1	Appara	14	14	12	09	04	0	01	8
2	Khosar	18	18	15	12	05	0	01	9
3	Margalla	20	20	17	16	04	0	0	6
4	Golra	27	26	23	16	10	01	0	6
5	Tarnol	05	0	04	01	04	0	0	0
6	Bharkau	09	1	08	06	03	0	0	0
7	I-9	15	15	1	05	09	01	0	01
8	Sihala	02	0	02	01	0	0	01	0
9	Secretariat	07	7	06	04	02	0	01	02
TOTAL		117	101		70 (60)	41 (35)	02 (02)	04 (03)	32