

**The Influence of Madrasa Education on the Social Life of
Ulamā: A Case Study of Islamabad, Pakistan**

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Islamic Studies at the
Faculty of Social Islamic Studies in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of**

Master of Arts (M.A.)



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ABSTRACT

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The madrassa system in Pakistan offers an alternate kind of education. Different educational systems in Pakistan contribute to the development of various social and political ideologies. The madrassa system is the most significant, directly impacting the socialization process. Therefore, the current study explores the impacts of madrasa education on the social lives of Ulamā in Islamabad, Pakistan. Evolving from a qualitative research approach, the study will assess how the madrasa system affects the social life engagements of the students, particularly Ulamā with educational backgrounds from madrasa units. The research uses purposive sampling to recruit twenty Ulamā from three madrasas across different levels of education. In data collection, interviews were conducted using structured and unstructured questions, giving a broader view of their stand. The findings of this study show that madrasa education has a very profound influence on students' social life subjectivities. The curriculum matters most here and covers religious aspects, and values children should learn to uphold in society. The students commit firmly to their communities and religious obligations, often performing leadership responsibilities in their areas. Ulamā, regarded as students of madrasas, are in important positions in leadership and spiritual teachings of society. The education they receive empowers them as knowledgeable and assisting authority in social and religious spheres. In this case, the madrasas ensure that positive responsibility is taken from the students to continue contributing to the betterment of society and adhere to ethical behavior. The madrasa system is known for following a conventional approach to education, memorizing, and formula-promoting scriptural learning as opposed to contemporary educational theories. However, it suits its purpose of maintaining religious and cultural teaching. In light of this study, incorporating modern educational practices with the madrasa curriculum is required to improve student's critical thinking and organizational involvement. Indeed, while they play a more prominent role in education, madrasas are not without their problems, including short supplies and public view of them as harbors of terrorism. To eradicate such issues, there is a need for policy change and the provision of educational support from the authorities. The study reveals the need for early education in the madrasas, i.e., there is a need to have a proper plan to mold the young learners' socio-moral beings. This can help ensure that the society-produced madrasa graduates are qualified to be Islamic scholars and ordinary citizens in society. It is determined that madrasa education significantly affects the students' socio-religious intended role in society and conduct. It is helpful for stakeholders such as the government and schools to know these findings when implementing religious education with family planning and other social development initiatives.

Keywords: Madrasa Education, Ulamā, Socio-religious, Islamabad, Islamic Education.

الملخص

الاسم: عثمان وحيد

كلية الدراسات الإسلامية

الجامعة الإسلامية العالمية الإندونيسية

الموضوع: تأثير التعليم في المدارس الدينية على الحياة الاجتماعية للعلماء: دراسة نوعية لمدينة إسلام آباد، باكستان

تعد نظام المدارس الدينية في باكستان من أبرز المدارس التي تساهم الأنظمة التعليمية في تطوير العديد من الأيديولوجيات الاجتماعية والسياسية. ولها أهمية كبيرة حيث تؤثر بشكل مباشر على عملية التنشئة الاجتماعية. لذلك، تستكشف الدراسة الحالية عن تأثيرات التعليم في المدارس الدينية على الحياة الاجتماعية للعلماء في إسلام آباد، باكستان. وتستهدف الدراسة تقييم كيفية تأثير نظام المدرسة الدينية على الانخراطات الاجتماعية للطلاب، خصوصاً العلماء الذين لديهم خلفيات تعليمية من وحدات المدرسة الدينية. يستخدم البحث أسلوب العينة الهادفة لتجنيد عشرين عالماً من ثلاث مدارس دينية على مستويات تعليمية مختلفة. وذلك من خلال نصح البحثي النوعي، عن طريق المقابلات الشخصية و باستخدام أسئلة منظمة وغير منظمة، للحصول على رؤية أوسع لموقفهم. وأظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة أن التعليم في المدارس الدينية له تأثير عميق جداً على الحياة الاجتماعية للطلاب. المنهج هنا له الأهمية الكبرى ويغطي الجوانب الدينية والقيم التي يجب أن يتعلمها الأطفال للتمسك بها في المجتمع. يلتزم الطلاب بشدة بمجتمعهم والتزامهم الدينية، وغالباً ما يؤدون مسؤوليات قيادية في مناطقهم. يُعتبر العلماء، كطلاب المدارس الدينية، في مواقع هامة في القيادة والتعليم الروحي في المجتمع. التعليم الذي يتلقونه يمكنهم كسلطة معرفية ومساعدة في المجالات الاجتماعية والدينية. في هذه الحالة، تضمن المدارس الدينية أن يتحمل الطلاب المسؤولية الإيجابية للمساهمة في تحسين المجتمع والالتزام بالسلوك الأخلاقي. يُعرف نظام المدرسة الدينية باتباع نصح تقليدي في التعليم، يركز على الحفظ وتعزيز التعلم النصي بدلاً من النظريات التعليمية المعاصرة. ومع ذلك، فإنه يناسب غرضه في الحفاظ على التعليم الديني والثقافي. في ضوء هذه الدراسة، يتطلب دمج الممارسات التعليمية الحديثة مع منهج المدرسة الدينية لتحسين التفكير النقدي للطلاب والمشاركة التنظيمية. بالفعل، بينما يلعبون دوراً بارزاً في التعليم، لا تخلو المدارس الدينية من مشكلاتها، بما في ذلك نقص الموارد والنظرة العامة إليهم كحاضنات للإرهاب. للقضاء على مثل هذه المشكلات، هناك حاجة إلى تغيير السياسات وتوفير الدعم التعليمي من السلطات. تكشف الدراسة عن الحاجة إلى التعليم المبكر في المدارس الدينية، أي الحاجة إلى وجود خطة مناسبة لتشكيل الكائنات الاجتماعية والأخلاقية للمتعلمين الصغار. يمكن أن يساعد ذلك في ضمان أن الخريجين من المدارس الدينية في المجتمع مؤهلون ليكونوا علماء إسلاميين ومواطنين عاديين في المجتمع. يتم تحديد أن التعليم في المدارس الدينية يؤثر بشكل كبير على الدور الاجتماعي والديني للطلاب في المجتمع وسلوكهم.

كلمات مفتاحية: المدارس الدينية، العلماء، الاجتماعي-الديني، إسلام آباد، التعليم الإسلامي

TRANSLITERATION GUIDE

Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman
ا	a	س	s	ل	l
ب	b	ش	sh	م	m
ت	t	ص	ṣ	ن	n
ث	th	ض	ḍ	و	w
ج	j	ط	ṭ	ه	h
ح	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ي	y
خ	kh	ع	'		
د	d	غ	gh		
ذ	dh	ف	f		
ر	r	ق	q		
ز	z	ك	k		

Short Vocal

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
َ	a	جَلَسَ	<i>jalasa</i>
ِ	i	رَكِبَ	<i>rakiba</i>
ُ	u	كُتِبَ	<i>kutiba</i>

Long Vocal

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
آ/أ	ā	جَرَى/سَافِر	<i>jarā/sāfar</i>
ي	ī	سَلِيم	<i>salīm</i>
و	ū	سَجُود	<i>sujūd</i>

Diphthong

Arab Alphabet	Roman Alphabet	Arabic Example	Transliteration
أُو	aw	مَولَا	<i>mawlā</i>
أَيُّ	ay	غَيب	<i>ghayb</i>

Notes:

1. Consonant with shaddah (◌◌) for instance, أُمَّة is written as *ummah* (double letters).
2. Arabic letter *hamzah* (ء) at the beginning of a word is transliterated into “a” not into “`a”. For instance, أحمد is written as *aḥmad* not *`aḥmad*.
3. Arabic script of *alif-lam qamariyah* (ال) is written as “al” at the beginning of words and *alif-lam shamsiyah* (ا) is written in accordance with the first letter at the beginning of words. For instance:

المائدة : al-mā'idah

الرحمان : ar-rahmān

4. Arabic letter *ta' marbutah* (ة) is written as “h” when it is located at the end of the words, such as البقرة is written as *al-baqarah*. When located in the middle of a sentence is written as “t”, such as أُمَّة وَسَطًا is written as *ummatan wasaṭan*.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

This research aims to empirically examine the impact of madrassah education on the social lives of Ulamā in the Islamabad region of Pakistan. Madrasa education in Pakistan has a rich historical legacy, tracing back to the early Islamic period and evolving significantly over the centuries.¹ Thus, madrasas as traditional Islamic schools are an important educational tradition², which not only acted as schools of Islamic sciences, but also as religious, social, and, in some cases, political power centers. At present, Pakistan has several madrasas which are associated with different Islamic sects and provide education with dissimilar curriculums mainly concerning religious subjects such as *Tafsīr* (exegesis) of the Noble Quran, Sunnah³, *Fiqh* (jurisprudence), ‘*Ulūm al-Qu’ran* (knowledge of the Noble Quran), and Arabic language, etc. As important as they are for the continuation of the Islamic scholarship, these institutions are often in focus thanks to controversies as to their relevance to modern society, their links to extremism, and the issue of reform. While attempts to reform the madrasa education have been made, some of the undertaken interventions call for the incorporation of secular subjects to increase the prospects of employment for graduates, as well as the introduction of the moderate version of Islām interpretation and promotion.⁴

The Ulamā, experts in Islamic law, Ḥadīth, Quranic interpretation, and religious guidance, have greatly influenced the prevailing theological discussions in Muslim cultures for most of Islamic history. According to Zaman, the Ulamā (singular: Alim) is an Arabic term that refers to Islamic scholars or religious experts who have acquired extensive information on Islamic sciences, as well as Quranic exegesis (*Tafsīr*), Ḥadīth (prophetic traditions), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), In addition, other related disciplines.⁵ The Ulamā are considered the

¹ Usman Afaq, “The Evolution of Islamic Education in Pakistan,” *Harf-o-Sukhan* 8, no. 2 (June 4, 2024): 609–20.

² Traditional Islamic education means, an Islamic education system which is based on the Islamic curriculum.

³ Sunnah is the body of traditional social and legal customs and practices of the Islamic community, based on the teachings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad.

⁴ Mumtaz Ahmad, “Madrasa Education in Pakistan and Bangladesh,” 2004; Tariq Rahman, “Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Survey of Students and Teachers at Pakistan’s Urdu and English Language-Medium Schools, and Madrasas,” *Contemporary South Asia* 13, no. 3 (September 1, 2004): 307–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0958493042000272212>.

⁵ Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām: Custodians of Change* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

inheritors and transmitters of Islamic knowledge and play a crucial role in interpreting and guiding the Muslim community on matters of faith, law, and social affairs.⁶ According to Zaman, "Ulamā" traditionally refers to those who have acquired a high level of religious education and training, typically through the traditional Islamic educational system of madrasas (religious seminaries) or informal study circles.⁷ Historically, the Ulamā have held significant influence and authority in Muslim societies, serving as religious leaders, educators, judges, and advisors to rulers.⁸ They have played a vital part in shaping Islamic thought, jurisprudence, and societal norms throughout history.⁹ In contemporary times, the Ulamā continues to hold sway in various Muslim communities, particularly in matters related to religious interpretation, Fatwā (religious edicts), and the preservation of Islamic traditions.¹⁰

Religion has a tremendous effect on all communities and cultures around the globe. It has been shown to drive societal development throughout history, pushing individuals to build moral traits and encouraging them to help others and improve their society. Tolerance, compassion, love, justice, humility, sacrifice, trustworthiness, commitment to the well-being of everyone, and solidarity—these essential moral principles at the heart of religion—form the foundation of modern society.¹¹ So, social life and individual skills involve setting up secure and trustworthy relationships, productive relationships with other people, persistence, solving issues, developing understanding, recognizing and expressing emotions, and resolving dividing conflicts, along with the ability to awaken inactive faculties for challenging situations.¹²

Studying the social life of Ulamā is crucial for several reasons. First, Ulamā, as a part of the scholarly engaged in teaching and interpretation of the Islamic law and theology, command vast control over religious and to some extent social life of Muslims. They use religious texts to influence moral guidelines and norms of the society, and such norms ranges from individual mannerisms, etiquette and even laws.¹³ Second, awareness of the social

⁶ Barbara Metcalf, "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India on JSTOR," 1978, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/311825>.

⁷ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

⁸ Francis Robinson, *Islām and Muslim History in South Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁹ Metcalf, "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India on JSTOR."

¹⁰ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹¹ Akhter Hossain, "EVALUATION OF ETHICAL VALUES TO DEVELOP GLOBAL HUMAN RESOURCE," *Journal of Liberal Arts and Humanities*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.48150/jlah.v4no5.2023.a1>.

¹² Marion C. Hyson, *The Emotional Development of Young Children: Building an Emotion-Centered Curriculum* (Teachers College Press, P, 2004).

¹³ Metcalf, "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India on JSTOR."

characteristics of Ulamā improves comprehension of their position in society and their relations with political authorities, schools, and the common people as a whole.¹⁴ Third, understanding the social lives of the Ulamā will help to discover how the education of madrasa reform affects their social identity, enculturation, and leadership practices. This is particularly relevant to the discussion of Pakistan, where the Ulamā can most of the time become involved in the process of mobilization and demobilization of the sectarian conflict and support or oppose specific socio-political changes.¹⁵ In the end, the quality of such studies may be of interest for policymaking, for instance, in the sphere of educational reforms, or the processes of social reintegration of the madrasa graduates into the society of the country.¹⁶

Contextualizing Islamabad as a case study for examining the influence of madrasa education on the social life of Ulamā is essential for several reasons. Firstly, Islamabad is the political, cultural, and educational capital of Pakistan making it an important location for further study. It can accommodate a diverse population such as government employees, diplomats and different ethnical and religious groups therefore it is a representative sample of the overall population in Pakistan.¹⁷ Secondly, Pakistan has a large number of madrasas, many of which are located in Islamabad together with modern schools and universities that allow compare educational outcomes. In addition, most of the madrassah sectors like Brelevi, Deobandi, Jamā‘at-e-Islāmī, Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, and Shī‘ah offer Islamic teaching in the same areas. These are typically non- state, communal Madrassahs that are initiated and run independently of government influence. Islamic schools in the city can accommodate students from various regions and backgrounds for a comparative analysis of how education in a madrasa impacts social relationship, community position, and identity of the Ulamā.¹⁸ Thirdly, being the political capital of Pakistan, the role and stance of Ulamā in Islamabad can shape national policies including the educational systems and social integration.¹⁹ Finally, many religious and

¹⁴ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹⁵ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama‘at-i Islāmi of Pakistan* (University of California Press, 1994).

¹⁶ Jamal Ahmad, “Family and Community Expectations of Madrasa Graduates.,” *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 2019.

¹⁷ Dr. Javed Ali Kalhoro and Dr. Sarfraz Khan, “Education and Radicalization; Is There Any Causative Relationship? A Case Study of Pakistan,” *Journal of Law & Social Studies* 4, no. 1 (March 31, 2022): 20, <https://doi.org/10.52279/jlss.04.01.1329>.

¹⁸ Saleem H. Ali, *Islām and Education: Conflict and Conformity in Pakistan* (OUP Pakistan, 2009).

¹⁹ Ali Riaz, *Faithful Education: Madrassahs in South Asia* (Rutgers University Press, 2008), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5hxxz5>.

sectarian groups are present in Islamabad, which could provide a chance to assess the problems of madrasa education, sectarianism, and social cohesion on the example of a city where these influences are rather limited.²⁰

This study was conducted using a qualitative research approach. This study examined many aspects of madrasah education locally using a qualitative methodology. More focus was placed on examining participant impressions and viewpoints in the research region than statistical analysis. This approach allowed researchers to conduct interviews with persons affiliated with and unaffiliated with madrasahs, thereby gathering data to fulfill the study's research objectives. It also included comprehensive information on many socioeconomic, cultural, and religious aspects, all of these factors were essential for understanding the true nature of the madrasah education phenomenon in Islamabad.

This study investigates the impact of madrasa education, identifying the authority of understanding their educational impact on Ulamā. As this study explores the influence of madrasa education on the social life of Ulamā, we can easily find the trends and impacts of madrasahs on society in detail. By doing so, this study aims to offer readers a snapshot and will uncover the positive and negative effects of madrasah education on students' social and religious lives. This exploration seeks to find the implemented educational philosophy on the socio-religious development of students and the embedded societal impact of Madrasa education.

The findings of this study reveal that madrasa education significantly shapes the social life of Ulamā, the curriculum based on Islamic education develops religious responsibility and a sense of responsive citizens among students. Ulamā the majority of whom have been trained by madrasahs are viewed as leaders and people with a lot of authority in the society. It prepares them to be knowledgeable and to have sound ethical direction to the social and religious affairs keeping the society glued together and individuals ethical in their conduct. One of the key findings is that madrasa students develop firm commitments to their communities and religious obligations. On most occasions, they are involved in most of the leadership issues and responsibilities within the social and even spiritual lives of the people. This feeling of

²⁰ Farzana Hassan Shahid, "The Role of Pakistan's Madrasahs in the Alleged Growth of Intolerance in Pakistani Society," *University of Phoenix*, 2010.

obligation and devotion is attained and owed squarely to the madrasa's curriculum and norms. The study also reveals that madrasas also promote group address and responsibility among the students which will make them responsible citizens of the society.

Moreover, the present study also reveals a few issues of the madrasa education system in Pakistan. Didactic education, patterns of learning, memorizing of texts, and scriptures can be seen as being at the opposite end of the continuum from contemporary theories of learning and education. On the one hand, this strategy ensures religious and cultural values' transmission, but on the other, there is a rising necessity in the modern curricula's incorporation into the madrasa system to help students succeed in the current society. However, the following challenges are seen to affect madrasas among them being shortage of resources and negative public image whereby they are considered as compounds of extremism. Solving these problems means the need for policy measures, as well as organizing educational authorities to improve the material-technical provision of education and change the perception of madrasas. The study also underpins the infancy education within Islamic madrasas and stresses the need to have a blueprint that shapes young learners within the contexts of socio-moral development. This approach can effectively help in training decent citizens or persons who passed through a madrasa able to positively influence the religious as well as the secular realms.

This study provides valuable insights into madrasa education's role in shaping students' socio-religious development in Pakistan. By highlighting the strengths and challenges of the madrasa system, the study offers recommendations for integrating modern educational practices to enhance critical thinking and societal engagement among students. These findings are crucial for policymakers and educators aiming to integrate religious education with broader social development goals, ultimately contributing to the progress and harmony of contemporary society.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What is the influence of madrasa education on the social life of Ulamā during their study period within the madrasa?
2. What is the impact of madrasa education on the social life of Ulamā after they graduate from the madrasa?

1.3 Research Objectives

- To examine the influence of madrasa education on the social life of Ulamā during their study period in madrasas. This objective aims to understand how the environment, curriculum, and social interactions within the madrasa impact the social behaviors, networks, and activities of the Ulamā during the study period.
- To evaluate the impact of madrasa education on the social life of Ulamā after they graduated from the madrasa. This objective focuses on assessing the long-term effects of madrasa education on the Ulamā social integration, career paths, community involvement, and influence in society.

1.4 Study Significance

The significance of this study is in presenting the complexity of the role of madrasa education in the social life of the Ulamā in Islamabad, Pakistan. Consequently, understanding the patterns underpinning madrasa education concerning the social roles, community involvement, and perceptions of Ulamā provides relevant insights into the general sociopolitical culture in the capital city. In that sense, this study addresses a research need by providing evidence that stems from the context of Pakistan and addresses policy and educational issues by discussing how religious education impacts social inclusion and community leadership. The conclusions made based on this study can be useful for explaining how the good work of Pakistani madrasas can be supported while minimizing any problems regarding social inclusion or relations between different faiths. This research will uniquely analyze education, Islamic studies, sociology, and religious studies. The findings of this research will be fruitful for policymakers in structuring a comprehensive educational policy to respond to the challenges faced by the madrasa in Pakistan.

Thus, the theoretical and methodological importance of this study is reflected in the use of Bourdieu's Social Capital Theory, and the non-traditional research approach based on the analysis of qualitative data collected through the survey of the Ulamā in Islamabad, Pakistan about the impact of the madrasa education. The study is novel, it provides a perspective on the role of religious education in forming the social roles and identities of the Ulamā by applying the often-underutilized Bourdieu's Social Capital Theory. The qualitative research method of interviews, participant observation, and documentary data collection allows for an understanding and exploration of the Ulamā beyond counting the number of

organizations they established, discovering what they believe about the role of the community in facilitating and identifying the social dynamics, the deeper and more contextual individual information needed for an understanding of the community and its dynamics. Such theoretical development and methodological approaches make the study different from the previous literature, suggesting important policy implications for policymakers and educators in formulating integrated educational policies; and for recognizing the positive roles of the madrasas besides addressing issues of social integration as well as social cohesion and inter-religious relations.

1.5 Literature Review

An extensive body of academic research has examined various aspects of madrasa education and the roles of Ulamā, shedding light on their historical evolution, contemporary functions, and socio-political impact. These studies provide valuable insights but also invite critical evaluation regarding their methodologies, scope, and conclusions.

The madrasa education is the historic and enduring system of Islamic intellectual and spiritual formation that played a crucial role in reforming Muslims' social life. Madrasas in Pakistan play the role of education and social facilities mainly for the Ulamā which included Islamic scholars. Previous scholarly works of Metcalf, Nasr, and Rahman explain the former face of madrasas in South Asia and look at its educational, political, and community aspects.²¹ It may be essential to note that these studies rarely or carelessly take into account the social and personal experiences of the Ulamā enhanced by madrasa education. In the section of Dars-i-Nizāmī, the routine learning in the typical curriculum of Pakistani madrasas concentrates on the Quran, Ḥadīth, and Fiqh. Such approaches are described by Rahman and Zaman,²² where the study showed that the education mechanisms used included rote learning and memorization. Nonetheless, there is actually very little research that seeks to understand how this educational framework in fact molds the social aspects and relations of Ulamā.

Even though most of Ulamā influence is confined to religious teachings, they also possess social clout that saturates social teachings that involve dispute resolutions, charity

²¹ Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton University Press, 2014); Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*; Rahman, "Denizens of Alien Worlds," September 1, 2004.

²² Rahman, "Denizens of Alien Worlds," September 1, 2004; Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

works, and political negotiations. As illustrated by Eickelman & Piscatori²³ and Weiss²⁴ the Ulamā have been involved in various capacities; however, they do not explain the exact impact that madrasa education has had on their social relations. Moreover, madrasas serve as a means of social promotion, the students of which, mostly come from low-income families. It is for this reason, that Bano and Malik refer to madrasas as safe havens for poor children although this is discussed about all students in madrasas and not the Ulamā.²⁵ Such as; madrasa reforms have been called recently due to extremism and sectarianism, etc. which has been reported by Fair and Andrabi et al.²⁶ Nevertheless, the influence of the above reforms on the social life of the Ulamā has not been researched to its full potential.

The madrasa education spreads to the families and communities of Ulamā. A couple of studies revealed the expectations and roles the families and communities hold on the madrasa graduates Patoni and Rifai and Jamal.²⁷ Still, there is a paucity of information on the process of personal as well as social relationships among the Ulamā families in Islamabad. Employment opportunities for graduates and volatile economic conditions related to the madrasa education are also important issues. While Ali assesses the matters related to the economic prospects of the madrasa graduates, there is a lack of investigations considering the impact of economic issues on their status and standard of living.²⁸

One significant area of research has focused on the growth that is feasible as Islām spreads since it influences the private values of the Muslim individual and the financial

²³ Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton University Press, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780691187785>.

²⁴ Anita M. Weiss, *Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan: The Application of Islamic Laws in a Modern State* (Syracuse University Press, 2020).

²⁵ Masooda Bano, "(PDF) Contesting Ideologies and Struggle for Authority: State-Madrasa Engagement in Pakistan," 2007, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279444227_Contesting_ideologies_and_struggle_for_authority_State-Madrasa_engagement_in_Pakistan; Jamal Malik, *Madrasas in South Asia: Teaching Terror?* (Routledge, 2007).

²⁶ C. Christine Fair, *The Madrassah Challenge: Militancy and Religious Education in Pakistan* (United States Institute of Peace Press, 2008); Tahir Andrabi et al., "Religious School Enrollment in Pakistan: A Look at the Data," *Comparative Education Review* 50 (April 1, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.667843>.

²⁷ Ahmad Patoni And Rifai, "The Role of Religious Leaders in Socio-Economic Development: A Case Study of Ulamā in Pakistan," *IJC Heart & Vasculature* 45 (2019): 101191, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijcha.2023.101191>; Jamal Ahmad, "Family and Community Expectations of Madrasa Graduates.," *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 2019.

²⁸ Riaz, *Faithful Education*.

business.²⁹ Dobbin points out that in the earliest Islamic countries, particularly in Sumatra, the Qur'an was established as a fundamental concept that guided general behavior and engaged in the morality of social activities. The Qur'an was employed as an alternative to the traditional method of governing society's affairs during the period. Aside from that, the Messenger of Allah's (PBUH) teaching (Sunnah) is significant in individuals' and communities' essential religious lives.³⁰

Kusakabe's research on four villages in Bangladesh aimed to understand the factors influencing the popularity of madrasas.³¹ The study examined how madrasas adapt to societal changes and how locals evaluate their role in obtaining livelihoods. The comparative study aimed to understand how madrasas fulfill and respond to villagers' needs. Hira Shakeel's qualitative research on madrasa challenges found that reforms have not been effectively implemented due to rigid stances between the government and madrasa authorities.³² The study suggests that overcoming differences and collaborating with religious authorities can help counter the rise of religious extremism in Pakistan through mutual efforts. Ejaz and Mehfooz, research explores the Madrasa education system, focusing on curricula and teaching methods to identify solutions and promote positive change in the country.³³ Akhtar conducted a qualitative research study on the impact of Sympathetic Madrassah Education in Pakistan.³⁴ The study focused on enhancing madrassahs and their political engagement, particularly their alleged connections with militancy.

²⁹ EG Sukoharsono, "Accounting in a Historical Transition: A Shifting Dominant Belief from Hindu to Islamic Administration in Indonesia," *Accounting Commerce and Finance: The Islamic Perspective*. Jakarta, Indonesia., n.d.

³⁰ Vincent Houben, "Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy: Central Sumatra 1784 - 1847, Christine Dobbin," *Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series*, 1983, https://www.academia.edu/42027561/Islamic_Revivalism_in_a_Changing_Peasant_Economy_Central_Sumatra_1784_1847_Christine_Dobbin.

³¹ Tatsuya Kusakabe, "Diversification of Madrasa Education in Rural Bangladesh: Comparative Study of Four Villages" (Hiroshima University, Japan, 2013), <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Diversification-of-Madrasa-Education-in-Rural-%3A-of-Kusakabe/685352e6980c54a0aeb50fe9e712e3e0314c6642>.

³² Hira Shakeel and Irfan Mahsud, "The Challenge to Madrasa Reforms in Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of Criminology* 12 (2020).

³³ Huma Ejaz, Musferah Mehfooz, and Dr Muhammad Iqbal, "Madāris Educational System: Identifying Loopholes and the Way Out," *Al-Qamar*, December 31, 2020, 79–92.

³⁴ Waheed Akhtar, "Understanding Madrassah Education and Its Impacts. A Case Study of Chach (Attock) Region in Pakistan," University of Bradford, 2012, <https://bradscholars.brad.ac.uk/handle/10454/5659>.

In contemporary contexts, studies have explored the curriculum and pedagogy of madrasas. For instance, Muhammad Qasim Zaman's "The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām" examines how traditional Islamic education adapts to modern challenges.³⁵ Zaman discusses the tension between preserving classical Islamic knowledge and responding to contemporary socio-political issues, illustrating how madrasas navigate these complexities. His work is commendable for its nuanced understanding of the internal dynamics of madrasa education. Nevertheless, some scholars critique Zaman's work for not sufficiently addressing the impact of globalization and technological advancements on madrasa curricula and pedagogical practices.

Another study done by Ghani and Ghani sought to understand the effect of madrasas on political socialisation taking an account of the fact that they have a predisposing function of social and political opinionate.³⁶ Angela & Aijazi argue against the usual perception of madrasas as negative establishments, which are spatially located in urban environments and have a role in providing and facilitating religion to the inhabitants of cities.³⁷ Mehmood et al study focuses on the policies adopted by madrasas concerning social integration and they use an ethnographic approach.³⁸ In his critical review of the literature on madrasa reform published after the September 11 attacks, Sajjad underscores the need to consider the viewpoints of the country's Ulamā when discussing reform.³⁹ Altogether, the reviewed studies show that while madrasas contribute to extremism, they also perform multiple educational and social functions as well as maintain connections with the urban environment. The research is based on the fact that a more precise comprehension of the roles of the madrasas and their positive impact on

³⁵ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

³⁶ Fauzia Ghani, Bushra Ghani, "Madrasa Education System and Political Socialization in Pakistan," *Iḥyā' al'ulūm - Journal of Department of Quran o Sunnah* 21, no. 1 (July 25, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.46568/ihya.v21i1.85>.

³⁷ Leonora C. Angeles and Omer Aijazi, "Revisiting the Madrasa Question in Pakistan: Worlding Lived Religion and Religious Education in Urban Spaces," *Humanity & Society* 43, no. 3 (August 2019): 295–326, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0160597618814878>.

³⁸ Samreen Mehmood, Abdul Ghaffar, and Madeeha Murad, "A Case Study on Pakistani Religious Institutions and Their Policies Regarding Social Cohesion," *Global Educational Studies Review* V, no. III (September 30, 2020): 191–98, [https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2020\(V-III\).19](https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2020(V-III).19).

³⁹ Lecturer, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Department of Islamic Thought and Civilization, University of Management and Technology Lahore, Pakistan and Fatima Sajjad, "Reforming Madrasa Education in Pakistan; Post 9/11 Perspectives," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 03, no. 01 (March 2013): 104–21, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.31.05>.

Pakistani society is required.⁴⁰ The institution of madrasas in Pakistan has been historically significant in offering sloppy social security.⁴¹ However, there has been debate over the education program in the madrasas, and research shows that they can be instruments for grooming of militants particularly from the curriculum in religious colleges.⁴² While some consider that due to their specificity, madrasas assert religious divisions within a society,⁴³ others focus on studying the practicalities of how these institutions guarantee students' rights and how they punish violations.⁴⁴

Olivier Roy's and John Esposito's are notable contributions in this regard.⁴⁵ These works on how the Ulamā as scholars are involved in the political process and governmental policies and participate in social activism. Roy's remarks on the transnational nature of Islamic education are especially valuable; Rajalim upholds connections across countries and continents, thereby shaping the overall Islamic discourse. However, critics have often argued that perhaps such works overstate the activism of the Ulamā in political issues while failing to capture their contributions to social and organizational activities and welfare services.

However, some works of Tariq Rahman as well as Mumtaz Ahmad contain appropriate descriptions of the madrasa system.⁴⁶ The sociolinguistic focus of Rahman's "Denizens of Alien Worlds" highlights the nature of madrasa education in Pakistan arguing that the language

⁴⁰ Angeles and Aijazi, "Revisiting the Madrassa Question in Pakistan"; Lecturer, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Department of Islamic Thought and Civilization, University of Management and Technology Lahore, Pakistan and Sajjad, "Reforming Madrasa Education in Pakistan; Post 9/11 Perspectives."

⁴¹ Zahid Mumtaz, "Madrasahs as a Provider of Informal Social Protection in Pakistan," in *Informal Social Protection and Poverty*, by Zahid Mumtaz (Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2022), 85–107, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6474-9_5.

⁴² Kalhoro and Khan, "Education and Radicalization; Is There Any Causative Relationship?"

⁴³ Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar. and Zainab Amin, "ISLAMIC RE-CONSTRUCTION OF EDUCATION SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN: IN THE CONTEXT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES," *Habibia Islamicus* 6, no. 1 (March 30, 2022): 29–40, <https://doi.org/10.47720/hi.2022.0601u03>.

⁴⁴ Dr. Rehmat Shah et al., "Exploring The Implementation of Freedom of Expression Rights and The Use of Corporal Punishment in Pakistani Madrasahs," *International Research Journal of Management and Social Sciences* 3, no. 1 (March 31, 2022): 115–23, [https://doi.org/10.53575/irjmss.v3.1\(22\)12.115-123](https://doi.org/10.53575/irjmss.v3.1(22)12.115-123).

⁴⁵ Olivier Roy, "GLOBALIZED ISLĀM: THE SEARCH FOR A NEW UMMĀH," *Islāmology* 7, no. 1 (June 30, 2017): 11, <https://doi.org/10.24848/islmlg.07.1.01>; Md Mukhtar Alam, *Madrasa and Terrorism: Myth Or Reality* (Indian Social Institute, 2004).

⁴⁶ Tariq Rahman, *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan* (OUP Pakistan, 2004); Ahmad, "Madrasah Education in Pakistan and Bangladesh."

practices mirror sociopolitical and cultural relations within the given community.⁴⁷ The basic area of study that Ahmad works on is madrasa education and politics, particularly the funding of these institutions and their relation to state policies. They are both beneficial in offering empirical funds and a theoretical framework. However, their works are also problematized to the degree they explain regional differences and the reasons for attending and funding a madrasa by students and their families. The impact of madrasa education on the social lives of Ulamā in Islamabad, Pakistan, is a complex interplay of religious teachings, educational practices, and societal perceptions, warranting further research and analysis. While there is a growing body of literature on the social dynamics of the Ulamā, little micro-level qualitative research exists on personal-level experiences of Islamabad's Ulamā or critical discussions about the effects of madrasa reforms on them. Filling this gap is vital to better understand the complex social position of the Ulamā and come up with more precise policies and changes in educational systems.

1.6 Problem Statement

Madrasa education and social life growth of students in Islamabad, Pakistan is a twisted and unfathomable concept. Even though schools play a crucial role in religious education, there is a severe lack of research that looks into how these institutions affect the social and religious aspects of students' lives. In existing studies, madrasas are mostly described and analyzed through the lens of the curriculum, methods of teaching, and religion, whereas the graduates' individual and communal contexts are not given enough attention. Furthermore, previous studies compare results between different areas while neglecting the socio-religious environment of Islamabad, a capital city that has an impact on its inhabitants.

In particular, there is scarce empirical research examining how madrasa education influences the social roles, community dynamics, and societal perceptions of the Ulamā in Islamabad. This includes knowledge of how they relate to the local society, their participation in social processes, and how their education prepares them to engage with other educational and social entities. Also, there is very limited discussion on the transmission of values and practices within the Ulamā families and how the madrasa education impacts this transmission. This research intends to address this gap by presenting a detailed case study of Islamabad that can shed more light on how and in what social contexts madrasa education affects the daily

⁴⁷ Rahman, *Denizens of Alien Worlds*, 2004.

lives of Ulamā in that particular city. By addressing this gap, the research will contribute to a more holistic understanding of the multifaceted role of madrasa education in contemporary Pakistani society.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu pioneered an understanding how society is reproduced and how ruling classes hold onto their positions. Social capital is a commonly used topic in social science, with many meanings and interpretations. Scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam have all contributed to the vagueness of the phrase. Bourdieu's updated definition in 1992 proposed that social capital is the total of resources accrued to people or groups via a long-term network of institutionalized connections.⁴⁸ Coleman saw social capital as an advantage for individuals⁴⁹, but Putnam described it as aspects of social life that allow members to work more effectively together to achieve common goals.⁵⁰

Social scientists have developed and utilized a variety of definitions of social capital, presumably as a result of their study focus on topics such as "Where does social capital reside?" and "How can social capital be used?" The core proposition of social capital theory refers to jointly held capital or resources that emerge from a network of interactions. Ahn and Ostrom argued that several steps are required to reduce confusion surrounding the concept of social capital, including clearly defining and relating it to other forms of capital, identifying its forms, clarifying the meaning of each form of social capital, establishing causal relationships between forms of capital and their consequences, developing better measures of social capital, and designing stronger empirical studies to test social capital theories.⁵¹

This research uses Bourdieu's social capital paradigm to examine the impact of Madrasa education on socio-religious transformations among students in Islamabad, Pakistan. According to Bourdieu, social capital is the accumulation of real and prospective resources

⁴⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Force of Law: Toward a Sociology of the Juridical Field," *Hastings Law Journal* 38 (1987 1986): 805.

⁴⁹ James S. Coleman, "Commentary: Social Institutions and Social Theory," *American Sociological Review* 55, no. 3 (1990): 333–39, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095759>.

⁵⁰ Robert D. Putnam, "The Strange Disappearance of Civic America," *Policy: A Journal of Public Policy and Ideas*, March 1996, <https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/ielapa.970201788>.

⁵¹ T. K. Ahn and Elinor Ostrom, "Social Capital and Collective Action," in *The Handbook of Social Capital* (New York, NY, US: Oxford University Press, 2008), 70–100.

associated with social relationships and acquaintances that may be utilized to mobilize cultural and economic capital. In the case of Madrasa education, social capital is gained through religious and community interactions, which can have a beneficial or negative impact on students' social position. Because madrasas have an Islamic emphasis, they offer not just religious instruction but also social interactions to Muslims and other members of the society. It so promotes student cohesiveness and group identification since students with similar views engage in comparable religious rituals and/or activities. Students' social and economic interactions within Madrasas are more than just educational; they influence their future lives. For example, alumni networks at Madrasas may assist students with job placements, social assistance, and access to religious and cultural activities, all of which will increase their social capital. Thus, to analyze the socio-religious influence of Madrasa education on the perceptions of students and the population of Islamabad, it is critical to understand the function of Madrasa education in increasing social capital.

The study focuses on the concept of bonded social capital, which is achieved through high, significant, and similar-minded contacts among madrasa students. This bonding is necessary for paying for education, feeding or nurturing the surviving, and fostering a sense of fellowship among the ulama. However, the intensity of these interactions can pose a significant threat to bonding capital, leading to the contraction of the ulama's social networks after graduation. Bridging social capital, as pointed out by Bourdieu,⁵² is useful in understanding the circumstances of ulama when they complete their studies. Graduates' responses reveal that they use various degrees to create and cultivate contacts outside of the intimate madrasa community to varying degrees. Other social actions, such as joining new social situations, looking for work, and being involved in social and political issues, are more likely if respondents have a tremendous amount of bridging capital.

The study also highlights the importance of focusing on social capital while evaluating and reporting ulama's career patterns after graduation and their societal effect. The degree of contact with clergy, public personnel, or formal elites during their madrasa days is crucial for achieving the apex level of the social entity. According to Bourdieu's Social Capital Theory, crosscutting relationships allow ulama to access resources, knowledge, and opportunities that support social capital and the ability to effect change. Social Capital Theory has been applied

⁵² Bourdieu, "The Force of Law."

to this study to understand how ulama controls different types of social capital at varying stages of their lives and careers by employing various social and professional strategies. It is essential to refer to social capital theory when discussing numerous issues that ulama face in their social setting.

The bonding capital generated by madrasas is often estimated in thousands of rupees but is ritualized, making it difficult to create among individuals of different types or mold to conform to changing standards. This thesis analyzes how it is possible to profit from all kinds of capital, bonding, bridging, and connecting capital, and discusses the disadvantages of relying on one form of social capital rather than a diverse range. The use of Social Capital Theory as a theoretical framework for this research provided profound insights into Ulama's social dynamics, enabling the investigation of how madrasa education develops social networks, encourages community participation, and affects Ulama social integration. These findings will undoubtedly add to the current body of information on Islamic education and social integration, providing practical insights for policymakers and educational institutions working to improve the social consequences of madrasa education in Pakistan.

1.8 Methods

In terms of the method, this study figuratively sinks a tooth into examining how madrasa education affects Ulamā social life. This is done to accomplish the objective outlined above, where a qualitative research method is used. Structured and unstructured data collection technique, which forms part of Humanities and Social Sciences research, is the process of gathering and using non-numerical information that helps in comprehending better the social life, the condition, the event, the issue, or occasion through the study of specific individuals or places.⁵³ Moreover, using qualitative techniques lets the researcher go deeper into the subject.⁵⁴ This research relied very much on the use of qualitative data in a bid to gain deeper information and meet the aim of this research. The qualitative technique can be conducted on primary or secondary data.⁵⁵

⁵³ Ade Gafar Abdullah et al., *Ideas for 21st Century Education: Proceedings of the Asian Education Symposium (AES 2016)*, November 22-23, 2016, Bandung, Indonesia (Routledge, 2017).

⁵⁴ Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (SAGE Publications, 2014).

⁵⁵ Melissa P. Johnston, "Secondary Data Analysis: A Method of Which the Time Has Come," *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries* 3, no. 3 (2014): 619–26; Bogusia Temple, Rosalind

Therefore, the study population comprises Ulamā residing in Islamabad and have earned madrasa education. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select well-known ledged individuals who can provide more robust insight on the subject matter. To achieve saturation in my data collection, Author utilize Interviews, various articles, books, and personal information. This comprehensive approach ensures a robust and well-rounded dataset for thorough analysis. The sample includes twenty Ulamā from three popular madrasas in Islamabad, representing diverse Islamic sects and educational levels. This variety allows the author to understand the multiple perspectives within the Ulamā community comprehensively.

The interview approach allows authors more versatility and flexibility in gathering data and perspective from interviews. Semi-structured interviews are employed because this study asks proactive questions that would enable researchers to deeply understand individuals' autonomous perceptions within the cohesive unit. Following Rea and Parker, probing questions allow critical inquiries to be fully addressed to respondents.⁵⁶ Previous studies have demonstrated that this approach promotes reciprocity between the interviewer and the interviewee.⁵⁷ Furthermore, authors can design follow-up questions based on how the person being interviewed reacts to previous equivalents. Participants in the interview may additionally express their opinions and provide additional perspectives regarding the subject matter.

A list of potential interviews representing three madrasas was developed, consisting of twenty key respondents: three were chosen based on the higher positions in the madrasa, and the rest were experienced Ulamā. The potential respondent detail is presented in Table 1.1. Which depicts the respondent's background. The interview was conducted through Zoom (online) and lasted at least on hour to two hours. The list of critical questions was put together as an interview guide for the interviewer and the interviewee. The interview questions were based on the study objectives.

Edwards, and Claire Alexander, "Grasping at Context: Cross Language Qualitative Research as Secondary Qualitative Data Analysis," *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 7, no. 4 (September 30, 2006), <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-7.4.176>.

⁵⁶ Louis M. Rea and Richard A. Parker, *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide* (John Wiley & Sons, 2014).

⁵⁷ Anne Galletta, *Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview and Beyond: From Research Design to Analysis and Publication* (NYU Press, 2013); John T. Chirban, *Interviewing in Depth* (SAGE, 1996).

Respondent	Marital Status	Socioeconomic Status	Family Background	Age	Marriage Age	Number of Children	Occupation
1	Married	Low SES	Ulamā	35	25	2	Islamic Scholar
2	Married	Middle SES	Engineering	38	28	3	Teacher
3	Unmarried	High SES	Ulamā	32	N/A	0	Social Worker
4	Married	High SES	Businessman	36	30	4	Businessman
5	Married	Low SES	Ulamā	30	22	2	Journalist
6	Unmarried	Middle SES	Agriculture	31	N/A	0	Teacher
7	Married	High SES	Ulamā	29	26	3	Teacher
8	Unmarried	Low SES	Ulamā	32	N/A	0	Teacher
9	Married	Middle SES	Engineering	35	29	2	Journalist
10	Married	Low SES	Ulamā	34	24	5	Islamic Scholar
11	Unmarried	High SES	Engineering	28	N/A	0	Graduate
12	Married	High SES	Ulamā	37	27	3	Islamic Scholar
13	Married	Middle SES	Engineering	38	31	2	Student
14	Married	Low SES	Ulamā	40	23	4	Islamic Scholar
15	Unmarried	High SES	Ulamā	29	N/A	0	Islamic Scholar
16	Married	Middle SES	Engineering	35	25	2	Teacher
17	Married	High SES	Ulamā	42	26	3	Islamic Scholar
18	Unmarried	Low SES	Engineering	31	N/A	0	Journalist
19	Married	Middle SES	Ulamā	43	28	4	Businessman
20	Married	Low SES	Engineering	36	24	5	Teacher

Table 1.1. Which depicts the respondent's background.

In the academic world, ensuring the validity and reliability of the study findings is crucial. Thus, several steps are considered to meet the legitimacy and reliability of the study. Several probing questions were raised throughout the interview to explore the concerns further. Respondent privacy was maintained by concealing their identity in paper publishing to ensure they were comfortable and honest in answering the questions. The respondent's data is transcribed and examined to acquire data about their response and assess their significance before coding under several themes.

1.9 Outline

This thesis encompasses five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction that includes background, problem statement, objectives of study, literature review, research significance, theoretical framework, methodology, and thesis structure.

In the second chapter, I discuss the background of the study that was pointed out in the preliminary literature on madrasa education and the role of the *Ulamā*, and in compiling the literature review, recent works were reviewed to conclude the essential concepts through critical analysis and synthesis.

The third chapter focuses on an elaborate description of student life at the Madrasas in Islamabad to capture a broad picture of the nature of Islamic Education in the city. It starts with a background of Madrasas, focusing on their role and their role in society. It offers an insight into the provided curriculum, as well as students' perceptions of their personal and academic growth. Moreover, the chapter provides a detailed depiction of students and their daily activities with references to the academic aspect, prayer practices, social relations, and the Madrasa community.

The fourth chapter analyzes how the education one obtains from Madrasas and the teachings they are subjected to affect their social life once they leave Madrasas. This chapter also explores how and in what ways Madrasa education influences *Ulamā* religious and social engagements and fortunes in the modern Muslim world through an examination of their spiritual and economic performances and contributions within their societies.

The fifth chapter contains the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER II

CONTEXTUALIZING MADRASA EDUCATION AND ULAMĀ

The first chapter briefly examined madrassah education and its associated concerns. This chapter further explores the current body of literature. A literature review analyzes academic publications related to a specific topic. It summarizes the most recent research, assisting us in identifying concepts, approaches, and knowledge gaps relevant to the subject of our article, thesis, or dissertation. It also analyses, synthesizes, and critically evaluates them to provide readers with a complete picture of the field's present level of knowledge.

2.1 Exploring the concept of Madrassah education

2.1.1 Contextualizing Madrassah

'Madrassah' originates from the Arabic word '*Dars*', which translates as 'instruction' or 'lessons'.⁵⁸ Therefore, the term "madrassah" has been used to denote an educational institution that serves as a hub for learning, including both religious and formal academic settings such as schools or colleges. In the past, the term 'madrassah' had various meanings. In the seventh century, throughout the early phases of Islām, the term commonly referred to conventional Islamic schools that provided Islamic instruction at different levels. The term 'madrassah' is often used to refer to several Islamic educational institutions that provide a range of courses, including fundamental Quranic learning, the study of Ḥadīth, and Islamic law.⁵⁹ In countries outside of the Arabic- world, such as South Asia, madrassahs are the sole establishments that offer intermediate and advanced levels of Islamic education. These organizations differ from those that offer essential Islamic education, such as fundamental Quran instruction and Ḥifẓ (memorization of Quran)' classes in mosques or Quran study centers at home for young kids.⁶⁰ Islamic educational organizations that deliver a structured curriculum with various religious courses and fundamental Islamic teachings may be classified into distinct groups. For instance,

⁵⁸ Alexander Evans, "Madrasah Education: Necessity or Rational Choice?," Harvard International Review, September 22, 2008, <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Madrasah-Education%3A-Necessity-or-Rational-Choice-Evans/820cf30200146200b52c4e546b861019e1c7120c>.

⁵⁹ Yoginder Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers: Madrasas and Islamic Education in India* (Penguin Books India, 2005).

⁶⁰ Ingrid Robeyns, "Three Models of Education Rights, Capabilities and Human Capital," *Theory and Research in Education* 4 (March 1, 2006): 69–84, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878506060683>.

"madrassah" refers to an organization offering Islamic teaching from secondary to tenth grade. On the other hand, the term "Dār al-'Ulūm" refers to an educational institution that offers Islamic instruction up to the twelfth grade. In contrast, "Jāmi'ah" refers to an institute offering curricula equivalent to those at the college and university levels. Any establishment that offers Islamic education beyond the fundamental study of the Quran, Ḥadīth, and Jurisprudence may be referred to as a madrassah. The primary objective of all Islamic madrassahs is to cultivate 'Ālim', individuals who may provide religious advice to the Muslim Ummah (Islamic Nation).⁶¹ Madrassahs exhibit significant variation in their typology and display diverse characteristics and functionalities throughout various regions worldwide.⁶² In the region of South Asia, more specifically in the country of Pakistan, the term '*Dīnī*' is commonly employed to refer to an establishment that is exclusively focused on imparting conventional Islamic education.⁶³ In the contemporary discussions surrounding madrassah education, several studies often misinterpret the true nature of madrassah teaching, and even low-level Islamic education centers are mistakenly classified as madrassahs. Thus, it is crucial to specify that this research only examines madrassahs that expressly provide official Islamic topics and operate autonomously, without any government connection or influence.

Given that the primary focus of madrassah education is imparting traditional Islamic knowledge, it is essential to understand Islamic education to comprehend the purpose and nature of madrassah teaching. Therefore, the following section provides a comprehensive analysis of the genesis of Islamic education, its philosophical viewpoints, and its objectives and aims. Understanding the backdrop of madrassah education and its distinctions from official education can be beneficial.

2.2 Overview of Madrassahs in the South Asian region

This section offers a concise overview of the historical development of madrassah education in South Asia. It would also facilitate comprehension of the educational setting at Pakistan's madrassahs. The origins of madrassahs in South Asia may be traced back to the 13th

⁶¹ Masooda Bano, "Allowing for Diversity: State-Madrassa Relations in Bangladesh," Monograph (Birmingham, UK: University of Birmingham, 2008), http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/files/resourcesmodule/@random454f80f60b3f4/1259585112_working_paper_13___complete_file.pdf.

⁶² Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*.

⁶³ Sikand.

century.⁶⁴ However, the ascendance of the Mughal Empire and the expansion of Islām eastward resulted in the formation of madrassah education in the Indian subcontinent in a more structured manner. During the first stages, the curriculum primarily focused on disciplines like poetry, logic, and Falsafah (philosophy), predominantly taught in Arabic and Persian. The Madrassah Firoz, located in a rural location near Multan, is believed to be the earliest madrassah in South Asia.⁶⁵ In South Asia, an informal education system was formed during the Mughal period, which later evolved into the modern form of the madrassah tradition. The madrassah was first regarded as a distinguished establishment for studying Islamic studies and other disciplines.⁶⁶

Following the Mughal Empire's fall and British control's establishment in 1858, significant changes occurred in the madrassah educational system. Many Ulamā in the Asian sub-continent criticized the character of the Western educational system, expressing their opposition to secular knowledge and emphasizing the need for religious and spiritual knowledge.⁶⁷ This resulted in a schism among the Muslim population in British India, with some individuals displaying a greater inclination towards acquiring a contemporary education while others prioritized a religious education. Gradually, the madrassahs and their religious customs permeated throughout Indian culture. The new madrassahs served as a prototype for the current form of the madrassah educational system.⁶⁸ The Muslim community was compelled to explore revamping its education system due to the rapidly evolving educational policies implemented by the British government.⁶⁹ In response, Mullah Nizamuddin devised a new curriculum known as Dars-i-Nizāmī. The current curriculum, with some adaptations, is being taught in several traditional madrassahs in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, there was a divergence of opinions between Muslim modernists and the Ulamā about implementing the new curriculum. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other Muslim modernists

⁶⁴ Bano, "Allowing for Diversity."

⁶⁵ Arshad Alam, "Inside a Madrasa: Knowledge, Power and Islamic Identity in India - 1st," 2011, <https://www.routledge.com/Inside-a-Madrasa-Knowledge-Power-and-Islamic-Identity-in-India/Alam/p/book/9781138659988>; Ali, *Islām and Education*.

⁶⁶ Robinson, *Islām and Muslim History in South Asia*.

⁶⁷ Farish A. Noor, *The Madrasa in Asia: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages* (Amsterdam University Press, 2008), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt46n10w>.

⁶⁸ Bano, "(PDF) Contesting Ideologies and Struggle for Authority: State-Madrasa Engagement in Pakistan."

⁶⁹ Metcalf, "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India on JSTOR."

⁷⁰ Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*.

advocated for a transformation, recognizing the need for change. Conversely, the Ulamā saw the British education system, which offered secular education, as a menace to preserving Muslim identity and culture.⁷¹

Following the modifications in the curriculum, it was necessary to convince madrassahs to embrace the new system. The Dār al-Deoband, also known as Deoband madrassahs, was established in 1867, marking the beginning of a new tradition of Islamic education that continues to this day in several nations, including most madrassahs in Pakistan.⁷² Implementing this new madrassah system also stimulated several transformations in Indian society, such as the emergence of political mobilization against the British administration and the expansion of India's struggle for independence.⁷³ The primary objective of the Deoband madrassah tradition was to safeguard the Muslim way of life and uphold Islamic principles in British India. The Deoband madrassah also educated Islamic scholars and Ulamā, who were required to be fully committed to the service of Islām and assisting individuals in practicing their Islamic faith in their everyday lives.⁷⁴ The Deoband madrassahs gained significant popularity, particularly among students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, due to their reliance on charitable support.⁷⁵ Simultaneously, various ideological perspectives, including Brelvi, Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, and Shī‘ah, established their educational institutions known as madrassahs. The Brelvi madrassah functioned similarly, with a focus on Sufism. In addition, they began to create branches in several regions throughout the sub-continent.⁷⁶

Nevertheless, the many methodologies used in madrassah education contributed to the intricacy of the subject. However, in the late 19th century, a reform of the madrassah system successfully unified the diverse sects into a single entity. In 1893, the establishment of Nadwatul-Ulamā, a new organization in India, aimed to change madrassahs' curriculum and teaching techniques. Additionally, it sought to promote collaboration among various Ulamā,

⁷¹ Metcalf, "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India on JSTOR"; Ali, *Islām and Education*.

⁷² Jamal Malik, *Colonialization of Islām: Dissolution of Traditional Institutions in Pakistan* (Manohar, 1996); Bano, "(PDF) Contesting Ideologies and Struggle for Authority: State-Madrasa Engagement in Pakistan."

⁷³ Robinson, *Islām and Muslim History in South Asia*; Hefner and Zaman, "Schooling Islām | Princeton University Press," Robert W. and Muhammad Qasim, accessed May 16, 2024, <https://press.princeton.edu/books/paperback/9780691129334/schooling-Islām>.

⁷⁴ Riaz, *Faithful Education*.

⁷⁵ Robinson, *Islām and Muslim History in South Asia*.

⁷⁶ Robinson; Riaz, *Faithful Education*.

including the Shī‘ah, to advance Islamic education within the Muslim community. This organization implemented several improvements to the Madrassah educational system, including advocating for curriculum modifications and creating libraries. Nevertheless, the fundamental idea of the madrassahs remained unaltered, and the resistance to secular education persisted.⁷⁷ This section presents a comprehensive overview of Pakistan, including an in-depth analysis of its madrassah educational system.

2.3 Madrasa Education in the context of Pakistan

Madrasa educational institutions have a long history among Muslims in South Asia. The total amount of madrasas has expanded dramatically since independence. Historically, these organizations have played a key role in teaching Islamic education, improving literacy, enhancing Islamic awareness, and, most crucially, preparing potential public workers. In earlier periods, a graduate who studied mathematics, logic, philosophy, and other scientific and religious disciplines had a higher chance of finding work in the imperial civil service or the courts of regional rulers and nobles.⁷⁸

The education system in Pakistan is characterized by three distinct and independent systems: the public, private, and madrassahs.⁷⁹ Firstly, the government, or public education system, is the predominant entity responsible for delivering education from elementary to higher levels. Furthermore, private schools are in rural and urban locations, catering to children from moderate-income households and upper-class families. NGOs have just established a new educational initiative in the private sector. Madrassahs provide education in both rural and urban settings. These schools, varying in size, provide Islamic education, which includes Quran lessons, Islamic studies degrees, and specialized programs.

In Pakistan, Madrassahs are often autonomous community endeavors overseen and managed by the Ulamā and the local community. Nevertheless, a limited number of madrassahs

⁷⁷ Robinson, *Islām and Muslim History in South Asia*.

⁷⁸ Randall Collins, “Comparative and Historical Patterns of Education,” in *Handbook of the Sociology of Education*, ed. Maureen T. Hallinan (Boston, MA: Springer US, 2000), 213–39, https://doi.org/10.1007/0-387-36424-2_10.

⁷⁹ Farkhunda Farkhunda JABEEN, “MADRASA EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN CONTEXT: IT’S HISTORY AND STRUCTURE, PAKISTAN’DA MEDRESE EĞİTİMİ: TARİHİ VE YAPISI,” *Kocaeli İlahiyat Dergisi / Kocaeli Theology Journal*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7444124>.

are overseen by the government, operating inside the ‘*Awqāf*’⁸⁰ system.⁸¹ Madrassahs in Pakistan exhibit variations in their location (urban or rural), size, available resources, education level provided, and ideological sect affiliation.⁸² Islamic education in Pakistan may be categorized into two main types: informal and formal. The informal level of Islamic education, the lowest level, occurs in the mosque, maktab, or house. Here, children are taught how to read the holy Quran and are introduced to certain fundamental Islamic beliefs. Madrassahs provide comprehensive Islamic education programs, ranging from secondary to post-graduate. Madrassahs often educate many pupils, and it is typical for a primary madrassah to have many branches in various locations. Madrassah education is provided without charge, and many madrassahs provide free accommodation, meals, and textbooks. Nevertheless, several madrassahs only provide sessions throughout the daytime. The official madrassahs, such as the *Jāmi‘ah* and *Dār al-‘Ulūm*, may be classified based on the degree of education they provide.⁸³ For qualifications to be officially recognized, all full-time madrassahs must be associated with one of the madrassah boards, also known as *Wifāq*.

Pohl said in his study that secularization is a significant cause of an increasing need for madrasah education. As a result, one crucial and somewhat contentious feature of secularization is the confinement of religion to the private sphere, which also impacts education.⁸⁴ Thus, in many emerging nations, public education has become increasingly secular (scientific and logical), with religion being generally ignored in the educational sector. This is regarded to be contrary to the fundamental notion of Islamic education. As a result, numerous parents see it as a threat to their kids' ethical and religious growth. Hence, they choose madrassah education.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Government-managed endowments that provide financial support for religious and charitable institutions, such as mosques and shrines.

⁸¹ Riaz, *Faithful Education*.

⁸² Borchgrevink Kaja, “Pakistan’s Madrasas: Moderation or Militancy? The Madrasa Debate and the Reform Process – Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO),” 2011, <https://www.prio.org/publications/5830>.

⁸³ Fair, *The Madrassah Challenge*.

⁸⁴ Florian Pohl, “Islamic Education and the Public Sphere,” Waxmann Verlag, 2009.

⁸⁵ Riaz, *Faithful Education*; Pohl, “Islamic Education and the Public Sphere.”

Furthermore, Bano highlighted the desire for madrasah education concerning non-material advantages, such as spiritual incentives, which are essential to believers.⁸⁶ As a result, it is claimed that the formation of a need for madrassah studies in certain situations is linked to good judgment and personal gain. Similarly, Evan argues that the desire for madrassah education is reasonable given an overlap of developments regarding madrassah education requirements.⁸⁷ Nelson argues that funders and regulators in international and national academic marketplaces must evaluate local needs.⁸⁸

Akhtar conducted a qualitative research study on the impact of Sympathetic Madrassah Education in Pakistan.⁸⁹ The study focused on enhancing madrassahs and their political engagement, particularly their alleged connections with militancy. The research revealed that factors like economic circumstances, religious interests, and societal norms influence choices for madrassah education. Despite hindering contemporary skills and earnings, madrassah education provides social advantages for rural residents and empowers women. The study suggests reconsidering madrassah education within Pakistan's economic, social, cultural, and religious frameworks.

2.3.1 Madrasa Education Boards in Pakistan

In Pakistan, madrasas are often autonomous community projects that are funded by public subscription and managed by the local community and Ulamā. On the other hand, a few madrasas are under the “*Awqāf*” system and are supervised by the government. Madrasas also differ in terms of their size, availability of resources, location (rural or urban), degree of education, and ideological adherence to a particular sectarian viewpoint. To provide adequate oversight and management of madrasa activities and curriculum, as well as to provide current courses and standardized tests, every sectarian orientation has set up an education body known as a *Wifāq*.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Masooda Bano, *The Rational Believer: Choices and Decisions in the Madrasas of Pakistan*, The Rational Believer: Choices and Decisions in the Madrassas of Pakistan, 2012, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9780801463860>.

⁸⁷ Evans, “Madrasah Education.”

⁸⁸ Matthew Nelson, “Muslims, Markets, and the Meaning of a ‘Good’ Education in Pakistan,” *Asian Survey - ASIAN SURV* 46 (October 1, 2006): 699–720, <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2006.46.5.699>.

⁸⁹ Akhtar, “Understanding Madrassah Education and Its Impacts. A Case Study of Chach (Attock) Region in Pakistan.”

⁹⁰ Fakhar Bilal, “BUILDING ISLĀM: JĀMI‘AH KHAIIR UL MADĀRIS, MULTAN, PAKISTAN, 1947-2001” (University of London, 2018), 129.

In Pakistan, there are five madrasa education boards: one is affiliated with the well-known Islamic political organization Jamat-i-Islāmi, three are Sunni, and one is Shī‘ah. Every madrasa school board is a representative of a certain sect or group.⁹¹ Tanzīm ul Madāris, Wifāq ul Madāris al Salafia, and Wifāq ul Madāris al Arabia are the three Sunni boards. Wifāq ul Madāris Shī‘ah is the name of the Shī‘ah madrasa education board, and Rabitat ul Madāris al Islāmia is connected to Jamat-i-Islāmi. Only madrasas that are registered, out of the many madrasas that now exist, are governed by their central boards and organizations (*Wifāq*). These boards establish the curricula, gather information about student registration, forms, fees, and examination costs, and schedule exams in both Arabic and Urdu. and the announcement of their outcomes thereafter.

Five Madrassa Boards in Pakistan. They are;

Sect	Sub-sect (maslaq)	Madrasas Board (wafaq)	Board Established	Wafaq HQ
Sunni	Ahle e Sunnat (Barelvi)	Tanzeem-ul-Madāris Ahl-e Sunnat-wal-Jamaat	1959	Karachi
Sunni	Dīūbandī	Wafaq-ul-Madāris Al- Arabia	1959	Multan
Sunni	Ahl e Ḥadīth	Wafaq-ul-Madāris	1955	Faizalabad
Islāmist	Jamat e Islāmi	Rabta-ul-Madāris Al Islāmia	1983	Mansoorā, Lahore
Shī‘ah	Jaffari Twelwer Shī‘ah	Wafaq-ul-Madāris Al-Shī‘ah	1960	Lahore

Table 2.1 The Pakistani madrasa boards.⁹²

Mullah Nizamuddin Sehālvi Farangi Mehli (Lucknow), who passed away in 1748 AD, introduced the Dars Nizami syllabus, which has been widely adopted in Madrassas. There were several curricula before to 1857. Shah Waliullah, who lived from (1703 to 1762 AD)⁹³, created a curriculum for their Madrassa. Rahimiyya offered a comprehensive curriculum that included philosophy, medicine, algebra, mathematics, metaphysics, Ḥadīth, Fiqh, and Arabic language and grammar. The objective was to cultivate knowledgeable and competent people. The curriculum of Dars Nizami underwent modifications throughout the post-1857 period to

⁹¹ Rohan Gunaratna and Khuram Iqbal, *Pakistan: Terrorism Ground Zero* (Reaktion Books, 2012), 137.

⁹² Data gathered by the Research from the premises of Madrassa Boards and some publications affiliated with them.

⁹³ Halid Zaferullah Daudi and Nasır-ı Husrev, *Pakistan ve Hindistan’da Şah Veliyullah ed-Dehlevi’den günümüze kadar Hadis çalışmaları* (İnsan, 1995).

counteract social pressures.⁹⁴ There are 3 levels of Madrasas. Elementary, Secondary, and Higher. The Elementary level gives a degree or teaches a course of Mutawassitah to Āmmāh, the Secondary level Āmmāh to Khāṣṣah, while the last one is Āliyah to Almia and Daura Ḥadīth Takhaṣṣuṣ (specialization). At the primary standard, madrassas served as a base for students preparing to attend universities.

Due to the reduced need to meet the Boards' registration criteria, businesses are increasingly common. Secondary level Madrassas are more prevalent due to the increased number of students, and the conditions set by Madrassa Boards for registration as a High-level school are less demanding than those for a Madrassa. The architectural design and accommodation amenities of higher-level Madrassas surpass those of lower-level Madrassas. They provide postgraduate degrees in addition to courses at an intermediate level. Elementary school classrooms are often segregated into distinct campuses or sections.⁹⁵

2.4 The concept of Ulamā and their social life roles

2.4.1 Definition

'Ulamā' is derived from the Arabic word 'Alim, ' the singular form. The origin of this word is 'ILM'. *Ilm* refers to knowledge; hence, 'Ālim' refers to those who possess knowledge. The phrase is mentioned twice in the text of the Holy Qur'an.⁹⁶ The phrase is also mentioned in the significant Ḥadīth collections.⁹⁷ However, the phrase has acquired a specific meaning within the framework of Islamic legal theory. The word is used in a technical sense to refer to someone who possesses extensive knowledge in a particular area of Islamic studies, such as jurisprudence (*fiqh*), theology (kaloṅji), tradition (*Ḥadīth*), Qur'anic exegesis (*Tafsīr*), and others. Traditional religious schools often provide extensive instruction in several areas of Islamic scholarship. Graduates of these seminaries who have met the academic criteria are

⁹⁴ Farkhunda Farkhunda Jabeen, "Madrassa Education in Pakistan Context: It's History and Structure, Pakistan'da Medrese Eđitimi: Tarihi Ve Yapisi," Kocaeli İlahiyat Dergisi / Kocaeli Theology Journal, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.5281/Zenodo.7444124>.

⁹⁵ Fazlur Rahman, *İslam ve Çađdaşlık*, çev. Alpaslan Açıkgeç, Hayri Kirbaşođlu (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 1999).

⁹⁶ Shah, Rev. Al'amed, *Miftah at-Qur'an*, Concordance of the Quran {Henares; E. N. Lazarus & Co. 1926) p. 146.

⁹⁷ Abi Dawud, *Sunnan*, Edited by Muhammad Muhyuddin 'abd al-Hamid, (Misr: Al-maktabah al-tajjariyah al-kubra, 1950) 2nd Ed. Vol. III, Ch. 19 kitab al-'ilm, No. 3641, 'Alim is superior to the man who prays as the full moon is superior to all the stars', and also the tradition, 'The 'Ulamā are the successors of the prophets'; see also 'al'Şi Bukhari, translated by Mirza Jjjayrat Dehlavi (Karachi, n.d.), Vol. I, Ch. on Kitab al-ilm. p. 27. Similarly, these traditions can be found in other collections.

awarded the necessary degrees and are often called 'Ulamā'. These Ulamā are also known according to their area of specialization as traditionist (*Muḥaddith*), jurist (*Faqīh*), commentator (*Mufassir*) and theologian (*Mutakallim*). They are often classified as 'mawland', 'mawlawi', 'alim, and *fddil*. Historically, individuals were designated as judges (*qddi*), attorneys (*mufti*), leaders of prayers (*imam*), and instructors (*Mudarris*). During the region of the Abbasids and the Ottomans, they held prominent positions such as the Chief Justice (*Qādī al-Qudāt*) and the Head of the Clergy (*Shaykh al-Islām*).

In the context of Islamabad, Pakistan, "ulama" refers to the Islamic scholars or religious leaders who are well-versed in Islamic jurisprudence, theology, and other religious sciences. They play a significant role in interpreting Islamic law, guiding the Muslim community on religious matters, and influencing various aspects of social and political life. In Islamabad, the ulama can be found in madrasas (Islamic schools) and mosques, where they often provide religious education, issue fatwas (legal opinions), and contribute to discussions on contemporary issues affecting the Muslim community. Their influence extends to shaping religious practices and community norms within the city.

The Ulamā, who are experts in Islamic law, the *Ḥadīth*, Quranic interpretation, and religious guidance, have greatly influenced the prevailing theological discussions in Muslim cultures throughout most of Islamic history. However, Muslims disagree on a standard definition of Ulamā. While the phrase is not only confined to those with religious education, it encompasses anybody who knows a broad sense; An alim may also be defined as someone who has extensive knowledge in the Islamic intellectual disciplines, such as Islamic theology and jurisprudence.⁹⁸ Furthermore, the Ulamā are not regarded as representatives of God, nor are they revered as divine beings in any kind. A scholar's authority level is determined by their formal and informal education, as well as their social and academic connections and influence. In Islamic territories, the Ulamā were acknowledged as the ruling authority by the state, whether it the caliph, sultan, or amir. In exchange, the academics provided legitimacy to the monarch. The state compromised by hiring academics to work in legal courts and educational institutions. In return, the scholars were given control and regulation over Sharī'ah law and the

⁹⁸ It is important to mention that while the word "Ulamā" is often used to refer to anyone who are educated in religious studies, specifically a "alim" is a specialist in theology. A fuqaha is a specialist in the field of jurisprudence, specifically in matters of Islamic law, whereas a falasifah is a someone who engages in philosophical inquiry.

power to choose what was considered orthodox and heretical. Conversely, the academics often exhibited a level of acceptance for the frequently impious and lenient behavior of the ruling elite. This pattern was established during the Umayyad era and strengthened throughout the Abbasid era.⁹⁹ However, the possibility of the *Ulamā* withdrawing their support or authorization has always been there,¹⁰⁰ even though it has rarely occurred.

2.4.2 Role of *Ulamā* in Society

According to Islamic scholars, the play of *Ulamā* is essential to the socio-religious fabric of Muslim society. They have always acted as the bearers of the Islamic tradition, education, judiciary powers, and religious leadership.¹⁰¹ Before the rise of modernity, the main roles of religious leaders were to gloss over the Islamic law (*Sharīʿah*), the interpretation of the holy texts, and the moral education of the community.¹⁰² They were a vital part of the system of running Islamic courts, which was the chief authority in declaring *Fatwās* about different matters.¹⁰³ In addition, the *Ulamā* were often the mediators between the majorities and the ruling authorities and acted as consultants using their religious authority to prevail on political decisions.¹⁰⁴ Their political participation differed in Islamic Empires and dynasties, where advisory roles and active participation were included.¹⁰⁵ The *Ulamā* now modifies Islamic legal philosophy to fit into a modern era and the human rights regime.¹⁰⁶

In modern times, the position of the *Ulamā* is no longer limited by religious or educational tasks like specific areas.¹⁰⁷ They fulfill this religious function in more than one way, acting as religious leaders and teachers and taking part in social, political, and cultural

⁹⁹ Gustav Edmund Von Grunebaum, *Classical Islām* (Transaction Publishers, n.d.).

¹⁰⁰ Several *Ulamā* chose to retract their endorsement of the caliphs and publicly contested the system. Imam Abu Hanifa (699–767 CE) expressed disapproval of the Abbasid authorities' harsh repression of anyone who opposed their authority.

¹⁰¹ Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Formation of Islām: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600-1800* (Cambridge University Press, 2003); Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹⁰² David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* (University of California Press, 1988); Zaman, *The *Ulamā* in Contemporary Islām*.

¹⁰³ Hallaq Wael B., "From *Fatwās* To *Furū*: Growth and Change in Islamic Substantive Law in: *Islamic Law and Society* Volume 1 Issue 1 (1994)," 1994, https://brill.com/view/journals/ils/1/1/article-p29_3.xml.

¹⁰⁴ Norshahril Saat, "The State, *Ulamā* and Islām in Malaysia and Indonesia," 2017, 1–240.

¹⁰⁵ John L. Esposito, *Islām and Politics: Fourth Edition* (Syracuse University Press, 1998).

¹⁰⁶ Zaman, *The *Ulamā* in Contemporary Islām*.

¹⁰⁷ Zaman.

activities outside of strictly religious ones. In modern days, they play a significant role in religion, performing religious leadership.¹⁰⁸ *Imam* conducts prayers in a mosque, leads a congregation in sermons (*khutbah*), and imparts religious education to the young and the old.¹⁰⁹ They do not only administer ceremonies and rituals but also head the administration of marriages, funerals, and many community functions.¹¹⁰ However, the functions undertaken by the Imams are more than religious and spiritual. Instead, they act as an instrument of a change in the community's behavior.

The scholars of religion (Ulamā) also play important roles in education and research.¹¹¹ Some stipulate the teaching of traditional Islamic 'ulūm, which includes the Quran and its interpretation (*Tafsīr*), prophetic traditions (*Hadīth*), jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), and the Arabic language (Arabic grammar).¹¹² While these institutions make up the base of religious education, they are how Muslim knowledge is passed down from one generation to the following.¹¹³ Due to their teaching responsibilities, Ulamā established Islamic scholarship on writing sacred texts and academic papers.¹¹⁴ These intellectual works not only challenge by preserving traditional Islamic learning but also deal with and handle current problems and debates from an Islamic perspective, thereby uniting the past centuries with the present.¹¹⁵

Besides their role in social services and counseling, Ulamā are physically and socially critical.¹¹⁶ Hence, they offer social welfare services, mainly counseling and support to people

¹⁰⁸ Jonathan P. Berkey, "Chapter 2. Madrasas Medieval and Modern: Politics, Education, and the Problem of Muslim Identity," in *Chapter 2. Madrasas Medieval and Modern: Politics, Education, and the Problem of Muslim Identity* (Princeton University Press, 2010), 40–60, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400837458.40>.

¹⁰⁹ Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām*.

¹¹⁰ Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*.

¹¹¹ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹¹² Berkey, *The Formation of Islām*.

¹¹³ Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām*.

¹¹⁴ Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "The Ulamā and Contestations on Religious Authority," 2009, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9780748637942-009/pdf?licenseType=restricted>.

¹¹⁵ Fazlur Rahman, "Islām and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition," 2017, https://books.google.co.id/books?hl=en&lr=&id=3_stDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=These+intelle+ctual+works+do+not+only+challenge+by+preserving+traditional+Islamic+learning+but+also+deal+and+handle+current+problems+and+debates+from+Islamic+perspective,+thereby+uniting+the+past+cent+uries+with+the+present+&ots=sUzz1lEXye&sig=V7JjLU2AZDLsrQ0pZQrGd6doMH8&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false.

¹¹⁶ Heni Nurhaeni et al., "Ulamā Collaboration in the Implementation of Interprofessional Collaboration," 2023, <https://eudl.eu/doi/10.4108/eai.19-10-2022.2329028>.

suffering from emotional problems and economic difficulties.¹¹⁷ This position is vital, especially in the community that is served by professional social services such as social security, which is hard to access. In addressing ethical and moral principles, the Ulamā introduces a God-centric path that will keep individuals aligned with the prescribed religious values despite the complexities of the modern world.¹¹⁸ In addition to offering social services, these local institutions serve as a conflict mediating mechanism and a uniting pillar. So, they make the community and the society stay peaceful and well-knit.¹¹⁹

Diversifying the role of the Ulamā in politics is another aspect in which the meaning of the Ulamā has changed.¹²⁰ Ulamā occasionally delves into politics as a member of religious, political parties or as a freethinker.¹²¹ It is embedded in the political field in areas such as religion, education, and social justice, which influence political debate and policy reform. In Pakistan, the political horizon is, however, deeply mingled with spiritual beliefs, and they can often be used as a medium of consultation on issues of national importance.¹²² Not only can they bolster their social standing, but they can also be susceptible to confront the risks of political strain and battling the site of partisanship.

When it comes to Islamabad, which is the capital city of Pakistan, the role of Islām in the city's social and political dimensions is somehow different. Although Islamabad is young and culturally heterogeneous, this feature manifests opportunities and challenges for the Ulamā regarding their relation to the community.¹²³ The town's diverse population includes people from diverse ethnical, linguistic, and sectarian backgrounds. This makes the role of the Ulamā to navigate more and more complicated social interactions and respond to the different communities' religious needs.¹²⁴ These differences will create a need for a comprehensively nuanced approach to religious leadership since the Ulamā should consider the city's different cultural and religious practices.

¹¹⁷ Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām*.

¹¹⁸ Berkey, *The Formation of Islām*.

¹¹⁹ Nurhaeni et al., "Ulamā Collaboration in the Implementation of Interprofessional Collaboration."

¹²⁰ Md Nazrul Islām, "Faithful Participation: The 'Ulamā in Bangladeshi Politics: Politics, Religion & Ideology: Vol 23, No 2," 2022,

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21567689.2022.2082416>.

¹²¹ Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām*.

¹²² Mohammad Waseem, *Political Conflict in Pakistan* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

¹²³ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹²⁴ Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām*.

Through the coexistence of traditional madrasas and contemporary educational institutions, there exists a space for interacting sacred teachings with secular learning in the city.¹²⁵ The religious leaders (Ulamā) in the capital of Islamabad often interact with students and the educational staff from many different areas of study and majors. This creates a dialogue and understanding. Through this engagement, students can understand the religion and secular subjects as two phases, rather than mutually exclusive entities. A crucial part of such integration would be indispensable to creating a universal educational system that prepares people to function as members of their religious communities and as valued components of their societies.

As Pakistan's political capital, Islamabad provides a political arena that is active and loaded with debates and political participation.¹²⁶ A conservative Ulamā may give his opinion on political events in the city and use his religious authority to influence public opinion and government policies.¹²⁷ This disclosure of their engagement in political matters can be seen in their contribution to religious councils, advisory boards, and panels in the media.¹²⁸ This political activity lends them a chance to defend Islamic principles as well as to help a Muslim community with its problems. On the one hand, this situation gives their political life additional dimension. However, on the other hand, it is necessary to reconcile their religious responsibilities with their engagement in political life without damaging their religious integrity.¹²⁹

While Ulamā do play a crucial part, these societal elements put them in remote positions. As evident as sectarianism is one of the challenges.¹³⁰ Contrary to the dialog set between the ahl al-sunnah and the followers of Twelver, called Shī‘ah, the clergy faces a major obstacle to maintaining unity and asserting their influence. These cleavages, however, wind up as conflicts and nullify the goals of the Ulamā as a whole to alleviate the problems. A solution can be finding a common path among people across all divides while maintaining religious and ideological integrity. Creating a platform for inter-sectarian dialogue and collaboration can be

¹²⁵ Berkey, *The Formation of Islām*; Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*.

¹²⁶ Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām*; Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹²⁷ Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Islām in Pakistan: A History* (Princeton University Press, 2018).

¹²⁸ Waseem, *Political Conflict in Pakistan*.

¹²⁹ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹³⁰ Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām*; Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*.

the way out of sectarianism and towards having a Muslim society defined by harmony and cohesion.¹³¹

The problem of secularizing modernization and secular ideas that strengthen secular authority against Shari‘ah principles.¹³² Introducing to the life of Muslims many modern social codes which often do not match traditional Islamic practices is what comes with the reason ‘modernization’. It is the vanguard of clergymen to seek what they can do to be credible and relevant for eternity. This is about literately restructuring of their teachings to suit the present context but with the core Islamic principles being maintained. Modern technologies and electronic media are tools that imams can employ to increase the level of their audiences and transmit their message efficiently.¹³³

Political pressures constitute another significant challenge for waqifs; there is also a tangential aspect.¹³⁴ The clerics participating in politics sometimes find themselves subordinated facilely to political entries and the state, which can adversely affect their religious impartiality and capacity to function as pastors. Managing a fine line between preserving their religious symbols and participating in the judicial clash across their tribes is a highly challenging course. Increasing information and responsibility concerning the company's political activities can ease the drawbacks of political involvement.

Nevertheless, the Ulamā power in terms of political as well as cultural life of Muslim communities.¹³⁵ They often use their regular worship experiences to teach religion, acceptable standards, and moral, social, political, and community values. Acknowledging their roles and understanding the barriers they encounter is an act of showing gratitude for the greater interconnected society in Islamabad and beyond. The secret of Ulamā is reconciling the realities of a shift in the socio-political situation and the essence of Islamic principles.¹³⁶ These custodians of Islamic knowledge and heritage are the cornerstone of our communities. Their

¹³¹ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹³² Berkey, *The Formation of Islām*.

¹³³ Zaman, *Islām in Pakistan*.

¹³⁴ Esposito, *Islām and Politics*; Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹³⁵ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*; Gilmartin, *Empire and Islām*.

¹³⁶ Berkey, *The Formation of Islām*; Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*.

activities in closing the gap between tradition and modernity are thus invaluable because social development happens only in this wholeness.¹³⁷

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of the Madrasa education and that of the *Ulamā* confirms the understanding of the social life and personal development of the students. This chapter discusses Madrasas' historical and present-day relevance as establishments offering Islamic education and the care and development of human beings. Muslim education in madrasa is a significant part of a child's moral and ethical development since it is grounded in *Islām*. The emphasis on developing '*Ālim*' people who can provide spiritual support for the Muslim community speaks to the importance of these schools in the present day. It is noteworthy to commend the efforts of *Ulamā* in its attempt to address modernization, political pressure, and sectarianism while attempting to balance the unadulterated tenets of *Islām* with the demands of the modern world. Their grounding in religious and secular learning promotes an all-around approach to learning to make the students productive citizens in their faiths and the larger society. The findings of this chapter seek to increase the instructors' awareness about the social life and personal development of the students in the context of Madrasa education. This knowledge is essential for modifying the strategies and policies in the educational system that will guarantee Madrasas' central role in producing individuals who can be responsible for Islamic values as well as be productive members of contemporary society.

¹³⁷ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

CHAPTER III

STUDENT LIFE INSIDE THE MADRASA

In the second chapter, as a background of the study the discussion was pointed out on the preliminary literature on madrasa education and the role of the Ulamā, and in compiling the literature review, recent works were reviewed to conclude the essential concepts through critical analysis and synthesis. This chapter focuses on an elaborate description of student life at the Madrasas in Islamabad to capture a broad picture of the nature of Islamic Education in the city. It starts with a background of Madrasas, focusing on their role and their role in society. The chapter then moves on to discuss the institutionalization of these institutions through interviews. It offers an insight into the provided curriculum, as well as students' perceptions of their personal and academic growth. Moreover, the chapter provides a detailed depiction of students and their daily activities with references to the academic aspect, prayer practices, social relations, and the Madrasa community. Last, it explores the students' context and dreams, comprehensively understanding Madrasa students' educational and life paths in Islamabad.

3.1 Islamabad – A Brief Profile

Before discussing the findings of this study, the following section briefly introduces the Islamabad region. This will add to the understanding of the attitudes of people in this area towards madrasah education.

Islamabad is the capital city of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and is located within the Islamabad Capital Territory. It is advantageously situated in the center of the country and surrounded by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on the western side, the district of Rawalpindi on the eastern side, and the Murree district on the northern side. Islamabad's natural beauty can be seen further by its proximity to Margalla Hills, located on the city's northern side. The city is also culturally and linguistically diverse, and the main languages used in the city are Urdu and English, indicating the multicultural nature of the place. The Korang River, a flowing water source, and Rawal Lake also contribute to its natural beauty, which allows people of Rawalpindi and outsiders to engage in recreational activities.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Khurram Amal, "Problem Identification: Examining the Factors That Resulted in Islāmabad's Unsustainable Development," Middle East Technical University, 2022.

Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, has a rich cultural and ethnic diversity. Some of the ethnic groups in the city are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pathan, Baluch, and others from other provinces. In contrast to the overall social system of the rural areas, the influence of *Biradries* (tribes) and *Zaat* (caste) is less conspicuous in Islamabad. However, some divisions still exist based on social classes, especially among the older generations and specific communities. It is also easier to achieve more democratic contacts in cities than in the countryside, such as Chach.¹³⁹

Socially, Islamabad also follows both the traditions and modern culture of Pakistan. Although traditional cultures are valued, there is a substantial shift towards the liberal or post-modern culture, especially among the youth. Compared to other parts of the country, women in Islamabad have comparatively enhanced freedom and opportunities for education and employment. Women go out to work, engage in committees, and socialize, but issues such as dressing modestly and avoiding being alone with a man are still religiously observed.¹⁴⁰

The economy of Islamabad is vibrant and diverse, ranging from government service, information technology, education, health, and retail. As the country's capital city, Islamabad is home to many government departments and international agencies, opening up various job opportunities in the government sector. The city has also developed a robust private sector where many companies, multinationals, startups, and ventures are in different sectors.¹⁴¹

Hence, Islamabad's agricultural sector is less developed than rural areas. However, most people are involved in providing services, business, and, more specifically, trade. It is beneficial for the education and technology of the city to have large universities and technological institutions. Also, many people migrate to other countries, particularly to the Middle East, to seek employment, and they remit the money they earn back home, thus contributing to the local economy.¹⁴²

The people of Islamabad are considerably religious, with much focus on the Islamic culture. There are many mosques, Islamic centers, and religious schools, also known as

¹³⁹ C. A. Doxiadis, "Islāmabad, the Creation of a New Capital," *Ekistics* 72, no. 430/435 (2005): 113–30.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Amal, "Problem Identification: Examining the Factors That Resulted in Islāmabad's Unsustainable Development."

Madrasas, in this city. Several famous religious sites include the Faisal Mosque, one of the largest mosques in the world and a significant site of Islamic architecture in Pakistan.¹⁴³

Although Sufi influence is recognized in Pakistan, and there are many Sufi shrines in and around Islamabad, Tablighi Jamaat is another religious movement linked to the city. Religious education is available, with many local and national institutions providing classes and courses in Islamic studies. This blend of the old and new religious processes and beliefs shows the role of Islamabad as a spiritual and scholarly city.¹⁴⁴

Islamabad's social, economic, and religious profile reveals a city that blends the old and new eras. A large population, a strong economy, and various cultural and religious backgrounds form a specific context that can be considered both as a benefit and a drawback for people living there. This constant interplay of factors indeed makes Islamabad the epitome of Pakistan's social changes, a vision of development as a challenge combined with respect for cultural and religious traditions.

3.2 Madrasas in Islamabad – A historical context

The contextual background of Madrasas in Islamabad closely connects with the enabling aspects of the history and culture of Islamic education in South Asia. There is historical evidence that the madrasas, which are traditional Islamic schools, have been the center of Muslim communities for centuries, serving the religious and educational needs of the communities.¹⁴⁵ Madrasas as an institution, however, has a relatively shorter history in the context of Islamabad, where these institutions were established in sync with the physical construct of the city in the 1960s and rose to become the capital of Pakistan.¹⁴⁶ The origin of Madrasas in the region can be researched back to the early Islamic period in the Indian subcontinent; these were significant institutions involved in the Islamic education system. Fundamental to different facets of the Mughal rule, Madrasas served as educational institutions encouraged by the state and eminent benefactors. They were vital for training scholars, jurists,

¹⁴³ Doxiadis, "Islāmabad, the Creation of a New Capital."

¹⁴⁴ Amal, "Problem Identification: Examining the Factors That Resulted in Islāmabad's Unsustainable Development."

¹⁴⁵ Berkey, "Chapter 2. Madrasas Medieval and Modern."

¹⁴⁶ Annie Harper, "The Idea of Islāmabad: Unity, Purity and Civility in Pakistan's Capital City - ProQuest," accessed June 8, 2024, <https://www.proquest.com/openview/687754b98bf1e6e6f732637e6cb52ad4/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>.

and administrators and indispensable for the imperial intellectual and bureaucracy requirements. The early madrasas comprised broad curriculums that included coverage of religious sciences, logic, philosophy, and other secular subjects.¹⁴⁷ After the formation of Pakistan in 1947, the process of Islamization also intensified with the inclusion of Islamic education to promote nationalism and cohesion.¹⁴⁸

In the decade of 1900, Muslim scholars and educators migrated from India to Pakistan. They introduced a compilation of valuable learning and academic achievements, considered the genesis of the modern Madrasa system there. Initially, Madrasas were established in old cities like Lahore, Karachi, and Peshawar, which are historically developed cities in Pakistan.¹⁴⁹ However, when Islamabad was planned as the new capital city at the beginning of the 1960s, great efforts were made to introduce Religious Education in the spree of education growth, which was rapidly increasing in Islamabad. During the initial years of Islamabad's formation, the government realized the importance of religious education and supplemented the secular education imparted by schools and universities. This realization led to the founding of several Madrasas in the city, which were meant to meet new Muslims' religious and education requirements.¹⁵⁰ These institutions received a major share of their funding from private sources and charitable foundations to show support for maintaining the Islamic way of life. The establishment of Madrasas in Islamabad started gaining momentum in the 1980s and 1990s because of some factors.¹⁵¹ Sociopolitical factors such as the Afghan War and the arrival of refugees in Pakistan with an emphasis on religious education were partly a result of communism, which was another factor that enhanced religious education in Pakistan.¹⁵² In this period, many new madrasas were founded and were financed from local and foreign sources.

¹⁴⁷ Alam, "Inside a Madrasa: Knowledge, Power and Islamic Identity in India - 1st."

¹⁴⁸ Carimo Mohamed, "'Islām' as the National Identity for the Formation of Pakistan: The Political Thought of Muhammad Iqbal and Abu'l 'Ala Mawdudi," *História (São Paulo)* 33, no. 1 (June 2014): 317–39, <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-90742014000100015>.

¹⁴⁹ Martin van; Sikkand Bruinessen, *The Madrasa in Asia : Political Activism and Transnational Linkages* (Amsterdam University Press, 2008), [//library.unissula.ac.id%2Fopac%2Findex.php%3Fp%3Dshow_detail%26id%3D58289](http://library.unissula.ac.id%2Fopac%2Findex.php%3Fp%3Dshow_detail%26id%3D58289).

¹⁵⁰ Zia Rukhsana, "Religion and Education in Pakistan: An Overview," *Kluwer Academic Publishers Dordrecht* 33 (2003): 165–78.

¹⁵¹ Derrick M. Nault, *Development in Asia: Interdisciplinary, Post-Neoliberal, and Transnational Perspectives* (Universal-Publishers, 2008).

¹⁵² Nault.

These institutions not only availed of religious education but also offered simple education and skill development to their poor students.

Madrasas in Islamabad are more focused on providing religious and social integration to the young generation of Pakistan. It can also act as a community welfare facility where the community will receive education, healthcare, orphans, and feeding centers. It is part of their responsibility to contribute to the student's or the entire community's social and religious outlook and the generation of identity.¹⁵³ It is worth mentioning that Madrasas in Islamabad also fulfill the necessity of teaching tolerance and interfaith dialogue. Although mainly involved in Islamic education, some Madrasas have improved their social responsibility by extending their function to disseminate interfaith tolerance.¹⁵⁴ This is especially true because Islamabad is a cosmopolitan city with many residents with different cultural and religious affiliations. In this way, the actions of these institutions help to support a positive message of social cohesiveness in our society.

All the same, several problems are encountered in Madrasas in Islamabad, and Madrasas provide many benefits. This means there is no specific standard regulation or supervision from the government to ensure quality education and follow the national curriculum systems.¹⁵⁵ Different attempts by the government and the educational boards are now being made toward standardizing Madrasa education and enhancing connectivity with the national education system.¹⁵⁶ This integration ensures that graduates from the Madrasa institutions are well-equipped for their societal responsibilities. In addition, continued measures are being made to improve the socio-economic problems of Madrasa students. Most students who attend the Madrasa are from poor families and depend on the Madrasa for daily necessities.¹⁵⁷ It is,

¹⁵³ Isahaque Ali et al., "Islamic Faith-Based Organizations and Poverty Reduction in Bangladesh: A Social Work Perception," *Social Work & Society* 18, no. 2 (2020), <https://ejournals.bib.uni-wuppertal.de/index.php/sws/article/view/618>.

¹⁵⁴ Muhammad Khalid Masud, "Madrasas Promoting Social Harmony? Debates over the Role of Madrasa Education in Pakistan," in *Knowledge, Authority and Change in Islamic Societies*, ed. Allen James Fromherz and Nadav Samin (BRILL, 2021), 244–66, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004443341_014.

¹⁵⁵ Fazal Rabbi, "Discourse on Madrassa Education Reform in Pakistan: Challenges to State Narrative and Its Implications," *Al Basirah*, 2019.

¹⁵⁶ Muhammad Shafiq, Abdul Razzaq Azad, and Muhammad Munir, "Madrassas Reforms in Pakistan: A Critical Appraisal of Present Strategies and Future Prospects," *AsiaNet Pakistan (Pvt) Ltd*, 2019.

¹⁵⁷ Ubair Anjum, "Assessing the Need of Modern Education in Madrassah System: A Case Study of Madāris in Lahore," *Arts and Social Sciences Journal* 08, no. 04 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.4172/2151-6200.1000286>.

therefore, essential to ensure that these students get what they need educationally, health-wise, and in terms of vocational training that may be needed to ensure they lead meaningful and productive lives. Some non-government organizations and community-based organizations are helping these students by offering scholarships and educational materials to empower them with job information.¹⁵⁸

Overall, the history of Madrasas in Islamabad portrays the importance these institutions have embraced in the city's growth, Educationally and socially.¹⁵⁹ These centers have moved from institutions of learning in Islamic studies to facilities offering various other services to their communities.¹⁶⁰ Thus, Madrasas provide spiritual, moral, and intellectual education through a religious curriculum and its intervention in the community. In general, realizing the aspirations of Madrasa students and the possibilities of development within the given education system is worthwhile.¹⁶¹ Throughout growth and development in Islamabad, these Madrasas will continue to hold essential responsibilities towards the city's future development, the more significant social harmony and well-being of the society, and the overall growth and well-equipped education for all.

3.3 Structure and Curriculum of Madrasas

These madrassas follow a curriculum known as *Dars-i-Nizāmī*, which was authored by Mullah Nizamuddin Siharvi, an instructor of esteemed Islamic law and ideas in Lucknow until his death in the year 1747. This curriculum is not connected to the curriculum associated with the name Mullah Nasiruddin Tusi, d. 1064, Madrasa Nizāmiyyah was founded in the eleventh century in Baghdad. As pertains to the course of study, almost all the Sunni madrassas, including Barelvi and Ahl-i-Ḥadīth madrassas, follow the Nizami course of studies that was adopted by the Deoband seminary in 1867. It consists of about twenty subjects broadly divided into two categories: For sure it categorizes the sciences into two broad categories that is *al-'Ulūm al-Naqlīyah* (the sciences of transmission) and *al-'Ulūm al-Aqlīyah* (the sciences of reason or understanding). These fields are grammar, rhetoric, prosody, logic, philosophy, Arabic literature, Kālim a type of dialectical theology, Seera is life of the Prophet, *Tibb* means

¹⁵⁸ Anjum.

¹⁵⁹ Jaddon Park and Sarfaroz Niyozov, "Madrasa Education in South Asia and Southeast Asia: Current Issues and Debates," *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 28, no. 4 (2008): 323–51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188790802475372>.

¹⁶⁰ Tamara Sonn and Akbar S. Ahmed, "The SAGE Handbook of Islamic Studies," 2010, 1–392.

¹⁶¹ Ebrahim Moosa, *What Is a Madrasa?* (UNC Press Books, 2015).

medicine, arithmetic, *Munāzarah* is debate, Fiqh refers to Islamic jurisprudence, Fiqh Akbar major jurist, Ḥadīth and lastly Tafsīr is the exegesis of the Quran.¹⁶²

These observations lead to the conclusion that of the twenty subjects analyzed, only eight can be classified as purely religious. The subjects mentioned above are otherwise not religious and were taught in the Nizami curriculum to prepare students for civil service jobs and insightful comprehension of religious texts. In addition, teaching aids for all the subjects and books are not commonly found in every madrassa. This is especially true when a student is learning medicine, mathematics, history, philosophy, poetry, and rhetoric. This means that the students can be forced to transfer from one madrassa to the next in order to complete his or her syllabus. This also leads to the inability of many madrassas to develop a standard method of grading and promotions.¹⁶³

As stated, it is well known that most books used in this curriculum are very ancient. Texts employed in philosophical and logical analysis date back as early as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This is taught through the ‘Physicians and Surgeons’ text, an undeniably genuine study of medicine in the eleventh century. Even in texts, we mentioned above as purely religious topics, dated no later than the seventeenth century and as early as the eleventh century. Texts for astronomy, mathematics, and grammar are prescribed texts and are more than five to seven hundred years of writing.¹⁶⁴

As noted earlier, most madrassas have no set admission criteria and curricula, while timetables are poorly structured. Significantly, madrassas have developed formal admission, grading, and promotion systems, though they have set methods for the academic year. The specific age for admission into *Dars al-Nizāmī* in madrasas can vary depending on the institution and local educational norms. Generally, there is no strict age requirement universally applied across all madrasas. However, it is common for students to begin *Dars al-Nizāmī* studies in their early to mid-teens, typically around 13 to 16 years old. The overall Nizami curriculum takes from six to eight years after the conclusion of the initial stage. In the

¹⁶² Pakeeza Tabassum, “Religion and Religious Education: An Analytical Study of Selected Schools of Dars e Nizami and Religious Blended Institutions in Rawalpindi and Islamab,” Quaid I Azam University Islamabad, 2021.

¹⁶³ Ahmad, “Madrassa Education in Pakistan and Bangladesh.”

¹⁶⁴ Tabassum, “Religion and Religious Education: An Analytical Study of Selected Schools of Dars e Nizami and Religious Blended Institutions in Rawalpindi and Islamab.”

past, each component has been funded through trusts, endowments, charitable donations, and *zakat*. Nevertheless, thanks to the latest efforts of the Zia ul-Haq government to make the collection of *zakat* and usher compulsory in the 1980s, some madrassas are regularly supported by public *zakat* funds. Not only are the students exempt from tuition fees, but they also receive free textbooks, room and board, and a small amount of money for spending.¹⁶⁵

In terms of levels of education, the madrassas in Pakistan are categorized as follows: This is the *Ibtidā'iyyah* stage, which is similar to the primary level of schooling among students. During this stage, students are taught the basic tenets of the Islamic faith, the Qur'an, core tenets of the Islamic faith, and elementary Arabic language proficiency as a second language. This state forms the basis of further religious education at higher levels. The next level the learners are categorized is *Mutawassīṭah* (Middle Level), which resembles lower secondary education or middle school. Here, the students have the chance to study various sections in detail, including the Quran, Ḥadīth – the teachings and actions of Prophet Muhammad, Fiqh, which is the Islamic law, and the Arabic language. In this stage of the curriculum, the intention is to develop Islamic knowledge further and to prepare the students to take higher classes in religious studies.¹⁶⁶

After this, students move to *Thānawiyyah 'Āmmāh*, which is known as the secondary level of education, which is similar to high school. This level comprises higher education courses in the field of Exegesis of the Holy Quran, Ḥadīth, Islamic jurisprudence, and Arabic literature. At the same time, other subjects that are taught include mathematics, science, and social studies. This combined approach helps to give students a broad, entirely academic education while keeping religious studies at the core. Then *Thānawiyyah Khāṣṣah* (Higher Secondary Level) is two/four years higher than inter-college. It is meant for extensive studies in Islamic Jurisprudence, Tawheed, Philosophy, Arabic literature and science, etc. This stage orients its learners to professional specialization in specific fields of Islamic studies that arm

¹⁶⁵ Ahmad, "Madrassa Education in Pakistan and Bangladesh."

¹⁶⁶ Tabassum, "Religion and Religious Education: An Analytical Study of Selected Schools of Dars e Nizami and Religious Blended Institutions in Rawalpindi and Islāmāb."

learners with the knowledge essential for other academic advancements or the actualization of leadership positions in Islamic religious institutions.¹⁶⁷

At the *Aaliyah* (Graduate Level), as this level is equivalent to the level of a Bachelor's degree, students enter advanced and specific fields of study in various branches of Islamic learning, including Tafsīr (Qur'anic exegesis), Ḥadīth, Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Usul al-Fiqh (principles of Islamic Jurisprudence) and Arabic Language. This level expects to nurture scholars adequately equipped to engage in and foster religious literacy.¹⁶⁸

The highest level is *Takhaṣṣuṣ* (Post-Graduate Level), equivalent to the master's degree or doctorate level. This stage contains postgraduate programs and specialized research and education in some regions of Islamic sciences. Scholars at this level are deeply involved in research and investigations, thus playing an active part in the Islamic religion's academic and theological current debates. It can, therefore, be said that this is a rigorous academic environment that would help make out the experts and the thinkers in the different fields of study.¹⁶⁹

However, most of the Madāris are now in the private sector, and only a few of them operate under the provincial administration of *Awqāf*¹⁷⁰ departments. In most instances, the mosques and the seminaries are owned and run by leading ulema, while they also arrange alternatives for their funding. In most cases, the founders of the madrassas are ulema, who enjoy quite a measure of acceptance within the local community, facilitated by which they can source for lands, houses, and other facilities for the madrassas as well as financial support. For the majority of the madrassas, many of which are organized as charitable corporations, they are government-recognized, and most of them are now exempt from paying taxes, which means they are on an indirect subsidy from the state's treasury. A few large madrassas have official boards of directors or executive committees, which include stakeholders such as local business people, landowners, and some local ulema. In most cases, these are dignified or honorific

¹⁶⁷ Malik, *Madrasas in South Asia*; Tabassum, "Religion and Religious Education: An Analytical Study of Selected Schools of Dars e Nizami and Religious Blended Institutions in Rawalpindi and Islāmab"; Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

¹⁶⁸ Tabassum, "Religion and Religious Education: An Analytical Study of Selected Schools of Dars e Nizami and Religious Blended Institutions in Rawalpindi and Islāmab."

¹⁶⁹ Ahmad, "Madrassa Education in Pakistan and Bangladesh."

¹⁷⁰ In Pakistan, ****Auqaf**** refers to the government body responsible for managing and overseeing religious endowments (Waqf properties), including mosques, shrines, and other religious institutions, ensuring their proper use for charitable and religious purposes.

positions, which entail primarily the task of lending respectability and gravitas to the respective madrassas. Most of the critical policy matters, including the doctrinal orientation, course content, and choice of teachers and students, are squarely in the hands of the ulema.¹⁷¹ Overall, the curriculum in Islamabad's Madrasas has traditionally focused on the Dars-i-Nizāmī, a classical syllabus developed in the Indian subcontinent during the 18th century.¹⁷² This curriculum includes the study of the Quran, Ḥadīth (the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad), Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and Arabic grammar and rhetoric. Over time, some Madrasas in Islamabad have incorporated modern subjects such as mathematics, science, and English, responding to contemporary society's needs and enhancing their graduates' employability.

3.4 Student Life Inside the Madrasa

In the previous section, As discussed, the structure and curriculum of the madrasa. In this part, we will discuss social life especially studying within the madrasa, as well as the routine schedule for the students and the amenities they enjoy. It also presents information about students' daily routines, starting from wake-up time, academic timetable, prayer time, and other religious activities. Also, areas that pertain to support services for students will be investigated for example, accommodation, food, and communal areas. This section will provide a general understanding of the specifics of the madrasa educational setting along with the ways it contributes to students' academic success and spiritual accomplishments.

3.4.1 Daily routines and schedules

Daily student life inside a Madrasa in Islamabad depends much on teaching and learning processes and religious practices within the structured schedule. The timetable is perfect for enforcing discipline and hardworking ability and for inculcating a sense of togetherness among students. Daily schedules usually start with the Fajr prayers early in the morning and Quran memorization and recital afterward. A series of classes follow breakfast sessions, which revolve around the core curriculum, and the subjects include the Quran, Ḥadīth,

¹⁷¹ Tabassum, "Religion and Religious Education: An Analytical Study of Selected Schools of Dars e Nizami and Religious Blended Institutions in Rawalpindi and Islāmab."

¹⁷² Naseem Ahmed, "Concept of Education in Islām and the Role of Madrassah: Short History of Madrassah and Militancy in Pakistan," *Technium Social Sciences Journal* 19 (2021): 106.

Fiqh, Arabic grammar, and Arabic literature. There are often short breaks between these classes to give time and energy to the learners to recuperate.

Since the afternoon sessions, some extra classes and study time are usually presented, where students continue the study of Islamic jurisprudence and theology. A few of the Madrasas have introduced modern studies, including Mathematics, Science, and English subjects, and produce the intelligentsia who can handle different social challenges of the present world. When students are discharged after Asr prayer in the evening, they may be engaged in playing or allowed to study or exercise to be healthy students.

Thus, in the evening, after maghrib prayer, the students practice more or have group discussions to summarize what has been learned throughout the day and develop a task-oriented approach. Dinner is followed by prayers known as Isha, and the final session of learning or leisure is done before sleeping. This structured routine also fosters the students' positive development in terms of academic, spiritual, and interpersonal growth. Therefore, respondent 2 emphasized that:

“We wake up early in the morning for Fajr prayers, which makes a conducive environment for the rest of the day. The Quran recitation lessons make one feel they are in direct contact with Allah. Despite the tight and structured schedule, the school keeps us more disciplined. Including some modern subjects has been very impactful, as it exposes us to what is in the outside world and keeps.

Similar to the above response, the respondent noted the explicit supportive social context in the Madrasa context.

“From living and studying in the Madrasa, interacting with classmates and teachers daily, we become one family, thus closely supported with classmates and teachers both in our academic and even personal lives if needed, the teachers of the Madrasa do not only teach but also guide and enlighten the student in path of spirituality and moral values Education system of the religious and modern form used in the Madrasa effectively prepares us for further life in this world.” Respondent 4 said.

In elaborating on the broader context of their function, another respondent 3 said that many of these Madrasas operate as institutions of social support for children who cannot get an education from the state system. Speaking to respondent 3, He noted that,

“Most of them are from poor families, and for them, the Madrasa is their hope and opportunity, for it provides education and meals without charge and, in some cases. However, he also realized the necessity of modern subjects in religious education, observing that ASGO provided preparation for facing the modern world and improved the potential jobs market.”

The interviews show that student life within a Madrasa is not only a strict educational process, but the education process here encourages discipline, brotherhood, and spiritualism. Due to the detail, much attention is paid to the daily schedule so that every student can excel academically and religiously. In offering courses in the traditional Islamic curriculum and those in secular subjects, the school shows a progressive worldview that educates the students in religious humility while arming them with knowledge to address current modernity. This kind of education goes hand in hand with the ultimate aim of the Madrasa, which is to produce individuals capable of enhancing society's welfare. According to Bano, the empirical reality of Dīūbandī Madrasa in Pakistan shows that the blend of religious and modern education is adopted to make good citizens.¹⁷³ As well, Andrabi et al note that, Pakistan's religious schools tend to steer their programs towards the comprehensive of the children's personalities including their academic and spiritual aspects.¹⁷⁴

3.4.2 Living arrangements and facilities

Accommodations and facilities in the Madrasas of Islamabad are developed to cater to students' academic and personal needs so that they feel comfortable learning and growing spiritually and as a community. Typically, these educational institutions offer hostel facilities; thus, many students share a room. These arrangements encourage teaming and togetherness since students live and study together and encourage each other through their educational

¹⁷³ Bano, “(PDF) Contesting Ideologies and Struggle for Authority: State-Madrasa Engagement in Pakistan.”

¹⁷⁴ Andrabi et al., “Religious School Enrollment in Pakistan.”

process. The dormitories usually are minor and do not have all the amenities, but they have facilities such as beds, study tables, and shelves, among others.

General amenities observed in a Madrasa include a mosque or a prayer hall, classrooms, a library, and, quite frequently, a dining hall. The mosque or prayer hall concentrates on organizational, prayer, and religious activities; students attend it to pray and listen to the imam's speeches. Classrooms are specific learning spaces used for many learning activities, such as lectures, group discussions, and independent learning. The library is essential as it contains religious books, textbooks, other reference books, and periodicals that enhance the students' studies. Also, there are the Madrasas that recognized the need for an overhaul and have installed computerized labs and other modern forms of teaching aids, a respondent 6 of the Madrasa provides the conditions he lives in and the facilities provided by his Madrasa. He said,

“Residing in the dormitory has been interesting. Sharing a room with several other students fosters relationships and oneness. However, the amenities inside the dorms are minimal but sufficient for studying and personal development. The mosque is a peaceful area where we can pray and contemplate while the classrooms are well-suited for our classes. The library is another close to my heart; it is well-stocked with numerous helpful books.”

Similarly, there is another respondent 5 who is supportive of the atmosphere created by the living arrangements at the Madrasa setting:

“Staying in with other students has helped me learn that everyone must support each other with homework and information sharing. Some amenities that have been facilitated include the library and the mosque, which play a significant role in our learning and religious practice. The Dining hall is where meals are served, and it provides a family-style environment as we all sit and eat together, for it is made up of simple accommodation that meets our basic needs while encouraging us to.”

Another respondent 7 helped me understand the significance of these social interactions specifically for him:

“One of the highlights of getting an education in Madrasa is the friendships you make. As we spend most of our time with classmates and teachers, we become good friends with them. The relationships we build here are solid since we spend quality time with each other apart from classroom learning hours. We help each other with our studies, and someone is always ready to take your side whenever you are in trouble.”

Supporting opinion was given by another respondent 9:

“We are from different families and people, but here we are, one family, interacting socially. This benefits us because we learn from one another and help each other during stress. This teaches us essential life skills such as teamwork, care, and leadership.”

These interviews also focus on the type of accommodation and other facilities provided in the Madrasas, playing a vital role in the education process. The primary benefit of communal living is that the students feel that they are one big family; hence, they are forced to work together towards the common good of all the members, which is healthy for their development as individuals and students. Accessibility of critical physical infrastructure and learning and worship spaces like prayer halls, classrooms, and libraries guarantees that students have all the physical support they need in their academic and religious pursuits. Although the facilities of a Madrasa may be essential, the environment of a Madrasa is created to enable such a system that combines academic education, religious, and social life at the same institution. This holistically prepares the students to be responsible members of society upon completing their studies by creating noble attributes.

According to Bano, students live in congregated hostels and they share many facilities, which creates a most appropriate environment for cooperation; that in turn, is essential for the students' personality and academic growth.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, Zaman claimed that interpersonal communication with other students in the Madrasa setting is instrumental in building individuals' relationship skills and thus nurturing friendships.¹⁷⁶ This infrastructural arrangement in which students live in the same rooms, class, eat in the refectories, etc., helps them to be united and cooperative. They are instructed to join society for their own

¹⁷⁵ Bano, *The Rational Believer*.

¹⁷⁶ Zaman, “The Ulamā and Contestations on Religious Authority.”

development and as a way of assisting each other to finish school. These interactions facilitate the student to acquire interpersonal skills and friendly relations that can be continued after the interaction.

3.5 Challenges and Opportunities

In the previous section, i discussed the organizational structure of madrasa education institutions and the particular features of students' daily activities and special provisions. In this section, we discover the challenges and opportunities within the madrasa system. This will entail discovering the challenges faced by madrasas which among them are; lack of resources, lack of infrastructure, and perceived image problems that are associated with the media. Further, we will analyze the promising areas of development and improvement, including the introduction development of students' critical thinking, and searching for increased funding and cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations. It is expected that from this extensive study, an understanding would be gained of how madrasas can rise above the challenges and fully exploit the opportunities for the improvement of their education intake.

3.5.1 Challenges faced by students within the Madrasa environment

As discovered, struggles experienced by students within the Madrasa setting are complex and diverse, affecting their learning, interpersonal relationships, and psychological well-being. The following are typical: heavy class workload is one of the main challenges a student encounters throughout his/her course of study.¹⁷⁷ This docket gives the learners a regulated timetable of studying but still expected to perform well in religious studies, stressing them out and causing burnout. However, the system lacks standardized curricula and educational resources, and these problems can be observed in some Madrasas; getting a job or continuing education could prove difficult.¹⁷⁸

Nonetheless, Madrasas have been very productive despite the challenges they have faced. Another challenge is the absence of harmonized legislation to regulate and authorize these schools across the member states, which results in inconsistencies in the quality of education offered and whether or not the institutions meet the set education standards and national curriculum. The education ministry of Bangladesh, along with many other boards, is

¹⁷⁷ Ilona Leki, "Coping Strategies of ESL Students in Writing Tasks across the Curriculum," *TESOL Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (1995): 235, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3587624>.

¹⁷⁸ Park and Niyozov, "Madrasa Education in South Asia and Southeast Asia."

trying to modify and modernize the Madrasa system and bring it closer to the national system. This integration was done with the view of ensuring that graduates of the Madrasa are appropriately equipped and skilled to enable them to fit into society. The efforts also aim to successfully contain radicalization because standardization entails a balanced and moderate interpretation of the Quran and the Sunnah. Challenges such as These were illustrated in an interview with respondent 4:

“But as for academic demands and expectations, it is sometimes challenging to study and produce great results in religious courts, where there is much pressure because frequent examinations do not cover all the material necessary for exams.”

Respondent 11 added that,

“One more problem – the absence of united curricula and textbooks makes it hard to evaluate our achievements and prepare for examinations. In the process of applying for higher education.”

Social challenges also exist within the Madrasa environment, particularly for students from different cultural or socio-economic backgrounds. The close-knit community within the Madrasa can sometimes lead to cliques or exclusionary behavior, making it challenging for some students to feel fully integrated. One of the respondents was given some of his opinions on the social challenges.

“Despite such tight-knit compatriot support within the Madrasa, there may be occasions where students form cliques and shun others. I think it is rather important that every student should feel compelled to interact with others and be in a position to share the feelings of others.” Respondent 11.

Respondent 12 emphasizes:

“I believe there is a need to overcome these barriers of segregation in parts of the Islamic world and promote equal opportunities between genders.”

The interviews conducted with the respondents revealed that even though cultural differences deeply affect their behavior, they are equally intolerant of the implementation of the gender segregation policies that hamper interaction with students. Nevertheless, it is also

imperative to note that there are some prospects for student development within the Madrasa environment. The friendliness of the school, hardworking teachers, and focus on spirituality and morality help children attend the school and thrive. Moreover, the new wave formed by the modern subject's regulation allows students to proceed to higher education or continue working in the manpower market with various skills. Some of these opportunities were evident, for example, from one respondent., he explained that,

“The communities within the Madrasa have played a critical role in assisting him in overcoming hurdles and finding personal development as an individual since the teachers are always ready to offer help, whether in academic issues or life in general.” Respondent 13.

Respondent 14 highlighted the importance of the incorporation of subject matters of modern society into learning. He said,

“By learning modern subjects and, at the same time, religious ones, my perspective has been opened. I am aware of what is ahead of me; I am sure I can practice religious and secular things endlessly.”

Besides, it is essential to note that attempts are occasionally made to intervene in the socio-economic problems Madrasa students face. Most students hail from poor families and may not get necessities from home, so they must depend on the Madrasa. This encompasses providing equalized educational, health, and vocational training services to these students for their development and well-being at a later date. Several NGOs and other community-based organizations are to support needy students through scholarships, educational materials, and career development. All these programs seek to address challenges affecting students' learning in Madrasa education systems to have a better future and society.

According to Hossain, NGOs as well as other stakeholders that are involved in the provision of services to socio-economically challenged students noted to offer the much-needed support and services to the Madrasa students in their educational as well as other related needs.¹⁷⁹ Likewise, Basheer laid very useful light on such programs in terms of combating socio-economic issues and facilitating personal and career development for the students of

¹⁷⁹ Ismail Hossain, “Is Public Provisioning of Secondary Education Equity Enhancing? A Case Study in Bangladesh,” *The Hague, The Netherlands*, 2017.

Madrasa.¹⁸⁰ Overall, while challenges exist within the Madrasa environment, students also have opportunities for growth and success. By addressing these challenges and leveraging growth opportunities, Madrasas can continue to provide a supportive and enriching educational experience for students.

3.5.2 Opportunities for personal and academic growth

The environment within Madrasa affords numerous opportunities for personal and academic growth, allowing students to enhance their personal attributes, skills, and characters in a positive setting. One major prospect is that most of the Madrasas have an extensive curriculum that includes religious education and other courses more associated with contemporary learning, like mathematics, science, and English. The advantages of this educational viewpoint are that it gives the students a good foundation for academic and career pursuits. The respondent 5 described the usefulness of this diverse curriculum. He said:

“Education has enriched my thinking and equipped me with great skills in religious and worldly life. It is rather useful to know that the knowledge is within one’s reach and one is ready to be successful as a religious scholar or an employee of a secular workplace.”

Similarly, Respondent 18 expressed similar ideas and focused on the convenience of merging modern disciplines into the curriculum. He stated that,

Being able to study modern subjects such as science and English has given me opportunities for future learning and employment, he continued: I am certain that I can further my studies or find a job by getting a versatile learning experience.

Besides academic and educational benefits, the Madrasa environment contains many opportunities for a person’s development. To this end, the concentrated community of the Madrasa ensures that students can rely on fellow students and teachers while inspiring each other to gain academic, spiritual, and moral success. As educators, they act as role models, advisors, counselors, and guides to learners who have to face many difficulties during teenage or young adults’ periods of their lives. Respondent 8 described that,

¹⁸⁰ K. Mohammed Basheer, *Quality Enhancement in Madrasa Education: An Exploratory Study* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016).

A student testified to his transformation as a person in the Madrasa due to the social support available inside the Madrasa, he or she has learned leadership, teamwork, and care for other people throughout the time there, and the teachers are not only leaders but also care about their students' conditions and outcomes and help them become better people."

Similarly, respondent 16 who attended a Madrasa shared his observation that,

"The Madrasa education emphasized spirituality and moral values. He continued that attending the Madrasa has made me a more religious person and gave me a better knowledge of Islamic values and education. The course on spirituality and morality has helped me develop standard Islamic virtues such as compassion, integrity, and humility that are good for any person."

Overall, the Madrasa environment provides the following benefits and gains for the students and the school. Madrasas offers a multi-faceted curriculum, a friendly environment, and a focus on their students' spiritual and moral growth so they create proper opportunities to succeed academically and personally. Teachers and mentors are supposed to impart knowledge, skills, and character throughout the process of education in Madrasa so that in the future, as well as in the classroom, the student can achieve success. According to Hossain, the diversified curriculum in the context of a systematically developed Madrasa system and a caring learning environment helps students to develop in all aspects and excel.¹⁸¹ Also, Naseer notes that mentors and teachers regulate the character development of students and their academic accomplishments in Madrasas. All in all, considering the pervasiveness of madrasas, they are found to facilitate a supportive educational environment that seeks to develop students' skills, faith, as well as character.¹⁸²

3.6 Impact on Students and Society

In the previous section, the author discussed the difficulties and opportunities met by students of the madrasahs. In this section, it becomes we will discuss the social implications of

¹⁸¹ Hossain, "Is Public Provisioning of Secondary Education Equity Enhancing? A Case Study in Bangladesh."

¹⁸² Asep Azis Nasser et al., "Strengthening Character Education of Madrasah Students Based on Boarding School," *International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences* 3, no. 2 (April 28, 2022): 653–67, <https://doi.org/10.51601/ijersc.v3i2.320>.

madrassa education which might bear positive or negative consequences. It is essentially the same with general education; madrassas affect students and society in terms of religious and moral beliefs and values as well as issues such as education quality and integration. It is, therefore, possible to understand first how these impacts occur and second, how madrassahs affect the religious and moral outlooks of students, as well as the interactions within Pakistani society.

3.6.1 Influence of Madrasa education on beliefs and perspectives

Madrasa education impacts the students' beliefs more precisely and, in broader terms, influences how the students perceive the world around them and their place in the universe. The candidates who study in madrasas are taught religious values and principles, inculcating strong faith in Islām and its rich tradition. Upon thorough studying of the Quran and other literature, students master the significant concepts of Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and ethicality, which in turn shape their worldview.

Therefore, the interview with respondent 20, gives an insight into changes in belief systems and perceptions that Madrasa education can bring. As for his response:

“I have developed my religious understanding and my dedication as a Muslim while studying at the Madrasa to pursue, to study the holy Quran and Ḥadīths, the law of Islamic jurisprudence, and various matters of today's importance arising from Islamic laws and decrees, through enhanced values of compassion, justice, and mercy that are enthused by Islamic principles, my beliefs and perception have been reformulated.”

Similarly, respondent 5 also described that Madrasa education in Pakistan is formative regarding beliefs and perspectives. He mentioned:

“My education in the madrasa has helped enhance my spiritual life and diversify my understanding of various social, ethical, and moral causes. Critical thinking and reflection encouraged in the madrasa have made me capable of addressing matters rationally. The teachings of Islām regarding compassion, social justice, and service to society have provoked my beliefs and perspectives.”

Besides having the potential to develop individuals' personal beliefs and perceptions, Madrasa education also affects society. Many madrasa graduates preserve prominent positions as imams, scholars, educators, and activists and directly enhance their communities' social, cultural, and intellectual spheres. Through their education, knowledge, and skills, the Madrasa graduates become positive players or change-makers in society, fostering more understanding, tolerance, harmony, and justice.

Respondent 14 discussed his goal as a Madrasa graduate. He said:

“I was studying in a Madrasa, and it made me feel duty-bound to utilize myself for the welfare of the society in which I live. I am interested in dialogue for peace and justice, social justice, and community development. I learned these values During my Madrasa education.”

Similarly, respondent 3 noted in his own words,

“For me, madrasas are our treasure houses of Islamic learning and history, places where we learn about our glorious past and carry forward the legacy in our madrasas, we study from hundreds of years old texts about Islamic history and the various schools of jurisprudence in fact, it makes us feel proud to be a Muslim and be associated with such a rich tradition.”

Altogether, educational models of a Madrasa contribute valuable changes to the students' attitudes and perceptions, making them knowledgeable, compassionate, and socially sensitive individuals. According to the findings of the study done on the Madrasa graduates, their contribution towards society is well illustrated through the following points: By enhancing the value system of Islām, Madrasa graduates are the light of the society as they will always work towards bringing positive change in an ever-growing complex world by introducing to tolerance and understanding.

As Eickelman and Piscatori remarked the educational models in Madrasas considerably influence students' attitudes including knowledge, compassion, and enhanced social sensitivity.¹⁸³ In addition, Hefner flows to the generalizations stating that Madrasa

¹⁸³ Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*.

graduates are useful in society by being agents of transformation with values of tolerance and understanding.¹⁸⁴

3.6.2 Contribution of Madrasas to society

Madrasas have a far reach of conventional and virtual education for the students and society, altering beliefs and the perspective essential in underpinning the social structure. By interviewing a respondent 14, He said:

“I have a very positive perception of learning from madrasa as these have influenced my perception of Islām significantly; the madrasa education equipped me with a responsibility in society besides convincing me and urging me to promote peace more so in the society.”

This resonance gives an insight into how much positive impact madrasas have on developing feelings of compassion, empathy, and service towards society among the students. However, it is worth mentioning that besides the individual students, Madrasas serve society, benefiting the community and creating social balance. The account of the respondent 12 is another perspective to the argument:

“It is crucial and significant to know that Madrasas are centers for learning and religious practices in our communities. They are places where people can learn important educational materials and religious teachings, and our culture is promoted and, in turn, our Islamic identity.”

These words show that Madrasahs are essential as they have the function of transmitting knowledge and enriching culture. Besides, graduates of the Madrasa advance into influential citizens in their respective societies, offering their education and skills towards nation-building. A young man who graduated from a Madrasa –an Islamic school–, illustrates this aspect. In his testimony, He said:

“My education in the Madrasa empowered me with good critical thinking skills, leadership ability, and citizenship training. I am now a teacher teaching the younger generation to build society's intellect and moral character.”

¹⁸⁴ Hefner and Zaman, “Schooling Islām | Princeton University Press.”

Furthermore, the key lessons of Madrasas have also contributed to interfaith dialogue and tolerance. Because of their efforts to initiate religious tolerance, kindness, and understanding amongst people of different religious backgrounds, Madrasas create a suitable background to promote interfaith dialogue and cooperation. An experienced Madrasa respondent 1, explaining:

“Madrasas help to build bridges and bring faiths together as well as make society more harmonized and less conflicted.”

This shows how Madrasa promotes unity among people from different communities; thus, they are bridges between different faith groups. In summary, madrasas' role is critical among students and to the society where students are; these institutions help determine people's belief systems, create a sense of togetherness, and instill the culture of being socially responsible. The role of Madrasas in today's educational system is, therefore, highly effective because it aims to produce knowledgeable, equally spiritual, and very active participants in the progress of society. In appreciating and channeling the positive aspects of Madrasas, societies benefit from a positive impact that can enhance the values of such aspects as the opposite of extremism. Patoni And Rifai explains that significant concerns center on the distinctive way madrasas contribute to the formation of an individual's beliefs to support, develop, and encourage members' sense of belonging within society.¹⁸⁵ Further, Rahman insists that through the establishing of such schools called Madrasas, people become knowledgeable and spiritually equipped to contribute to society.¹⁸⁶ In sum, modern madrasas are important centers in modern education systems with values that are distasteful of terrorism and mechanical for integration.

3.7 Conclusion

The knowledge of student life inside Madrasas in Islamabad may help to understand better the current state of the Islamic educational system in the region. Thus, throughout this discussion, some critical points have been highlighted that may help to provide a clearer understanding of the role of Madrasa education and how it shapes students and society. Firstly,

¹⁸⁵ Patoni And Rifai, “Risk of Coronary Artery Disease in Patients with Gout on Treatment with Colchicine.”

¹⁸⁶ Rahman, “Islām and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition.”

being more related to religious institutions, it is crucial to mention that students get spiritual knowledge and a modern curriculum at Madrasas. This excellent balanced approach enables the students to acquire adequate knowledge, skills, and ethical principles that would allow them to face the challenges of the Adventist life in the complex world of the twenty-first century. Secondly, the communities within and surrounding Madrasas ensure that the students feel wanted and can easily interact with each other to lead balanced lives as academic, spiritual, and social beings. Education is instrumental in shaping individual personality and academic achievements, as teachers and mentors act as positive student references. Thirdly, the level of belief, perceptions, and values of the students who receive education in Madrasa transforms them into knowledgeable, socially sensitive individuals. As a result of their socially responsible contributions, the Madrasa education system graduates serve as change-makers who encourage a culture of peace, tolerance, and social justice in their societies. As regards the detail overview of student life in Madrasas about Islamic education in Islamabad, the overall role of Madrasas is essential as these institutions have played a significant role in the dissemination of Islamic knowledge, history, culture, morality, and personalities that can benefit the entire society as well as the world. So, when societies identify the significance of Madrasas, they can be used as a force for good in the future to advance the rights of man and ensure that together, we can bring about more tolerant and better societies where people can live in harmony.

CHAPTER IV

THE IMPACT OF MADRASA EDUCATION ON THE SOCIAL LIFE OF ULAMĀ POST-GRADUATION

The education of madrasa has occupied an essential place among Islamic peoples, as it is the center where scholars, called Ulamā, obtain proper training in religious sciences and Islamic legislation. It is essential also to note that the role of the Ulamā is not simply academic. Still, they are essential in religious practice, jurisprudence, and societal leadership in the Muslim world. The Ulamā, products of education through the Madrasa, hold highly regarded offices in Islamic communities. They are scholars of *Islām*, religious teachers, and judges of Islamic laws in the country. It is anywhere from individual worship and devotion to religious duties in the context of a religious community to more extensive functions in society. Islamic scholar Tamara Sonn suggested that the Ulamā power comes from knowledge, so they are religious teachers and moral and ethical leaders.¹⁸⁷ The Previous Chapter described the living conditions of students and the educational process in the madrasas of Islamabad with a description of their structure and curriculum. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze if and how the education one obtains from Madrasas and the teachings they are subjected to affect their social life once they leave Madrasas. This research explores how and in what ways Madrasa education influences Ulamā religious and social engagements and fortunes in the modern Muslim world through an examination of their spiritual and economic performances and contributions within their societies.

4.1 Impacts of madrassah education on individuals

Madrassah offers people the opportunity for social promotion and liberation from an inferior position in the family and society, freeing them from oblivion for a given period. The researcher mentioned that social mobility improved the capacity of people to act independently in Islamabad. The following section provides empirical evidence on the role of madrassah education in constructing individual agency. The madrassah teachers also stress that the Islamic educational paradigm gives students a view of the world quite different from the secular views dominating modern educational systems. They note that madrassahs educate students in religion and moral direction regarding individual and communal lives under Islamic tenets.

¹⁸⁷ Sonn and Ahmed, "The SAGE Handbook of Islamic Studies."

Therefore, education in the madrassahs is considered a socially valuable investment, even though it is not financially profitable. This view is supported by studies that suggest that regardless of social evolution or madrassah education modification, some sections of society always favor these institutions. This preference is attributed to the notion that education at madrassah is associated with religious benefits in the hereafter. Thus, it is a perpetual source for forming a religious personality and a moral-puritan outlook in students. A madrassah respondent 12 explained:

” Secular education’s main agenda is to educate students on materialistic aspects of life, thus making them embrace the Western culture. In contrast, madrassah education instills Islamic principles in the students, significantly influencing their behavior once they complete their studies. The graduate students have dignity towards parents and relatives; they accept whatever situation they find themselves in because that is the will of Allah, and they are taught not to tell lies, embezzle, or engage in.”

Furthermore, teachers and parents observe distinctive attitudes and behaviors among madrassah students compared to those attending public schools, even within the same family. For instance, a respondent 5 noted:

”A female madrassah graduate tends to have a more stable married life than girls who graduate from universities. She understands her husband's rights, respects him, and knows how to manage relationships with his family. This understanding minimizes family conflicts and reduces the likelihood of divorce. Madrassah education also equips female graduates with skills to nurture and educate their children with discipline.”

Parents from diverse backgrounds express confidence in madrassah education for instilling strong moral values in their children, which they believe shields them from negative societal influences. Respondent 18 explained:

”Madrassahs teach fundamental ethical values, respect for elders, especially parents, and proper conduct with others. These are essential for developing good character in children. In today's rapidly changing society, many parents in rural and urban areas worry about protecting their children from negative influences. Madrassah education provides a straightforward guide

on distinguishing right from wrong and helps children avoid immoral behaviors like bad friendships, smoking, drugs, and other sins."

In Pakistan, particularly in urban areas like Islamabad, societal norms are predominantly patriarchal, significantly influencing gender dynamics in daily life. The researcher observed that due to socio-cultural and religious constraints, individuals often face limitations in making and implementing decisions regarding their social and economic activities and in shaping the lives they aspire to lead. Traditionally, community-level decision-making processes exclude many individuals, and agency is often restricted by household dynamics led by dominant family members. For instance, individuals typically have limited say in their education, career choices, or marriage decisions, which are crucial aspects of their lives. Interestingly, the study found that a madrassah education enhances the agency of men, particularly those from urban areas with low socio-economic status. Respondent 13 described how his religious education transformed his role within his new household after marriage:

"Usually, when a young man moves in with his wife's family, particularly in rural settings where joint family systems are more common, it is hard for him to gain the respect her wants' – initially apprehensive; nervously, I found myself receiving considerable respect from the members of the house because of my knowledge in religious studies the household members asked me to give them some religious instructions. Also, they supported me in providing Islamic education to the young boys."

Similarly, respondent 2 shared his experience of a fulfilling marital life shaped by his madrassah education:

"Madrassah's education has taught me the rights of the husband and wife and the ways of treating in-laws and respecting our elders. This aspect has made my marriage sober compared to many marriages where there are frequent fights over failure to provide parental care. My wife knows that I am knowledgeable in religious matters. So, she leaves most of the family decisions in my hands, including the financial aspects of the marriage and schooling for our children."

The above stories show how madrassah education makes men wise and informed on what they are entitled to and gives them the ability to gain respect within their homes and be

part and parcel of the decision-making process within the households and the community at large. These stories illustrate how, through education, the madrassah gives people knowledge of their rights and thus helps them not to be exploited and effectively in their relationships within the family and the community. The social and psychological empowerment that Bano elaborated was similar to the outcomes of madrassah education to civic engagement,¹⁸⁸ similar to those experienced by the communities, as described by Niaz.¹⁸⁹ However, it is imperative to admit that despite the overall positive impact of madrassah education on enhancing agency in various spheres of human lives, problems like patriarchy still exist and should be solved within the framework of Islamic Sharī'ah.¹⁹⁰ In summary, the increased importance of madrassah education in Islamabad is an excellent opportunity for graduates. It helps them to overcome real-life situations, making it a preferred choice for many people in the region.

4.2 Influence of Madrassah Education on Students' Skillsets

In the previous section, we explored how madrassa education influences individuals. In this section, we will discuss how madrassa education specifically impacts the development of their skills.

The Madrassah education, which intends to cultivate students with a strong belief in religious knowledge and ethical behaviors, affects the students' skills and abilities. This curriculum typically involves the study of the Interpretation of the Holy Quran, Ḥadīth or Prophetic traditions, Fiqh or Jurisprudence, Arabic language and literature, and other subjects. Structured and effective learning and teaching pedagogy enable students to learn more than religious information. Another characteristic feature of the madrassah education is the focus on memorization and interpretation of the religious teaching. Respondent 6 explained:

“The students memorize the Quran as it helps improve memory; at the same time, it makes learners disciplined and patient. They also practice interpreting a text, which opens the way for critical thinking. He also explained that throughout my years in the madrassah, I gained the ability to

¹⁸⁸ Bano, *The Rational Believer*.

¹⁸⁹ Mohammad Niaz Asadullah and Nazmul Chaudhury, “Religious Schools, Social Values, and Economic Attitudes: Evidence from Bangladesh,” *World Development*, Formal and Informal Institutions and Development, 38, no. 2 (February 1, 2010): 205–17, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2009.10.014>.

¹⁹⁰ Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*.

reason with information. The madrassah trained me to read into religious scriptures and decipher meanings, and this has helped in many areas like solving problems and making decisions.”

Also, in the madrassah curriculum, students’ ethical behavior and conduct are taught, which plays a vital role in molding the student’s personality. Respondent 19 noted:

“The ethical teachings we received are relevant in my personal life: a focus on truthfulness, respect, and the societal perspective has been helpful in terms of interpersonal relations at work and my life in general.”

Furthermore, the subject choice of community service and leadership enables students to be proactive in different societies. Respondent 20 described how his madrassah education has empowered her to contribute positively to her community:

“While our curriculum is strong in religious and ethical teachings, integrating subjects like science, mathematics, and technology would equip our students with a broader skill set. This would help them adapt to the modern world without compromising their religious values.”

Overall, madrassah education shapes students' intellectual, ethical, and social skills. It provides a solid foundation for religious knowledge while equipping them with essential life skills that contribute to their personal and community development. According to Berkey, madrassah education entails several processes that foster the growth of the student’s intellect and character and the production of responsible members of society.¹⁹¹ Boyle also pointed out that madrassahs affiliated with these subject skills essentially impart important life skills to students: Thus, the madrassahs had impacted a great way in personal and social development.¹⁹²

4.3 Family Life

This section focuses on the family-related features of Ulamā who has passed through the standard madrasa education in Islamabad. In particular, the production emphasizes their

¹⁹¹ Berkey, *The Formation of Islām*.

¹⁹² Helen N. Boyle, “Memorization and Learning in Islamic Schools,” *Comparative Education Review* 50, no. 3 (August 2006): 478–95, <https://doi.org/10.1086/504819>.

relationships, family roles and positions, and individual struggles, as well as the conflict between the male workers' careers and their roles as fathers. In recognizing these aspects, one gets an understanding of the general welfare, sacrifice, and living stake of graduates of the madrasa over and above the vocational service.

4.3.1 Living Standards and Lifestyles

This completes a critical analysis of the living conditions and the life approaches of the Ulamā who graduated from madrasa in Islamabad. In particular, it focuses on the descriptive analysis of respondents' housing situations, income, schedule, and quality of life three years after graduation, providing additional information about respondents' socio-economic status, job satisfaction, and well-being.

In-depth interviews with a diverse group of madrasa graduates reveal a range of living standards and lifestyles shaped by their educational backgrounds and professional roles:

Respondent 15:

"I have a small rented house with my wife and kids in a suburban neighborhood of Islamabad, and my earnings from both my Imam employment and some extra tasks help me provide for my family necessities only; we would, however, struggle to pay for our children's higher education. Despite these hardships, I am content in improving the community's standard of living through religious guidance and education services."

Respondent 14:

"Speaking of accommodation, currently, I reside in a hostel-like manner within the madrasa's premise where our living is quite basic but it helps that I am free from major rent or house loan repayments so one can be more committed to the books and the society."

Respondent 6:

I have been able to advance to a better and more spacious house in one of the better neighborhoods of Islamabad through private tutoring and conducting community classes in addition to the regular classes I offer. Not

only has this helped in enhancing our living standard, but it has also created chances for saving and investing for my children's future education. However, the daily teaching along with business and marketing has proved to be a little difficult but fruitful at the same time.

These interviews serve to highlight the heterogeneity of the socio-economic origins of the interviewees and their flexibility of the graduate of the Islamabad madrasa. The living conditions include single rooms in rented apartments, slum houses, and basic houses which Ulamā shares with other families, and others who live in better-built houses in the affluent estates because they have better housing needs and different wealth capacities and income.

Ahmad also highlights the problems that many Ulamā experience due to low-income possibilities in official capacities; this is why most of them work as tutors privately, businessmen, or local community leaders, in addition to being limited in paid workplaces.¹⁹³ On the general note on employee satisfaction and Ulamā contribution in religious education and community improvement, Patoni and Rifai points out that the socio-economic conditions of Ulamā have to be upgraded so that they can continue to discharge their duties effectively.¹⁹⁴

These facts give insights into the living standards of the madrasa graduates and their ways of life to understand the tenacity, self-reliance, and desire on the part of the graduates for improvement in their personal and professional lives. Legislation for affirmative measures for the women, financial education and the economic enabling of women with the view of enhancing their standards of living and continued productivity to society.

4.3.2 Social Mobility and Aspirations

This section of the study offers a detailed analysis of the social mobility and upward social class targeting attending Ulamā graduated from Madrasas in Islamabad. It explores how their transition to the next level of social mobility took place in their careers, their chances for promotions, personal ideals about career advancement, and their role in the advancement of society. A grasp of these aspects therefore provides considerable insights regarding the metamorphic potential of madrasa education and the potential for its generative effects on

¹⁹³ Ahmad, "Madrasa Education in Pakistan and Bangladesh."

¹⁹⁴ Patoni And Rifai, "Risk of Coronary Artery Disease in Patients with Gout on Treatment with Colchicine."

societies and the lives of individuals. Through in-depth interviews with a diverse group of madrasa graduates, a nuanced understanding of social mobility and aspirations emerges:

Respondent 17:

“Acquiring education from a prestigious madrasa in Islamabad has not only enriched my religious education but also paved the way for leadership roles in my communities I want to be part of the policy-making on religious education change for the better and healthy interfaith democracy in context to national causes and effects.”

Similarly Respondent 12:

“Thus, despite my socio-economically disadvantaged background, the years spent at the madrasa have been an economic journey from the socio-economic forming stage to economically stable community leaders and professionals willing and ready to mentor the younger generations of Ulamā and impart education irrespective of their socio-economic background.”

Such interviews feature different narratives of social mobility and heterogeneity of goals that madrasa graduates have to establish the role of change in the religious, educational, and societal fields. Education draws a crucial structure when it comes to the transformation of individuals from their socio-economic statuses and enables them to take up leadership positions that define the future of their societies.

According to Patoni and Rifai indicate that madrasa graduates receive religious knowledge and leadership as well as civic responsibility that allows them to find better social positions. Ahmad stated that the professional imperative in the career progression of the Ulamā supports the preservation of Islamic values and practices coupled with the pursuit of modern realities in various settings. This section examines social mobility and life aspirations to demonstrate that education profoundly changes people’s lives and society, especially the graduates from madrasa. An emphasis is made on the need to create an appropriate educational climate for the boys, to facilitate leadership, and to develop their dreams for a better future within a humane society and the Ulamā.

4.3.3 Influence on Children's Education and Upbringing

This section looks at the impact of the trained Ulamā who graduated from Madrasas in Islamabad on the Correction and upbringing of children in their communities. The first one is focused on their part as teachers, which includes providing instructions and modeling behaviors, and their religious conversions, beliefs, and practices are discussed here as influencing the educational processes and the consequent organization of families. Through interviews with a diverse group of madrasa graduates, insights into their influence on children's education and upbringing emerge: Respondent 16:

“My professional occupation entails being an Imam and an educator who is involved in teaching Islamic knowledge to children through Qurans and moral education activities focusing on good ethical standards and religious beliefs that shape the child’s academic life and personality.”

Respondent 8 added:

“I conduct educational workshops focusing on improvements of Islamic knowledge among the children and youth, and youth programs that are meant to strengthen their perception of cultural identity and build up the feeling of togetherness.”

Respondent 12 stated that,

‘It is not my responsibility to teach students alone inside the class; I also work with parents to teach Islamic values at home and the overall development of the kid especially on gaining good grades and being good Muslims.’

The interviews presented in this study outline diverse ways and means by which Ulamā shapes Children’s Education and Socialization in the Communities. The present study therefore seeks to highlight the contribution made by madrasa graduates in teaching roles formal teaching roles, community outreach in collaboration with families, and in the ongoing process of molding educational practices and developing religious and ethical conduct among the younger generation. Having analyzed the role of Ulamā from the point of view of Khan, it can be stated

that scholars are the key connectors between the past and future generations as they pass down the knowledge of religion and culture, which helps maintain the Islamic identity of a particular population and strengthening the bonds between the members of the community.¹⁹⁵ According to Ningsih such influence given to children's education indicates their application of Islamic ideologies with modern educational systems.¹⁹⁶ Appreciating the fact of Ulamā about children education and upbringing makes it necessary for them to come out in support of educational improvement and moral and cultural conservation in the society. Socio-emotional development of children is underlined, focusing on the roles of religious schools, religious families, and other educational institutions in the child's upbringing.

4.3.4. Impact on Family Livelihoods

This section explores how those who graduated from madrasas in Islamabad, the Ulamā affect families' sustenance in the society. It explores their economic productivity, their roles in supporting families' finances, and the socio-economic roles offered by the faith-based organizations that they head as religious officers, champions, teachers, and leaders. Through interviews with a diverse group of madrasa graduates, insights into their impact on family livelihoods emerge: Respondent 11:

“Imam and madrasa teacher's income helps me to support my family's needs like my child's education and other needs; I educate people about the religion also giving them a guide in life hence easing the smooth running of the society economically.”

Respondent 4 explained that,

As a community person, I engage in community activities and fundraising for families in need, basically, through charitable organizations and social welfare programs, I endeavor to embrace a better socio-economic status for low-income families that are most often neglected in the society.

Respondent 9 stated that,

¹⁹⁵ Kalhoro and Khan, “Education and Radicalization; Is There Any Causative Relationship?”

¹⁹⁶ Titik Ningsih, Tuti Ernawati, and Wahyu Sakban, “The Influence of Islamic Religious Education in Family and School Religious Culture on Students' Religious Discipline” 15 (2023).

“As a religious educator, one can help families by providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills that will allow them to become economically active; I encourage youth to take up vocational training and become entrepreneurs and be ready to adopt modern ways of earning their living through proper economy.”

These interviews showcase the various signs through which Ulamā affects families’ economy in their communities. Apart from spirituality, these duties play an important role in educating people and being in a position to speak for the economic rights of Cherokees, income provisions, and welfare provisions. According to Patoni and Rifai pointed out that Ulamā act as beneficial intermediaries in families’ quest for sustainability through the espousal of ethical social norms, absolution, and economic productivity.¹⁹⁷ According to Khan, their role goes up to the level of educational empowerment and social welfare policies for socio-economic development installations.¹⁹⁸ Significantly for the analysis of the role of Ulamā is the evidence of how their activities contributed to the socio-economic welfare of the family and, consequently, to the formation of a new type of Indonesian society. It focuses on the relationship between religious authority and succession, funding, and charitable policies and programs for the improvement of the standard of living in the community which the madrasas in Islamabad serve.

4.4 Transition from Madrasa to Society

From being a student in this Madrasa to becoming an Ulamā is a ladder that he or she undergoes a process of education, a spiritual and practical formation. Traditionally, formal education in a madrasa includes learning the Quran, *Hadīths*, *Fiqh*, *Tafsīr*, and other Islamic subjects. This broad syllabus is expected to enable the students to study the teachings of Islām and be able to explain the meanings and implications of these teachings in various sectors in their lifetime. These students are awarded a degree in Ulamā at graduation, making them arbiters of faith and practice in their respective societies. The respondent 12 who completed

¹⁹⁷ Achmad Patoni and Muh Khoirul Rifai, “The Role of Religious Leaders in Conducting Islamic Religious Education in The Community,” *AL-TANZIM: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islām* 6, no. 1 (March 28, 2022): 449–64, <https://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v6i2.3324>.

¹⁹⁸ Kalhoro and Khan, “Education and Radicalization; Is There Any Causative Relationship?”

the course at the Madrasa was recently interviewed. The passage reveals this journey. He was asked about it, and this is his response.

“While studying at the Madrasa, many things were new for me, and it was interesting to learn as an Ulamā, which is my calling now; years in the Madrasa had been a primary period of learning and studies that helped me to grow, both spiritually and intellectually, to be a worthy member of the Ulamā.”

To advance my knowledge of the transformations from being a madrasa student to an Ulamā, I conducted a formal interview with respondent 2 who received his religious education in a madrasa in Pakistan and who plays a vital role in his community now. In this case, he emphasizes the positive aspects of his voyage, He said,

‘When I was young, my parents decided to send me to a madrasa to receive proper Islamic education being an Islamic school. After joining the madrasa, the primary concentration was memorizing the Quran and general Islamic knowledge, including Arabic grammar and other basics. From being a madrasa student to becoming an Ulamā is a process with a syllabus and religious and secular knowledge. Continuing, he said: ‘Once the foundation had been learned thoroughly, we progressed to higher levels of study in Ḥadīth, Tafṣīr, and Fiqh. This phase was vital because it helped the future generations to grasp the intricate issues of shari’ah and Aqidah [theology].’

Respondent 5 stated:

‘When I was in the madrasa, I opted to study Sharī’ahh – Islamic law,’ he says. ‘This was to study under great scholars who teach and encourage right standards and practices and religious devotion’.

In addition to academic exercises, vocational training, and volunteering activities significantly mold an aspiring Ulamā. Embedding and training, he reminisces:

” We had been freely interacting with the community to answer their questions and concerns on religious issues, and it made us fit the leadership roles we were given.”

The final stage of this process is marked by graduation and assuming positions as Ulamā leaders tasked with leading the community. Recalling his way, he says,

‘After finishing my studies, I joined the list of the Ulamā as an imam of a mosque in a particular area, showing that matriculation does not only mean one has to stop learning but also be a servant in society.

In summary, transforming a madrasa student into an Ulamā gives them a comprehensive religious education blended with ethical, moral, and leadership skills. It represents a deep dedication to learning and the dissemination of knowledge and a noble mandate to educate the people in the light of the teachings of Islām. Zaman recognizes that madrasa education and training are not only religious, but they impart religious ethical, and leadership competencies to students to discharge their roles as Ulamā.¹⁹⁹ In addition, Metcalf notes that the changing of madrasa students into Ulamā proves an engagement in the propagation of Islamic Lessons and guidance of the society.²⁰⁰

4.5 Employment, Career Opportunities, and Economic Impacts

The jobs and career prospects that graduates from the Madrasa have in the years today have changed a lot, and so have the economic effects of education. The role of Madrasa education has been viewed primarily as concentrating on religious teachings and the preparation of community leaders. Nevertheless, in the present scenario, the prospective realm of the career Nobility for the Madrasa graduates is rising due to certain socio-economic factors.

4.5.1 Employment and Career Opportunities

Madrasa, up to recent times, was intended to produce Ulamā, teachers of Islamic education, and Imams for mosques. However, as all society’s requirements change, Madrasa graduates are expanding their career options more than ever. One of the valuable things that can be done is interviewing from Madrasa respondent 14.

“Earlier, most of us were taught to be Imams or religious teachers. Nevertheless, what is happening today is that many of the graduates from the Madrasa enter the field of journalism, social work, and even business.”

¹⁹⁹ Zaman, “The Ulamā and Contestations on Religious Authority,” 200.

²⁰⁰ Metcalf, “The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India on JSTOR.”

Another respondent 17 explained.

One of the primary reasons for this diversification is said to stem from the integration of modern subjects in the Madrasa. He also pointed out that many of them are now offering computer science, English, and other subjects that are prized in the labor market, thereby enabling the students of the Madrasas to get broad-based employment opportunities by acquiring competitive skills in the job market.”

Furthermore, some of the Madrasa graduates continue with university education, opening up a wide range of job avenues. A respondent 8 said,

“After I finished my Madrasa education, I joined a university to study law, which has given me a new direction I had never thought of before.” This blending of the conventional education system and madrasa produces a new set of Madrasa graduates to join the society, ready to take up specific professional fields.

Overall, the role of madrasas was to produce the Ulamā which are Islamic teachers, Imams and Scholars. But the dynamics of the society have resulted to those from the madrasa finding employment in journalism, social work, and business among other fields. This change has been occasioned by incorporating other relevant subjects in the curriculum such as computer studies, English, and other Graduates’ employment skills subjects in the madrasa system. Also, many graduates pursue their studies at universities establishing new opportunities for employment, which include law that combines formal and madrasa education thus producing a diverse human capital. Thus, Hefner and Zaman indicate that changes in the curriculum in madrasas have ensured that madrasa graduates can practice different professions apart from religion.²⁰¹ Moreover, Sonn and Adam point out that initiatives in secular subjects and higher education opportunities have expanded the opportunities for madrasa graduates in today’s labor market, and made the graduates more diverse and qualified.²⁰²

²⁰¹ Hefner and Zaman, “Schooling Islām | Princeton University Press.”

²⁰² Sonn and Ahmed, “The SAGE Handbook of Islamic Studies.”

4.5.2 Economic Impacts

The process of Madrasa education yields various economic repercussions. On the one hand, the conventional job profiles available within the religious sector involve relatively low salaries, which may become an issue of concern for the graduates of Madrasa. A respondent 12 gave an interview, and he mentioned,

For instance, working as an Imam or a religious teacher may not be highly paid, and most of us must engage in other activities to help feed our families.

However, it can also help achieve better economic outcomes due to the coverage of modern subjects and the striving for various professions. First, graduates who pursue professions such as education, social work, or even business creation have better earning capabilities. For example, he said that some of his friends had started companies or worked for NGOs, which pay relatively higher wages.

Another aspect of Madrasa graduates is that they can give back economically to their communities. Most graduates participate in self-help activities such as community, social, and charitable services, which benefit society's socio-economic status. Many of us participate in community-related causes, including education, healthcare, and other social support for those in need within society, apart from improving our economic lives. In addition, focusing on the graduates of Madrasa, holding ethical business practices and social justice can extend economic growth. Thus, it becomes easier for them to adjust their practices according to the Islamic principles of justice, trustworthiness, and the responsibility held towards the societies, leading to more just and sustainable economic reforms. According to Patoni and Rifai, is ethical training that enables the graduates of the madrasas to be sensitive to moral issues concerning business and society to champion integrity and ethical business practices.²⁰³ In addition, Asad maintains that proper following of other Islamic principles such as justice and trustworthiness in the economic field enhances a more favorable kind of economic planning and growth.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Patoni And Rifai, "Risk of Coronary Artery Disease in Patients with Gout on Treatment with Colchicine."

²⁰⁴ Muhammad Asad, *The Principles of State and Government in Islām* (Univ of California Press, 2023).

4.5.3 Challenges and Opportunities

However, various challenges are encountered even today. Modern subjects have not been taught in all Madrasa curricula, and graduates of Madrasa face problems with inadequate resources and career opportunities in higher learning institutions. As respondents mentioned, not all Madrasas can provide education in modern subjects, and many students face financial and logistical challenges while seeking higher education. To overcome these challenges, there is increasing demand for public policies and support programs to provide the Madrasa graduates with a proper start towards different career opportunities. This ranges from scholarships, vocational training, and affiliation between Madrasas and universities. Respondent suggests that more support from the government and non-governmental organizations can go a long way. More scholarships, training, and other programs and facilities can bring out the best in us.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the employment and career opportunities for the graduates of Madrasa are changing due to the incorporation of the modern education system and the quest to achieve various careers. At the same time, a conservative outlook within the religious sector continues to matter; new directions such as social work, business, and higher education further improve the income potential of graduates from Madrasa. Policy solutions and programs aimed at the existing problems may develop the opportunities of Madrasa education in more detail and bring substantial socio-economic effects at the individual and community levels. As highlighted by Bano, in the modern-day madrasas education is included in the modern syllabus meaning that graduates can further differently career opportunities.²⁰⁵ Furthermore, Malik insists that there is a role for policy improvement in the ways that deliver improved socio-economic returns from madrasa education, as well as for the individuals and societies in need of effective schooling.²⁰⁶

4.6 Participation in Political Affairs

The political role of the Ulamā is extraordinary, especially those educated in a madrasa, some of them have important roles in Pakistan politics and are involved in the processes of translating religious doctrines into practices. A sample survey of their political engagement

²⁰⁵ Bano, "(PDF) Contesting Ideologies and Struggle for Authority: State-Madrasa Engagement in Pakistan."

²⁰⁶ Malik, *Madrasas in South Asia*.

roles has manifested in advisory positions, vote-making processes or the legislative themselves, and constant agitation. This engagement is pertinent in situations where Islamic law and ethic dominate political legal systems such as in Pakistan.

Ulūma plays more of the role of legal consultant in the political leadership and policy-making affairs of the state business based on Islamic law and moral standards. This advisory feature is rather central in guaranteeing that laws and policies align to Islamic tenets of fairness, equity as well as empathy. For instance, in the course of voicing their opinions on social issues for instance women's rights issues or economic bills and policies, Ulamā offers the legal professional elaborations of the Quranic verses and Ḥadīth in support of just outcomes. Respondent 9 discussed his role,

” It is not about exerting power; it is about contributing our input guaranteeing the fact that the decisions made are just Islamic civil and moral as it were, in some aspects, it is consulting on mostly all facets of life calling for Sharī‘ah compliant economic policies and hence social justice.”

Other than being in advisory positions, some of the Ulamā engage in political campaigns whereby they can stand for elections or support political parties that embed Islamic principles. This participation enables them to fight for policies of social relevance, economic equity as well as community upliftment. It is considered part of their theological obligations to maintain justice and be of public good to people.

According to Respondent 11 given to politics,

“It makes us able to be in a direct interaction with policy making and implement them in a manner that will help the society in our operation, we hope to organize a society that has Islamic values of justice and benevolence in its policy making.”

Ulamā role at the community level involves sensitizing the community on matters touching on social and political issues. These inform the public on their rights and duties and ensure participation in the matters affecting society. Such activism is important in the development of politically informed citizens who are able to challenge the leadership and demand change. Counseling and guidance are among the functions that are performed by Ulamā for the people with their problems as individuals and in terms of their communities.

People approach them for counseling on personal as well as family issues as well as societal issues. This role is grounded in their knowledge of the ethic of Islām, then the message of mercy and justice. Ulamā plays more of the role of legal consultant in the political leadership and policy-making affairs of the state business based on Islamic law and moral standards. This advisory feature is rather central in guaranteeing that laws and policies align to Islamic tenets of fairness, equity as well as empathy. For instance, in the course of voicing their opinions on social issues for instance women’s rights issues or economic bills and policies, Ulamā offers the legal professional elaborations of the Quranic verses and Ḥadīth in support of just outcomes.

Respondent 1, a respected Islamic scholar, discussed his role:

” It is not about exerting power; it is about contributing our input guaranteeing the fact that the decisions made are just Islamic civil and moral as it were, in some aspects, it is consulting on mostly all facets of life calling for Sharī‘ah compliant economic policies and hence social justice.”

A large number of Ulamā provide counseling to people and families on personal issues including conjugal problems, business and economic issues, and ethical issues. The help they provide is considered to encompass more than spiritual issues of life. This counsel is rooted in Islām where Satan asked for a more compassionate, just, and humane experience.

Respondent 10, who majors in family law counseling, narrated,

“This is because people bring their problems to us because they accept the judgment, we give them and our adherence to Islamic values. We give advice that is religious and utility and our community members get that relief they need in their lives.”

Apart from this, Ulamā also act as counsellors to individuals, resolve disputes within the society, ensure solidarity and mobilize the society in case of an emergency. Due to their respected position within the community, they can solve such things as inter-group conflicts, social injustice, and communal complaints. Ulamā bear a great position in this regard, indeed they are the source of identification between right and wrong in society; they act like a mediator and solve issues through wisdom and justice for the well-being of the society. According to Hefner and Zaman, The Ulamā mainly position themselves in supporting the society’s moral

purpose, and as the mediators who apply reason and justice in addressing the society concerns.²⁰⁷ Furthermore, Eickelman and Piscatori stress that the Ulamā are expected to be model ethical human beings and their actions and advocacies enjoin the people to do the same for social cohesion.²⁰⁸

4.7 Role of Ulamā in Community Leadership

In the previous section, we discussed economic careers and the opportunities available to individuals. In this section, the concept section will be defined and expanded with specific reference to their position in communities. We will look into how scholars participate in the communal discourse and the overall intellectual and spiritual spheres of their societies, and in the processes of education and religious teaching and preaching that take place in societies; the part played by scholars in the determination of societal and cultural trends will also be discussed. Further, the role of scholars in moderating conflicts, offering ethical direction, and affirming the support of community development endeavors will also be explored to demonstrate scholars' indispensableness in contributing to the enhancement of the communities' cohesiveness and durability.

Modernity has impacted the traditional role of the Ulamā in the contemporary Muslim world.²⁰⁹ Nevertheless, the socio-religious roles of the Ulamā continue to persist and influence Muslim societies. The relationship between the madrassahs and the local community in Islamabad is evident, fostering a social network that encourages adherence to madrassah teachings. My interviewees indicated that madrassahs in Islamabad are more than mere providers of Islamic education, and Ulamā work extends beyond leading prayers in mosques or teaching students in madrassahs. The Ulamā actively engages with the broader community, performing various social functions. Consequently, the involvement of the Ulamā in the public sphere in Islamabad is noticeable. For example, the Ulamā offers advice on marriage and other social issues, mediating conflicts between community members.

To examine the practical role of the Ulamā at the community level, the researcher asked several questions of the madrassah interviewees and other participants. Interviewees stated that the primary responsibility of the Ulamā is to disseminate Islamic teachings to the general public

²⁰⁷ Hefner and Zaman, "Schooling Islām | Princeton University Press."

²⁰⁸ Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*.

²⁰⁹ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*, 200.

and guide them in living an Islamic way of life. The goal is to build a society based on Islamic principles and bring about social change through the teachings of Islām. A madrassah respondent 4 explained:

"The Ulamā act as successors of the Prophet to spread the teachings of Islām to everyone in the community, guiding people on practicing Muslims and living according to the Sharī'ah (Quran and Ḥadīth). Also, to teach that practicing an Islamic life involves more than just praying five times daily and reciting the Quran. Therefore, an Ālim living within a community, closely interacting with people, teaches them how to apply the lessons of the Quran and Ḥadīth practically. This includes knowing your rights, respecting others' rights in the community, helping the needy, respecting parents and elders, and ensuring women's rights, among other things. In other words, the Ulamā strive to establish a good society through the teachings of Islām."

Respondent 20 added:

"A sustainable society is based on practicing the teachings of Islām, and the Ulamā guides people on the life code provided by the Quran and Ḥadīth. The Ulamā broadens good deeds through Islamic teachings, such as teaching people about Zakat, which helps reduce poverty, and informing them about social evils and sinful actions that harm individuals and society."

In recent years, our community has faced various social issues, such as women's rights in property inheritance being ignored, rampant gambling through bird fighting, and caste-based inequality. However, the increasing presence and efforts of the Ulamā have significantly addressed these problems by imparting Islamic teachings to the general public. The Ulamā interviewed acknowledged that modern Muslim societies face challenges from modernization and globalization, with individuals becoming more Westernized. They expressed concern about the younger generation straying from Islamic teachings, leading to various social issues. The madrassahs believe that their religious education and the work of the Ulamā not only spread Islamic teachings but also promote Islamic culture and values in Muslim societies.

People seek spiritual guidance from the Ulamā, who consult them on various daily life issues, including marriage, divorce, inheritance, and financial matters like Zakat and interest. This highlights the Ulamā role in providing Islām-oriented solutions according to Sharī'ah law. This

study also explored the Ulamā active social role in the community. Informants outside the madrassahs indicated that the Ulamā are deeply involved in social matters and rituals. For instance, they are invited to conduct *Nikāh* ceremonies, deliver *Khuṭab*, lead *Ṣalāt al-Janāzah* at burials, and oversee Eid festival prayers. The Ulamā role as community leaders extends to encouraging social engagement and motivating individuals to perform community welfare work. They also act as mediators, resolving social disputes and maintaining social harmony.

A community member described how the Ulamā participate in the Jirga system to resolve serious social problems and disputes. People trust the Ulamā decisions because they believe they are fair and based on Islamic teachings. Additionally, involving the Ulamā helps avoid the lengthy, costly, and complicated processes of the police and court systems. The Ulamā involvement in the Jirga²¹⁰ system is crucial for providing justice to poor and marginalized people conveniently. The respect and honor an *Ālim* receive from the community are tied to his practice of religion and piety. A practicing *Ālim*, who embodies the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah daily, earns the community's respect and can effectively serve as a religious leader. Conversely, an *Ālim* who fails to practice these teachings loses the community's respect and can damage the reputation of madrassah education and other Ulamā. Such behavior can lead to increased skepticism about the religious teachings of the madrassah system. In summary, the Ulamā play a vital role in addressing social issues, providing spiritual guidance, and maintaining social harmony through their religious teachings and active involvement in social matters. As Zaman articulates, the Ulamā are crucial in tackling social challenges and offering spiritual counsel, thereby fostering social cohesion.²¹¹ Additionally, Eickelman and Piscatori emphasize the Ulamā active participation in social affairs, which helps maintain societal harmony and stability.²¹²

4.8 Engagement in Social Welfare Activities and Community Development

This section proved that Ulamā educated in madrasa is actively involved in social welfare activities and community development. They are well-grounded with the Islamic notions on *Ṣadaqah*, Zakat, and responsible citizenship and most of the time engaged into

²¹⁰ The jirga system is a traditional assembly of elders in society that resolves disputes and makes communal decisions.

²¹¹ Zaman, *The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām*.

²¹² Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*.

different welfare activities. This involves matters concerning educational facilities, medical services, the elimination of poverty, and disaster services among others. Here it can be seen that the Ulamā has made serving their communities part of their religious function as supported by mosques ‘teachings’.

In many instances, the graduates of Madrasa start and operate non-profit organizations whose aim is to offer basic services within society’s least endearing sections. For example, Respondent 20, shared his experience:

“When I finished my education, I had a personal responsibility to be of service to my community in any way I could in so doing, I established a non-Profit making organization whose main aim is to educate the needy and the less privileged children from poor background families of their right to education and provide vocation skills to make them economically productive citizens.”

Respondent 15 of the Madrasa, stated,

Based on the principles of Islamic teachings for compassion and care to patients, I initiated a mobile clinic where we provide medical care to rural people who cannot afford medical bills and accessibility to healthcare facilities.

Despite being devoted to social welfare, the Ulamā have some issues that affect them regarding their cause. The problem of financing is critical because the majority of welfare projects are implemented using money obtained through donations and voluntary contributions. Thirdly, sometimes there are social barriers that are exhibited by the local people who are in a given community and feel that their way of life is right thus, opposing any change. In the translated interview with Respondent 14, an Islamic social work scholar stated that,

“Ulamā are highly respected for their work but when they are bringing changes in terms of method or addressing such issues as gender mainstreaming, there is a lot of resistance. Then again, they cannot just

bring in the conventional Islamic methods and principles, they need to embrace change to be of better service to the community.”

Most of the Ulamā also partners with institutions and NGOs of today’s generation to have magnified effects. This partnership helps them to mix the Islamic values that are conventional to this religion with the modern trends in social work. Such partnerships are generally more effective and have a longer-lasting and broader impact.

Respondent 5 discusses his experience with collaboration:

“We were able to add several NGOs as our partners to extend the coverage of our education programs. Such organizations allow us to build more efficient educational systems and extend the list of children who can receive their education.”

In return, the Madrasa-educated Ulamā play crucial roles as actors in the welfare and development of society. Based on the tenets of Islamic Shari’ah in charity and justice, they extend their participation in different welfare activities. The following chapter containing demonstrations of as well as taped interviews together with case studies proves the positive involvement of Ulamā to their communities notwithstanding the difficulties they experience. Thus, through accepting the new trends as well as building partnerships Ulamā can further increase its role in bringing positive changes to the communities, and at the same time, guarantee that the work done can be both efficient and meaningful. As noted by An Nah, the Ulamā engagement in welfare activities reflects their commitment to Islamic principles of charity and justice, contributing significantly to community development.²¹³ Additionally, Patoni and Rifai emphasizes the importance of case studies and interviews in demonstrating the impactful role of Ulamā in promoting social welfare and community cohesion.²¹⁴

²¹³ Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na and Asma Mohamed Abdel Halim, “RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO PHILANTHROPY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ISLAMIC SOCIETIES,” *American University in Cairo, Egypt*, 206AD.

²¹⁴ Patoni and Rifai, “The Role of Religious Leaders in Conducting Islamic Religious Education in The Community.”

4.8 Challenges and Adjustments Faced by Ulamā Entering Broader Society

In the previous section, we discussed the scholars' position within the community. In this section, we will discuss and explain comprehensively the many multifaceted difficulties scholars face in the larger society. These difficulties include conforming to the roles expected from them by society, combating misunderstandings about their profession, and integrating faith-based principles with the modern population's requirements and stress. When we discuss these matters, we try to point to the challenges scholars experience in delivering on their assignments in an ever-transforming sociopolitical environment.

Ulamā have several issues and adaptations to encounter as they enter into society. From the viewpoint of learning, one challenge is how to relate religious education learned in class with society in today's world. The Ulamā need to understand ways of relating their religious education to modern world affairs, such as human rights, economic growth, and relationships with other religions. A continued learning process usually characterizes successful performance in any given socially-based job if the players are to stay relevant in their positions. In an interview with a recent Madrasa graduate, he discussed these challenges, saying: An interview with a recent Madrasa respondent he discussed these challenges, saying:

“Our education is based on traditional Islamic scholarship, and it seems in many cases that we are a product of the medieval society. Regarding such aspects of life as generational roles, economic practices, and social conduct, they hearken back to principles that seem to clash with the current society. We have to find the balance between upholding Islamic principles and fitting into contemporary society, which is sometimes very complicated.”

Another respondent 8 highlighted this struggle:

“Perhaps the most challenging change after the degree was reconciling the ideas from Madrasa to the practical questions in everyday life. From here, theoretical questions, such as the modern finance systems or bioethics, sometimes require additional sources of information and, in some cases, even consultation with experts in the subjects.”

Another difficulty is their expected moral and ethical model role to their communities. They are expected to offer religious leadership, particularly on issues affecting the individual

and society, and this can be a challenge given that life today is more complicated. They have to mix the school appeal with an understanding of the natural world's philosophy to solve the issues of their followers. Regarding this aspect, an interview offered further elaboration in the following way.

“The people come to seek our help in all life matters, from marriage to communal/country issues. It is a challenging task that needs knowledge, time, and goodwill. In particular, it entails winning the trust of the community.”

Ulamā have several issues and adaptations to encounter as they enter society. From the viewpoint of learning, one challenge is how to relate religious education learned in class with society in today's world. The Ulamā need to understand ways of relating their religious education to modern world affairs, such as human rights, economic growth, and relationships with other religions. A continued learning process usually characterizes successful performance in any given socially-based job if the players are to stay relevant in their positions. In an interview with a recent Madrasa Respondent 11, he discussed these challenges, saying:

“Our education is based on traditional Islamic scholarship, and it seems in many cases that we are a product of the medieval society. Regarding such aspects of life as generational roles, economic practices, and social conduct, there are hearken back to principles that seem to clash with the current society. We have to find the balance between upholding Islamic principles and fitting into contemporary society, which is sometimes very complicated.”

Another respondent 19 highlighted this struggle:

“Perhaps the most challenging change after the degree was reconciling the ideas from Madrasa to the practical questions in everyday life. From here, theoretical questions, such as the modern finance systems or bioethics, sometimes require additional sources of information and, in some cases, even consultation with experts in the subjects.”

Moreover, the Ulamā may encounter definite financial and organizational problems. Most of the Madrasas lack strong financial support to support their graduate Ulamā; hence, they have to look for other ways to sustain themselves and practice their roles of the Ulamā.

This can be incredibly challenging in societies with little resources or access to economic capital. A respondent 12 highlighted this. He said,

‘Employment’ is another major issue after leaving school; most of us engage in various jobs, for instance, teaching in school or teaching religious classes for individuals; in addition to being religious, we are employed fully.’

This sentiment echoes the views of scholars like MQ Zaman, who emphasize the importance of contextualizing religious teachings. Ulamā duty has always been to explain Islamic teachings to society in a way suitable to society’s time and context.²¹⁵ This means that the interpreter must understand both the present age's scriptures and realities. Technology, globalization, and the proliferation of the mass media have made modern societal norms contradict conventional human rights and personal freedom. People often turn to the Ulamā for advice that would comply with Islamic law and norms and be relevant to modern society. This is a delicate process that must consider both the revelations of religious scriptures and the social reality in which those revelations are implemented. Interview Respondent 15 elaborated on this challenge:

“On questions such as women's employment or the usage of contemporary tools in finance, we should apply a modern interpretation of the regulations based on Islām, which can sometimes be problematic because the texts when they were written are quite different from the contemporary ones. Our mission is to make the transition between the ancient regulations and the modern Muslim world.”

Further, the Ulamā are often required to clarify the misunderstandings and prejudices that come with the globalization of the Islamic world and its religion. The reason it entails is not just a defense of Islamic teaching but the equally crucial task of informing the broader public about the specific tenets of the faith and the importance that should be paid to it. The respondent 15 mentioned the importance of public education:

“We often devote much time in trying to explain misconceptions that people may have about Islām, and it is important to tell people that it is an integrated religion that causes jihad, which means to struggle or strive for

²¹⁵ Zaman, The Ulamā in Contemporary Islām.

justice, for the women's rights, Muslim children's rights or disabled persons right or any form of right in society, so it is good to interact with the society which may require going outside our comfort zone of bookish scholarly research."

Therefore, it can be seen that Ulamā confronts numerous and versatile problems in the contemporary world. Tasked with balancing texts and modern and enduring cultural values, technology, governance, and the world, these women must understand, adjust, and steadfastly bear witness to the faith and its collective. Looking at the role of the Ulamā in contemporary society, it is evident that the Ulamā also continues to substantiate efforts to be relevant and valuable in the modern world, and more critical is their renowned role of connecting the past with the future. Therefore, becoming an Ulamā from a Madrasa student is not just a clean jump and crossing through various barriers that require a change of mindset, knowledge level, and practical training. Extremely informative events of respondents support a thesis of ceaseless learning, critical flexibility, and community involvement to address these adverse experiences and adequately perform the tasks of an Ulamā today.

Hussain pointed out that the Ulamā has always acted as an Amanah or a trustee for the Muslim masses, especially when people face significant change across every aspect of life due to knowledge of the divine law and theology.²¹⁶ Nevertheless, modern Ulamā also deals with new challenges, such as progress in technology and globalization, which raises new ethical and practical concerns.²¹⁷ Additionally, the political context prevailing in certain areas also plays a significant part in defining the position and image of Ulamā, who are religious scholars and political players.²¹⁸ According to Ghazali, becoming an Ulamā through madrasa education is a long and challenging process. It requires studying many texts, languages, and legal principles. While this foundational knowledge is crucial, it also needs to be updated to address modern societal issues and use interdisciplinary methods.²¹⁹ Ulamā faces several challenges, including

²¹⁶ Ali Ayten and Amjad M. Hussain, *Psychology and Islām* (M.ü. İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfi Yayinlari, 2020).

²¹⁷ Waleed Khan Hafiz Muhammad Khan, "The Role of Islamic Education in Moral Character Building of Pakistani Youth: An Analytic Study," September 10, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.5500731>.

²¹⁸ Ahmed, "Concept of Education in Islām and the Role of Madrassah."

²¹⁹ Izza Nazalia and Lailatul Fitria, "The Concept Of Education In The Qur'an: A Critical Study Of Al-Ghazali's Thinking," *Didaktika: Jurnal Kependidikan* 13, no. 2 (April 14, 2024): 2253–66, <https://doi.org/10.58230/27454312.672>.

staying current with contemporary knowledge systems and effectively communicating with a diverse audience.

Ulamā position in modern society can be described as hovering between the traditional and the contemporary. Thus, the need for constant changes in their conduct to avoid compromising their values is a testament to the continually evolving leadership. The experience gathered during the interviews, and the use of literary sources emphasizes the role of the Ulamā in coordinating the link between the past and the present and the dynamics of Islamic teachings in the contemporary world. As Metcalf (1982) highlights, the Ulamā navigate the delicate balance between preserving traditional Islamic values and adapting to contemporary societal changes. Moreover, Moosa (2015) underscores the importance of the Ulamā in bridging historical Islamic teachings with modern practices, ensuring the relevance of Islamic principles in today's world.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter aims to analyze diverse manifestations of the social life of Ulamā after graduating from the madrasa. This paper has established that madrasa education is crucial in determining the socio-religious roles of the Ulamā since they gain roles as religious leaders in their societies and spread socio-cultural morality. The study also showed that the Ulamā, post-graduation, become leaders of community or society, teachers or scholars, and decision-makers of religious practices. They participate in different facets of social activities, such as the arbitration of conflicts within the community, spiritual exercises, and even the enforcement of certain humane conduct. This crucial position highlights the necessity of their training in the processes of the community's stability and following the religion.

However, the chapter also revealed some of the factors that affect the Ulamā social lives as they start practicing their profession after their studies. The professional outcome and economic future of Madrasa graduates are two of the major problems. The social status of these women reflects the fact that, despite their high positions in society, their schooling in secular subjects is strictly limited, and that translates into their extremely limited employment prospects. This is an economic vulnerability that makes them vulnerable to reliance on donations from the community; hence, their social status is affected, as is their quality of life. Furthermore, the chapter also focused on the persisting relevance of the concepts of madrasa

reform for further improvement of the socio-economic status of the Ulamā. Such integration of vocation and mainstream education with religious education might equip the graduates of the madrasa schools with the tools they need to improve the odds of a better life and work in the current global environment.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that the madrasa schools have a great influence on the socio-religious aspects of learners in Islamabad. This research proves that madrasas provide religious and modern education, so students have all the key knowledge, skills, and ethical norms required for our modern world. The community environment of madrasas as well as the surroundings provide a significant contribution to the students' feelings of inclusion and belonging, thereby giving them the chance to develop as individuals both academically, spiritually, and socially. The madrasa education system makes graduates well-groomed, fully equipped, and competent in different aspects and social relationships that benefit graduates who are knowledgeable, socially sensitive, and effectively contribute to making society a peaceful, tolerant, and just society. This research highlights the various roles these madrasas have been playing, and the society has been producing ability and manpower that can help the society at large have knowledge of Islamic culture as well as moral knowledge. That is why it is necessary to acknowledge the importance of madrasas to use their potential for positive aspects by influencing further human rights improvements and more tolerant societies. The result of this research indicates that madrasas, with their enhanced religious and secular education traditions, are still relevant in determining the socio-religious life of society in the region, offering ground for producing political leaders, religious servants, and other community leaders to adequately understand the religion they practice and the world at large.

In the second chapter, the concern is more focused on madrasas and *Ulamā*, both in the historical framework as well as in the present context. To provide the basic context, the foundational concepts have been discussed, and then the process of defining the nature of madrasa education and its compatibility with the historically received tenets of *Islām* and the challenges of the current world demands have been explained. Thus, this chapter focuses on the ways used by madrasas to preserve Islamic traditions while at the same time being relevant to the contemporary context of education. The crucial position of *Ulamā* as the link between sacred texts and modern problems and the vocation of the madrasas in the formation and development of socialist socio-religious norms are the concepts explored in this chapter. The third chapter focuses on describing the everyday practices of students within Islamabad's madrasas regarding the academic curriculum, religious activities, sociability, and lifestyle of students studying in the madrasa. It explains the integrated process of the formation of students

within the system of madrasa, which reveals the connection between academic, religious, and social processes that take place in the learning process and underlines the significance of a supportive community within which the students are developing to become knowledgeable, ethical, and responsible learners. The fourth chapter seeks to discuss the roles of Ulamā in society and religion as much as it seeks to understand the impact of madrasa education on the latter by relating their ability to participate in socio-economic activities to the problems of the modern world. The findings show that through the combination of madrasa education and modern curricula and proficiencies, Ulamā possesses relevant competencies and aptitudes necessary for today's leadership and social challenges as intermediaries who can reconcile the religious and secular worlds.

Overall, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of the madrasa system in Islamabad as well as a view on its importance for the formation of qualified, responsible, and active members of society. Therefore, with proper response to the challenges as well as improvement of the educational approaches implemented in the madrasas, these institutions will remain a positive force, fostering Islamic values and creating contributions to the advancement of modern society.

Recommendations for Future Research

There has been some other research done on madrasa education, but those works did not capture a clear picture of the effects of madrasa education in specific eras, and on that note, emphasis is not attached to the apprehension of social life outcomes. Regarding the impact on the social life of Ulamā in the Islamabad region of Pakistan, this was the first study that examined madrasa education. However, similar to any other research study, this study in Chapter Five of the research was not devoid of methodological and contextual limitations. Taking into consideration the limitations mentioned and the results of this study, it is possible to outline some directions for further research.

- A similar study can be conducted with a different sample and using different methods, through which other motives for choosing madrasa education might be explored. Such a study could also give further information about the effects of madrasa education.
- A study could look at madrasa education in rural areas and make a comparison with an urban madrasa in Pakistan. This would, in the end, provide a better understanding of

madrassa education in these different contexts. In the same context, research on the differences between the education received in formal schools and madrassa could be done.

- A study could be made on the inter-country comparison of madrassa education, either relating Pakistani madrassas to other developing countries or in the context of the overall Islamic educational environment. The conclusion could be especially important to address the development problems in the countries located in South Asia or Sub-Saharan Africa.
- A study that is particularly on female madrassas could be done to ascertain why female madrassa education has become so popular and the changes it has brought to rural as well as urban societies.
- A study could examine students' socio-economic characteristics and how they affect their participation and performance in madrassa. This would be beneficial in determining the role played by economic characteristics in the education and mobility of the madrassa students.
- A study that could focus on how madrassa education influences students' attitudes toward interfaith relationships could prove useful. This would be especially significant in the call for maintaining and enhancing social cohesion and specifically dealing with the issues of sectarianism in society at large.

Future research should aim to address these gaps by including a more diverse and representative sample and exploring the long-term impacts and gender dynamics within the madrassa education system.

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