

The Role Of The Present-Day Madrasa In The Historical Perspectives

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Abstract

The history of Islam assures us that the role of Madrasa is like the role of Sufia for spreading the teaching of Quran and Sunnah. The first Madrasa suffah was established by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself in his Mosque in Madina. The Ashab e Suffah used to spend the whole time in the presence of prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for getting the preaching of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and teaching of Quran.

Hazrat Abu huraira was one of them who narrated 5374 ahadith while he spent just 3 years with Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Later on with the passage of time similar Madaris were established in Bukhara, Kufa, Baghdad and in subcontinent. In fact Madaris were built against the educational system in India subcontinent, the Muslim scholars were in the front line of struggle against the British Colonialism in India. When Pakistan got independence in 1947, the Madaris tradition was shifted into Pakistan, in the beginning there were few Madaris but with the passing of time the number of Madaris increased and it is very difficult to get the number of these Madaris in Pakistan, because there are thousands of Madaris which are providing the services individually in Mosques and shelters but they are not affiliated to any of the five Madrasa boards. These Madaris plied the key role to eliminate of injustice, indigence, poverty, illiteracy, atrocity and arrogation, and they can play the same role nowadays but with changing in curriculum.

Starting of Madrasa

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The Arabic word Madrasa (plural: Madaris) generally has two meanings:

(1) It's simply meaning is "school".

(2) It's second meaning is ,a madrasa, an Islamic educational institution but not limited to, the Quran, (Hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Fiqh.²

Madrasa education started in the beginning of Islam, the prophet Himself was the first teacher, when He was living in Makkah, he taught the new converts in the Dar al-Arqam.³

After the migration to Madina he continued his teaching and preaching activities in Masjid-e-Nabwi.⁴

Building of Masjid-e-Nabwi was the first project of prophet and it was the first Islamic University for companions, because there was also arrangement for the education of those who wanted to acquire learning, companions trained themselves for the spread of light and learning in distant parts of the country in a place, called the Suffa, attached to the Mosque, it was the centre of Muslim educational activities, all levels of instruction, from the elementary to higher studies, were taught in the Masjid.⁵

Hazrat Abu huraira was one of them who narrated 5374 ahadith while he spent just 3 years with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Later on with the passage of time similar Madaris were established in Bukhara, Kufa, Baghdad and in subcontinent. The first ever, regular and disciplined institute was established in Cairo (Egypt) and named as Al-Azhar. In the Middle Eastern Asia the first madrasah was instituted by Saljuk Wazir Nizammuddin Tusi (Died 1274) at Baghdad in 459 A.H. The madrasah was namely Nizamiyya Tusi founded a chain

2 Christopher M. Blanchard, Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas, CRS Report for Congress, January 10, 2006,Page,1.

3 Shalaby ,A, History of Muslim Education,Beirut, Dar al-Kashaf,1954,Page No 30.

4 : Hamidullah,M.(ed.) Sahifa Hammam ibn Munabbih,(Hyderabad:Habib@co,1979),p.15.

5 : Shalbi,A, History ,p,15.

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of Madaris in the region. In Indian sub-continent from the time of Muhammad bin Qasim (695–715) to the Moghul Emperor Humayun (1540–1556), educational institutions were completely free in their internal affairs and administration. Teachers were free to teach their students, and use whatever syllabus they considered appropriate. The state and the public had so much trust in these institutions that they used to donate large tracts of land to them. Education was not restricted to the transfer the knowledge of “Quran” and “Hadith”, but included among others things like arts of defense, medicine, pharmacy and surgery.

Sultan Sikandar Lodhi (1489–1517) contributed to the tradition of education through two processes:

He made education compulsory to a certain level for government officials and armed forces.

He declared Persian as the official language. Due to this policy Hindus started taking an interest in learning the Persian language, and were admitted to Muslim institutions those were not affiliated with mosques. Afterwards, during the rule of Mogul Emperor Akbar (1556–1605), education started moving away from its religious base because of his policies Madaris started to be built outside the mosques, and Persian became the medium of instruction at the secondary and higher levels of education.

Mogul Emperor Aurangzeb (1658–1707) took the major steps for spreading the education in subcontinent, even small towns and villages were producing scholars in all Fields.

Dar ul uloom Deoband

Darul uloom was established on 30 May 1866. Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi and Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi were the prinsple founder of this Madrasa. There were 3,500 students till 2010, studying in Deoband ,there is no facility for girls and women to get education. Students get the admission in Deoband on the merit

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base. Every year nearly 5,000 to 6,000 send application to take the admission, out of which 1,000 students are selected. Students can take the admission after primary education in Deoband or in any other Madrasa. The number of students increased between 1400 AH/1980 and 1424 AH/2003–04 from 1,822 to 3,504, the number of graduates rose from 406 to 774 per year. According to Deoband's own data, until 2003 the Madrasa had produced 32,806 graduates since it came into existence. About 6 percent of its graduates hailed from other countries⁶

The teaching of Islam at the Deobandi Madrasa and other Sunni mada'ris had also been modeled on the famous Egyptian Islamic university, Al-Azhar. This includes the curriculum, but Al-Azhar came with some significant changes in the 50s and 60s with opening new faculties of modern and worldly sciences, some Deobandi schools followed them and have started offering modern facilities where they teach secondary education based on government standards alongside the religious subjects.

The control of Dar ul uloom Deoband was headed by Qari Muhammad Tayyib Qasimi (1897–1983), the grandson of the founder Nanautawi, the other led by Maulana Asad Madani (d. 2006), the son of Husayn Ahmad Madani. After the independence of Pakistan in 1947, a number of Ulema from Deoband migrated to Pakistan and established madaris here. Two of these madrasas are Darul Uloom Haqqania, in Akora Khattak and jamia binoria in the Binori township of Karachi.

Number of Madaris in Pakistan

At the time of independence in 1947, there were only 137 Madrassahs in Pakistan. According to a 1956 survey, there were 244 Madrasas in Pakistan. Since

⁶ Dar ul uloom, 2001: 55; 1424 AH/2003 Data provided by the Department of Education (Daftar-e-taleemat), Dar ul uloom Deoband, in February and March, 2004.

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then, even by official accounts, the number of Madrasas has doubled every ten years.⁷

the current estimate is that there are more than 43,000 Madaris in Pakistan. The registered Madaris are 21000, but 14956 Madaris in Punjab, 4490 in Sindh, 1420 in Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa and 1341 in Balochistan, they are not registered under any government authority till yet.⁸

Deobandi Madaris that cover over 70 per cent of all registered Madrasas. Among the five above-mentioned boards, four of them are classified on the basis of sects, Deobandi, Barelvi, Shia or Ahl-e-Hadith, and a fifth board that is affiliated to Jama'at-e-Islami does not adhere to any specific sect. There are two primary sects in Pakistan, the Sunnis and Shias. The Shias makes up about 15% of the Pakistani Muslims. The Pakistani Sunnis are followers of the Hanafi school of thought. Among the Sunnis, the majority are Barelvi.⁹

Central Boards of Madrassas in Pakistan

Name	Sub-Sect	Place	Date Established
Wafaq ul Madaris	Deobandi	Multan	1959
Tanzim ul Madaris	Barelvi	Lahore	1960
Wafaq ul Madaris (Shia) Pakistan	Shia	Lahore	1959
Rabta-tul-Madaris-al-Jama't-i-Islamia	Islami	Lahore	1983
Wafq-ul-Madaris-al-	Ahl-i-Hadith	Faislabad	1955

7: SYED TAUQIR HUSSAIN SHAH, Madrassahs in Pakistan: A Threat to Enlightened and Moderate Pakistan, CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES Hungary, July 2006, page,8.

8 . National Counter Terrorism Authority (NECTA) report,PIQUE Magazin, now or never **By Yasir Habib Khan**, <http://pique.pk/now-or-never/>.

9 :Dr Seyed Manzor Abbas Zaidi, Madrassa Education in Pakistan, SISA Report no 3-2013, 4 March,2013

Salafia

Sect-Wise Increase in the Number of Madrassas

<i>Deobandi</i>		<i>Barelvi</i>		<i>Ahl-i-Hadith</i>		<i>Shia</i>		<i>Jama't-i-Islami</i>		<i>Total</i>	
<i>1988</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>2002</i>
<i>1779</i>	<i>7000</i>	<i>717</i>	<i>1585</i>	<i>161</i>	<i>376</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>419</i>	<i>97*</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>2801</i>	<i>9880.¹⁰</i>

Dars-e-Nizami

The texts studies present in most Madrasas of India and Pakistan is known as the "Dars-e-Nizami". Introduced by Mulla Nizam-u-din Muhammad (d. 1748), the founder of the Farangi Mahall family of scholars in Lucknow in northern India. Many of these texts were being taught in Indian Madrasas long before Nizam-u-din's time, however other subjects were added after his death.¹¹

It has eight or 16 years' programs divided into six levels, each being equivalent to corresponding levels in mainstream education that only eight of the 20 subjects are absolutely religious, but since facilities are limited, only the larger Madrasas are able to teach them completely.

Dars-e-Nizami was adopted as a "curriculum" by Madrasas of the Indian subcontinent.

Madrasas have continued to change this curriculum, because there were complaints that the fundamental subjects like Quran, Hadith, and law, were sometimes given less attention than secondary disciplines like morphology and syntax.¹²

10 : See Dr Tariq Rehman's essay.

11 : Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Society for Comparative Studies in Society and History, Cambridge University Press, 1999, Page No:11,12.

12 : Ibn Khaldun, The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History, F. Rosenthal, trans. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), III, 299-300; Hajji Khalifa, Kashf al-zunun 'an asami al-kutub wa'l-fu-nun, G. Flügel, ed. (Leipzig: Oriental Translation Fund, 1835), Page :114.

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the study of Hadith has come to have in the Dars-i Nizami in the eighteenth century. Shah Wali Allah (d. 1762), had introduced in his own Madrasa in Delhi a style of learning which gave special importance to works of Hadith. The study of Hadith was given an importance much greater than it had previously enjoyed in most other Madrasas.

The Curriculum

The subjects in the Madaris of Pakistan, as well as in the rest of the Muslim world can be divided in two kinds: almanqulat and almaqulat.

almanqulat are:

Tajwid: *the art of Quranic recitation*

Qirat: *the art of different reading methods of the Quran Tafsir: Quranic explanation*

Hadlih: *Prophetic traditions*

Fiqh: *Jurisprudence according to different madhahib (schools) of law*

Usul al-Fiqh: *doctrine of fundamental methods for deducing laws*

Faraid: *the laws of inheritance (mirath)*

Kalam: *scholastic theology*

Tasawwuf: *mysticism*

almaqulat are:

Sarf : *morphology*

Nahw: *Syntax*

Balaghah: *rhetoric*

Aruz: *prosody*

Qafiyah: *rhyme*

Mantiq: *Logic*

Hisab: *Arithmetic.*¹³

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13 : Cf. Berkey, Transmission, passim, Chamberlain, Social Practice, page: 69-90.

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Reforms in Curriculum

Reforms in Madaris were started at the time of british government but their reforms were limited to those Madrasas which had been established by them, like Calcutta Madrasa founded by Warren Hastings in 1781¹⁶

The first government that attempted to reform Madaris in Pakistan was Ayub Khan's government in 1962 and Zia ul Haq,s government in 1979. This Ordinance was designed and announced without consultation with the Ulema.

14 : Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Society for Comparative Studies in Society and History, Cambridge university uk, 1999, Page No: 11, 12.

15 : Ibn Khaldun, The Mugaddimah: An Introduction o History, F. Rosenthal, trans. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), III, 299-300; Hajji Khalifa, Kashf al-zunun 'an asami al-kutub wa'l-fu- nun, G. Flue gel, ed. (Leipzig: Oriental translation Fund, 1835), Page : 114

16 : Cf. Javed Majeed, Ungoverned Imaginings: James Mill's The Histonn of British India and Orientalism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), page: 196.

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Ulema believe that the Ordinance was announced at the behest of the United States.¹⁷

Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi the Federal Minister of Religious Affairs in Musharraf's government proposed to create model Madrasah in each of Pakistan's four provinces and in the federal area of Islamabad.¹⁸

Model Madaris were established in Islamabad, Karachi, and Sukkur, he developed materials for them.

The big development for reforms in Madaris is of a common platform of Ittehad-e-Tanzeemat-e-Madaris Pakistan (ITMP). The Deeni Madrasah Board was set up with the sole objective of reforming the curriculum of Madaris. It is hoped that ITMP will work jointly so that they can effectively deal with issues of common concern to themselves and the community at large. As a result of talks between the government and Ittehad ul-Tanzeemat-e-Madaaris Pakistan, it was proposed that a madaaris education commission would be set up on the style of Higher Education Commission (HEC) to monitor the curriculum and education in madaaris. The proposed commission is meant for better working relationships between the government and the madaaris.

The central issue in madaris reform should be that millions of students are headed for education in an institution that is not intended to provide general education¹⁹.

*The madaris are in need of reform in curriculum because they **teach** the basic principles of Islam as well as the Maslak.²⁰*

17 : See Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Religious Education and the Rhetoric of Reform: The Madrasa in British India and Pakistan," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 41: 2, (April 1999) and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

18 :Mufti Muhammad Mushtaq Ahmed, *Model Dini Madaris in Pakistan an Outcome of 9/11: A Misconception*, *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 19 (8): 1229-1233, 2012.page 2.

19 : Estimate of madaris enrollment by former Minister for Religious Affairs Mahmood Ahmed Ghazi in an interview in April 2002 with International Crisis Group

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All schools of thought in Pakistan teach their particular point of view (*madhab* or *maslak*) which clarifies and rationalizes the beliefs of the sect (Sunni or Shia) and sub-sect (Deobandi, Barelvi, Ahl-i-Hadith and Shia). There are two major things regarding Madrassa curriculum, first thing is that the students concern on their own interpretation of school of thought, and declare others as unauthentic, then they promote sectarianism directly or indirectly within the society. The second thing is misinterpretation of jihadi verses for political purpose, it may pull the students of Madaris towards militancy.

The reality is that there is absolutely nothing in the Madrassa curriculum that can promote or encourage militancy, or related to terrorism, there is no any relationship between the Madrassa curriculum and Islamic militancy.²¹

It is interesting to note that in the standard syllabus on the study of Hadith, chapters on jihad in all the six standard collections of the Prophetic tradition are not discussed at all. The radicalism was brought into Madrassas of Pakistan by some international and domestic politics who wanted to use the religious power of these Madrassas for their own objectives. Outside Pakistan, some Madaris are known as breeding grounds for violence due to Taliban. In September 1996, Taliban [madaris students], Afghan refugees from Jamiat-i-Ulema Madaris marched to Kabul, toppled the government of Afghanistan, and imposed their version of shariah [Islamic law] on the people living under their control. The Taliban used violence to enforce a shariah that banned women's formal education, paid work, and appearance in public without a male relative companion we can remove violence from Pakistan with many efforts, we have to change our educational system, and the subjects of love, peace, harmony should be the part of curriculum. Many scholars and religious educators would like to see Madaris curriculum reforms, some Ulama and Islamic educators have introduced reforms in their own Madaris while some have opened new Madaris or jamia or darul uloom. Many Ulema think that Madaris reforms are necessary to sustain the true meaning and social relevance of Islam. Dr Raghieb Naeemi recommends that subjects like modern economic system, political ideologies and modern philosophy in light of the Quran and Sunnah can be taught in the madaaris. Qari Hanif Jallandhary suggests that besides modern Philosophy and Logic, History, Computer

20 : See further Jean Dréze and Amartya Sen, "Education as a Basic Right" in India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity, New York: Oxford University Press (revised edition), 2002.

21 : It is the thinking of American scholars see more the article of Christopher Candland, The Afghan Crisis, New York: Church World Service, 1988.

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Science, Mathematics and Geography should also be part of the curriculum. He further suggests, "As far as languages are concerned, English and Arabic should be focused upon in order to expand contacts with the Muslim world and Europe. Comparative study of religions should also be focused and commonalities should be found out."²²

Maulana Niaz Hussain Naqbi, a member of the ITMD board from Lahore, Pakistan, stated Madrassas provide education to boys and girls in the most underdeveloped and underprivileged areas.

"Our madrassas are filling in a vacuum or a gap of the Pakistani government's inability to provide free education, said Maulana Naqbi.

Dr. Rehman challenged the American policy makers to identify a madrassa which promotes "terrorism," and assured the ITMD board will investigate its curriculum and terminate its license if the accusation proves to be true."²³

As is well known, most of the books in this curriculum are very old. The books used in philosophy and logic, were written in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries but they are still considered as an authentic subjects, the books of logic and philosophy are not relevant subjects at the modern times, Madaris need to be replaced by History, Comparative study of religions, Social Sciences, Politics, International affairs and subjects about income generation. Another new trend change has been observed in the Madrasa education, in which a new system of Madrasas is emerging in urban areas that combines formal school/college education with religious education like Dar-e-Arqam or Raoza-tul-atfal system of school.

Funding of Madaris

Madrasas offer a free education, room, and board to their students, and thus they appeal to impoverished families and individuals. There are many ways of which are used by Madaris for collection of donations. The entire system has been traditionally supported by the community through trusts, endowments, charitable donations, and zakat contributions. Since the introduction of the compulsory collection of zakat and ushr by the Zia ul-Haq government in 1980, however, a large number of madrassas receive regular financial assistance from the publicly administered zakat funds.

22 : Dr. syed Manar Abbas zaidi, Madrassa Education in Pakistan, center for international and strategic analysis, 4 March, 2013, page 25.

23 : DC Hosts Madrassa Leaders for Curriculum Talks, Written by Administrator Thursday, 26 July 2007 08:09

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Funding to Madaris has always been a major focus of reform agenda, madaris primarily collect their fund through Sadiqa and Khairat, some Madaris get fund from gulf countries for Madrasa.

The largest sources of funding to Madrassa are the, charitable trusts and foundations and special campaign for collection of raw animal hides of sacrificed animals on the day of Eid Ul Aza, every year in Pakistan.²⁴

The madaaris want to remain independent in term of their financial matters. They do not allow state intervention regarding their sources of funding. According to the 'Societies Registration Act', any religious school or charity which is set up under the above-said act is bound to submit an audit report from an independent chartered accountant. The ITMP follows this condition effectively and the heads of madaaris are accountable to their governing bodies or the boards of trustees. Some Madaaris even maintain their budget through audits, and present it before the students and the administration of the madaaris. But the issue of funding from foreign countries is heavily debated. It is perceived that foreign funds are used to promote political agendas of foreign countries, in particular that of Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Why children go to Madaris ?

Parents send their children to Madaris due to many reasons. Many Madaris provide children with a place to sleep and meals as well as books without any cost. Madris provide the opportunity to strengthen ones children's faith. It is important to many parents that their sons are pious Muslims. Parents also want to teach their children Adab. Parents of Madaris students express the hope that their children will learn to obey their elders and to be disciplined in life.²⁵

24 :SYED TAUQIR HUSSAIN SHAH, Madrassahs in Pakistan: A Threat to Enlightened and Moderate Pakistan, CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES Hungary, July 2006,page,34

25:Shaikh Allah Rabani, Jamia Banuria Masjid, Karachi, interview, January 3, 2000.

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Madaris also provide protection from a vagrancy law under which thousands of Pakistani children are in jail.²⁶

Parents also hope that Madaris education will keep their children protected from gangs, drugs, and the violence of everyday life. Madaris often serve as care-providing institutions for parents who cannot take care of their children, most Madaris are for male students.²⁷

More than one and one half million children are studying in Madaris today because the national educational system does not reach them, and students face regular beatings at school.²⁸

The other reason is absence of teachers and classrooms.²⁹

Conclusion

The Madrasa situation remains as complicated as always, there is no denying the fact that Madrasa reforms are crucial for the development and progress of Pakistan, because graduates of most Madrasas have no understanding of important subjects like Economics, Science, or Computing. While this may not have been a serious concern few decades ago, in the current context, such restricted education may not serve the development needs of the nation.

The following demands of the Madaris are very important if government accept these demands then it is possible that curriculum would be change by Madaris-e-diniyya:

(1) The Tanzeem degrees of Metric (Sanwiya Khasa) and FA (Sanwiya Aama) are not approved yet, whereas its higher degree, Shahadat ul-Aalmia is recognized as equal to MA Islamic Studies and Arabic. The government should accept these lower level degrees as equal to the formal educational system.

26: Myron Weiner and Omar Noman, *The Child and the State in India and Pakistan*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

27 :Qibla Ayaz, Dean and Professor of Seerat Studies, Centre for Islamic and Oriental Studies, University of Peshawar, Peshawar interview, August 13, 2004.

28: Donald Warwick and Fernando Reimers, *Hope or Despair? Learning in Pakistan's Primary Schools*, (Westport: London, 1995), 19-22

29 Social Policy and Development Centre, *Review of the Social Action Program*, (Karachi: SPDC, June 1997), vii.

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- (2) *The madrassa boards should be given the status of an independent examination board to each board.*
- (3) *Madaris should be affiliated with the Federal Ministry of Education or Federal Ministry of Religious Affairs.*
- (4) *Madaris should also link with the Higher Education Commission and all education grants should be distributed among Madaris through it.*
- (5) *Madrassas should be exempted for all utility bills, and this will be the best way of cooperation from government side.*
- (6) *Obstacles of bureaucracy for registration of Madaaris should be removed in the registration process.*
- (7) *Opportunities should be provided for Madaaris students for easy admission in universities and participation in competitive exams.*
- (8) *The government should provide opportunities of job to Madaris students in all its departments.*