

TRADITION AND MODERNITY OF MADRASSAH TEACHERS: ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION, TEACHERS TRAINING AND SALARY IN PUNJAB (PAKISTAN)

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ABSTRACT: *In the middle Ages, among the learned classes, there was no distinction between teachers and non-teachers. Receiving one's education from the scholars of the time and not through books alone was considered an essential for the student. With the passage of time, the profession of teaching was institutionalized, and it became universal that it is beyond the ability of each person to acquire knowledge by his own efforts; thus the student needs a teacher and guide for learning, character, beliefs and actions. In this regard, madrasah is an oldest institution of learning, imparting Islamic education. With this backdrop, the results of the study reveals that the madrasah teachers have transformed their traditional methods of teaching with modern techniques, though it's the case in leading madaris in Punjab (Pakistan) up till now. The fast development of knowledge in every field of life has compelled madrasah teachers to change their traditional methods to make madrasah students at par with students of formal system of education. Madrasah is an important educational institute, imparting Islamic education in society, therefore, we cannot overlook the significance of the madrasah institution.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is delivered by teachers, who serve as medium to communicate quality education, social, moral and ethical training, both in schools and *madaris*. They are promoters and serve as means of bringing about positive changes in education system and society [1].

Now days, there is general research consensus that make it clear that transformation of traditional methods of teaching with modern techniques through academic and professional qualification, teacher training programmes at all levels of *madrasah* education system will result in producing high caliber teachers which in turns will facilitate the improvement of student learning [2]. *Madrasah* Education for 'Sustainable Development' therefore endorses competencies like 'critical thinking,' comprehending future scenarios and making choices in a collaborative way.

CONCEPT OF MADRASSAH

Islamic education is imparted in institute, known as *madrasah*. The word *madrasah* is taken from an Arabic verb, *darasa* (to study); *madrasah* in Africa and Arab world is a 'catch call' term used for all types of Schools, irrespective of curriculum and affiliation. While in South Asia it refers particularly to educational institutes that impart religious education only. The word *madrasah* is used as a wide-ranging term describing higher level Islamic education institutions, including *madrasah*, *dar ul ulum* meaning (house of knowledge) and *Jamia* (university) [3]. The *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* defines *madrasah* as "an institution of learning teaching Islamic sciences and also referred to it as college meant for imparting higher studies" [4].

Madaris have been imparting religious knowledge (*Holy Quran & Hadith, Fiqh* (Islamic Law & jurisprudence, along with knowledge of languages, literature, reasoning, rhetoric, natural sciences, philosophy, Arabic and Persian grammar. The subjects were broad in orientation and their practicality resulted in developing *madrasah* graduates into successful doctors (*tabib/hakims*), educators, scholars and seasoned

politicians/administrators [5]. The early *madaris* were ideologue of tradition and modernity of Islam. Similarly, tradition and modernity are somewhat contrasting terms, but in reality are two sides of the same coin. These terms frequently being used in the cotemporary Islamic discourse these days, especially after 11 September, 2001 [6] and are specifically linked to *madrasah* education in South Asia [7]. Tradition is a mean of understanding reality and beliefs of religion made known to people, through revelations made by the prophets. A tradition give support to application of the principles derived from them in different spheres of life. It also provides means of obtaining best knowledge and develops means for its acquirement. With this background, tradition is a mean of transfer of knowledge. On the other hand modernity means evolution in the past cultural practices and knowledge.

MADRASSAH TEACHERS

Academic and Professional Qualification

The ability of a teacher to deliver and manage lessons effectively is key to the educational impact of *madaris*. This depends on their academic and professional qualifications, skills, experience and training as well as their ability to communicate to students in a way they understand clearly. There are cases where *madrasah* teachers achieve good results but that the outside perception is shaped by negative information.

Teacher Training

The need for highly qualified and well-trained *madrasah* teachers was emphasised throughout the research. Training is seen as extremely important but also lacking in many cases, limited by either resources or capacity. As discussed earlier *madrasah* teachers have a range of backgrounds. The data collected from 25 *madaris* representing all schools of thought in Islam in Lahore (Pakistan), depicts that the most common form of training required by *madaris* is theological training, whereas only 14 percent require a qualification in teaching. This indicates that, in many cases, *madaris* are lacking teachers that have been formally trained to manage

classrooms and deliver effective lessons. Teacher training was discussed in both the questionnaires and interviews. For some *madaris*, the level of qualifications held by teachers is unimportant. As one *madrassah* representative said: 'We look for people who have a passion to teach but they are not necessarily teachers in terms of qualifications' [8]. The quality of the teacher is seen as crucial in terms of having a positive impact on students and achieving the aims of the *madrassah*: 'A good teacher and good *madrassah* then definitely that would encourage them, because they will give them [an] aim in life where maybe the conventional school doesn't ... when this person excels in the *madrassah*, definitely they can excel in formal school system and do something in their own locality. It means inspiration is a key to success [9]. A strong finding from the qualitative research was that teacher training is lacking within *madaris* and that this is having a negative impact on both the delivery of lessons and classroom management. Some suggested that teachers with only theological training do not always have the skills to be able to manage classrooms effectively and support pupils to learn.

Others mentioned that a lack of funding and support was preventing *madaris* from employing more qualified staff. For example, one teacher said:

'We have a number of teachers who are qualified teachers themselves. So we can use their ability, use their skills and we can take that on board here as well ... But I'd say the biggest challenge will be resources and the funding as well. Yes, we would like our teachers to have the proper professional training that they can have as well, but again it's the cost really'[9]. Interviewees highlighted the positive changes occurring within some *madaris*, providing examples where teacher training is being improved. One past *madrassah* student spoke of the increasing influence of younger *madrassah* teachers who often have a more developed set of teaching skills. It is felt that approaches to teaching were changing and evolving naturally and without external involvement [10].

On the whole, the extent to which learning takes place within a *madrassah* premises strongly depends on the academic and professional qualifications, training and skills of the teachers, in addition to teaching methodology they adopt in class. While *madaris* are still strongly focused on delivering religious material, the extent to which they include appropriate information, and help children develop a deeper understanding of their religion, varies. In some cases, *madaris* can be seen to go beyond their religious role to deliver a broader curriculum which has the potential to improve a child's capacity to learn [11]. While in other smaller *madaris* in Punjab is still following traditional methods of teachings, and needs improvement through enhancing academic qualification, teacher training and raising their remunerations [12].

Teacher Salary

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the first teacher in Islam, never of course thought of any personal gain. His life was financially modest and when he died, he left almost nothing.

The early Caliphs and Companions, who taught after him, not only declined to make a profit from teaching but even spent their own riches. It is related that they greatly disliked the idea of selling the Quran and looked on that as a great sin. They also halted the notion of accepting any recompense for teaching the Quran. This attitude seems to have had its effect upon many of the latter jurists, such as *Hanafi* Scholars as well as Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Sufiyan al Thawri, and others, who made it clear that the teacher of the Quran and *Hadith* was not allowed to accept remuneration for his teaching. Many scholars' adopted this view eagerly so that when Nizam ul Mulk established *al-Nizamiyahs* and endowed them, the learned men of Transoxiana met in council and solemnly deplored that learning was not now to be pursued for its own sake. Under such an influence al-Harith b.Muhammad that was sent by Hazarat Umar II to teach *Hadith in al-Badiyah* refused to receive salary fixed for him. Abu al-Abbas al Asamm, the famous *Muhaddith* in Khurasaan never accepted any subsidy for his teaching and he used to earn his living as a craftsman which was a common practice.

From here, it follow that the appointment of a man to conduct a course of teaching neither from religious motives nor for the promotion of knowledge, the salary was the only incentive to encourage such a man to perform his duty. From the early times of Islam, Non-Muslims were employed to teach children reading and writing, and a little latter many of them such as Jurist b.Mikhail, Yuhaanna b.Masawaih, Jibril b.Bakhtishu and Hunainb. Ishaq took a great part in the advancement of learning.

They were usually paid for this service. For these two reasons the idea of receiving salaries in return for teaching and promoting knowledge existed, and in course of time it became a normal procedure. It was welcomed except by unworldly men who continued to follow the example of the Prophet and his companions [15]. This tradition is inherited by the contemporary *madaris* in Punjab (Pakistan). However, slight modification is that the teachers and patrons (*Muhtamim*) of leading *madaris* receive meagre salaries out of their own choice, consider it a religious duty. But, in spite of this individual choice, the overall scenario in *madrassah* education system in Punjab is that, teachers are not well paid and therefore, they have to supplement their income by taking other assignments, like teaching Quran to children as home tuitions. They do not receive pensions, for which reason; underwent financial crunches in later life. The selected *madaris* in Punjab have started offering loans and pensions for teachers and other employees, and many cite improving teachers' salary packages as part of future plans.

In selected *madaris* there is no precedence of giving advertisement for teaching faculty [16]. The method is conventional, where teachers are generally selected among the graduating students, who have achieved distinction in any field, either the Quran or *Hadith*. Or partly selection depends upon the personal relationship between student and administrator, or student's interest in teaching [17]. As, discussed earlier, the importance of teacher in any education

system can hardly be overlooked in *madaris*, the significance of a teacher is much higher. The credibility of the faculty is one of the factors for attracting students to take admission in a particular *madaris*. The selected *madaris* in Punjab arrange for special training workshops, as discussed in succeeding sections of the study. But, generally *small madaris* do not share this trend. Nevertheless, all the leading *madaris* in Punjab and other provinces realize the need for teacher training and there are some programmes in the works.

In most cases, the teaching style is still conventional, but it is changing in selected *madaris*. More progressive teachers use modern techniques to make their lectures more effective. Students are encouraged to ask questions, which was not common in the past. Physical punishments, which have a practice in the past and one of the arguments to inculcate discipline and obedience among students is now diminishing, especially in *madaris* located in the cities of Punjab.

The students from selected *madaris* and other leading *madaris* in Punjab are encouraged to appear for qualifying the equivalent grades in formal system of education. It nullifies the general impression that *madrassah* students are not good in contemporary subject, where they come in competition with students of formal system of education. Though, contemporary education is imparted on limited scale in *madaris* in Punjab, but

still we have examples where *madaris* students achieved distinction among students [18].

Research and specialization are among the top priorities of the heads of the selected *madaris* in Punjab, interviewed during the study. *Jamia Ashrafia*, *Jamia Salfia*, *Jamia tul Muntazar*, *Jamia Rizwia* are also encouraging their teachers toward research by providing an honorarium for their endeavours and arranging for their articles to be published in academic journals. The topics of research, however, usually relate to traditional religious issues. In order to improve the system of education and research activities, most leading selected *madaris of Punjab and other leading madaris have* been planning to expand the research resources and facilities. Substantial amount of money and resources are generated to adorn their libraries with book complementing all contemporary issues along with one on the Quran, *Hadith* literature, and *Fiqh*. Research work is a regular practice of the *Jamia Mohsinat*.

Objective of the study

To find out the extent of tradition and modernity of *madrassah* teacher's through Academic and professional Qualification, Teacher Training and Teacher Salary in Punjab (Pakistan).

Research Question

The research questions which are going to be treated in the underlying study include: How the concept of tradition and modernity is intermingled with *madrassah* teacher's efficiency through Academic and professional Qualification, Teacher Training and Teacher Salary in Punjab (Pakistan).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Keeping in mind the basic prerequisites of the research, narrative and analytical research methods have been employed. Considering the intricacy of the study, multiple research methodologies are used to achieve the research objectives of the study. The study utilizes primary as well as secondary sources. Interviews, discussions, questionnaires are used as primary source for collection of data.

NATURE OF THE STUDY

This study was qualitative in nature, and data was collected through open end questionnaires and interviews then the discussion was analyzed.

Population

In this research population was the teachers of twenty five selected *madaris* from Lahore, Faisalabad and Rawalpindi in Punjab (Pakistan), representing all schools of thought in Islam. The leading *madaris* includes *Jamia Rizwia Zia ul Ulum*, Rawalpindi (*Barelyvi* school of thought, *Jamia Ashrafia* (*Deobandi* school of thought, Lahore, (*Jamia Salfia*, Faisalabad, *Ahl-i-Hadith* school of thought), *Shia* (*Jamia tul Muntazar*, Lahore), and *Jamat-i-Islami* school of thought (*Jamia Mohsinat*, Lahore).

Sample of Study

The data were collected from 175 teachers belonging to twenty five selected *madaris* in Punjab, belonging to all schools of thought in Islam using convenience sampling method.

Research Instrument

Research tool for the study was a questionnaire designed as open ended questions and interviews.

Delimitation of the study

The study was delimited to elementary *madrassah* teachers of twenty five selected *madaris* in Lahore, Faisalabad and Rawalpindi in Punjab (Pakistan).

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data was thus analytically interpreted and analyzed. It was found out that *madrassah* teachers need to transform traditional methods of teaching with modern techniques through professional development and training to meet the following objectives:

- I. To produce skilled, capable, committed, dynamic *madrassah* teachers by enhancing their academic qualification and professional development with in-service training programmes through appropriate and adequate training measures at all levels of *madrassah* education.
- II. To endorse needs driven skills development interventions designed by the Workplace Skills Plan and to identify with different areas of training needs.

The term 'tradition' and 'modernity' has been used to denote the gap existing between the current status and the desired one or the required level of competencies. In case of *madrassah* teachers it stands for gap existing between teachers present knowledge in their subject and their teaching proficiency on one hand and level of teaching proficiency or methods of teaching (traditional/child centered) on the other.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

The questionnaire was delivered to 175 teachers, from twenty five *madaris*, from three *madaris* of all schools of thought in Lahore, one each in Faisalabad and Rawalpindi to find out the extent of tradition and modernity of *madrasah* teachers. One of the *madaris* from each school of thought was a leading, progressive *madrasah*, while the other four were small *madaris* of the same sect. About 150 teachers responded to the questionnaires sent to them. Some of the major questions were as follows:

1. What issues do you face in your service mainly in teaching?
2. In which discipline do you like to upgrade your knowledge?
3. What is your area of specialty?
4. In which area do you want more training?
5. Which subject do you teach?
6. List out the topics whose transaction seems to be difficult for you?
7. Do you prepare/use teaching aid?
8. Do you want your skill refinement in using technology?

These were all open end questionnaire to get multiple responses in each. Out of 175 teachers 150 (85.7%) mentioned the major issues. Some of them with higher responses are given in the table below:

Sr. No.	Issues before Teachers	Responses in %
1	Differential attitude of administration (<i>Mohtamim</i> and Secretaries).	20
2	Lack of infrastructure	55
3	Lack of teaching aid	45
4	Lack of modern equipments like computers etc	35
5	Lack of respect in committee members for teachers	20
6	Textbook method and rote learning. No deviation	56
7	Lack of auxiliary and reference books, news papers and magazines in library	30
8	Mostly first generation learners, very difficult to make them learn.	30
9	Lack of in-service training/refresher course in <i>madrasah</i>	20
10	Traditional curriculum, old books and old methods of evaluation and marking	20
11	Lack of incentives for excellence/creativity both for students and teachers.	15
12	Limited jobs/works in society for <i>madrasah</i> graduates	25
13	Harsh punishment for defaulters	35
14	Compelling teachers for collecting alms/charity/donations	10
15	Ban on using TV/Radio in the campus	25

The researcher has selected varied responses, ranging between 10-60 %.

Area of Tradition and Modernity of *Madrasah* Teachers

On the basis of teachers' responses following broad areas were identified. The responses in percentage are given in the following Table:-

Sr. No.	Concerned areas	Responses in %
1	<i>Madrasah</i> administration – including office management and book keeping, new concept of administration in HRM	85
2	Psychology of education specially child psychology	82

3	Philosophy of education – including Islamic philosophy of education	80
4	New concepts and terms like globalization, banking terms etc.	77
5	Curriculum development – different concepts and methods of developing curriculum	82
6	Different Methods of Teaching	80
7	Lesson Planning in different subjects	65
8	How to give assignment	64
9	Evaluation – methods of framing questions and their evaluation	68
10	Computer training	73
11	Enrichment content from the selected topics from Languages, Math, Environmental Studies, up to elementary level and Jurisprudence (<i>Fiqah</i>), Interpretation (<i>Tafseer</i>) and Traditions (<i>Hadith</i>) at higher level	85
12	Muslim Law, English Law	86

The details of topics are not given here due to limitation of space for a journal

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A virtual classroom environment is needed to depart from traditional method of teaching with different types of activities in the classroom. The most effective modern teaching method is activity based programmes through presentations. Under this method, teacher could use specially designed teaching materials, instead of textbooks, and trainees could teach lessons to students so that children would learn lessons through pictures, art forms, paintings and small stories written in a colourful way. Such a type of learning would enhance their innovating thinking, creativity and learning skills. Especially at elementary level, students could be taught by live demonstration on all religious rituals like ablution (*wadu*), performing prayer (*salat*) or performing *arakan* of *faraiz*, *wajibat* and *sunnah*. The teachers could learn computer especially on the use of Inpage for their Urdu and Arabic writings, Google search and downloading of contents, rare books of *fiqah*, *hadith* and *tafseer* from internet.

The researcher observed that there is a positive change in the attitude of teachers and in their methods of teachings. They were trying to shift their transaction strategies from mere textbook reading and translation to the use of blackboard and writing important points on it. In many selected *madaris*, the *madrasah* teachers were giving assignment based on problem solving and project methods, thus detracting students from mere rote learning to understanding and leading to the process of self-learning particularly in the subject of Arabic language, jurisprudence (*fiqah*) and interpretation (*tafseer*). The teachers seen to use computers in these *madaris* having computer facilities. They informed that how have they downloaded modern Arabic course for elementary level and new books on *Fiqah* from the websites of different foreign Islamic Universities, like Cairo University, Egypt and Riaz University.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study revealed that the *madrasah* teachers are equally capable of teaching through modern methods and techniques of teaching, if provided with substantial resources

and encouraged to enhance their professional development through training programmes at all levels of *madrassah* education system. It is also a fact that *madrassah* education system is running parallel to formal system of education in fulfilling the educational needs of a larger number of Pakistani populations, though it is far behind in percentage to formal system of education. It is the task of *madaris* and their respective *wafaq* to familiarize *madrassah*' teachers with modern methods and pedagogical processes.

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