

The Question of Socioeconomic Benefits of Religious Seminaries in Pakistan

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Abstract

This paper intends to explore the Socio-Economic contribution of Institution of Madresa in Pakistani society while critically evaluating the authenticity of criticism against the institution which has surfaced after the 9/11 incident, accusing Madresa to be the breeding ground of militancy, terror networks and sectarian violence. Additionally the paper explores the free-for-all service of Madresa in providing education, increasing literacy rate and employability for the poorest of the poor. It is discovered that Madresa provide a near equivalent of primary to tertiary levels of education by only spending almost half the amount spent by its conventional counterparts in the country. Along with this residential Madaris save the poorest of children from various illegal activities including child prostitution. Furthermore role of religiosity in crime reduction is also discussed in the light of various cross-national secondary researches and it is argued that by enhancing the influence of Madresa to increase the religiosity of the society, crimes of all nature, including corruption and white collar crimes, can be significantly reduced. The most of the conclusion are drawn on the basis of limited data available on Madaris affiliated with Wifaq-ul- Madaris Al-Arabia (which adhere to Deobandi school of thought) therefore the confidence level of conclusions needs to be further enhanced by adding more primary data on other networks of Madaris operated with by Ahle-Tashee, Ahle- Hadith and Bareilvi schools. The paper however provides a basis for further research in Pakistan to explore the influence of Madresa-initiated-religiosity on law and order situation, the degree of employability of Madresa graduates and the cost effectiveness of Madaris in all corners of Pakistan.

Index terms—

1 Introduction

any believe that the incident of 9/11 changed the perception of a large majority regarding many things in the world (Haven, 2011). It was axiomatically assumed that the culprits behind the incidents are Islamic extremists and their eradication from the world is necessary to make this world a better place to live. George Bush defined the incident as an attack on American Values or values of the free world (Klocke, 2004), and that things should go back to normal so that 'Free Americans' can go back to shopping (Bacevich, 2008). To bring things back to normal it was perhaps considered important to eradicate all sources generating negative sentiments against the values of the 'free world' (secular and liberal), along with the people who advocates these sentiments to the extreme, from stand point of the free world. In this context Madresa were considered to be part of the problem and were assumed to be breeding grounds of extremism. In the famous 'Civil Democratic Islam' Cheryl Benard accuses "radical Islam turns young people into cannon fodder and suicide bombers. Madrassas specifically educate boys to die young, to become martyrs?" (Benard, 2003). A simple Google search reveals hundreds of

42 reports, articles papers which are written with the same presumption, just like it was assumed that Iraq being
43 a big producer of WMD, as we will see in a while. Later it was proved that WMB rhetoric was a lie (Chulov
44 & Pidd, 2011), so was the case dismissed against Madresa that they were breeding grounds for terrorists (Puri,
45 2010).

46 2 II. Definition

47 Madresa is an Arabic word used in two different contexts: 1) commonly it could mean only "school"; 2) in
48 terminological sense Madresa is an institution providing education pertaining to the teachings of Qur'an, hadith
49 (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w), jurisprudence (fiqh), and law. Historically, Madaris were known as an
50 institution of higher studies and existed in parallel to more basic version of schools called 'kuttab' where students
51 would only learning Qur'an. In contemporary sense "Madresa" has been used for any school -primary, secondary,
52 or tertiary -that promotes a curriculum based on Islamic Shariah. However in some countries, like Egypt and
53 Lebanon, the term 'Madresa' is used in literal sense refers to any educational institution (state-sponsored, private,
54 secular, or religious), mainly because the spoken language there is Arabic. On the contrary in Pakistan, India
55 and Bangladesh, Madresa commonly refers to a religious school where the curriculum is derived from Islamic
56 Shariah and is affiliated with any of the registered boards such as Wifaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia (Deobandi school of
57 thought), Tanzim-ul-Madaris (Barelvi school), Wafaq-ul-Madaris (Ahle-Tashee school), Wafaq-ul-Madaris (Ahle
58 Hadith school) and Rabita-ul-Madaris (Jamaat-e-Islami).

59 3 III.

60 4 History

61 In literal sense the first Madresa was established by Prophet Muhammad s.a.w 1 himself which was known as
62 'Sufa'. It was a simple place to sit where Prophet s.a.w use to teach his companions r.a.a 2 about the fundamentals
63 of Islam. Government operated Madaris (plural of Madresa) were later established in around 1065 CE in Morocco
64 -during the late Abbasid period. Nizamul Mulk Tusi created the first officially recognized one by the name of
65 Madresa Nizamiyah. Its branches were spread in various Abbasid cities by at the end of the 11th century.
66 Before Tusi's initiative Madaris were an integral part of Masajid (Mosques), however when the Masajid became
67 overloaded and educational activities begin to disrupt the Ibadat (prayers) or worshipers, separate buildings of
68 Madaris begin to erect adjacent to Masajid.

69 The scope of education there ranged from basic religious education, from primary to tertiary levels, specializing
70 in the areas of Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence), Medicine and even administrative sciences. Along with these
71 engineering, mathematics, architectural sciences were also taught in Madaris. It is also said that Muslim scientist
72 were also educated in this institution ??Jalindhari, 2011, pp. 163, 164). Madaris therefore provided complete
73 educational solution in Islamic civilization.

74 The epistemological foundation of everything taught in a Madresa since the beginning till today rests upon
75 Quran and Sunnah, therefore Madresa have always been considered as a significant contributor in shaping the
76 value structure of society in an Islamic way where they exist.

77 It is believed by various Islamic historians and scholars that during British rule in subcontinent after 1857
78 and communist revolution in Balkans etc after 1917 Madresa were considered to be the breeding grounds of the
79 resistance against the occupation of British (Qureshi, 1998) or communist rules in respective regions ??Usmani,
80 2008, pp. 293-303), therefore various violent and non-violent means were used to reduce or eliminate the role of
81 Madresa from the society. It is often quoted that Bukhara and Samarqand which remained knowledge centers
82 of Islamic civilization since many centuries were deliberately cleansed (sic) by communist forces and to day that
83 traditional values and spirit is missing from these cities. Perhaps even today Madresa are again assumed as a
84 source of resistance or rejection of the value system (Jalindhari, 2011, p. 338) which global players are busy
85 preaching and spreading in the world by hook or crook. Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya are recent examples.

86 On the other hand the perspective of foreigners like Lord Macaulay in 1835, author of the famous minutes
87 of education, was that the education system of the subcontinent, of which Madresa were a major part, was a
88 root of backwardness, ignorance and barrier in progress of the region as envisioned by the European standards
89 of that time. Macaulay wrote in his minutes on education: "I have conversed both here and at home with men
90 distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I am quite ready to take the Oriental learning at the
91 valuation of the Orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf
92 of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia [this would include all
93 religious text as well', Author]. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is, indeed, fully admitted by
94 those members of the Committee who support the Oriental plan of education (para 10) ? It is impossible for
95 us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to
96 form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian
97 in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it
98 to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the
99 Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of
100 the population (para 34)" 3 With this standpoint Britishers made serious efforts to undermine the role of Madresa
101 and ??Ghazi, 2011, pp. 40-41) replace it with their own brand of education system suitable for their own needs.

102 Ulema and all stakeholders of Madaris gave a fierce resistance to the onslaught by Britishers on the Institution
103 of Madresa particularly after the loss of Political power of Mughal Empire after mutiny of 1857 (Qureshi, 1998).
104 The role of Ulema in the independence movement is also worth noting. According to Anjum (2006):

105 "The Indian madrasas where Muslim children learned the art and etiquette of life were destroyed. In the
106 Bengal Province alone, where some eighty thousand madrasas were running under the rule of Jehangir, all of
107 them were demolished ? It will not be true to say that this independence [of subcontinent] is achieved by the sole
108 efforts of Ulema. However, there is no denying the fact that Ulema played the most crucial and critical role in this.
109 The significant factor is that in this noble cause Ulema from a cross section of schools of thought participated.
110 ??rominent A part from Ulema Intellectuals like Allama Iqbal and Akbar Ala Abidi were also xenophobic to the
111 new system of Education brought by the foreigners. Through their poetry they heavily criticized the philosophical
112 foundation and the impact which the colonial education system created in the society. Some lines from their
113 poetry are as follows:

114 "Youn Qatal se wo bachon ke wo badnam na hota; afsos ke firaon ko collegoon ki na sojee" ?.

115 "In se bibi ne school hi ki bat ki Ye na batlaya khan rakhi he roti rat ki" (Akbal Ala Abadi)

116 "Mehsoos per bina he Alam-e-Jadeed ki; Hai is dour mein sheesha aqaid ka pash pash" ? "Hai taleem peer
117 falsafa-e-magribi; hai nadan ko bas hastee-e-ghaib ki talash" (Iqbal going sarcastic)

118 The alternative education which Akbar Ala Abadi and Iqbal 4 seem to be inclined toward is closer to the
119 version followed in Madresa. Even today we find people who are against or in favor of the Madresa institution
120 to various extents. Some actively look forward for their eradication from the society, whereas some even offer
121 financial support worth billions ??Ghazi, 2011, p. 198) for maintenance of old Madaris and establishment of new
122 ones.

123 IV.

124 5 The Pakistani Context

125 It can be inferred that Pakistani society is primarily a religious in nature, where non-liberal and non-secular
126 values are deeply embedded in its culture. For the same reason perhaps Madresa have found a safe haven in
127 Pakistan. It can be said so as the number of students currently studying in the Madresa is around 2 -3 millions
128 (Andrabi, Das, Khwaja, & Zajonc, 2005; Jalindhari, 2011). Madaris spent roughly Rs. 950/-per month on
129 average on the education and accommodation of these students (detailed discussion coming below). Even if we
130 take a conservative number of 2 million students studying in the Madresa institution across the country then
131 a rough estimate of the expenditure on education with 'accommodation' by the entire Madresa institution in
132 Pakistan could be around Rs. 2 billion monthly and around Rs. 24 billion annually. All of this money is collected
133 by Madresa in the form of charity, Zakat, and 'accounts payables' as they don't have any other source of income.
134 One can estimate the extent of financial support received by Madresa from the society in general.

135 Furthermore every year around hundred thousand pass-outs and assume different religious roles in the society
136 (Ghazi, 2011), such as clerics in mosques. From the population of Pakistan around 84% observe Friday prayers
137 and 40% pray in mosques in Pakistan; and this number "" has increased in Pakistan during the last decade"
138 (Gallup Pakistan, 2000). According to another survey at least 64% of the population "" seeks information
139 regarding religion from religious leaders and Imams". Furthermore it is inferred in the same survey that "this
140 have changed in these few years and religious scholars have become more prominent in disseminating religious
141 information" (Gallup Pakistan, 2009). The religious leaders and Imams with whom Pakistani population is
142 interacting more often, as mentioned above, are none other than graduates from Madresa. Keeping this in view
143 ideological and socio-economic influence of the entire system of Madresa on the overall society can also be assumed
144 to be significant. However Beauty of this significance is in eye of the beholder. This makes it a tricky topic as
145 appraisal of an education institution under discussion will be different or even contradictory when done from
146 religious perspective versus liberal secular perspective.

147 There is no question about the inherent contradiction or conflict which exists between liberal / secular and
148 Islamic value systems at ontological, cosmological and epistemological levels. However since an ordinary man is
149 more concern about the physical manifestation instead of conceptual connotations of the two systems, therefore
150 it would be a relatively better idea to find some common ground at the practical levels. For example the two
151 value systems wouldn't much argue on the importance of:

152 ? Impact on the law and order situation of the society by the graduates of the institution etc. ? Providing a
153 safe house to millions of children from the poorest pockets of society ? Fund utilizing efficiency of the institution
154 (both value systems are against wastage perhaps due to different reasons),

155 ? Ability to produce Employable citizens ? Contribution in enhancing literacy rate V.

156 Madresa And Terrorism; Linked Or Not?

157 Before proceeding further it is crucial to discuss the connection of Madresa with terrorism, local and
158 international. It is a known fact that less than one percent of terrorist activities in Europe in last decade
159 were conducted by so called Islamic terrorists (Danios, 2010). Even from this small number, it is interested to
160 note that so called Muslim terrorists who have ever been arrested had never attended any Madresa (Puri, 2010).
161 While citing various sources Winthrop and Graff (2010) notes in one of their comprehensive report on linkages
162 between Madresa and militancy in Pakistan:

163 ""? a recent study of militants involved in the Kashmir dispute suggests that few are recruited in Madresa.

164 Other Pakistan experts confirm this, suggesting, for instance, that Lashkare-e-Tayaba draws its recruits not from
165 Madresa but from universities, colleges and among unemployed youths. This finding is consistent with studies
166 of terrorist recruits in other parts of the world, which, though suffering from methodological flaws, suggest that
167 recruits are not generally less well educated or poorer than the average citizens in their country of origin. Research
168 ? also shows that the recruits involved in five of the largest international terrorist attacks had no connections to
169 Madresa.”

170 In a Most Wanted Terrorists list of Pakistan released by ??ataflow Research Department (2009), only 10% of
171 the terrorists had some form of preliminary education from a Madresa, none of them had attended tertiary level
172 education in a Madresa, the remaining 90% were graduates of secular education system of the country, or their
173 qualification are not known but their pictures in the report hints toward their nonreligious background.

174 Some authors have taken a biased and opinionated view on the connection between Madresa and militancy,
175 like a study by International Crisis Group (2002) infers without citing references of any credible source.

176 **6 ”Most madrasas do not impart military training or education
177 but they do sow the seeds of extremism in the minds of the
178 students ? In short, madrasa education and upbringing aim to
179 indoctrinate with an intolerance of other religious systems.”
180 (pp. 2-3) Looney (2003) also without citing any credible
181 source makes a sweeping statement:**

182 ”Unfortunately, many of the Madrassas have built extremely close ties with radical militant groups, both inside
183 and outside of Pakistan. In this capacity they have increasingly played a critical role in sustaining the international
184 terrorist network.” (p. 261)

185 On the other hand a small number of Madaris, in relation with their total number, involved in local (inside
186 Pakistan) form of terrorism primarily belong to banned organizations like TTP or Lashkar-e-Jhangvi etc with
187 doubtful affiliations. Some even claim that these banned organizations are subsidiaries of RAW (the Indian
188 intelligence agency) and operate various unregistered brainwashing Madaris along Pak-Afghan Borders (Aaj
189 TV, 2011). Some even are of the opinion that ”9/11 was a Mossad operation” (Sabrosky, 2010;Madsen, 2011).
190 Even if it is agreed that a small percentage of unregistered Madaris are involved in militancy or terrorism to a
191 certain degree, then it is most certain that they would be condemned and denounced by the official networks of
192 Madaris (Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, 2009; Ghazi, 2011; Jalindhari, 2011, p. 350).

193 Beside this terrorism is a recent phenomenon, though the institution of Madresa has played a prominent social
194 role since many centuries in Muslim societies, since they are the only form of formal education system which
195 prevailed throughout the Islamic civilization for many centuries. This role even extended to preservation, defense
196 and propagation of brand of value system which they hold sacred to themselves, so is the case today. This
197 defense has been also been in the form of aggression to any foreign force challenging the value system dear to
198 them (Jalindhari, 2011, p. 328). The most recent examples are during the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and
199 continuous occupation of Kashmir by Indian armed forces.

200 Madresa pass-outs have been very active in volunteering to support the resistance movements ??Usmani, 2008,
201 p. 398). Though this happens only when a foreign force invade their land (which includes all parts of the world
202 with dominant Muslim population) with military force, however it is claimed that the Madresa graduates only
203 offer any or all forms of resistance to the foreign invaders only and prefer not to hurt any civilian population
204 ??Usmani, 2008, p. 397).

205 Keeping this history in view, the possibility of Pakistani Madaris (Plural of Madresa) pass-outs being involved
206 in offering resistance of NATO and American allies in Afghanistan cannot be ruled out though the magnitude
207 would be lower than their role in resisting communist invasion some decades ago. This reduced role could be due
208 to the restrictions from Pakistani Govt. and Pakistani Army against all cross border activities since 9/11.

209 7 VI.

210 8 Madresa Reforms

211 Since Pakistani Govt. has offered itself as an ally of America therefore, in this context, any initiative by the
212 Govt. to reform the Madresa system is seen with suspicion and is considered as an attempt to defuse their
213 resistive spirit. Looney, while citing various key figures from Madresa Networks managed by different schools
214 of thought, anticipates ”their [Madaris] biggest suspicion is that every government move in this direction is a
215 Western-inspired maneuver to gain control over Islamic institutions to change the Islamic education and values
216 to suit the West” (2003, p. 268).

217 This rigidity in the attitude of Madresa against any change can be understood by putting oneself in their
218 shoes. How a university in the in Europe, America or Australia would respond if they are told to advocate values

219 contradictory to the spirit of liberalism, secularism and democracy. In a similar way the institution Madresa may
220 not also be accepted to adopt anything which they consider contradictory to their value system.

221 9 VII.

222 Madresa And Sectarian Conflict Ali (2008), Ahmer (2009) and Zaman (1998) has written on the root cause of
223 sectarian violence in Pakistan. This conflict has been prevalent among the two sects Shia and Sunni mainly.
224 Both authors agree that these outfits have been created in reaction to injustice of the feudal system mainly in
225 lower Punjab area, where this feudal system has its inclination toward Ahl-e-Tashee sect (Shia). In reaction to
226 this injustice and illegitimate use of power against the lower class militant organizations have emerged to resist
227 the hegemony of unduly dominant sects of the rival group. The violent reactions by both factions against each
228 other however have also been criticized by these authors as socially destructive and have demanded solutions to
229 the problem.

230 Zaman (1998) and Ahmer (2009) have in fact taken a more historical and holistic view on the development of
231 the sectarian conflicts in Pakistan, starting from branding of Ahmedies as non-Muslims, to influence of Iranian
232 revolution on Shia community in Pakistan and its subsequent uprising on Zia's pro Sunni policies, to the formation
233 of Sipah-e-Mohammad, a banned militant outfit, as subsidiary of TNJP and finally the creation of Sipah-e-Sahaba
234 in reaction to the Shia militancy and injustice of Shia magnets and feudal class against the sunni peasants in the
235 Jhang region. Zaman's arguments seem unbiased as he blames both factions in contributing to the problem and
236 not in the solution.

237 It is also claimed that modern form sectarian violence between Shia-Sunni (The Nation, 2010) and Barelvi-
238 Deobandi ??Ghazi, 2011, p. 61) is caused by a local or foreign conspirators. Furthermore political and economic
239 factors create a context to breed violence where arguments of religious (whose health might be questionable)
240 nature only provide moral justification to a violent act.

241 It is argued that in a society which is already divided on political, ethnic, racial and economic grounds, presence
242 of religious divide is a no surprise. Molana Qari Muhamamd Hafeez Jalindhari, Head of Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-
243 Arabia network, questions that why religious sectarian violence gets more attention in the media or emphasized
244 by the government despite the fact its magnitude in the overall violence, occurring due to political, ethnic and
245 racial reasons, is insignificant. He even argues that if government is really serious then it should work to eradicate
246 all forms of violence occurring at various types of fault lines, let alone religious (Jalindhari, 2011, p. 110).

247 According to Mufti Zahid Sangharvi, graduate of Darul-uloom Korangi, "around 2 out of 16 years of Madresa
248 education, topics related to differences among various 'schools of thought' and sects are taught". It largely
249 depends on the teacher how he is teaching the topics, says Mufti Zahid. Mainstream Madaris are not involved
250 in sectarian violence, rather they condemn the phenomenon however, in his view, some teachers in Madaris in
251 remote rural areas does incite hate for other sects among their students, which might contribute to the problem,
252 however "The percentage of such Madaris might be insignificant in total". It is also claimed that highest respect
253 is paid to the viewpoints of other schools of thoughts such as those belong to Imam Malik, Imam Shafi and Imam
254 Hambal r.a 5 (Jalindhari, 2011, p. 107), however it is also admitted by Molana Hafeez Jalindhari that while
255 discussing the viewpoints of the other sects (like Barelvi or Ahle-Tashee) the tone of the discussion becomes
256 intense and critical beyond the appropriate limits. Molana Jalindhari suggests that this habit is inexcusable and
257 must be rectified whenever and wherever it is present (p. 168).

258 No matter how little the involvement may be, if there is a point of weakness then it should be proactively being
259 taken care of. Ali (2008) also confirms the observation of Mufti Zahid Sangharvi stated above for Ahmedpur-East
260 region in lower Punjab, however he also suggests that government has to address the issues of rural development,
261 take measures to eradicate economic disparity and protect the violation peasant rights which provide a context
262 for hatred among feudal (Ahle-Tashee) and peasant class (Sunni).

263 This suggests that roots of sectarian violence might be traced to economic and political causes instead of
264 religious ones alone, let alone of any foreign conspiracy. However this shouldn't excuse Madaris executive bodies
265 to keep a check and take precautionary measures when and where needed within their system or curriculum and
266 avoid becoming part of the problem.

267 10 VIII.

268 11 Socio-Economic Role of Madresa Graduates

269 The question of Madrasa's socio-economic contribution in the society is also worth probing. Some discussion will
270 be done on:

- 271 ? Economic role of Madresa graduates in society,
- 272 ? Employability of Madresa graduates,
- 273 ? Influence of Law and order of society,
- 274 ? Providing a Safehouse for poor children, and

12 ? Contribution in increasing literacy rate a) Economic role

In a contemporary sense if person is capable of adding economic value in the society through his skills, talents, competencies etc then he or she qualifies to be called as human capital, whose economic value needs to be greater, in monetary terms, then the investment put into the development of his skills and talents to qualify as human capital. In view of Smith (1776) if a person's:

" acquisition of such talents, by the maintenance of the acquirer during his education, study, or apprenticeship, always costs a real expense, which is a capital fixed and realized, as it were, in his person. Those talents, as they make a part of his fortune, so do they likewise that of the society to which he belongs. The improved dexterity of the workman may be considered in the same light as a machine or instrument of trade which facilitates and abridges labor, and which, though it costs a certain expense, repays that expense with a profit".

A Madresa graduate doesn't qualify to that. A typical private corporation requires a variety of skills in the domains of marketing, management, logistics, finance, accounts, production, quality control etc. Furthermore the organizational culture and norms, its value system allows only those to fit in those who accept the same value system. A Madresa graduate isn't like that and his value system doesn't makes him compatible with most organizational cultures of contemporary nature such as where free mingling of opposite genders is an organizational norm. "Headhunter says in today's job environment Madresa graduates are at a disadvantage", asserts Imtiaz (2011) while quoting various head hunters'. In the same context the need to provide Madresa students vocational training is also highlighted, Haider (2011) This critique on Madresa graduates is coming from a value system alien to Islam, economic role of an individual as emphasized above is valued in a capitalistic order, where accumulation of wealth for pleasure and freedom maximization is considered to be the end objective of all economic activity (Ansari & Arshad, 2006); it is also considered his responsibility to do so as his higher standard of living will increase his consumption patterns which eventually give reasons for the producers to produce more, henceforth the economic engine of the society will move faster and faster, if this continues to happen.

In the same light a corporate environment is designed to encourage employees to advance in their careers for the sake of increasing levels of remuneration and status. Each of these levels promises a better than before standard of living. The top executives maintain a lifestyle to aspire the middle and lower level management so that they may work hard to earn the same standard at sometime in future. A person is bound to get entangled in such a system if he considers improving his consumption and accumulation cycle intermittently throughout his life. There is no end point to it. A Madresa graduate cannot be expected to become a part of such a lifestyle, simply because "unprecedented wealth creation" (Heilbroner, 2007) is not what he is trained or suppose to do; his value system inspire him to become a virtuous man instead. Consuming and accumulating as an end objective doesn't make any sense to him. Submission to 'Divine Will' instead of 'freedom maximization' is his primary concern and goal.

13 b) Employability

Extensive primary research is required to find out the kind of jobs acquired by Madresa graduates and how much they earn, however it wouldn't be wrong to assume that the vast majority of them belongs to lower economic class, and works mainly as teachers in the same Madresa, as an Imam, Khateeb or Moazen in Mosques and become teachers of Arabic or Islamiyat in private of public schools etc. In view of Molana Adil Digri around 70% of graduates assume a religious role after passing out (Digri, 2011). All of these are low paying jobs from economic perspective. ??vans (2008) of illiterate peers in the employment market. Moreover, there is an apparent market-however limited-for madrasah teachers, and parents may believe that there is an opportunity for their children to earn a livelihood from teaching at one."

Sajjad (2009) also notes while referring to various works: "Indeed, even as graduates of secular schools are unemployed in large numbers, it is rare to find a madrasa graduate unemployed. Similarly ? if a student wants to make a livelihood working in a spiritually rewarding if low-paying job, he should be admired, not condemned." Molana Adil Digri and Mufti Zahid Sangharvi have also believe that almost 95% of Madaris graduates find a respectable job. Majority of them becomes an Imam of a Masjid or Madresa teacher. A few also advances their education and chose to become an Islamic Jurist or Mufti as well (Digri, 2011;.

After the brink of Islamic finance, a few who are qualified till the level of Mufti have been able to find Jobs in Islamic Banks and Takaful companies. Today this number is small however Islamic Banks and Takaful companies locally and internationally are growing at a noticeable pace (Imam & Kpodar, 2010) and has "promising growth prospects" in future as well (Akhtar, 2008). Global financial crisis has also turned attentions of many including Vatican toward acknowledging that "banks should look at the rules of Islamic finance to restore confidence amongst their clients at a time of global economic crisis" (Totaro, 2009). This has open new job prospects for Dars-e-Nizami (Equivalent of post graduation) and Takhasus (qualification necessary to become an Islamic Jurist) Graduates.

Along with that a growing number of Islamically Inspired business in all types of industries 6 and Halal food industry (Islam, 2011) is also promising in this context. At present most of the Muftian (plural of Mufti or Islamic Jurist) find their way into Darul-Iftha 7 6 Currently two parallel movements though philosophically aligned are working for this cause. One of them is operating from Lahore by the name of Ahya-e-Deen led by senior scholars of Tableeghi Jamat and the other one in Karachi by the name of UBBM ?? and Naafay Consultancy

337 (<http://www.ciraat.com/naafey/>) etc are getting an overwhelming response from business community indicating
338 that demand for Islamic jurists (Mufti) as Shariah Advisors and teachers is most likely to be increase substantially
339 in future. 7 Department of Madresa which provides solution to various domestic or commercial problems or
340 disputes brought by general public of a Madresa (bigger ones) where they provide legal advice, decree (Fatwa)
341 and Shariah compliant solutions to various business and family related matters. But that again is a very small
342 percentage of graduates as well.

343 It is also argued that specialization courses offered in Madresa are intended to make the graduate expert
344 theologian or a jurisprudent, not a doctor, engineer, or something else ??Evans A. , 2008). In Muslim societies
345 such religious experts are highly valued as they provide guidance to general public with respect to various
346 personal, domestic and business related problems. They even provide help in resolving various marriage (divorce),
347 inheritance or commercial disputes, sharing the load of formal court system of the country, which is already highly
348 congested by backlog cases in Pakistan (Rehman, 2011). Mufti Abdul Manan, member of Darul-ifta, Darul Uloom
349 Korangi Karachi, states that solution or Fatawa for around 13,000 problems and disputes are provided on yearly
350 basis. Around 35

351 Muftian alone in Darul Uloom Korangi Karachi provides this service to general public free of charge. In
352 Karachi the total number of these Fatawa goes upto 60,000 per annum (Manan, 2011). Keeping this in view
353 it can be safely assume that in absence of Darul-Ifta operated within large Madaris, court system of Pakistan
354 would have strained even more.

355 Madresa in their own perspective are doing a massive contribution to the society by preserving the value
356 system from the onslaught of foreign values, disseminating the knowledge of Islam and Shariah (Ghazi, 2011)
357 and perform various ritualistic duties like leading prayers in congregation, leading funeral prayers, performing
358 Nikah ceremonies etc. Ahmad (2004) also acknowledges this social role of the clergy.

359 **14 c) Influence on Law and order**

360 It is generally assumed that religious institutions let it be a church, synagogue, Buddhist temple, masjid or a
361 Madresa, are a source of religiosity in a society.

362 There is significant cross-national empirical evidence available that religious influence reduces the crime rates
363 in any particular society. The fear of punishment in hereafter restrains people from committing crime (Ellis,
364 1985); furthermore the moral code offer by the religion also offers deterrence against criminal behavior (Ellis &
365 Peterson, 1996). Evans, Cullen, Dunaway & Burton (1995) has also inferred after their analysis that "participation
366 in religious activities was a persistent and non-contingent inhibitor of adult crime". Stack & Kposowa (2006) has
367 also inferred that religiosity and tax fraud are inversely proportional, which suggests that a religiously conscious
368 society is likely to avoid tax frauds and fiscal deficits. Muhamad (2009) have also found Muslim students in
369 Malaysia being less tolerant toward unethical business practices if they are more religious, he infers that more
370 students from "religious education stream ? are less tolerant toward unethical business practices". In a theoretical
371 paper Al-Khalifah (1994) has also inferred that "religiosity, in an Islamic context, serves as a mechanism which
372 shields people from criminal temptation". Ali (1985) has examined the impact of religious inclination of the
373 society, its penal code, the education system on the low crime rate which prevails in the Saudi society, he asserts
374 that "a combination of factors seems to contribute to the very low rates of crime in Saudi Arabia including
375 the firm and deterrent effect of Islamic criminal law, the general effect of religion and religiosity, the influence
376 of Quranic teachings, and the Islamic educational system." Gunes (2003) in his study on university students in
377 Turkey, a Muslim predominant country, also concludes that "religion and religiosity have important social control
378 functions on crime through shaping attitudes of people against crime [among university students in Turkey]."
379 Analogously there is little or no evidence available to significantly connect Madresa graduates in Pakistan with
380 crimes of various types such as drug trafficking, money laundering, forged currency, printing, extortion, murder
381 for hire, fraud, human trafficking, corruption, black marketeering, political, violence, terrorism, and abduction
382 for ransom. This could be so because many of these crimes are too sophisticated for a typical Madresa graduate,
383 95% of those have never seen a gun in their life even on a television, it is believed ??Ghazi, 2011, p. 254).
384 Secondly the religiosity factor also significantly reduces ones inclination toward crime as empirically shown by
385 various researchers cited above. Keeping this in view, it is safe to hypothesize that, a Madresa graduates and
386 any one directly or indirectly associated with Madresa, regular attendees of Mosques (which is also operated by
387 Madresa graduates) and those involved in missionary organizations like Tablighi Jamat are less likely to involve
388 in any criminal activity as compare to those who are illiterate or those who attend secular schools. However a
389 comprehensive primary research is needed of similar nature cited above to factually back this insight, or reject
390 it.

391 **15 d) Safehouse for poor Children?**

392 There is no accurate figure of Madresa enrolment in Pakistan, however it wouldn't be wrong to assume the
393 number to be more than 2 million, among which around 1.5 million are residing at 9000 Madaris affiliated with
394 Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia network, which adhere to Deobandi school of thought, alone (Jalindhari, 2011, p.
395 180). After dismissing the allegation of being a breeding ground of militancy or terrorists (discussed is detailed
396 above), It can be argued that these Madresa are safehouses for the poor children. It is said so because "runaways,

15 D) SAFEHOUSE FOR POOR CHILDREN?

397 school dropouts and illiterate boys from poor and often abusive families are found to be at high risk. The main
398 factors pushing ? boys into prostitution are the need for food, clothing, accommodation and money” (ECPAT,
399 2006, p. 11). Food, clothing, accommodation and money are what poor students of Madresa get free of cost
400 along with education of comparable quality and chance of getting a respectable employment after graduation.
401 Perhaps for the same reason former President Pervez Musharraf called Madresa as the Pakistan biggest network
402 of NGOs (Musharraf, 2002).

403 On the other hand there have been reports on child sexual abuse incidents occurring within the premises of
404 some Madaris in Pakistan (Murphy, 2005;Jafferi, 2011). Neutrality of these media reports is also questionable.
405 Child abuse and Molestation is an unfortunate reality in Pakistan and there has been numerous incidents reported
406 in media every now and then (Pakistan Today, 2011). Majority of these young victims are abused, molested or
407 exploited by their acquaintances.

408 In a report compiled by Sahil (NGO working against child abuse in Pakistan) 81% out of 4543 abusers were
409 acquaintances in the year 2010. Among these 3106 were family members of the victim, 22 were school teachers
410 and 18 were identified as ”Molvis” etc. From the total of 675 places of abuse, whose data was collected by Sahil,
411 369 were abusers place, 306 were victims place, 18 were schools, 10 were Mosques and 2 were Madresa etc (Sahil,
412 2010). In an earlier report prepared by Sahil, out of total of 13181 abusers, 117 were ”Molvis” and 101 were
413 school teachers from the year 02’ to 06’, whereas only one Madresa was reported to be a where crime took place
414 in this 4 year period (Sahil, 2007). These reports have been compiled from the cases which gained a spotlight
415 in media therefore it is believed by Sahil that these ”number of incidents do not represent the total numbers of
416 such incidents in Pakistan-because such issues are taboo and are not easily reported. Any attempt to quantify
417 the issue of child sexual abuse is bound to be limited in scope” ??Sahil, 2011).

418 In another report published by ECPAT, schools in Pakistan (Lahore and Peshawar) can be a place where
419 children can be forced into child prostitution ??Muhammad & Zafar, 2006, p. 36), furthermore the report notes
420 that some ”schools are not safe places for children. Teachers, whose role should be to protect children from
421 abuse, can become abusers and exploiters due to poor supervision by the Education Department and the local
422 community.” (p. 37). In this report there was no mention of Madresa being a place of sexual abuse of children, on
423 the contrary it was mentioned that various community religious leaders (who appeared in focus group discussion
424 on the subject) ”strongly felt that falling moral standards and increasing obscenity are also important factors
425 behind boy prostitution” (p. 49).

426 Madaris authorities don’t deny the likelihood of such cases of child abuse occurring within the premises
427 of Madresa boundaries or Madresa teachers being involved in such acts. Mufti Zahid has also accepted that
428 occurrence of such unfortunate incident is possible in Madresa. He even mentioned a personal account of firing
429 a teacher, who was accused by a student for sodomizing him, from the Madresa where he himself teaches. Even
430 Murphy (2005), in his not so neutral article, has quoted Molana Hafeez Jalindhari, head of Wifaq-ul-Madaris
431 Al-Arabia (cited above as well), saying ”I cannot rule out isolated incidents of sex abuse at Madresa, but I
432 reject reports that hundreds of students are being subjected to sexual attacks at Madresa”. Keeping in view
433 the statistics documented and published by Sahil, claim of Molana Jalindhari seems correct that such are only
434 isolated incidents. Portraying the entire institution of Madresa, where less than 5 crimes were reported to
435 have taken place, for being involved in such a cruel act is unjustified. If we put such a label on Madresa then
436 secular schooling system would also have to be labeled as a den of child abuse and molestation keeping in view
437 the numbers compiled by Sahil which shows an almost equal involvement of a school teacher as compare to a
438 religious teacher, and a significantly higher use of a school as a place of abuse as compare to a Madresa. A
439 school which doesn’t provide accommodation to him also cannot guarantee his protection beyond school hours
440 from the possible threat which may exist in his neighborhood or family members. On the other hand, keeping in
441 view Sahil’s statistics referred above, for a poor child a Madresa would be a safer place then his neighborhood,
442 let alone his home; as the chance of his getting abused, molested and exploited and even killed in the process
443 are significantly higher when he is not a resident student of a Madresa. e) Increasing Literacy rate: Free of cost
444 ??vans (2008) has highlighted the need of a research which explores the literacy increasing function of Madresa
445 in society. It is known fact that Madresa provide education utterly free of cost, in fact many even bears the
446 expense of boarding and lodging of students.

447 Evans in the same essay notes ”Even if Madresa do little more than make thousands of young people who would
448 not otherwise learn to read and write, that is an educational achievement.” ??hazi (2011, pp. 91, 256, 258) even
449 claims that the literacy rate in Pakistan has contributed significantly increased by Madresa because the condition
450 in public school is not good enough to achieve this objective. This claim seems farfetched and inconsistent with
451 the argument in the same book on page 254, which can also be backed by a research (Andrabi, Das, Khwaja,
452 & Zajonc, 2005), that in Pakistan out of total only 2-3% students (liberal estimates) goes to Madresa for their
453 primary education, and the rest goes to public or private schools.

454 By fraction of the total, the contribution of Madresa in increasing the literary rate might be small, however
455 Madresa provide education free of cost at primary, secondary and even at tertiary levels. This means in the least
456 sense the institution of Madresa have been doing a government’s job of increasing the literacy rates in the country
457 without using the taxpayer’s money. Furthermore ??hazi (2011, p. 89) has also reported that out of 2.1 million
458 students in registered Madresa around the country 0.9 million are female. If this is true then it is sufficient to
459 refute the allegation of biasness religious circles has toward the education of female, as well.

460 It would be interesting to find out how a Madresa spends on teaching one child in comparison to a conventional
461 welfare school operated in Pakistan by any NGO or a public school. Some authors have done some number
462 crunching to work out the breakeven cost of educating a child in some parts in Pakistan. The average cost of
463 private school per month per student was Rs. 326.3 and Rs. 191.2 in government schools in Lahore Pakistan;
464 furthermore pupil-teacher ratio is 25.2 in private schools and 42.5 in government schools (Alderman, Orazem, &
465 Paterno, 2001). In another paper by it was noted that "private schools in Lahore, Pakistan functioned in 1995
466 with monthly tuition under 100 rupees. The presumption was that households in Quetta, a poorer city than
467 Lahore, could afford at most 50 rupees per month tuition?" (Alderman, Kim, & Orazem, 2003, p. 269). This
468 was more than ten years back; today the cost would have increased manifolds keeping in view on high inflation
469 rate persistent particularly during last four years.

470 TCF foundation, which is one of the largest nonprofit education provider in Pakistan, spent Rs. 735.5 million
471 (2010, p. 27) in 2010 on the management of 730 schools across Pakistan (this expense includes salaries of
472 teachers to marketing for fund raising activities). The total students studying in these schools are 102,000. It is
473 also mentioned that around 92% of the total expenditure is on providing education to students. If this true then
474 roughly Rs. 7206 per student per year is spent by TCF on the education of one child. That's around Rs. 600
475 per month per student. TCF is also not 100% free like a Madresa, however people can "pay-as-theyafford" and
476 "up 95% scholarships are provided to all deserving students. Books and uniforms are also heavily subsidized
477 and provided on easy installments." (2010, p. 17).

478 According to a rough estimate, based on the macro level statistics in the Economic Survey of 2009-10 available
479 on Ministry of Finance official website (www.finance.gov.pk) the total expenditure by government on maintain
480 the education system was Rs. 215 Billion, in which roughly 29.6 million students were enrolled in all levels of
481 education (roughly 80% of which were undergraduate students). This also gives us a crude estimate of government
482 expenditure of Rs. 600 per student per month in the fiscal year of 2009-10. It is interesting to note that TCF
483 foundation spends almost the same amount as government of Pakistan spends on education; however the quality
484 of the education and infrastructure maintained by both is different by miles, proof of which can be easily found
485 just by walking in any of the schools operated by both parties.

486 On the other hand Madresa named Jamia Ashrafia in Mankot near Multan claims to spend Rs. 1,110 on
487 one student per month which includes the amount spent on his accommodation as well. Out of 600, 450 are
488 resident students in this Madresa. The maximum education which a student receives is till Dora-e-Hadith
489 (equivalent to Masters Degree from conventional university). Molana Adil Digri, head of Jamia Farooqia Digri,
490 provided monthly expenditure per student of around 30 Madresa of interior Sindh, along with maximum level of
491 education provided in there (see Appendix-A). Education provided ranges from Hifz (equivalent to 5 th Grade
492 in conventional schools), Saniya (Matriculation), Rabia (Intermediate or collage education), Sadesa (equivalent
493 to bachelors), Almia or Dars-e-Niazmi (equivalent to post graduation).

494 All of these Madaris provides accommodation to the students. The average of this expenditure is Rs. 957
495 8 The quality of education provided in these Madresa is also equivalent or better than conventional , which
496 includes the cost of education (books and salary of teachers), food, medicine (when required), utility expense etc.
497 The amortization cost of the building isn't included in this expense as it is the property of Waqf (endowment)
498 established by the founder(s) of the Madresa.

499 According to Molana Adil Digri, as per a thumb rule, around one third of the said expenditure goes in education
500 and the rest goes to manage the accommodation of students. If this is so then on average a Madresa in Interior
501 Sindh is spending roughly Rs. 319 on student's education on monthly basis, and this number is even lower in
502 interior Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa (Digri, 2011). According to a conservative estimate around 2
503 million studies in Madaris today, multiplying it with students monthly expense status above we get Rs. 640
504 million approximately which would be spent by Madaris to educate 2 million of its students. This is almost half
505 of the amount spent by TCF foundation or Govt. of Pakistan, who would consume Rs. 1.2 Billion to provide
506 education to the same number of students. Despite spending this much, the parents would have to bear expense of
507 uniforms, books, transportation (as almost all TCF or public schools doesn't provide accommodation to students)
508 etc to a certain degree depending upon the subsidy offered by their respective school. 8 Min = 700, Max = 1300
509 or public schools as it is often observed that pass outs of Madresa, appearing in equivalent examination systems
510 like federal board, secure top positions in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education ??Ghazi, 2011, p.
511 73). This claim doesn't seem much farfetched keeping in view the quality of public schooling system in Pakistan
512 (PETF, 2011).

513 16 IX.

514 17 Conclusion

515 An attempt has been made to explore the impact of Madaris on the society, which these days are under the spot
516 light due to their alleged involvement in terrorist activity. Investigation done by various researchers, cited in the
517 paper, proves otherwise. Instead of that various social benefits of the institutions has been also highlighted by
518 various authors, details of which has already been mentioned above. Some of the direct benefits include from
519 providing education free of cost, providing a safe house for millions of poor children who otherwise might risk
520 ending up as child labor (Bhatti, 2010), if he is lucky, or child prostitute (ECPAT, 2006; IRIN, 2010), at worst.

521 A part from that without charging any fee Madaris develop individuals with significantly higher chance of
522 getting employed. Being a source of religiosity in the society, it can be also inferred that influence of Madaris
523 help reduce crimes in the society.

524 However in Pakistan and Sub-continent, it is argued by some authors that Madaris has been a source of inciting
525 sectarian violence, though a critical review of this accusation suggests that this phenomenon is not endorsed by
526 mainstream Madresa network and role of foreign hand also cannot be ignored. In short with a little effort internal
527 reforms can help eradicate the weakness of reacting to the economic and political injustice prevalent in some part
528 of the country which provides a pretext of sectarian conflicts, as discussed. Keeping in view the magnitude of the
529 situation, it should be the prime responsibility of the government to provide the economic and political rights to
530 the vulnerable class so that suppressed ones do not use religion to justify their violent reaction to the injustice
531 done to them by affluent feudal class.

532 Publically available data was analyzed to compare the amount spent on each student by TCF or government
533 of Pakistan with that of Madaris. A sample of around 32 Madaris across the Sindh was taken, in which monthly
534 expense per student to educate a child was found to be around 50% less than that of a TCF school (on avg) or
535 a general estimate of expenditure done by Govt. of Pakistan. Over and above Madaris doesn't charge a penny
536 from their students and even provide accommodation, on the contrary TCF and public schools are not hundred
537 percent free, students have to purchase text and note books in most cases, take tuitions and even have to spend
538 on daily traveling provide accommodation, on the contrary TCF and public schools are not hundred percent
539 free, students have to purchase text and note books in most cases, take tuitions and even have to spend on daily
540 traveling which a Madresa resident student doesn't have to worry about.

541 The conclusions drawn on this paper are based on limited or secondary data. More primary data on Madresa
542 expenditure should be taken from the entire country with provincial, rural and urban categorization to increase
543 the confidence level of the conclusion on economic efficiency. Furthermore the criminal records of Pakistan needs
544 to be analyzed in details to find out the academic profiles of the incarcerated population and that how many of
545 them are Madresa pass-outs, to feel more confident the propensity of Madresa pass-outs to become a criminal.
546 Also more primary data is required to increase the confidence level of inference about the employability of Madresa
547 graduates as well. Information regarding how a Madresa handles any corrupt elements within itself with some
548 case-studies is also required to understand the seriousness which exists to the institution clean black-sheeps.

549 18 Madinatul Uloom

550 Tando Adam 350 Almia 1,200 ¹

¹Iqbal has even criticized the culture prevalent in Madresa system or religious seminaries in his poetry, like in some lines in his famous 'Iblees ki majlis-e-shura'(The Devils Council), but this doesn't mean that he was against the philosophical foundation of the institution, which is clear from some of the lines from his poetry quoted above.

551 .1 Appendix-a

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