

## A Comparative Analysis of the Elite-English-Medium Schools, State Urdu-Medium Schools, and *Dini-madaris* in Pakistan

SHAMAAS GUL KHATTAK<sup>1</sup>

Middlesex University, United Kingdom

**ABSTRACT** This study as an attempt to comprehend the three distinct mainstream schools: elite English-medium schools, state Urdu-medium schools and *Dini-madaris* (Islamic institutes) in reproducing various social and economic classes in Pakistan. This study suggests that an unequal availability of capital resources, socio-economic class, and the societal cultural clearly favour some social groups over others. This consolidates existing social-class hierarchy. The ruling classes ensure the transfer of their power and privilege to their children by providing them with quality education in elite-English-medium schools. The disadvantaged classes have no other option than to educate their children either in state Urdu-medium schools or *Dini-madaris* (regional languages). New non-elite English-medium schools have not succeeded in ameliorating this situation. The result is, this study shows, is *de facto* educational apartheid in the country.

*Keywords:* Education system, elite-English medium schools, state Urdu-medium schools *Dini-madaris*, cultural and social reproduction

### Introduction

Although part of a longer study<sup>2</sup>, this paper analyses three distinct mainstream school systems in Pakistan: elite English-medium schools, state Urdu-medium schools and *Dini-madaris* (Islamic institutes). The study aims to understand how these schools reproduce social and economic classes in Pakistan. It will be argued that unequal availability of capital resources clearly favours some social groups over others. The result, it will be shown, is a consolidation of an existing social-class hierarchy: The ruling classes ensure the transfer of their power and privilege to their children by providing them with quality education in elite-English-medium schools. The disadvantaged classes have no other option than to educate their children either in state Urdu-medium schools or *Dini-madaris* (regional languages). New non-elite English medium schools have not succeeded in ameliorating this situation. The result is, this study shows a *de facto* educational apartheid in the country.

---

1. I was Formally known Shabana Gul Khattak. To acknowledge my father's incredible support in my academic career, I want to be known by his name.

2. Part of my doctoral study—Silent Voices Untold Stories: Perceptions of Female Students towards their own Experiences and Higher Educational Opportunities in Peshawar, Khyber Pukhtunkhwah (KP) (Pakistan).

Social stratification in Pakistan is quite obviously in line with social origin. Ethnicity, clan/caste identity, associations, gender and patriarchal relations, economic conditions, and affiliation with traditional and modern lifestyles are some of the key factors that characterise social stratification. With regards to the relationship between these socio-economic classes and the available educational opportunities in the country, the education system provides a wide range of choices which reflects Bourdieu (1999) theories of culture, social and symbolic capital reproduction. For instance, rich people with substantial economic capital are more likely to educate their children in elite institutions to accumulate cultural capital, tend to establish social circles as a strategy to reap benefits (social capital), and are regarded and respectable by others who value their capital (symbolic capital). Current literature analysis of the students' family socio-economic status in three types of schools under study appear to suggest two predominant short-falls. For example, existing literature conclusions on secondary analyses of prior government surveys which, according to Rahman (2006: 4), 'are of high quality, but lack an understanding of, or familiarity with, primary sources.' The majority of secondary sources used in this regard are large-scale surveys conducted by the government, such as the Federal Bureau of Statistics Census of Private Schools (PEIP), Learning and Educational Achievement in Punjab Schools (LEAPS) Census, Pakistan Integrated Household Survey (PIHS), the Population Census, etc. (Andrabi et al, 2006: 471). By and large, 'the understanding of family SES is achieved by analysing the responses of questions that probe the extent of household public utilities, such as electrification and piped water and the quality of the housing stock (as a proxy for wealth) and then correlating these with responses vis-à-vis the type of school attended (Andrabi et al, 2006: 471). This fact has emphasized the need to have an accurate understanding of the family SES of students in different types of schools. To fill in this gap, this study has attempted to analyse data from academic research conducted on the issue.

### **Background: Theories and Practices of Education Policies in Pakistan**

In a country with high inequities in income and opportunity, eradicating social exclusion needs to be one of the principal objectives of the national education policy. Thus, various education commissions, which were periodically appointed by the government to review and recommend measures for improvement, suggested the need for an egalitarian and a just education system. For instance, the Hamoodur Rahman Commission emphasized that the government spends more money on elite schools than on ordinary state schools, which contradicts the constitutional assurance against discrimination among citizens. Moreover, the idea of superior and inferior schools does not fit with the principles of equality and social justice. Likewise, the National Education Policy (1972:1) recommended:

an equalizing access to education through provision of special facilities for women, underprivileged groups, mentally retarded and handicapped children, and adults in all areas in general and the backward areas in particular.

Additionally, this policy sets the following two significant objectives to make schooling more equitable. First, educational institutions, generally known as [elite] English-medium schools, such as Aitchison College, Lahore, are at present wholly or substantially financed by the government but inaccessible to poorer students, however intelligent. All state schools and institutions falling within this category will be taken over by the government and converted into schools for the gifted, as conceived in early the 1970s by the Government of Parkistain (GoP, 1972:19). Second, these schools, in future, will provide an enriched program of studies, entirely free, to gifted children drawn from all over the country without reference to their financial status or social background. In this way these renowned institutions, which in the past divided society on the basis of wealth, will now unite the nation on the basis of intellect and ability (GoP, 1972:19). However, in practice after forty two years there is no implementation of the policy.

Therefore, with an objective to eradicate social exclusion, the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971-1977) launched a major campaign to 'nationalise' institutions in the early 1970s. This led to the nationalisation of 175 private colleges by September 1972. More private schools and a host of diverse others were taken over in a 'phased manner' between 1972 and 1974, and by 1970s some 3,334 private schools had been nationalised (GoP, 1979: 26). Teachers, media, and general masses welcomed the nationalization as a positive development that would aid social mobility for underprivileged groups. Jones and Jones (1977) note that if 'infused' with ambitious egalitarian rhetoric, nationalisation promised to bring about a wholesale restructuring of values, local participation in educational affairs, equal access to education, and the eradication of illiteracy.

However, these objectives were more visionary than realistic under Pakistan's social and economic conditions—as key objective of school equalizing exercise was not completely realized. For instance, over two hundred 'high fee charging' English-medium schools were exempted from nationalisation because of their promise to reserve 20 percent of their enrolments for low-income students (Jones and Jones, 1977: 582). Similarly, Bergman and Nadeem (2008) explain that, in the end, schools for the privileged were saved from nationalisation on the condition that they would recruit students on merit alone and that poverty would not be criteria for exclusion. However, one important fact was ignored: these schools were English-medium institutions and their entry tests would be biased against underprivileged children who generally study in state Urdu-medium schools. Rahman (2006:15) also concludes that the elite schools were allowed to exist and that they maintained their business as usual, and continue to cater to the elite of power and wealth in Pakistan.

In view of the foregoing discourse on the history of contemporary schools for privileged students, I intend to clarify that the elite schools under study were not subject to the nationalisation initiative of the early 1970s.

In the subsequent decades, it seems that the wave of neo-liberalism ostensibly influenced government policies. For instance, in the 1980s, the government officially recognised that, on its own, the public sector lacked all the necessary resources and expertise to effectively address and rectify low educational indicators (GoP, 2004). Hence, the government decided to take bold steps to involve the private sector and civil society

organizations in the financing, management, and delivery of the education services in the country (GoP, 2009:4). Under a new scheme of denationalisation and privatisation, a new stream of non-elite private English-medium schools started emerging in the early 1980s, and their numbers have increased ten-fold since 1983 (Ahmad, 2012). The main reason for this drastic growth of non-elite private schools is that English is the key to power as far as the modern, employment-based domains of control are concerned. Without competency in English, one cannot access the most lucrative and powerful jobs, both in the state and private sectors (Ahmad, 2012).

### **Dini-madaris**

The traditional educational system, which is represented by Islamic schools—predominantly known as *madrassahs/madaris*—generally give priority to Islamic religious studies in their curriculum and other educational activities. Historically, *Dini-madaris* have served as the center for educational activities that sought to provide guidance not only on religious matters, but also on ‘worldly’ affairs. The broad and practical nature of their syllabi, which consisted of both professional and religious courses, produced both religious scholars and professionals, such as doctors, engineers, architects, teachers, and statesmen (Zaidi, 2013). However, with the advent of British rule in 1857, *Dini-madaris* began to lose their influence. The British introduced a new system of state schools to train people for administrative roles and divided the system of education into two separate domains—religious and secular, or traditional and modern (Zaidi, 2013). Moreover, the biased treatment from colonial government forced *madriss* scholars to adopt a defensive approach and to limit their educational activities to protecting the religious texts and transmitting them to younger generations. The resultant disparity of frameworks and objectives between the curricula of *Dini-madaris* and the secular schools gradually resulted in the exclusion of *Dini-madriss* graduates from the job market. After country’s independence in 1947, the *Dini-madaris* retained their identity as the centers of classical Islamic studies and the guardians of the orthodox Islamic culture and values.

Furthermore, Talbani (1996: 70) argues that in traditional Islamic pedagogy an authoritative acceptance of knowledge is stressed, with learning often based on listening, memorisation, and regurgitation. A greater emphasis is placed on listening to a teacher, who is active as a transmitter/narrator of knowledge and leads the students to memorise mechanically the narrated content (see also Freire, 1997). This style of learning undermine students’ creativity. However, Nelson (2006) concluded that the discipline and cognitive style of Quranic education foster understanding and responsibility among students. Boyle (2006: 494) argues that between December 2000 and June 2004 major British and American newspapers published 42 articles on *Dini-madaris* in Pakistan alone, many of which characterised them as ‘threats’ and many gave inaccurate or unverifiable statistics concerning the number of *Dini-madaris* and the scope of their enrolment. Hence, the publicity that *Dini-madaris* have attracted has shaped international—and to a lesser degree national—public perceptions and debate about these schools, often in a decidedly negative way. For instance, Islamic schools are mostly called ‘fundamentalist schools’ (Pohl, 2006: 67), ‘universities of *jihad*’ (holy war) (Singer,

2001: 88), weapons of mass-instruction' (Coulson, 2004: 2), and 'schools of hate' (Sinkler, 2005: 41). Conversely, some scholars provide more complex perspectives and argue that the purpose of *Dini-madaris* is to train scholars to interpret Islam in relation to demands of the specific time and also to preserve an authentic Islamic heritage by inculcating in students good Islamic religious knowledge (Zaidi, 2013; Sikand, 2006). They also argue that, before the tragic incident of 9/11 [in the US] *Dini-madaris* had been performing this task for centuries without being accused of promoting terrorism (Zaidi, 2013).

### Elite- English Medium Schools

The modern education system consists of both private English-medium schools and state Urdu-medium schools, which are generally believed to impart modern and secular education in the country. Rahman (2006) explains that, based on their purpose, type of education (e.g. curriculum/teaching methods, etc.), and the amount of tuition fees, private English-medium schools can be categorised into three major groups: (a) state-influenced elite schools, (b) private elite schools, and (c) non-elite schools. The state-influenced elite schools are mostly cadet-colleges/schools that are provide subsidized high-quality education to children of military officers. The British colonial administration initially established the private elite schools with the sole purpose of educating the ruling class. Curle (1966:69) emphasises,

in fact, as in England, so in Indian subcontinent the education of ruling group was carried out in a virtually separate parallel school system from which the children of the lower orders were excluded by both social and economic sanctions.

Curle (1966) further affirms that education in the colonial era was geared to staffing the civil service and producing an educated elite that shared the values of, and loyal to, the British colonisers. It was unabashedly elitist. The colonial administration established two kinds of elite schools on the subcontinent: those for the hereditary aristocracy, called the chiefs' colleges, and those for newly emerging professional classes, called European or English schools (Rahman, 2006). In both kinds of schools, the emphasis was put on English as the central symbol and tool in the process of Anglicisation (Lewis, 1962). Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India (1898-1905), believed;

that the young chiefs (who were supposed to learn the English language and become sufficiently familiar with English customs, literature, science, mode of thought, standards of truth and honour) would be allies of the British (Raleigh, 1906:245).

Likewise, the European or English schools had the same purpose of strengthening the upper social classes. The European schools in India had imitated British-type private schools, and adopted aristocratic view of education with the purpose of strengthening the ruling class, to make them wiser and better rulers, prepare high level bureaucrats,

military officers, and professionals'. The elite-English-medium schools, even after the political independence, have retained their existence and their goal of imparting high-quality education to the privileged classes and reproducing Western culture and value systems in the country. The ruling class has always protected these schools as they have served their vested interests. Hence, Moniza (2009) argues that Pakistani ruling class which is a *mullah* (clergy)/military/bureaucracy/ feudal nexus have followed the methods used by the British colonialists very successfully and adopted their philosophy of maintaining an educational apartheid system in which only the selected few, who are born privileged, can acquire good education and skills and to whom the rest of the populace is supposed to be subservient. The side of the fence on which one lands depends on the accident of birth and inheritance. Likewise, after analysing the education policies developed immediately after the country's independence in 1947, Curle (1966:71) concludes that the

goal of Pakistani society was not change, but stability. Education was not thought of as a means of promoting democracy, or spreading egalitarianism, or increasing social mobility. On the contrary, its role was to maintain the status quo.

However, education is not only about the individual; it also has a societal role, which includes selecting, classifying, distributing, transmitting, and evaluating educational knowledge that reflects both the distribution of power and the principle of social contract.

### **State Urdu-medium schools**

Researchers such as Jones (2001) and Warwick and Reimers (2005) argue that state schools are generally 'dull' and 'stringent'; often painted in dirt yellow with blue doors and windows with broken glass panes. These researchers continue that state schools are typically characterized by insufficient, small, and stuffy classrooms with no washroom/toilet facilities for students; a shortage of material resources; a lack of collaboration among teachers; a lack of teacher commitment; and inadequate management capacity. The state schools are also heavily criticised for the deterioration in the quality of education. Due to shortage of space, teaching aids, and very large classes, teachers find it difficult to use group strategies and activity-based teaching and thus tend to force their pupils to memorize passages out of poorly written, poorly printed, and very dull books. The overcrowded classrooms also present a highly regimented and discipline oriented atmosphere. However, some researchers believe that certain state schools are successfully and adequately preparing their students for a bright future. They argue that, at an individual level, some teachers work hard to empower their students and act as a catalyst to transform their lives. Such teachers or head-teachers are termed 'change agents (Retallick and Farah, 2005) or 'improvement-oriented-teachers' (Takbir, 2007: cited in Malik, 2012). In spite of all of the challenges, hindrances, and difficulties, such school personnel attempt to promote in-depth student learning (teaching for understanding) and a positive, stimulating, and interactive environment by modifying existing

instructional practices, using innovative pedagogical methods and techniques, and building more egalitarian relationships with students. Such school-personnel attempt to create new structures and systems and renew existing practices in order to improve the way school is organised. In the community, they try to build better relationships between the school and parents, families, other community members, and educational officials, and at the individual level, certain state schools are playing their part to promote learning communities (Retallick and Farah, 2005).

### **Analysis and discussion**

The foregoing paragraphs have underlined the highly stratified nature of the education system in Pakistan where, for example, these three types of schools—state Urdu-medium schools, elite-English medium Schools and *Dini-madaris*—constitute distinct fields of education. They provide contrasting academic and physical facilities. Their curricula, pedagogical methods, micro-political contexts (e.g. the school personnel's perspectives and practices and the school cultures), and organizational structures differ greatly. Their 'relative autonomy' also reveals different categories and scales. Therefore, these schools have the potential to provide very different schooling experiences to their respective students. This has significant implications for reproduction of students' class-habitus and political worldviews and determines different social roles and occupational trajectories (Malik, 2012). In summary, it appears that these schools prepare their students for life in the social class from which they come. For instance, different standards of material and human resources in these three types of schools are more likely to project among students to a view of a hierarchical world—on a scale from higher to lower social classes.

An integrated and equitable system of national education is vital for nation building. This is a specific culturally reproduced way of thinking and one that systematically encourages support for socio-economic hierarchies and 'misrecognition' of the actual nature of what people think, do, or value. Since the political independence, the government has persistently spent less than 2% of the GDP on public education (Malik, 2012). Consequently, the private schools provide substandard facilities, which act as symbolic violence and encourage the students to accept the legitimacy of their dominated position in the social order. Although the *Dini-madaris* provide impressive physical and academic resources to their students, they regularly teach a long history of socio-economic exploitation and injustice from Westernized ruling elite, which has resulted in the marginalisation of *Dini-madaris* graduates (Malik, 2012). The students are generally indoctrinated to value political interests that they share with others and the multi-years struggle in which their social group has been engaging to achieve social-economic dignity. In contrast, the rich environments at home and school alike have helped the elite children to tacitly inculcate the class-consciousness, sense of distinction, and a shared habitus of being privileged. Thus, the contrasting academic/physical facilities in the schools are likely to impose the spectre of legitimacy of the social order on their students.

Moreover, these schools conserve and inculcate their preferred cultural heritage and consecrate uneven social relations by providing different scholastic capital to their stu-

dents. For instance, *Dini-madaris*, even in the modern age, prefer to gain insight from the educational philosophies that were instigated by medieval Muslim thinkers. Hence, they base their schooling on traditional frameworks of faith-centered epistemology and praxis. Also, general schooling practices in *Dini-madaris* emphasise a counter-hegemonic trend where privileging of modern/secular knowledge as an exclusive vantage point for teaching and learning is challenged and resisted. The *Dini-madaris* personnel tend to reproduce the hegemony of their own conceptual heritage and cultural currency to subsequent generations. The students inculcate out-dated concepts that are largely irrelevant to the needs of the modern job market.

Conversely, the state Urdu-medium schools base their education on integrating Islamic knowledge into the corpus of secular and modern subjects such practices as useful for the students' holistic development (Malik, 2012). In effect modern education adequately prepares students for material success, while faith-centered school epistemology promotes their spiritual attributes, enlightens their minds, and creates self-discipline in character and actions as enunciated by Islam. In contrast to *Dini-madaris* and state Urdu-medium schools, the focus of the main policies in elite English-medium schools is to disseminate epistemological foundations of modern and progressive education and reproduce the hegemony of Western knowledge and ways of knowing as an exclusive standpoint for teaching and learning. These schools also conserve and sanctify Western culture in the society. This kind of knowledge and cultural currency are socially prestigious and attract premium in the job market (Malik, 2012).

The teachers' professional development programmes and practices are also designed to induct and socialise them into the traditions of these three types of schools. They are provided with expertise to reproduce aforesaid specific ideologies, skills, knowledge, and culture. The organisational habitus is a vital aspect of the schools' micro-political context and greatly influences teachers' sense of responsibility about their students' learning (Ahmad, 2012). Organizational habitus is defined as class-based dispositions, perceptions, and appreciations transmitted to individuals in a common organizational culture (Diamond and Randolph, 2004:76; Horvat and Antonio, 1999:320; McDonough, 1997). Therefore, there is a profound relationship between student composition of the schools, teachers' beliefs about students' abilities, and teachers' sense of responsibility for student learning. In predominantly low-income schools (e.g. *Dini-madaris* and state schools), teachers generally perceive their students as disadvantaged with regards to possessing cultural and intellectual resources. Thus, they reduce their sense of responsibility for student learning and tend to engage them in rote learning and memorization. In contrast, elite school teachers have faith in students' cultural and intellectual assets and, therefore, tend to engage them in creativity and empiricism (Malik, 2012).

These three types of schools also reproduce different cultural patterns in the society. The *Dini-madaris* are the sites where Islamic-oriented social identities, cultural norms, and conservative ideological orientations are reproduced. Although there are [sometimes] female students in *Dini-madaris* and a gender-mixed faculty, they make policies to sanctify the traditional ideological interpretations of gender seclusion. The seclusion is generally imbued with multiple and complex religious, social, cultural, and political meanings. However, it is usually consecrated as an important marker of faith,



modesty, and adherence to the Islamic code of conduct. By projecting their alternative gendered norms as more adequate, the *Dini-madaris* appear to reproduce anti-imperialist sentiments in the society. In the West, the gender diversity in an institution is usually valued and an intellectual encounter between males and females is considered useful to enhance a team's performance.

The elite schools, on the other hand, have retained their original role and purpose to consecrate Western lifestyles as a dominant culture in the country. These schools have coeducation and a gender-mixed faculty but, unlike *Dini-madaris*, make policies to take on board advantages of different attributes and qualities that exist between men and women and create a more collegial environment within their team of teachers. Therefore, by moving beyond gender stereotype and considering gender diversity as an advantage rather than a drawback, the elite schools consecrate the Western discourses of modernity and enlightenment in the society. In contrast to *Dini-madaris* and elite schools, the state schools tend to synchronize Western and Islamic cultures in their schooling. Such practices, however, reproduce an active conflict among faculty between the proponents of these apparently different paradigms. Islamic political parties and a large section of like-minded citizens are actively engaged in the revitalization of Islamic ethos, culture, and lifestyles in the country. Conversely, the ruling elite and their allies, more likely associated with the state schooling, find Western culture essential to keep pace with current economic and global realities (Malik, 2012). Therefore, it appears that the three different kinds of schooling are playing a central role in perpetuating different ideologies, dispositions, and practices regarding culture in the country.

With regards to the 'relative autonomy' of the schools, *Dini-madaris* and elite schools have attained almost complete independence from government influence. This is evident in their monopoly over recruitment, training of faculty, making and implementing the schooling policies, and appointing leadership from within their own ranks. The *Dini-madaris* personnel generally attribute their autonomy to an efficient fund-raising system, generous donations, and protection from influential like-minded individuals. Likewise, the main source of funds for elite schools and their autonomy is the elite clientele's lucrative fee contributions. The private donations from rich alumni and ruling elite also significantly contribute in this regard. Moreover, the government provides multiple subsidies to elite schools every year in form of capital and relaxation in duties/taxations, which contribute towards maintaining excellence in the provision of physical and academic resources to the students.

This probably provide an insight into the mindset of ruling elites—as they tend to use state-authority to provide adequate funding for these schools to maintain good performance. State subsidies are not intended to bring elite schools and *Dini-madaris* under state control. Elite schools make policies to better serve the rich and provide knowledge that ensures easy access for their children to the higher echelons of society. The *Dini-madaris* knowledge does not provide this kind of advantage to the poor. Therefore, it appears that the ruling class effectively uses the current schooling model to sustain their dominance over underprivileged masses.

The *Dini-madaris* effectively use their relative autonomy to resist any kind of curricular modernization effort from the government. Therefore, as discussed above, these insti-

tutions have maintained their original role to reproduce Islamic orthodoxy rather than to provide a trained work force for industrial capitalism. They make policies to preserve their conservative ideological orientation and the integrity of the tradition, while providing a significant cultural alternative and an intellectual approach to the citizens (Malik, 2012). Conversely, the organisational policies of elite schools are deeply ingrained in dominant-class interests and economic-market demands. These schools have retained their original mission as institutions to disseminate progressive education and Western intellectual ideologies. This cultural currency helps elite agents keep pace with current realities of globalisation, capitalism, and neo-liberalism. Besides, to better serve the ruling class, the autonomy of elite schools empowers them to effectively use through-the-ceiling fees and other schooling expenses as a control mechanism. This ensures an inclusion of only the upper classes in these unique institutions. The elite schools also make policies to admit elite children at any cost. For instance, if students somehow remain unable to get enrolled mainly due to relatively low grades, prior poor academic performance, or some other reason, the elite schools take them in through back channels. Such policies eventually ensure the continuation of ruling-class power and privilege to next generations.

In contrast, the state Urdu-medium schools reveal less autonomy and more interaction with the government, and carry out major and minor school policies mainly to reproduce the scholastic capital that is approved by the educational bureaucracy. The institutionalisation of education allows the agents in power to regulate school knowledge and determine curricula and textbooks as well as pedagogy and evaluation practices that do not provide higher cognitive skills to underprivileged students to compete with those of elites. In this way, the ruling-class tends to assert social control, social selection, and symbolic domination, which help to reproduce a regime of social hierarchy. Moreover, the fact that the public school administrators and teachers do not have power to choose learning modules for their students or engage them in creating knowledge, has implications on the schools' abilities to produce well-rounded high school graduates.

Malik (2012) suggests that the total volume of economic and cultural composition of the agents' capital and class-habitus act as selection mechanisms, which clearly favour some social groups over others. For instance, the study of economic capital reveals that an apartheid schooling system exists in the country with severe inequalities in income and many other factors related to access to quality education. What is worse is that this inequality seems to be escalating. Similar to their original design, the elite schools are still bastions of privilege even after more than six decades of political independence. This has occurred because the elite class makes policies in the country that are biased towards protecting their own vested interests. The existence of elite schools is evidently important for the elites because it provides an advantage to their children to legitimize individual advancement by acquiring unique educational credentials, which would certify them to access privileged job positions. Moreover, elite parents' relative affluence, educational expertise, and self-certainty provide them an advantage to build effective home learning environments and afford necessary educational materials for their children. During everyday home socialisation process, many elite parents regularly attempt to create pathways for children to effectively increase their cognitive ca-

pabilities. They initiate discussions that require interrogating epistemological assumptions and go beyond knowledge level to the higher levels of thinking. This way, the elite parents tend to reproduce their cultural capital, which eventually ensures the maintenance of their family power and privilege. The elite classes also effectively utilize their affluence to build rewarding social networks through holding parties and exchanging expensive gifts. Hence, their powerful social capital, which provides them an advantage to initiate a range of horizontal relationships, maximises their children's chances of accessing unique educational and occupational opportunities. The elite children fully understand the effectiveness of their family capital. Their perspectives generally indicate a notion that speaks of socio-economic class as a status as well as an opportunity. This kind of awareness has class-reproductive implications, as it is likely to channel the elite children's efforts to conserve their socially and economically privileged status. In contrast to elite schools, most families that tend to educate their children in *Dini-madaris* and state schools live on subsistence level and have an income of less than one dollar a day. These conclusions are rooted in economic capital and plays a significant role in the process of generating social inequalities. Rahman (2006:24) concluded: 'Pakistani educational scene is polarized according to socio-economic classes'. This study also underscores that the present state of the education system perpetuates capitalism in its worst forms, the lower levels of society are geared towards providing cheap labour, the upper levels of society are taught to be selfish consumers. Nonetheless, both levels are not capable of ushering in an era of self-sufficiency, egalitarianism and dignity for the masses.

### **Conclusion**

An analysis of the economic capital of Pakistan by Malik (2012: 77) has shown that the students' world in Pakistan is highly bourgeoisie. Bourdieu's (1999) theoretical assumptions are that linguistic, cultural competence, and knowledge of culture belong to members of the upper classes, but found to a lesser extent among the lower and working class agents. These attributes are also critical to these classes in creating knowledge and updating their social, economic, job-related, and educational knowledge through informal and non-formal channels. This practice, in effect, has underlined the existence of 'non-dominant cultural capital' (Carter, 2003, cited in Malik, 2012) in urban Pakistan. Moreover, the working-class agents actively pass on their cultural capital through private cultural consumption in home/family settings. Likewise, the working class agents demonstrate an ability to effectively use their educational knowledge to make efficient short-term, skill-oriented educational plans for their children. However, despite having cultural capital, class-habitus plays a vital role in making working class agents limit their future hopes and expectations to that which can realistically be achieved. They generally understand that it is not possible for them to overcome class-related and structured obstacles, such as a lack of money, ineffective social capital, lack of meritocracy, and discrimination to amicably achieve their ambitions. The working class agents can only materialise networks that have a more vertical characteristic of relations. Therefore, they need some kind of mediation with 'higher ups' to achieve their goals. Their children also have internalised such drawbacks. Therefore, class-

habitus appears to be a conceptual link between structure and agency. It helps to understand the interplay between individuals, their mindset, and broader social structures, which, hence, acts as a significant marker to reproduce inequalities. Arguably, a combination of many factors after secondary schooling determines the students' future occupations and relationship to the system of production and control. However, the nature of school knowledge and classroom work in these three types of schools provides an understanding that their future roles and professional trajectories are already being formed.

These schools have different curricula, pedagogical styles, and student evaluation methods, which mainly emphasise different cognitive and behavioural skills among students. These differences can become central features for the reproduction of division of labour at work and in society between those who plan and manage and those in the work force whose jobs mainly entail carrying out regulations and policies made by others. Therefore, it appears that education is the space where practices tend to legitimize social difference and social inequalities and where the regulation of access to capital resources is ideologically constructed. For instance, the *Dini-madaris* still teach their traditional curriculum, which mainly contains canonical texts and out-dated concepts. Thus, the students inculcate knowledge that has no exchange value in the marketplace, workplace, and even in working-class jobs. Conversely, the state schools legitimize modern and secular knowledge, which has some exchange value in the market place.

The teachers generally act as authority in the classroom, dictate commands, and assign work and work-related activities. Similarly, to encourage a complete reliance on memory, it appears that the developers of the board exams have intentionally maintained a content-heavy pattern, where the students are graded mainly on exact reproduction of the textbook content. Therefore, it appears that the *Dini-madaris* students' class-work does not provide knowledge and cognitive capabilities that help them engage critically and take on challenges of modern professional world. However, the state school students seem to be relatively more advantaged, as they are offered knowledge and cognitive skills that can help them at least earn blue-collar jobs. These jobs mostly require mechanical work to carry out regulations, plans, and policies made by others. In contrast, the elite school knowledge is socially prestigious, modern, and analytical. Their classroom practices are also designed to equip them with the cultural capital of personal expression, active use of ideas, thoughts and concepts, meaning-making, creativity, and the manipulation of socially prestigious language. The students are graded on standards of their academic analysis, independent thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. Thus, the overall purpose of elite school education seems to be the promotion of the human intellectual capacities related to creativity. This kind of empiricism is socially reproductive because it provides a framework for independent thought. Therefore, it appears that the elite students' schooling experience generally prepares them for leadership roles in the job market and society. Such roles predominantly require the cognitive capabilities of analysis, reflection, inference, comparison, planning investigations, and making logical decisions.

In conclusion, I would argue that an interplay between the structural forces, school-level institutional practices, and students' responses to these structures and practices contribute to the passing on of privilege to the children of the wealthy and to cement-

ing the disadvantages for students from poor and underprivileged families and, hence, contributes towards social class reproduction.

*Correspondence*

Shamaas Gul Khattak  
School of Health & Education  
Middlesex University  
The Burroughs, London NW4 4BT  
United Kingdom  
Email: [miss\\_khattak@live.co.uk](mailto:miss_khattak@live.co.uk)  
Tel.: +447961536861

## References

- Ahmed, M. (2012) Factors Affecting Initial Teacher Education in Pakistan: Historical Analysis of Policy Network, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2, 13, pp 105-113.
- Andrabi, T., Das, J., Khwaja, A. and Zajonc, T. (2006) Religious school enrolment in Pakistan: A look at the data, *Comparative Education Review, Special Issue on Islam and Education—Myths and Truths*, 50, 3, pp. 401-129.
- Bergman, J. and Nadeem, M. (2008) 'Primary and secondary education: Structural issues' in P. Hoodbhoy, (ed), *Education and the state: Fifty years of Pakistan*, Karachi: Oxford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1999) *Culture and Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Boyle, H. (2006) Memorization and learning in Islamic schools, *Comparative Education Review, Special Issue on Islam and Education—Myths and Truths*, 50, 3, pp. 478-495.
- Carter, L. (2003) 'Black' cultural capital, status positioning, and schooling conflicts for low-income African American youth, *Social Problems*, 50, 1, pp. 136-155.
- Coulson, A. (2004) Education and indoctrination in the Muslim world: Is there a problem? <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa511.pdf>.
- Curle, A. (1966) *Planning for education in Pakistan: A personal case study*, London, Tavistock Publications.
- Diamond, B. and Randolph, A. (2004) Teachers' expectations and sense of responsibility for student learning: The importance of race, class, and organizational habitus, *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *American Anthropological Association*, 35, 1, pp.75–98.
- Freire, P. (1997) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York: Continuum.
- GoP (Government of Pakistan) (1972) National Education Policy, Islamabad, Ministry of Education.
- GoP (Government of Pakistan) (2009) National Education Policy, Islamabad, Ministry of Education
- GoP (Government of Pakistan) (2004) Public-private partnerships in the education sector: Education sector reform action plan 2001-2005, Islamabad, Ministry of Education.
- GoP (Government of Pakistan) (1979) Qaumi committee barae deeni madaris [Urdu], Islamabad, Ministry of Education.
- Horvat, M. and Antonio, L. (1999) Hey those shoes are out of uniform: African American girls in an elite high school and the importance of habitus *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 30, 3, pp. 317–342.

- Jones, M. (2001) Community participation in frontier education planning, *Education Management and Administration*, 19, 3, pp. 160-165.
- Jones, E. and Jones, W. (1977) Nationalizing education in Pakistan: Teachers' associations and the People's Party, *Pacific Affairs*, 50, 4, pp. 581-603.
- Lewis, D. (1962) *The British in India: imperialism or trusteeship?* Great Britain, Heath.
- Malik, A. (2012) A Comparative Study of Elite-English-Medium Schools, Public Schools, and Islamic Madaris in Contemporary Pakistan: The use of Pierre Bourdieu's Theory to Understand 'Inequalities in Educational and Occupational Opportunities' [unpublished PhD Thesis] Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education University of Toronto.
- McDonough, P. (1997) *Choosing colleges: How social class and schools structure opportunity*, Albany, State University of New York Press.
- Moniza, I. (2009). Apartheid of another kind, <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/in-paper-magazine/education/apartheid-of-another-kind-689>.
- Nelson, J. (2006) Muslims, markets, and meaning of a 'good' education in Pakistan, *Asian Survey*, 46, 5, pp. 699-720.
- Pohl, F. (2006) Islamic education and civil society: Reflections on the Pesantren tradition in contemporary Indonesia, *Comparative Education Review*, 50, 3, pp. 389-409.
- Rahman, T. (2006) *Denizens of alien worlds: A study of Education, inequality and Polarization in Pakistan*, Karachi, Oxford University Press.
- Raleigh, T. (1906) *Lord Curzon in India: being a selection from his speeches as Viceroy and Governor General 1898-1905*, London, Macmillan.
- Retallick, J. Farah, I. (2005). *Transforming schools in Pakistan: Towards the Learning Community*, Karachi, Oxford University Press.
- Saigol, R. (2000) *Symbolic violence, curriculum, pedagogy and society*, Lahore, Society for Advancement of Education.
- Sikand, Y. (2006) The Indian madaris and the agenda of reforms, in J. Hartung, H. Reifeld, and R. Wirsing (ed), *Religious radicalism and security in South Asia*, Hawaii: Asian-Pacific Center for Security Studies, pp 117-143.
- Singer, W. (2001) Pakistan's madrassahs: Ensuring a system of education or jihad <http://www.brook.edu/views/papers/singer/200111.htm>
- Sinkler, A. (2005) *Pakistan: Nations in transition*, Farmington Hills, Greenhaven.
- Talbani, A. (1996) Pedagogy, power and discourse: Transformation of Islamic education, *Comparative Education Review*, 40, 1, pp. 66-82.

SHAMAAS GUL KHATTAK

Warwick, P. and Reimers, F. (2005) *Hope or despair? Learning in Pakistan's primary schools*, Westport, Praeger.

Zaidi, M. (2013) *Madrassa Education in Pakistan: Controversies, Challenges and Prospects*, Norway, Centre for International and Strategic Analysis.