

## Education Policies and Changing Trends of Madrassa Reforms in Pakistan: A Case Study of Musharraf Regime

Shafiq Qurban<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract:

Education Policy is devised to regulate the education system according to the exigencies of time to get the required outcome. Pakistan formulated various education policies to make her education system more effective, especially madrassas education for the development of society. This study intends to comprehend changing trends of madrassa reforms in education policies introduced since independence of Pakistan. The Musharraf government took feasible measures to reform madrassa education by introducing secular subjects with sufficient financial support. This reform scheme became partial successful in improving education in madrassas. This study is based on primary and secondary data, where the primary data is collected from policymakers. This research is informed from discourse analysis and results shows that madrasas education is still ineffective due to gap between theory and practice. This study recommends that effective policy measures to improve education in madrassas should only be realized with the effective implementation of the promised policy measures.

**Key Words:** curriculum, government agenda, madrassa reform, policy vision, education

### INTRODUCTION

Madrassa is an Arabic term which means a school for teaching or imparting knowledge for the well-being of humanity. It is generally recognized as a school of learning, where Islamic subjects are taught (Blanchar, 2008). It is an institutionalized system of education where Quran, Hadith and Fiqah are used as curriculum for both teaching and learning (Rehman, 2002). Madrassa occupies a significant place in spreading the teachings of Islam around the world. Pakistan inherited a culture of madrassa education along-with public education from the British government, wherein madrasas education was provided by 245 madrasas (GOP, 1955). As Pakistan was created as a "Muslim State," madrasas increased their number to provide Islamic education to the Muslim population. However, the government by keeping in view the meagre capacity of the infrastructural and economic ladder focused on modern education and adopted policy of neglect for regulating madrassa education under the control of education department. This neglect could be observed in first educational conference of 1947, which was lacking clear policy direction for the effectiveness of madrasas education.

It is due to the least priority of government that administrators of madrasas education started regulating educational activities following their own rules and schemes of fundraising to meet economic needs. This financial dependency on the fund from outside like philanthropists and other non-governmental organizations had put madrasas education in the hands of fortune seekers. These fortune seekers introduced a mechanism of organizing madrassa education on sectarian bases for escalation sectarian education within society (Sajjad, 1995). It was in the decade of 1950s when madrassas formally initiated establishing their respective boards inform from their

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<sup>1</sup> Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Governance and Public Policy, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad. Email: shafiquequrban@hotmail.com

respective religious thoughts (Ahle-Hadith, Barelvi, Deobandi and Shia) to impart sect based teachings, conduct examinations and award degrees to the students. There were four boards and madrasas were made bound to have affiliation with particular boards based upon their sectarian orientations. These boards were responsible for revising curriculum, providing registration for exams and schedule exams at different stages. They were also responsible for the collection of fees for registration and examinations. This step of formation of their respective boards on the bases of religious thoughts even could not get the attention of education policymakers which ensured their autonomy and independence from government. Accordingly, being independent and autonomous entities, these educational institutions promoted the practice of teaching sectarian-based knowledge (Zaidi, 2013).

It was in 1983 when the fifth board for religious education started its functioning as an autonomous board. This board was established by Jamat-e-Islami and was the pioneer board not having any sectarian affiliation. This board, known as "Rabta-tul-Madaris A-Islamiya," is quite distinct from the other four boards because this board pursues education system informed from modernized education through teaching subjects like economics, history and politics (Khalid, 1995). This madrasa system provides training and skills to repute the Western point of view by giving Islamic narrative on any issue. Despite these five boards, there are some autonomous institutions, which teach Islamic subjects like Fiqah, Hadith and Tafseer. These institutions are not affiliated with any board and enjoy the status of degree-awarding institutions independently (Khalid, 2005). It is worth mentioning that all these madrasas affiliated with five Boards and independent institutions are following Dars-e-Nizami as their scheme of study and contributing in promotion of Islamic norms and values. It is interesting to mention that the Zia regime used madrasas in "Jihad" or "Holy War" against the erstwhile Soviet Union. Zia used madrasas as factories of producing "Mujahid" or holy warriors to fight in Afghanistan. This strategy of Zia changed the dynamics of education in madrasas which fomented extremism and violence within society (Singer, 2001). The tragic event of 9/11, however, changed the dynamics of the world which poured derogatory remarks about madrasas declaring them as universities of extremism and terrorism (Haq, 2018). It led Musharraf government to reform madrasas education to make them part of development. Therefore, the Musharraf government introduced changed scheme of study by introducing modern subjects and banning publication of hate material. The government also established modern madrasas in pursuance of reform.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study was qualitative and analytical. It was informed from primary and secondary data. This study collected Secondary data from the policy texts, articles, and textbooks. It was primarily based on official policy statements of education policies produced by the government of times to incorporate reforms in madrasas education to meet modern education requirements. This research was based on education policies of 1947, 1959, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1979, 1992, 1998, 2007, and 2009. This study has implied the content analysis technique to analyze a particular government's policy statement to reform madrasas education according to the need of time. The method of content analysis is the most suitable to provide a frame of identification of discourse of madrasas reform adopted by the government as ideal to the nature of government ideology.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study uses governmentality theory to justify the changing direction for madrasas due to the regime change. According to governmentality theory of Michel Foucault, modern governments use education as an instrument to construct and reconstruct national identity to govern a nation and to control the behaviours of individuals and society at length. National governments control education as a middling factor for the creation of ideology as a channel of discipline for normalizing the conduct of people and a strategy for getting control over bodies. Education thus plays a crucial role in the legitimating social institution as per the direction of governments. In education, the curriculum is an appropriate place to legitimize some voices by including these voices as official truths while negating other voices to validate the knowledge as standard norms. The narrative of madrasas is suitably explained under the prism of governmentality, which promotes the idea that modern government introduces the curriculum reform to develop the required mentality and society. Furthermore, modern governments pursue standard knowledge to inculcate common public subjectivity among citizens to enhance the productivity of individuals for the development of society (Foucault, 1991). The governmentality theory-guided government role in controlling population through education as it is done in Pakistan by various governments through madrasas education.

## **EDUCATION POLICIES AND DISCOURSE OF MADRASAS REFORM IN PAKISTAN**

Since the inception of Pakistan, different governments formulated education policies to provide trained and technical human capital generally and particularly to tackle the menace of illiteracy. The First Education Conference in 1947 was lacking instructions and guidelines to streamline these traditional madrasas by delegating madrasas regulation power to respective provincial governments that ultimately made these institutes autonomous within their spheres. However, the successor of the First Education Conference came with proper instructions and guidelines for addressing the issue of traditional education by madrasas through reforms. The stance of reform in madrasas education is clear in statements of education policies of 1959, 1969, 1970, 1979, 1992, 1998 and 2007 to bridge gaps therein through integration of madrasas education with public education.

### **Madrasas Reforms under Sharif Commission Report**

Sharif Report was the first education policy document containing policy statements regarding traditional madrasas education reforms through introducing modern subjects (English, Social Studies, Philosophy Science and Humanities) to integrate these madrasas with the modern education system (Government of Pakistan [GOP], 1959). Sharif Report had 27 chapters in which chapter 9 deals with Islamic education and its role in the socio-political development of society. Whereas, 20th chapter of the report was having a perspective of reforms in the existing education system of madrasas by removing non-functional and irrational subjects from the scheme of study of madrasas and inserting modern subjects for making human capital compatible with market requirements (Amin & Ahmed, 2016).

It was due to the outcome of the 20th chapter of the report that the government of Ayub Khan created a committee for reforming traditional madrasas education in 1960. This committee was composed of ulema and bureaucrats, though representation of ulema was marginal. In 1962 this

committee recommended that the curriculum of Dars-e-Nizami was overloaded with non-religious and irrational subjects which needed to be eliminated and added new modern subjects in the existing scheme of study for the development of madrasas. There were around 700 madrasas, which removed two subjects; philosophy and logics from the curriculum of Dars-e-Nizami in 1962 due to their non-productivity and outcome in society (Zaman, 2004).

The government of Ayub Khan developed a mechanism of regulating madrasa education through the department of Awqaf for smooth development of madrasa education. Before the government of Ayub Khan, madrasas were free from the government sphere and having economic dependence on the property of Awqaf and shrines. The government had opted systematic ways of Awqaf rules to control the madrasa education system and made madrasas bound to impart modern subjects as an integral part of their curriculum under the government scheme. Ayub Khan took a very constructive step in utilizing the capabilities and potential of graduates of traditional madrasas by providing job opportunities as imams and teachers in government-run mosques where they were offered attractive salaries and provided space to play their role in the development of society. His government paid more attention to the development of madrasas education in West Pakistan and took the initiative for the establishment of an academy where training was provided to ulema under the supervision of Egyptian teachers who were renowned scholars and hired by Awqaf department to regulate a system of reform for the society (Amin & Lodhi, 2015). This scheme of the newly established academy under the patronage of Awqaf department was pursued to teach subjects including civics, economics, history, geography and international politics to make students capable of understanding the problems and encounter these problems by developing social harmony and overcoming sectarian differences for the betterment of society. The government hired the services of ulema under a project of USAID to offer training to adult people and boosted their morals in farming and agriculture for socio-economic development of society. The federal government established an advisory council named "Islamic Ideological Council" where ulema had to play their constructive role in making society more prosperous and developed (Bano, 2007).

The most important element of Sharif report was to emphasize on primary education by not involving madrasas in the promotion of primary education. Primary education was made compulsory for everyone, and after completion of primary education, the report acknowledged the role of madrasas for promotion of religious education. According to the statement and stance of a report on the quality of education, madrasas and maktabas were highly discouraged from being involved in the sphere of imparting education at the primary level (GOP, 1955).

Although, Ayub Khan took very constructive and seminal steps to improve the quality of education in madrasas by introducing modern subjects in their curriculum, these step could not sustain in the longer term due to Indo-Pak war in 1965 and students' protest against the government's liberal policy put Pakistan into political turmoil which forced Ayub Khan to discontinue his policies by resigning from the post of President of Pakistan (Ali, 2009).

### **Noor Khan Report's Narrative on Madrasas Education**

In 1969, Yahya Khan Government established a commission, popularly known as "Noor Khan Commission," to restructuring education system of Pakistan and recommending measures to bridge the existing knowledge gap between modern and madrasas education (GOP, 1969). The commission presented a report and recommended the restructuring of madrasas education system

according to the requirements of current societal trends by introducing modern subjects of science and social sciences. This report also recommended measures to provide training about modern subjects to the madrasa teachers. Noor Khan report emphasized on framing the system of equivalence for education systems, (madrasas and modern education) at all levels to make graduates of madrasas get equal employment opportunities and become active members of society by contributing to its progress (Faizi, Shakil, & Akhtar, 2012). The unique character of the report was to present agenda of regulating all educational activities of madrasas under the patronage of government by setting up Madrasas Education Board (MEB) in West Pakistan, responsible for developing curriculum, conducting exams and awarding degrees and acting as guardian of quality of education based on modern needs of the society (GOP, 1969). It is worth mentioning that previously the MEB was controlling all madrasas in East Pakistan while West Pakistan lacked such institution to regulate the educational system of madrasas (Siddiqui, 2016). The commission recommended progressive changes in the existing system of Pakistan which could not be implemented in true spirit because of political chaos in Pakistan.

### **Madrasa Reforms under Education Policy-1970**

The Education Policy of 1970 focused on the statutory status of the madrasas education system and its amalgamation with the general education system to produce viable human capital for societal prosperity. The policy paper highlighted the significance of introducing assimilated curricula in both existing education systems to make the two parallel but opposite systems to be aligned for providing the best career for the young generation of the society (GOP, 1970). This policy, by following the footprints of predecessor recommended the formation of MEB in West Pakistan and granted MEB a statutory status both in East and West Pakistan for regulating their education systems by inspecting the quality of education therein (Siddiqui, 2016). The recommendation of education policy 1970 met the same fate and became silent, without implementation.

### **Education Policy 1972: The Narrative of Status Quo for Madrasas Education**

The government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto launched the policy of nationalization, especially of educational institutions, to develop an egalitarian society. The government introduced curriculum reforms in public schools but left the religious sphere of education system unturned. The education policy 1972 exclusively maintained a position of status quo by not introducing curriculum reforms in religious educational institutions and recommended these institutions to follow their own curricula freely (GOP, 1972). Bhutto government tried to facilitate the teachers and students of madrasas by giving them concessions in getting employment opportunities in different departments of government by recognizing and awarding equivalence certificates of madrasas to master Islamic Studies with the condition to qualify graduate-level English (Malik, 1998).

### **A discourse of Madrasas Reforms under Education Policy of 1979**

In 1977, General Zia-ul-Haq started restructuring process of socio-political dynamics of society under the banner of Islamization. He focused on the restructuring of education to minimize the differences that existed in the curriculum of madrasas and schools. His government announced an education policy in 1979 having a detailed chapter on Islamic education in which policymakers recommended to have one board to ensure the unified curriculum and standardized teaching patterns to have same minded and well-equipped pupils (GOP, 1979). This policy propagated an

inimitable idea of common curricula for both madrasas and schools to provide a common platform of learning to pupils of both streams. Under the scheme of a common curriculum, the government promoted the design of mosque schools where students imparted Nazira Quran and modern education as well. Madrasas graduates were provided employment opportunities as a teacher under government patronage with a handsome amount as salary (Khalid, 1995). Despite the scheme of mosque schools, the government recommended a programme of indoctrinating modern subjects in the existing curriculum of all madrasas (GOP, 1979).

This policy document provided a scheme of financial assistance by the government in terms of scholarship and loans to boost modernized madrasas education and put it in line of development. This government put insights into imparting technical skills to form trained human capital (GOP, 1979).

### **Madrasas Reforms Guideline in Education Policy of 1998**

The education policy of 1998 set a standard for education at all levels. The education policy emphasized on one Madrasas Board for regulating and coordinating all madrasas to develop a unified curriculum, examination and degree endorsement (GOP, 1998). It recommended establishing a system of giving foreign scholarship to students of madrasas to go abroad for specialized education in any field of Islam. The policy paper proposed a scheme of scholarship and financial aid to facilitate students of madrasas. The government proposed to introduce modern subjects, e.g. mathematics, economic, Pakistan studies, English and general science to be taught in madrasas. It urged to have a mechanism of equivalence where certificate (Asnad) could be equivalent to formal certificates (GOP, 1998).

### **Madrasas Reforms and Paradigm Shift in White Paper 2007**

The white paper on education provided a systematic way of reforming madrasas education by adding subjects of formal education in the curriculum. This policy document proposed an exclusive scheme of equivalence by integrating madrasas education by removing sectarian differences to develop unity and integrity with a society based on true teachings of Islam (Alvi, 2007). This policy had provisions about a scheme of integration with formal education by introducing modern subjects wherein students must pass Urdu, English, Pakistan studies and basic mathematic for securing high school certificate. While for securing a certificate of higher secondary school, students must pass Urdu, English and two other elective subjects in replacement to Pakistan studies (Alvi, 2007). This policy document further clarified that no one should create any hurdle or prejudice in provisions of imparting any religious teaching. The most distinct feature of this educational document was not having a separate chapter on Islamic education as its forerunner policy documents.

**Table 1: Changing Narrative of Madrasa Education in Education Policies of Pakistan**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Policy Statement</b>
Madrasa Education Reforms	<b>1947</b> This policy document is lacking clear cut directions for restructuring madrasas education system however, policy document recommended provincial and state governments to regulate madrasas education (GOP, 1947).

<p><b>1959</b></p> <p>The curricula of maktab, madrasas and dar-ul-uloom are overloaded with courses in religion and allied subjects, without any regard to the needs of such studies of mathematics, science, social studies and humanities (GOP, 1959).</p> <p>At elementary stage, education must be broad based and curricula of maktab, madrasas and dar-ul-uloom should make due provision for subjects of study which will give their students some training for the vocational or professional courses they may later choose to follow. At the higher levels these institutions must present Islam as a dynamic and progressive movement which can endure to changing times. The dynamic spirit of Islam can be imbibed only if Islam is presented in every age in the light of the latest advances of science, philosophy, economics and contemporary history (GOP, 1959).</p> <p>There is a need to revisit curricula of madrasas and bring in subjects that are contemporary and helpful (GOP, 1959).</p> <p>Schooling at madrasas is an option only at the secondary and higher levels of education and only for those students who particularly want to pursue religious studies. Therefore, there should be no madrasa or maktab for primary education (GOP, 1959).</p> <p><b>1969</b></p> <p>Remote as these madrasas are from the trends of secular education, they have also been found wanting in serving the need of Pakistan. In view of this it is necessary to restructure completely the education system in light of present day national requirement (GOP, 1969).</p> <p>The teaching of mathematics and science subjects should be introduced in "madrasas" and special programmes should be undertaken to train their teachers to teach such modern subjects (GOP, 1969).</p> <p>Equivalence should be established between the various stages of madrasas education and those of modern education, so that the product of madrasas can obtain all those jobs which, at present, are only available only to those who have had modern education (GOP, 1969).</p> <p><b>1970</b></p> <p>Establishing an equivalence between courses offered in madrasas and in institutions of general education (GOP, 1970).</p> <p>Enabling their products to be assimilated in economic life of the nation; and examine the question of strengthening the organizational set up and giving a statutory status to the madrasas education board in East Pakistan and the development of institutional arrangements for the same purpose for the province of West Pakistan (GOP, 1970).</p> <p><b>1972</b></p> <p>Status quo will be maintained in respect of institutions imparting exclusively religious instruction such as maktab, madrasas, darul-Ulooms, etc., run by Muslims and similar institutions run by any other religious denomination (GOP, 1972).</p> <p><b>1979</b></p> <p>Constitution of study groups for exploring the possibilities of creating a</p>
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<p>madrasas board for standardization and uniformity of teaching and clarification.</p> <p>Making recommendations about possibilities of introducing common curriculum in primary schools and maktab;</p> <p>To make recommendations regarding the integration, improvement and modernization of curricula</p> <p>To assess the needs of these institutions and make recommendations to the government for grants, scholarships and loans</p> <p>To evaluate existing programmes and suggest methods and means to introduce the element of skill development (GOP, 1979).</p> <p><b>1992</b></p> <p>This policy document was lacking clear cut directions for restructuring madrasas education system however, policy document had a direction about Islamic education in formal education.</p> <p><b>1998</b></p> <p>The establishment of deeni madrasas board for uniform standard of deeni madrasas education through registration, standardization of curricula and examination system, equivalence of asnad, award of foreign scholarship, grant in-aid and financial assistance by government (GOP, 1998).</p> <p>In order to integrate the general education with madrasas education, subjects like English, mathematics, general science, economics and Pakistan studies should be included in the curricula of deeni madrasas and their asnad at matric, intermediate, and at graduate levels shall be equated with formal education (GOP, 1998).</p> <p><b>2007</b></p> <p>The students of madrasas at Secondary School Certificate level shall have to qualify in general mathematics, Urdu, English and Pakistan studies for equivalence. For Higher Secondary School Certificate, two elective subjects approved by HSSC scheme of studies 2006 made mandatory for madrasas in place of Pakistan studies for equivalence, shall be implemented. The federal government shall provide necessary support to the madrasas to teach these subjects (Alvi, 2007).</p> <p>What we need is not to deride the madrassa, or require it's so called mainstreaming, but to ensure that providers of religious education are converted to the cause of true Islam with a purpose to unite and purify people, and not for the purpose of widening the gulf between various schools of religious thoughts and in producing an individual divorced from reality and living in a fantasy world. The vast majority of madrassa are now incorporating subjects other than Islamic sciences also in their curricula and the equivalence granted to them for the purposes of participation in economic activity should be in proportion to the level of such incorporations (Alvi, 2007).</p> <p>Like the madrassa, schools for religious education of any faith, should not be handicapped by any prejudice or fear (Alvi, 2007).</p> <p><b>2009</b></p> <p>Provision of an opportunity for all existing and future madrasas to excel and</p>
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	<p>enhance the services they already provide to the nation;</p> <p>Provision of funds for education and socio-economic welfare of students;</p> <p>Further training to enhance skills of teacher;</p> <p>Support in vocational training to equip students to generate income;</p> <p>Advice and assistance in streamlining policies, objectives, and syllabi to give graduates a competitive edge in job market and for placement in institutions of higher education (GOP, 2009).</p>
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**Source:** Education Policies of Pakistan

### **MUSHARRAF REGIME: A PARADIGM SHIFT IN MADRASA REFORM**

Musharraf government initiated a programme of transforming madrassa from traditional to modern by keeping in view the pace of changing trends of education under globalization. This scheme of a transformation of society could only be achieved by introducing modern subjects to develop uniformity in madrassa education as madrassa education is based on sectarian narrative. The main task for government was to launch an appropriate scheme of reforms acceptable for all madrassas to streamline them with the formal education system. As the madrasa education is much distinct from the rest of education system with least government interference, zero financial aid organizing all activities through domestic and foreign financial assistance (Dogar, 2010). Madrasas, being places of free religious education along-with accommodation and food attracted large stratum of poor students. However, madrasas established on sectarian grounds like Ahle-e-Hadith, Bareilvi, Deobandi and Shia; promoted sectarian-based identities (Ali, 2012). This sectarian based madrassa education is the main problem in creating divisions based on sects and devastated social fabric of society. The government had to address the issue of traditional education system of madrasas to make it compatible with the global changing trends as well as their role in creating sectarian division within society that was a real threat for collective identity (Dogar, 2010).

Keeping in view these problems of madrasas education, the government passed a legislation on 18th August, 2001 for appropriate solution wherein madrasas education would be regulated under the patronage of Ministry of the Religious Affairs. Parliament unanimously passed an ordinance named Pakistan Madrasas Education Board (PMED) to modernize the traditional education system of madrasas and to lay to the foundation of Model Deeni Madris in Pakistan (Zaidi, 2013). The PMED was given the responsibility of overhauling madrasas by revising curricula, examination and most important by providing training to madrasas teachers to develop standardized regulation for uniformity and coherence among all madrasas (Ali, 2009). PMED gave a new scheme of study by adding other subjects than religious ones like English, Urdu, general mathematics, Pakistan studies, but priority was given to the teachings of religious contents (Zaidi, 2013). The government had also promised to establish model madrasas under this ordinance whereas government somewhat fulfilled its promise by setting up three model madrasas in Hyderabad, Karachi and Islamabad. This ordinance promised to register 25000 madrassas under the patronage of a modernized scheme of government but could put only 449 (Iqbal, 2003). Government efforts to materialize this ordinance proved to be deficient, and the government could not get fruitful results.

A legislation was passed before the tragic event of 9/11 where the government addressed domesticated problem and sectarian violence while the tragic event of 9/11 stigmatized madrasas

as factories of producing terrorists (Kronstadt, 2004). After 9/11, a spell of reforms got further momentum wherein a new ordinance called Voluntarily Registration of Regulation Ordinance was introduced in 2002 (Iqbal & Raza, 2015). According to this ordinance, madrasas were banned from accepting foreign aid and also asked to get registered on voluntary basis with the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Although parliament played its role by passing this ordinance, but ordinance could not have the signature of president for its promulgation.

In 2004, Musharraf chanted the slogan of enlightened moderation to transform Muslim society generally and Pakistan particularly by emphasizing on impelling idea of liberal Islam through reforming orthodox interpretation of Islam as well as stagnant curricula of madrasas. The government took another step by producing new legislation named the Madrassa Reform Programme in 2004. This programme had given comprehensive outlines for reforming madrasas by including modern subjects like computer, economics, English, general mathematics and Pakistan studies or social studies in existing curriculum of madrasas (Ali, 2012). This reform has attempted to mainstream madrasas by including modern subjects with financial aids of Rs.5727 million to modernize 8000 madrassas within a time span of five years. However, the government could only transform 507 madrasas on the modern pattern and missed the target of achieving 8000 modernized madrasas within five years (Dogar, 2010).

The foremost problem for regulating madrasas education lacked an appropriate plan of registration for madrasas because all madrasas were being registered under Societies Registration Act 1860 though Benazir government had abolished provision of madrasas registration under Societies Registration Act 1860 (Shabir, 2012).

The decade of 1990s had seen mushroomed growth of madrasas without government control. Musharraf government became serious in addressing the issue of madrasas registrations to regulate madrasas which could be possible with systematic registration design. Therefore, Musharraf regime in 2005, introduced amendments in Societies Registration Act 1860 and gave new ordinance of 2005 which made mandatory for all madrasas to get registered under this ordinance as no madrasa is authorized to run its affairs without getting registered (Iqbal & Raza, 2015). Every newly established madrassa had to register under this ordinance. All madrasas were bound to submit their report of educational activities, as well as information about their income and expenditure on annual bases. The main feature of this ordinance was to completely prevent all madrasas from publishing any hatred material which prompted violence and terrorism within society. The government produced a masterpiece in the shape of this ordinance that gave a systematic way of regulating madrasas by having their annual reports about all activities. However, the government could not get fruitful results due to negating the agreed term and conditions with madrasas administrations (Ali, 2012).

### **Education Policy of 2009 and Madrasas Reform**

The government of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) under the premiership of Syed Yousaf Raza Galani announced the education policy of 2009. This education policy had a separate chapter on Islamic education which had a detailed view of imparting Islamic contents through education and also had directions for madrasas education restructuring by integrating it with the formal education system. It recommended providing appropriate funds for madrasas students to make them socio-economically better off, and these funds guaranteed the welfare of students. They emphasized on

teacher training for a better future of students (GOP, 2009). It is an only policy document which proposed to impart technical education to the students of madrasas to make them capable of generating income for themselves. It had clear directions for streamlining madrasas education with the job market by improving curriculum and providing space for higher education.

### **Madrasa Reforms and the Response of Madrasa Boards**

The landmark triumph of the Musharraf government was to motivate all five boards of madrasas to form an alliance which is popularly known as Itihad-i-Tanzimat Madaris-e-Pakistan (ITMP) (Ali, 2012). ITMP has to act as a representative body of five madrasas boards to constitute a framework of common problems faced by madrasas to discuss and negotiate with government machinery to resolve these problems. ITMP has authority to negotiate on all madrasas related issues as a sole representative of all boards. It is also designated to impart standardized Islamic education as well as to facilitate all information regarding curriculum development of madrasas. It also provided a proper vista of cooperation between government and madrasas as this unified body was absent in the past, which led the communication gap between government and madrasas and lacking systematic negotiation at both ends. However, ITMP was created to launch a scheme of modernizing madrasas education to compete with the challenges of global education. ITMP declared this scheme of modernizing madrasas as an initiative of the West driven by their funding, thus, developing an element of distrust between government and ITMP. Due to distrust, all these measures to reform madrasas could not achieve targets.

### **Critical Analysis of Reform Scheme**

Musharraf's regime took important steps in mainstreaming of madrasas, to make the students as a competitive human capital and grooming as the agents of development within society having modern education along-with religious education. It is noticeable in every previous education policy introduced in 1947, 1958, 1969, 1972, 1979, 1992 and 1998 that maintained the space for the direction of mainstreaming of madrasas. Despite these policy promises by every regime; madrasas education system was regulated by a colonially inherited decree of Societies Registration Act of 1860, which showed negligible attitudes of every regime in realizing the importance of policy promises into reality through implementation. Thus, policy promises remained confined to policy documents which provided space for madrasas to grow freely without an appropriate standard of education. It was due to mismanagement of the government that madrasas education system was flourished on sectarian basis with the narrative of self-help. Madrasas being private organizations, had developed their respective boards to ensure the quality of education informed from various sects.

There have been five madrasas boards which followed their unique pattern of curriculum quite distinct from the other ones. The dissimilarity existed in quality of madrasas education within Pakistan. The madrasas rather being a platform of religious education were the source of sectarian divisions and acute violence within the society. Musharraf's regime, by keeping in view the existing problems, particularly sectarian divisions, extended sphere of educational reforms for streamlining the system of madrasas education with the formal education system. Musharraf's government, in contrary to his predecessor governments, launched a systematic restructuring of madrasas education by employing appropriate legislation in the shape of an ordinance in 2001, to lay the foundation of PMEB and to modernize traditional education.

PMEB was established to ensure the quality of education by developing uniformity in curriculum and examination system. Government through another legislation called Voluntarily Registration of Regulation Ordinance provided a framework of regulating madrassas education systematically by banning authorities of madrassas to accept foreign aid and get registered on voluntary basis with the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This sphere of regulation got strengthened after a unanimously passed Ordinance in 2005 wherein government provided scheme of mandatory registration for all madrassas to run their affairs. It banned madrasas authorities to not run their affairs without getting registered under this ordinance.

The government took practical measures to introduce secular subjects to integrate madrassas education with formal education. The government established three model madrassas in Karachi, Islamabad and Hyderabad wherein secular subjects like English, Urdu, general mathematics, computer, economics and Pakistan studies, are taught but priority is given to religious contents. Musharraf's government recognized madrassas certificate equivalent to formal education certificate, particularly madrassas boards asnad were declared equivalent to the masters in Arabic or Islamic studies to get a job in the market. The main cause of partial success was distrust of madrasas representative with the claim that this reform scheme was backed by western governments funding.

The successive government of PPP maintained a pace of reforms in madrassa education set up by Musharraf government. However, PPP government went ahead in taking a step, by establishing Madrasa Regulatory Authority (MRA) and madrasa education commission under the patronage of Interior Ministry to regulate a system of madrasas education. It was quite contrary to the previous regime where the Ministry of Religious Affairs regulated madrassa education. PPP government especially focused on promoting the culture of higher education among madrasas by encouraging them to join higher education institutions.

## **CONCLUSION**

Since 1947, successive governments in have been formulating education policies to improve the effectiveness of madrasas education by bridging gap existed with formal education. All education policies documents including that prepared in 1959, 1969, 1970, 1979, 1998 and 2007 have clear directions to modernize madrassa education by streamlining it with formal education except education policies of 1947 and 1992 while the education policy of 1972 had maintained status quo about madrassa as to be a source of religious education. Despite having clear directions of madrassa reforms, every regime has shown meagre capacity in implementation and could not get desired results.

His government revised societies registration act 1860 under the ordinance of 2005, which banned writing, publication and teaching of hate literature a unique step of Musharraf regime was to provide financial assistance to madrassas along-with provision of teachers to teach secular subjects. Regardless of these steps government received a mixed response from representatives of madrasas and achieved partial success in reforming only 507 madrassas on modern patterns. The main cause of partial success was distrust of madrasas representative with a claim that Western governments back this reform scheme with funding.

Every regime has tried to prescribe new policy directions to make madrassas education more effective but could not get results due to the gap existed between theory and practice. So, this study recommends having an appropriate strategy for implementation with governments will to implement with full zeal. It also recommends that religious leaders should be consulted while devising reform policy and their consent must be taken for making implementation successful.

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