

The Role of Madrassas in Sectarian Violence: An Empirical Study of Karachi

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Abstract

The presence of Madrassas in Pakistan is generally considered as breeding grounds of terrorism; therefore, the study is aimed to empirically analyze the role of Madrassas in religious radicalization that leads to sectarian violence. In this concern, the devised research design of the study was quantitative. The quantitative data was accumulated from 599 respondents belonging to Madrassas of Karachi. The research technique incorporated was statistical testing through SPSS. In light of quantitative assessment, it was found that educational content taught in Madrassas, teaching techniques, students' behaviors or sectarian identity were associated with sectarian violence and the radical views regarding Islam in Madrassas were found to be associated with the sectarian violence specifically regarding Islamist militancy. Thence, this study has crucial implications in debunking the reality that Madrassas are heavily contributing to the sectarian violence with their radical religious views of Islam.

Keywords: Islam; Madrassas; sectarian violence; religious radicalization.

Introduction

The term sect is utilized as a part of human science of religion to assign a specific sort of religious group (Sills, 1968).Sectarianism is a type of religio-political patriotism and in that capacity, our examination of its main drivers are specifically personality activation and sectarian clash. Shia factions comprise of, for example, the Ismailis, the Bohras and the Ithna Asharis (twelve's). Sunnis organizations include such groups as the Sufi-propelled Barelvi, the Deobandi, and the Wahabi-like Ahl-e-Hadith. Sectarian strife is not just found among the Muslims in Pakistan; it likewise exists in every single other religion of the world. In such society defiant considerations and analyses can be embraced without the dangers of hostility and terrorism. The Sunni and Shia organizations are further separated into Sub-orders (Nasr, 2002). Sectarianism is frequently seen as the outcome of Zia-ul-Haq Islamization approach which implied state restraining infrastructure religion and strength of the specific order, and which conveyed philosophical contrasts. Things however started to take a monstrous turn when brutality and terrorism was drafted in the sectarian clash in Pakistan bringing about the deaths and impairments of a huge number of individuals. In Pakistan Sunnis, who constitute the lion's share (80 %) of Muslims in Pakistan and Shi'as who have a little yet powerful minority (20%) are significant groups of the sectarian separation. the sectarian clash in Pakistan is one of a kind as in it has both inward and outward measurements. Sectarian clashes began not long after the rise of Pakistan, yet the significant sectarian clashes began in Zia administration (Khan &Chodhary, 2011). In the mid-1990s, Shia Sunni terrorism additionally reared through the system of Madrassas. In 1950, in Karachi there were just five Madrassas which transformed into twenty by 1971. Ahle Hadith has 56 Madrassas and 30 of them are in Karachi. Sectarian fanatics are prepared at Madrassas (religious foundations) of Sunni and Shia. In the mid-1990s, Shia Sunni ferociousness additionally reared through the system of Madrassas (Monthly Wafaq al-Madaris 2004). It shows that Madrasas are playing vital role in sectarianism which is needed to be studied.

Literature Review

Over the review of 28 nations, in both 2007 and 2014, there has been a movement toward worries about religious and ethnic disdain as the world's top issue (PEW Research Centre, 2014). A few powers connived in, or neglected to address, an expanding pattern of religious and ethnic narrow mindedness, prohibition and separation. Misuse was accounted for in nations in the Asia-Pacific including Laos, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. A bid against Sawan Masih's conviction and capital punishment for disrespect affirmations that started a swarm assault against residents of Lahore's Joseph Colony in 2013 stayed pending in the Lahore High Court. In March, a suicide assault on two houses of worship in Lahore asserted by Jamaatul Ahrar, a chip gathering of the TTP, murdered no less than 22 individuals (Amnesty International, Report 2015-16). An IED executed 40 Sunnis in Multan in October 2004. On October 10, a Shia mosque in Lahore was the objective of a terrorist assault. As per the BBC news report of September 28, 2005, around 4,000 individuals have been slaughtered in the previous 25 years of sectarian brutality in Pakistan (Ahmar, n.d). Pakistan's National Security Policy 2014-2018 was cited as saying 'Pakistan is confronting genuine conventional and non-customary dangers of rough radicalism, sectarianism, terrorism and militancy. As per the South Asia Terrorism Portal,

from 2003 to 2015 (information up to 27 September), no less than 20,697 regular citizens have kicked the bucket as an after effect of terrorist attacks. The Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) reported 'Surgical strikes against aggressors in Karachi have been going ahead since 2013 (PIPS, 2013). The US State Department yearly report for 2014 noticed that there is a separatist uprising in Baluchistan, and the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noticed that ethnic and sectarian brutality, especially toward the Hazara Shia people group, continued. However, general sectarian terrorism was accounted for to have factually diminished in the previous eighteen months. In 2015, up till 19 June, Intel Center recorded the aggregate number of individuals executed by terrorist and revolutionary groups occurrences in Pakistan as 479, however expressed that real figures were liable to be higher because of underreporting. These figures did exclude termination of aggressors murdered by security forces. The Pakistani Taliban (Tehreek-i-Taliban – TTP) and its fragment bunches kept on taking responsibilities regarding various assaults across Pakistan in 2015. Some of the most noticeably bad strikes on religious and sectarian minorities in 2013 happened in Quetta and Peshawar, including the 10 January suicide and remote control bomb assault that slaughtered more than 100, for the most part Shias, in Quetta; the 16 February fear assault that murdered more than 80, again generally Shias, in Quetta's Hazara town; and the 22 September bombarding (Home Office - Country Information and Guidance, 2015).' Abbas stated that Zia-ul-Haq situations regarding sectarian issues in Pakistan were pleasant especially relationship between Shia and Sunni in the country were normally friendly and peaceful. Mixed marriages (among Muslim sects) were accepted openly, and it was taken normal for people belonged to Sunni, Shia and other sect to participate in each other's rituals and other occasions. Depending upon their social and political status, different Shia groups responded to growing difficult conditions in divergent ways and many elite and politically connected Shias chose to stay publicly silent in order to retain their access to the corridors of power, while their religious institutions started drifting towards financially beneficial relations with Iran minority of Shia groups and took up arms to defend the community and engaged in tit-for-tat terror attacks against Sunni groups involved in the emerging sectarian conflict. In the process, Pakistan became a battleground for a proxy Saudi-a-Arabia and Iran war in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan after 1994 provided a safe port for anti-Shia militants while Islamabad watched as the country became enflamed in sectarianism (Abbas, 2010). The starkest illustration is Karachi, which encountered its deadliest year on record in 2013, with 2,700 setbacks, for the most part in target killings. In May, 45 Ismailis on a transport in Karachi were assaulted and slaughtered; and different groups, including TTP, Jundullah and the emerging group Islamic State (IS), took the responsibility (Amnesty International, Report 2015-16). On May 30, 2004 in Karachi an elderly Sunni cleric Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai was shot dead; 30 individuals were executed in a suicide assault on a Shia mosque in Sialkot in October 2004 (Ahmar, 2009). Nine eleven commission report (2004) confirms that numerous Pakistani Madrasas are associated with terrorism and radicalism. The State of sectarianism in Pakistan (2005) portrays that brutality went into Madrasas in 1980s amid Zia administration when Madrasas were subsidized to prepare the jihadi for Afghan-Soviet war. Worldwide Crisis Group (2002) in one of the report with respect to Madrasas expresses that Pakistani Madrasas advance fanaticism and terrorism. There are three hundred sixty three Madrasas in Ahmadpur (Punjab) and the majority of them advance partisan brutality. There is also an extensive rundown of

Pakistani Madrasas that are associated with jihadi associations (Sudhar, Rasool&Nisa, n.d). From eleventh September 2001, Karachi has been an ensured zone for al-Qaeda pioneers and harbored that organization's accomplices like partisan gathering of Jaish-e-Muhammad (JM) and SSP (Afzal, Iqbal &Anayat, 2012). Issues like destitution, unemployment, absence of wellbeing related offices, ignorance and absence of equity are thought to be a portion of the significant reasons for militancy in Pakistan and somewhere else (Irshad, n.d). Subsequently constrained by the financial components, this jobless youth of Pakistan have found an occupation, a philosophy and another family, as aggressor associations, in which they discover closeness and comradeship. The bosses of such activists attempt to maintain the uninformed personalities that lone their specific variant of religion is the genuine one and that every single other conviction and groups as they exist today are false (Chandio, 2002). . A great part of the initiative of religious associations originates from madrasas and contains individuals who started their professions as ministers and petition pioneers in their neighborhood mosques.the same mosques, behind a petition pioneer who may likewise be one of the pioneers of the partisan association one backings; mutually bearing the money related weights required in the upkeep and development of mosques and madrasas and in addition in supporting groups of the individuals who have succumbed to sectarian violence; subscribing to the productions of madrasas and sectarian organizations, and, if there should be an occurrence of agents, publicizing in them too; and being continually made mindful, through these distributions, additionally through the mosque-minister, of how different individuals from this partisan group somewhere else are occupied with exercises like their own. (Zaman, 1998). Another essential element of partisan spurred brutality, which as a rule has not got as much consideration, is the authoritative side of the issue, or how nearby organizations manage issues including diverse partisan gatherings, for example, disagreements about mosques, courses for Ashura and EidMilad-un-Nabi parades, portions of plots for religious purposes, and designation of auqaf property, and so on. Additionally the syllabi and courses of these foundations are past the state's instructive structure with numerous underscoring slender translations of confidence and little resilience for dissimilarities (Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, 2013).

Objectives

- To find out the historical background of sectarian violence in Pakistan
- To explore the causes, where Madrasas are contributing in sectarian violence
- To provide valid recommendations in order to control the sectarian violence in Pakistan

Methods and Procedures

The present research was quantitative and explanatory in the nature. The universe of the study was Karachi and the target population was the enrolled students of the Madrassas in Karachi. Researcher got the total enrollment of students from the Interior ministry of Sindh website. The calculated sample size was 599. And researcher used stratified proportionated sampling for the distribution and allocation of the respondents. Then, the researcher used a structured interview schedule for the collection of data. After the data collection, the data were analysed by using SPSS and statistically test of chi square test of independent was used for the examination of bivariate relationships.

Results of the Findings

Table No. 1 indicates that there is relationship between the educational contents taught in madrasas and sectarian violence. As the calculated of chi-square which is 21.036 at the degree of freedom 1 and level of significance 0.05 is higher than the table value of chi square which is 3.841. It means that the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, it is proved that there is relationship between the educational contents taught in madrasas and sectarian violence. This data has proved by the researcher observation from the field that to a greater extent the emphasis on the content taught in the madrasas is put on the subjectivity to maintain that sect and the ideology of the students should be moulded in a way that feeling of supremacy is inculcated through a continual years long process. Hence, it is felt that the students of a particular sects rarely accept any logical counter argument that perceptively goes against their sect.

Table No. 1
Contingency Table Showing Relationship between Educational Contents Taught in Madrasas and Sectarian Violence

Sectarian Violence	Educational Content Taught in Madrasas		Total
	Disagree	Agree	
Low	76 (52.6)	103 (126.4)	179
High	100 (123.4)	320 (296.6)	420
Total	176	423	599

$CV = 21.036 < TV 3.841$

Table No. 2 indicates that there is relationship between the teaching techniques in madrasas and sectarian violence. As the calculated of chi-square which is 19.9 at the degree of freedom 2 and level of significance 0.05 is higher than the table value of chi square which is 5.991. It means that the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, it is proved that there is relationship between the teaching techniques in madrasas and sectarian violence. This data and the researcher’s observation from the field have proved that the teaching techniques in a way are discretionary in a loosely codified mode, where it gives myriad of authorities to the preachers. It becomes more rigid when control remains the primary objective and only specific socialisation without questioning the authority is the order, and change and variations are not encouraged.

Table No. 2
Contingency Table Showing Relationship Between teaching techniques in Madrassas and Sectarian Violence

Sectarian Violence	Teaching Techniques In Madrassas			Total
	Old Method	New Method	Advance Method	
Low	41 (60.4)	102 (95.6)	36 (23.0)	179
High	161 (142.0)	218 (224.0)	41 (54.0)	420
Total	202	320	77	599

CV= 19.9 TV 5.991

Table No. 3 indicates that there is relationship between the Students of deviant behavioural traits in Madrassas and sectarian violence. As the calculated of chi-square which is 13.0 at the degree of freedom 1 and level of significance 0.05 is higher than the table value of chi square which is 3.841. It means that the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, it is proved that there is relationship between Students of deviant behavioural traits in Madrassas and sectarian violence. This data and the researcher's observation from the field have proved that primarily children with deviant behavioural traits are admitted in the madrassas by the parents. Environment in madrassas mostly with classifications with rigidity, limited opportunities and specifically directed socialisation contribute to such traits. Hence, the desire to deplete such negative emotions and inculcation of intolerance, such students are more prone to resort to violence.

Table No. 3
Contingency Table Showing Relationship Between Students of deviant behavioural traits and Sectarian Violence

Sectarian Violence	Deviant Behavioural Traits Of Students In Madrassas		Total
	Disagree	Agree	
Low	26 (43.3)	153 (135.7)	179
High	119 (101.7)	301 (318.3)	420
Total	145	454	599

CV= 13.0 TV 3.841

Table No. 4 indicates that there is relationship between the restricted sectarian identity in the madrasas and sectarian violence. As the calculated of chi-square which is 4.03 at the degree of freedom 4 and level of significance 0.05 is lesser than the table value of chi square which is 9.488. It means that the null hypothesis is accepted and alternate hypothesis is rejected. Thus, it is proved that there is no relationship between the restricted sectarian identity in the madrasas and sectarian violence. This data and the researcher's observation from the field have proved that restricted sectarian identity itself doesn't contribute to the sectarian violence. Society is made up of people from different ethnic, religious, sectarian and social backgrounds. To identify where the issue of sectarianism deepened the divide among various sects, pre and post Zia's era could be inferred.

Table No. 5.5.4
Contingency Table Showing Relationship Between Restricted Sectarian Identity and Sectarian Violence

Sectarian Violence	Sectarian Identity In The Madrasas					Total
	Deobandi	Barelvi	Ahl-e-Hadith	Shia	Any Other	
Low	46 38.5	50 48.7	46 52.0	21 24.8	16 14.9	179
High	83 90.5	113 114.3	128 122.0	62 58.2	34 35.1	420
Total	129	163	174	83	50	599

CV= 4.03 > TV 9.488

Table No. 5 indicates that there is relationship between the Favouring Islamic radicalization in madrasas and sectarian violence. As the calculated of chi-square which is 8.00 at the degree of freedom 2 and level of significance 0.05 is higher than the table value of chi square which is 5.991. It means that the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, it is proved that there is relationship between the favouring Islamic radicalization in madrasas and sectarian violence. This data and the researcher's observation from the field have proved that Islamic radicalization through glorification of the present day Islamic warriors, jihadi elements and those fighting for the cause to protect their under threat sect and ideology to a reasonable extent contribute to the sectarian violence.

Table No. 5.5.5
Contingency Table Showing Relationship Between Favouring Islamic Radicalization and Sectarian Violence

Sectarian Violence	Favouring Islamic Radicalization In Madrasas			Total
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
Low	9 (5.68)	39 (51.4)	131 (122.0)	179
High	10 (13.3)	133 (121.0)	277 (286.0)	420
Total	19	172	408	599

CV= 8.00 < TV 5.991

Conclusion

To conclude, based upon the empirical testing, findings and field observations through this particular research study, the general perception about the conventional madrasa being the base and point of originating sectarian violence it could be articulated that the notion has been proved. The hypotheses formulated for this study which are the side that the educational content taught, the teaching techniques and methodology used and the general ideology practiced in madrasas instils radicalization through a tacit gradual process that ultimately promotes sectarian violence have largely been accepted. In this context, it may be concluded that although madrasa impart education to the students enrolled, it must be linked with creating sectarian divide which in the end cause sectarian violence. Along with that, the madrasa could also be linked with any kind of violence against any non-Muslim communities.

Recommendations

As it is taught in its revelations, Islam is not a stagnant religion in its spirit, it gives moral and ethical solutions to its followers for an eternity in the evolving ages. Reformation of the syllabus in madrasas should be opted on exigent basis, refined blend of theological and secular teachings based on the true essence of Islam should be the goals of education imparted in the madrasas. Strict annual audit should be carried out as in correspondence to the other private or public organizations. Funds and transactions should closely be monitored as observed through personal interactions in the field, few organizers and elite religious figures even publically admit that they along with their entire families are being funded and given an annual stipend to each family member by foreign states those of which has nothing to do with spread or teachings of Islam. Such unregulated funding and stipends must be monitored and investigated as to what services these renowned religious figures are rendering to foreign governments.

Hiring of religious scholars should be made possible only after due psychological and behavioural tests. Preference must be given to those who could seek for ways in making Islam's teachings compatible to modern social viability and needs, on job trainings of teachers should be a routine and permanent feature in madrasas for capacity building of the preachers.

Inter religious, inter sects seminars should be organised for dialogues on commonalities between all the major sects for religious harmony and spreading sentiments of brotherhood.

Madrasas should incorporate vocational training projects for the students teaching them various skills e.g. auto mechanics, electrician, refrigeration etc. Madrasas' certificates should be recognized, those of which are compatible to the modern educational system: mandatory secular education e.g. mathematics, physics, chemistry and foreign language courses.

Government should allocate grants and scholarships for the students of madrasas exceedingly well in their education and other skills. Syllabus in madrasas should be uniformly formulated by the government and not any unaccountable body with freedom for anything. The government should take steps to nullify the perception that madrasas are let loose with unlimited freedom and growth in a coordinated effort by the elite in the society and government, to form bulk of masses controlled through religious lords, away from critical thinking on the state affairs, only sticking to the preparation for the life in hereafter.

The sole responsibility for spreading sectarian divide to the extreme extent where it leads to sectarian violence should not be thrown merely on the Madrasas alone, as those in power had twisted arms of the management of madrasas already on the global, regional or local establishment's payroll to serve the purpose of global Jihad to which phenomenon of sectarianism and sectarian violence remained a by-product.

The authority in collaboration with PMEBS should devise and make sure its implementation, it should always be not the case as to what the world is setting direction for Pakistan and the authority always comes in compliance, but to set directions, goals and achievements what better suit Pakistan's interests, development and prosperity, which unfortunately have been sacrificed on the altar of the interest of few in the elite.

Intolerance in the society is rampant, reasons to which could not only be attributed towards madrasas and its teachings. There are abundance of socio-economic issues e.g. poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, health, social disparity, unfair distribution of wealth so on and so forth lurking over the society if not addressed would abruptly go out of control of the authorities.

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