EDUCATION AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM: A CASE STUDY OF SCHOOLS IN PAKISTAN

Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri
Assistant Professor/Head, School of Economics,
Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences,
Minhaj University, Lahore
hmqadri@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT

There has been an increasing realization within the world community that uni-focal approach to deal with the menace of terrorism and violent extremism is not capable of delivering results as it just seeks to eradicate symptoms without necessarily trying to address the root causes that are at heart of mushroom growth of the problem. It is a battle of hearts and minds then anything else. This paper at hand explores the role of education in combating the violent extremism by using Pakistani education system as a case study. It undertakes a historical perspective of growth of the educational sector in Pakistan by delving deep into pre-partition system. The paper also shows why education has failed to cure the malaise and what can be done to render it into a force for eradication of violence based ideology. In order to present the authenticity and effectiveness of education to counter extremism, the writer also has thrown light on the three phase educational reforms movement in Indo-Pak Sub-continent's history and it's after effects. The paper recommends the measures to make the imparting of education a meaningful and productive process aimed at combating violent extremism.

Key words: Violent Extremism, Pakistani Education, Educational Reforms, Madrassa, Politics

Introduction

The war on terror, which started in 2001 following catastrophic events in New York, is well into the second decade. By all accounts, a war that was fought to combat and eradicate terrorism is yet to accomplish its declared objectives. In the process of few full-scale wars, hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives. Economic loss suffered by the world community is too immense to be calculated (Belasco, 2009). The 9/11 and what followed it changed the world in ways none could imagine it a decade ago. The world has never been the same place where amity, peace and harmony prevailed and people belonging to different cultures and civilizations lived in mutual respect.

The reliance on hard power as a policy of preferred choice to counter extremism and terrorism has only ended up compounding the problem. Despite massive expenditures that have gone into wars and other related security matters, the world remains as unsafe as ever. The non-state actors including a plethora of militant and terrorist organizations remain undefeated.

Going by the events taking place in different parts of the world, it appears that violence has emerged as a key instrument to put across one's point of view. While factors and variables responsible for spawning violence and bloodshed vary depending upon the context, geography, political and economic systems of violence-infected regions, the agreement among 'the stakeholders' to resort to violence to push through one's agenda or even to attract attention to their real or supposed grievances points to alarming trends, which if not checked through a well-thought through and carefully calibrated policy, have the potential of plunging the world in more chaos and strife.

What has reinforced failure and exposed the nation-states' inability to stem the upsurge in violence is the ineffectiveness of institutions to acknowledge instances of discrimination and put in place effective deterrence and mechanisms aimed at protecting fundamental rights, dispensation of inexpensive and speedy justice, equitable distribution of resources, ensuring rule of law, encouraging community participation and ensuring effective service delivery. The growing disenfranchisement and alienation experienced by a selected group of people who employ violence at having been wronged presents a daunting challenge (H. M. Qadri, 2013).

The challenge cannot be met adequately with the same old mindset that looks at the problem from a narrow prism and reiteration of policies that have failed miserably in stemming the tide of violence (Corn & Jensen, 2009) As a sage pointed out so succinctly that insanity lies in doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. A problem that has bedeviled the world for many years and still refuses to go away calls for a thorough inspection, investigation and understanding. This is possible if fresh ideas are applied.

It is in this context that changing the intellectual and political framework, which has been used to analyze the problem of extremism and radicalism, is of immense importance. The employment of jargons such as 'war on terror' and 'clash of

civilizations' used by the likes of George W. Bush and Samuel Huntington need to be revisited as they cast the debate in truly ideological and religious coloring without ever trying to understand the problem from purely a strategic angle.

"This 'clash of civilizations' paradigm has not only affected world politics through creating a barrier to dialogue and negotiation between Muslims and the Western elite but has also affected domestic politics of effected regions, promoting an 'us and them' mentality, particularly in the areas of immigration, multiculturalism and race relations."(Manohy, 2010) The discourse has also resulted in crippling social justice in local and regional societies thereby increasing violence and racial vilification of Muslim minorities around the world (Deliberates, 2008).

Changing the narrative within which debate on terrorism, extremism, militancy and radicalism has been conducted so far is also important from a strategic point of view. Enlarging the scope of debate will also allow explanations and counter explanations aimed at harnessing ideas that were not part of the debate. This is where shifting the gear from a military angle to political and psychological angles come in.

As "No strategy aimed at rooting out terrorism and extremism can be successful unless the policymakers comprehend the underlying principles and core components of the radicalization process. Doing so is central to making community engagement a result-oriented and worthwhile exercise. While different models have been enunciated to describe the process of radicalization, three components namely personal grievance, religio-political ideology and mobilization have been common to each model" Qadri (2013).

"Grievances both real and perceived lie at the core of the radicalization process, providing what social scientists describe as a cognitive opening. First- or second-generation immigrants in the West are prime candidates for probing this opening. They may have suffered because of exclusion or discrimination, coupled with a lack of identification with the cultures of their parents or grandparents, and extremist narratives can take root in the resulting identity vacuum (Skeem & Cooke, 2010). But grievance alone cannot explain how individuals become radicalized; they must also be subjected to a methodology through which frustration or anger can be directed. Target is also needed against which budding radicals can lash out "(Neumann & Smith, 2007)

However, in this writer's view, the making of a terrorist is the function of four stages with each stage paving the way for more hardened approach. They are: (a) narrow-mindedness, (2) extremism, (3) radicalism and (4) terrorism. A terrorist passes through these phases, which represents the interconnection of these four factors. The factor of 'support structures' as suggested by many experts comes later on after the radicalization process is complete (Qadri, 2013).

This brings us to the point that battling extremism, militancy and radicalism is a long drawn out process. The military approach can yield short-term results but cannot uproot the menace. In order to be able to eradicate these scourges from our midst, the world community should strive to design and present a counter message, a message of hope, peace, inclusion, participation and equality.

2. Countering Extremism through Education

The importance of education in setting the economic, social and political direction of a nation can hardly be disputed. Education is not merely a dynamic restricted to improving the morals of individuals, polishing their personalities and changing their social and psychological behaviors. Rather, given the mass-scale penetration of information and communication technologies, rampancy of globalization of economic, political and global architectures and increasing interdependence of cultures and civilizations, knowledge has come to be identified as a factor of production determining a nation's status on the global radar screen (Baig, 2013).

The edifice of an inclusive and participatory society is based on education. People get equality of opportunity if educational system is uniform in nature. Education serves as social and economic leveler as it equips people with economic power, increases their upward mobility through social empowerment and enables them to take part in decision-making processes.

Here we would take an opportunity to explore and discuss Pakistan's education as a case study, while building up our argument, as it has been a serious victim of extremism and terrorism in recent times and lost over 50,000 lives while fighting this monster; and rightly or wrongly Pakistan is considered an exporter of extremist mind set and terrorism.

2.1 State of Education in Pakistan

The role of education as leveler and provider of economic and political opportunities has been seriously questioned in Pakistan. Three streams of education mark Pakistan's educational landscape namely public sector education institutions, elite private run English-medium institutions and religious seminaries.

"There has always been 'two Pakistan's'. One Pakistan is reserved for the miniscule English-speaking elites who are educated in expensive private schools and colleges and who go on to govern the country and manage its institutions. The other Pakistan is populated by the unwashed, illiterate masses that slave away from these elites from dawn to dusk. This system of educational apartheid continues to eat into the fabric of our nationhood" (Sethi, December 2, 1993).

Deep divides characterize the present education system in Pakistan. Such schisms are not only limited to medium of instruction but also go much deeper. For example, students in Urdu-medium public schools come from the low-income groups. Teachers in these schools also belong to the same class and income group. They do not take up teaching as a career and a preferred profession out of their will or love for teaching but are rather forced to adopt this after they exhaust all other avenues. They are a demotivated lot who seldom inspire their students. These schools lack basic facilities. Overall environment is dull and not conducive to quality education.

Those who manage to complete school education successfully fail to get employment based on the skills acquired by them in such schools. The students who succeed in getting admission in medical or engineering colleges or get into the civil services constitute a very small fraction of total enrolment in such schools compared to English medium elite schools (Nasir, March 17, 2013).

The brief comment on the state of education currently prevailing in Pakistan gives one an idea of how education has failed to evolve into a unifying force for a country that is divided along ethnic, linguistic, racial and provincial lines. To cap it all, it has served to accentuate class divide between haves and have-nots. Those who have the resources and means to get quality education choose to go to private run English-medium schools while the majority of the have-nots, particularly those belonging to lower-middle and lower classes, are schooled in public sector institutions or worse still have no option but to attend religious seminaries (Aziz_Tahir & A, 1999).

Among other factors, disparity in the existing educational system of Pakistan has been identified as the principal reason behind spread of extremism and violence based ideology here. The streams of education mentioned above vary fundamentally to each other in terms of syllabi, teaching methodology and nature of education imparted by them (UNESCO, 2006). Their students come from different social and economic backgrounds with nothing in common between them. Those on the periphery who cannot even afford low-cost education of public sector institutions have nothing except seminaries to opt for which provide free boarding and low-paid employment at the completion of education. Thus the students in seminaries have little stakes and opportunities in life and are susceptible to radicalization and brainwashing.

Soofi et al. (2013) State: "Madrasahs (religious seminaries) are the second category of schools which cater to the needs of the poorest of the poor. Religious seminaries have filled in the void created due to state neglect. Madrasahs not only provide free education to their students but also give free food, boarding and lodging. They also provide some type of employment at the end of the day in the mosques.

The last three decades have seen a mushroom growth of madrasahs in the country. A majority of analysts attributes their growth to misplaced Islamization move initiated in Pakistan in the 1980s owing to the Afghan so called jihad. Some attribute the growth of such seminaries to the rise in poverty in Pakistan. But these are not the only factors. The growth of madrasahs is rooted in historical, political and socio-economic variables.

"The point made here is that the madrasahs are not only divorced from the mainstream education, rather the outlook and worldview imparted by one brand of madrasah conflicts with the outlook and worldview of the other brand. Further, the methodology of teaching is such that the adherents of one particular brand do not consider the interpretation of other sect reconcilable and agreeable. This has deepened the fissures in society and hindered the evolution of an inclusive society."(Nasir, March 17, 2013)

2.2 Historical perspective of religious education in Pakistan

Historically speaking, religious seminaries or commonly known as Madaris date back to the 11th century or even before and have played tremendously important role in producing excellent religious scholars, scientists, physicians, administrative officials and judges (Humphreys, 1991). This was the time when Madaris combined the imparting of religious and secular education. Historical literature shows that the Muslims dazzled the world with their wealth of knowledge, economic prosperity and technological advancement. They were the people who had Greek sciences in their one hand and the Holy Qur'an in their other, and, blending both religious and modern education, they developed new sciences. They were the torchbearers of enlightenment, progress, and development. Europe's mind-blowing progress of science and technology on which the modern human civilization takes pride was inherited by the Europeans from the Muslims and further developed. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, which are the leading light in the global educational system, were modeled on pattern of institutions like Al-Zaituna and Al-Azhar, built during the Muslim's golden era. However with the passage of time and evolution in socio-political environment, seminaries continued to undergo changes (Lyons (2010).

In Pakistan's context, religious seminaries are a pre-partition phenomenon. They used to be preferred destination for children of all Muslims classes in pre-partition India. The educational institutions were then a blend of modern and religious education, which taught enlightenment, open-mindedness and a broad worldview. The educational institutions produced people for government service as well as community service. Muslim masses received their religious education from mosques and associated primary schools. The chief aim of this education was to produce men of religion and religious education was regarded as a preparation for life and for life after death. Hence, religion was the main determinant of all study and learning (Abdul-Sattar, 1959).

The resurgence of Islamic educational institutions in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is a significant phenomenon from the viewpoints of education and history. It underlines the socio-political and cultural

resuscitation of the Muslim community in the Indian environment (Zia (2003). This system of orthodox religious education seems, on the one hand, to have determined the character of the Indian Muslim community by constantly providing it with a powerful religious leadership, and on the other hand, to have systematically re-awakened the sentiments of unity and solidarity among the Muslims in the midst of a Hindu majority. More importantly it imbued in Muslims a deeper consciousness of the Islamic way of life, Islamic history, philosophy and culture."(Haque, 1975).

The system of education that had been in vogue for many centuries in the sub-content was dealt a damaging blow when the British who took over power from the Muslims introduced liberal education. Sir William Hunter, the famous civil servant, portrayed the scene of that time in his book "The Indian Musalmans": "Before the country passed to us, the Muslims were not only the political but the intellectual power in India. … They possessed a system of education which however inferior to that which we have established, was yet by no means to be despised; was capable of affording a high degree of intellectual training and polish; was founded on principles not wholly unsound, though presented in an antiquated form; and which was infinitely superior to any other system of education then existing in India; a system which secured to them an intellectual as well as material supremacy.

… During the first seventy-five years of our rule, we continued to make use of this system as a means for producing officers to carry out administration. But meanwhile we had introduced a scheme of public instruction of our own; as soon as we trained up a generation of men on the new plan we flung aside the old Muhammadan system and the Musalman youth found every avenue of public life closed in their faces."(Hunter, 1876)

The period following the failure of war of independence marked the high point of despondency for the Muslims. It also heralded the coming of British Raj and with them a new political order. Within a span of a few decades, the Muslims who had been ruling India became the ruled. The new rulers suspected their loyalty and introduced measures to punish them for their role in the war of independence. The replacement of traditional and centuries-old educational system by the British secular education pushed the Muslims to the periphery with the rival Hindus moving in quickly to befriend the British and adapting to new education. The Muslims feared that the new educational system introduced by the English would destroy their religious values and peculiar cultural identity (Jaffar & Sherwani, 1936).

The events following war of independence gave birth to two groups within the Muslim community. Elucidating the same, Haque (1975) writes: "In this hour of self-examination, both groups of the Muslims i.e. progressive and orthodox felt the need for reconstruction of education in the Muslim community. Regarding the nature, content and objectives of this education, however, there emerged a split and a dichotomy. The orthodox group led by the Ulama believed that objectives could only be realized through a system of education based on religious fundamentalism imparted in the madrasahs. This was the motive, which impelled them to establish new madrasahs and revive old ones, which had suffered from neglegence and lack of patronage. The Ulama thought that the solution of economic, political and cultural problems lay in religious education.

"The other group led by the modernists thought that modern western education was the only means to bring a new world of progress and enlightenment. This created a dichotomy in the system of education, which still persists in the sub-continent. Despite many efforts to bridge the gulf between the two and to integrate them into a homogeneous system, they still oppose each other. This development also reflects the two distinct ideological and intellectual schools of thought in the Muslim community."(Haque, 1975)

2.3 Education Reforms Movement

2.3.1 First Phase

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1998) became the initiator of the first phase of the education reforms movement in indo-pak sub-continent. His role bears a special significance in the wake of political upheaval, which swept the sub-continent (Gopal, 1964) His multi-pronged struggle for the Indian Muslims deserves to be written in golden letters in the annals of history. On the one hand, he played the role of a bridge between the Muslims and the ruling English trying to clear the misunderstandings in the minds of the British and on the other he pleaded with the Muslims to take to English education to be able to take part in national life. He warned if the Muslims did not pay heed and adapt themselves to change, they would be left far behind only to rue the day while the Hindus would outshine them in all walks of national life. He was a political leader, social reformer, intellectual of highest order, educationist and above all visionary who foresaw that the Muslims needed to bring about change in their attitude to catch up with the currents of time(Hali, 1979).

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan not only preached but also led from the front. He established a plethora of educational institutions across Hindustan. Ali Garh College that he established to impart modern education to the Muslims developed into a movement commensurate with modernity and liberal education (Hali, 1979). Sir Syed described his vision of the institution he proposed to establish in an article written sometime in 1872 and re-printed in the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* of April 5, 1911:

"I may appear to be dreaming and talking like Shaikh Chilli, but we aim to turn this MAO College into a University similar to that of Oxford or Cambridge. Like the churches of Oxford and Cambridge, there will be mosques attached to each College… The College will have a dispensary with a Doctor and a compounder, besides a Unani Hakim. It will be mandatory on boys in residence to join the congregational prayers (*sala*) at all the five times. Students of other religions will be exempted from this religious observance. Muslim students will have a uniform consisting of a black alpaca, half-sleeved chugha and a red Fez cap… Bad and abusive words, which boys generally pick up and get, used to, will be strictly prohibited. Even such a word as a "liar"

will be treated as an abuse to be prohibited. They will have food either on tables of European style or on chaukis in the manner of the Arabs… Smoking of cigarette or huqqa and the chewing of betels shall be strictly prohibited. No corporal punishment or any such punishment as is likely to injure a student's self-respect will be permissible… It will be strictly enforced that Shia and Sunni boys shall not discuss their religious differences in the College or in the boarding house. At present it is like a daydream. I pray to God that this dream may come true."(Sir-Syed(1817), Birth. Graham, Irving, & Ḫān, 1974).

To a committee on Muslim education in 1872, he spoke as follows: "When the question of education is mooted amongst the Muhammadans, their efforts are always hampered by their endeavor to adopt their old hereditary system of education and the old established course of study. Many schools regulated by the old system have been established by the Muhammadans of Jaunpore, Allygarh, Cawnpore, Saharanpur, Deoband, Delhi and Lahore."(Philips, Singh, & Pandey, 1962)

2.3.2 Second Phase

Dr Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), the poet-philosopher of East and sage of his times, became the initiator of the second phase of the education reforms movement in indo-pak sub-continent. He impressed upon the Muslims the need to move on and shun their resistance to modern education. He was of the view if the Muslims wanted to catch up with the developments; they would have to change their mode of thinking. Iqbal emphasized the importance of Ijtehad (reconstructive thinking) to break the intellectual, political, economic and social morass, which had come to define the Muslims of the sub-continent (Abbas, 2012). Iqbal propagated an approach, which was marked by a blend of modernity and tradition (Iqbal, 2001). He was in favour of critical and innovative thinking to find solution to the problems faced by the Muslims as a community. It was for this reason that traditional Ulama of the time opposed Iqbal tooth and nail. They stayed clung on to conservatism and abhorred modern education dubbing it as an attack on their values, their culture and their way of life. The twain has never met and the gulf between has only continued to widen.

3. Madrassas in Pakistan

In 1947 there were only 189 madrassas in Pakistan. In 2002 the country had 10,000-13,000 unregistered seminaries with an estimated 1.7 to 1.9 million students. A 2008 estimate puts this figure at over 40,000 and today this number has crossed 50,000 (Muhammad, Butt, Ahmed, & Omer, 2012).

While the religious seminaries were few and far between at the time of partition of Pakistan, it was during the government of General Zia-ul-Haq that these religious institutions registered phenomenal expansion and growth both in terms of number as well as geographical location.

Given a peculiar geo-strategic environment, which defined our region at the peak of cold war, official patronage was provided to religious establishments aimed at producing firebrand religious leaders. The unhindered flow of foreign money and ideas also played a significant role in the expansion of religious seminaries across the country.
The present set of religious establishments are predominantly Sunni, both Deaobandi as well as Braveli, while the number of Shia institutions is very low. It is 10:4 respectively according to a survey. Likewise, close to 2 million students are enrolled in these seminaries.

These madaris continue to operate under different governing bodies depending upon the school of thought they belong to. The bodies are Tanzim-ul-Madaris (Braveli), Wafaq-ul-Madaris (Deobandi), Wafa-ul-Madaris (Shia), Wafa-ul-Madaris (Ahle Hadith) and Rabat-ul-Madaris (Jamaat-e-Islami).

All of these governing bodies of religious seminaries got together to form an umbrella organization by the name of Ittehad Tanzimat Madaris-e-Deeniya to secure their collective interests.

While there have been sporadic voices raised from time to time demanding reforms in the structure and syllabi of these institutions, the trend picked up momentum following 9/11. The then government of General Pervez Musharraf introduced two key legislations for this purpose. The first legislation related to establishment of state-controlled Madaris (2001), whereas the second one was premised on documentation and reform of the existing Madaris (2002).

The first legislative measure met a relative success. Pakistan Madarassah Education Board was created under a law. The seminaries and religious parties supporting them resisted the government's efforts to reform and document them. They accused the government of operating under the foreign influence (Sajjad, 2012). These seminaries impart education of Dars-i-Nizami. Some of them also teach English, Computer Science and other secular subjects as part of their regular syllabi(Javaid, 2012).

Majority of religious seminaries, with exceptions of course, have strong sectarian affiliations. An examination of content and syllabi being taught here suggests that they remain miles apart from the mainstream of life. The graduates produced by these madrasahs have little tools and skill valued in the job market (Saleem H Ali, 2009). Their worldview is limited and is marked by sectarian understanding of the world and its issues. In the absence of any competing narrative, they continue to stay isolated with little stakes in the system.

Couple this with peculiar geo-strategic environment, which has impacted the functioning of these seminaries beyond recognition. With newfound empowerment and a promise of divine rewards, the madrasahs have become breeding ground for dissemination of extremist ideologies and promoter of a worldview divorced from life (Anzar, 2003).

4. Third phase of Education Reforms Movement

Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri (born, 1951) became the initiator of the third phase of the education reforms movement in indo-pak sub-continent. He founded Minhaj-ul-Quran International, an organization in 1980; today which has its network and branches spread in over 100 countries of the world, he has been in the forefront of the efforts to eliminate extremism and violent ideology through education at every level. In its intellectual odyssey to de-radicalize, it has mainly been focused on the youth and shielded them from the ill effects of extremist tendencies (Minhaj-ul-Quran, 2010).

Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri is of the considered opinion that, in order to find a lasting solution to the problem of religious extremism and violence-based ideology, the dichotomy in the educational system needs to be removed. Those who have been getting modern secular education have little understanding of religion and its teachings while the students of religious seminaries have little exposure to life. Equipped with merely religious education, they are misfit, as they cannot address the demands of markets and industry. In his view, the major reason behind the spread of conservatism and extremism is the compartmentalized and isolated nature of these two streams of education (S. H. Ali, 2005). The worldview acquired by students of both streams is so much contrary to each other that they seem to be in direct clash. That leaves the possibility of radicalization much greater as the students of religious seminaries have no stake in the system or mainstream life. They are hugely vulnerable to brainwashing (Fair, 2006).

In order to forestall any possibility of radicalization, Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri supports an educational model, which is premised on the blend of religious and modern sciences. He stands for reforms in the curriculum and syllabi being taught at both religious seminaries as well as institutions of secular sciences (Commons, 2003). MQI under the supervision of Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri has set up educational institutions in Pakistan as well as in other countries that boast of mingling of both religious and secular sciences. Minhaj Education Society, a sister organization of MQI, has been overseeing and running a network of over 600 primary, secondary and higher-secondary schools and dozens of colleges throughout the country, particularly in the far-flung areas of Pakistan. Minhaj University Lahore, a chartered university in the private sector, is engaged in imparting both religious and secular education to thousands of students as well (MES, 1986).

MQI has also set up hundreds of Peace, cultural and educational centers throughout the world that are busy engaging people in multi-religious, multicultural and educational activities to prepare the youngsters of Muslim community to deal with the socio-religious and contemporary issues. Through these centers, MQI serves as a bridge between the Muslim diaspora communities and the governments. It is spearheading efforts for promotion of peace, interfaith dialogue, harmony and integration in the world (M. Tahir-ul-Qadri, 2010). The world renowned Fatwa against Terrorism and Suicide Bombings issued by Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri represents one of his crowning achievements in his determined struggle to dilute the effects of religious and political extremism and terrorism (Guidugli, 2013).

Humanity for Peace Conference 2011, held at Wembly Arena, is another example of such gigantic effort, which drew thousands of the Muslim youths in addition to faith leaders of six major religions (D. M. Tahir-ul-Qadri, September 2011). The moot was dubbed as a significant development in efforts to de-radicalize the youth. This movement took another turn when Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri launched Peace curriculum for Universities, Colleges and School in July 2015.

This launch has become a hope for the institutions that are struggling to fight the extremism through education in the world.

5. The Way Forward (Recommendations)

There is a greater consensus among the political and intellectual commentators that, in order to secure peace on sustainable basis, the estranged communities need to be won over through providing alternative to extremist thoughts, increased engagement, dialogue, socio-economic development and righting of past wrongs. Military option alone does not offer any long-term solution (Sayed, 2011). Following can be instructive in this regard:

Unwavering political will must mark efforts for re-radicalization. De-radicalization initiatives have often fallen by the wayside in the absence of sustained commitment. The political will must be an outcome of internal realization that extremism poses long-term threats to existence of state and society and its eradication should be the topmost priority of the government.

Without fundamental and sweeping reforms in educational system, violent extremism cannot be contained. The isolated and unrelated system of education has done much harm by accentuating class divides. There should be a merger of classical and modern system of education. It will break isolation of religious seminaries and integrate them into the mainstream by opening them up to new vistas of opportunities that will come their way.

The government should appoint a commission of eminent religious scholars well versed in both religious and modern sciences to scrutinize the syllabi and curriculum contents of religious seminaries. This exercise should be aimed at purging the syllabi of sectarian and hate-mongering material and explore the possibility of modern subjects that could enable them to get it touch with the present-day realities of life.

The Commission should also promote insights and recommendations for promotion of peace, harmony and interfaith dialogue with a view to creating goodwill and tolerance for each other's viewpoint. The curriculum should be based on enlightened and tolerant message of Islam. Religious scholars and Islamic educators in Turkey, Bangladesh and Indonesia and Minhaj-ul-Quran

International in Pakistan have already succeeded in framing such curriculum and encouraging Islamic institutions in the process of national development.

Relating to other communities in a spirit of mutual amity, tolerance and peaceful coexistence should be one of the topmost priorities of such a curriculum. This becomes all the more necessary undertaking in culturally and religiously diverse societies with significant number of minority communities.

A central organization mandated to oversee the functioning of religious seminaries should be put in place in consultation with the leading religious scholars of all sects. It must have both the administrative and financial authority for reform of education in the religious seminaries.

The role and capacity of the Ministries of Religious Affairs should be enhanced to effectively deal with the issue in a proactive manner.

The government should consider appointing khateebs and imams to mosques and Islamic education centers as regular employees.

The students from religious seminaries should be given loans on soft conditions to set up their businesses after they graduate. It will help them develop a sense of purpose in life.

Emphasis should be placed on technical and vocational education that will equip the students with necessary skills to enter the job market (Candland, 2005).

All the hate mongering books that propagate sectarian hatred and violence should be confiscated and banned.

Uniform system of education should be introduced. This single step will help reduce the divide, which has marked Pakistan's polity.

Traditionally speaking, education has been a neglected area in Pakistan. Because of the state's preoccupation with external problems and geo-strategic environment in which the country is located, the successive governments have failed to allocate sufficient resources for education. The allocation for education has been less than 2% of GDP, which is minimalist in the region. The devolution of education to provinces under the 18th Amendment presents a golden opportunity to raise allocations for development of education.

There is a need to create linkages between educational institutions and market to have the kind of workforce required by the industry for fast-paced socio-economic development.
Emphasis on general and traditional education should give way to that of science, engineering and technology (Aziz_Tahir & A, 1999).

Students need to be counseled at the higher secondary level to take up the kind of education religious or secular, rather going to Madrassa education system only in their childhood, which best suits, their temperament, skills and capabilities. This career counseling at this stage will help groom human resource as per requirements.

References

Abbas, Y. (2012). A comparative study of the concept of jihad as maintained by Bediuzzaman said Nursi & Sheikh-ul-Islam Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri. Paper presented at the International Post Graduate Conference.

Abdul-Sattar, M. (1959). The Making of Madrasah Aliyah (Urdu) Decca. *Research and Publications, Madrasah Aliyah, Decca, Bengladesh*.

Ali, S. H. (2005). Islamic Education and Conflict: Understanding the Madrassahs of Pakistan. Lahore, Pakistan.

Ali, Saleem H. (2009). Islam and education: conflict and conformity in Pakistan's madrassahs: Oxford Univerisity Press.

Anzar, Uzma. (2003). Islamic education: A brief history of madrassas with comments on curricula and current pedagogical practices. *draft report, March*.

Aziz_Tahir, & A, C. R S. L. r. (1999). Restructuring the Education System in Pakistan. Pakistan: National Reconstruction Bureau.

Baig, M. S. (2013). *Educational disparity in Pakistan at Higher Secondary level*. Paper presented at the the National Policy Conference, Lahor, Pakistan.

Belasco, Amy. (2009). Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11: DIANE Publishing.

Candland, C. (2005). Pakistan's recent experience in reforming Islamic education. Education reform in Pakistan: Building for the future, (pp. 151-165.).

Clarke, Richard A. (2004). *Against all enemies: Inside America's war on terror*: SimonandSchuster. com.

Commons, House Of. (2003). POPULAR MUSLIM REACTIONS. Retrieved 17-06-2013, 2013, from http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm200203/cmselect/cmdfence/93/93ap03.htm

Corn, Geoffrey, & Jensen, Eric Talbot. (2009). Transnational Armed Conflict: A Principled Approach to the Regulation of Counter-Terror Combat Operations. *Isr. L. Rev., 42*, 46.

Deliberates, A. (2008). Muslims and non-Muslims in Australia-Final report summary. *Issues Deliberation Australia 2007*.

Fair, C. C. (2006). *Islamic Education in Pakistan*. USA: United States Institute of Peace.

Gopal, Ram. (1964). Indian Muslims: a political history, 1858-1947: Asia Pub. House.

Guidugli, Mattias. (2013). Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings. *Journal of Politics, Religion & Ideology, Taylor & Francis, 14*(1), 159-161.

Hali, Altaf Husain. (1979). Hayat-i-Javed: A Biographical Account of Sir Sayyid, transl. *K. H. Qadiri and David J. Matthews (1901, Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 19791, 119*.

Haque, Ziaul. (1975). Muslim Religious Education in Indo-Pakistan. *Islamic Studies, 14*(4), 271-292.

Humphreys, R Stephen. (1991). *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry. (Revised Edition)*: Princeton University Press.

Hunter, William Wilson. (1876). *The Indian Musalmans*: Trübner and Company.

Iqbal, Shaykh Muhammad. (2001). *The reconstruction of religious thought in Islam*: Adam Publishers.

Jaffar, SM, & Sherwani, Haroon Khan. (1936). *Education in muslim india*: S. Muhammad Sadiq Khan.

Javaid, Omar. (2012). Socio-Economic Contributions of Madresa in Pakistan. *Available at SSRN 1986551*.

Lyons, Jonathan. (2010). The House of Wisdom: How the Arabs Transformed Western Civilization. Jonathan Lyons: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Manohy, I. (2010). Constructing Indonesian Islam in the context of war on terror. *University Press, The University of Queensland, Australia*.

MES, Minhaj Education Socierty. (1986). In M. U. www.mul.edu.pk (Ed.). Lahore, Pakistan.

Minhaj-ul-Quran. (2010). *af Minhaj-ul-Quran*

Danske trossamfund 2012, 106: Minhaj ul-Quran.

Muhammad, Niaz, Butt, Muhammad Naeem, Ahmed, Mufti Muhammad Mushtaq, & Omer, Fazle. (2012). Model Dini Madaris in Pakistan an Outcome of 9/11: A Misconception. *World Applied Sciences Journal, 19*(8), 1229-1233.

Nasir, J. (March 17, 2013, March 17). Haves and have-nots of education, *The News*.

Neumann, Peter R, & Smith, Michael Lawrence Rowan. (2007). *The strategy of terrorism: How it works, and why it fails*: Routledge.

Philips, Cyril Henry, Singh, Harischandra Lal, & Pandey, Bishwa Nath. (1962). *The evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858 to 1947: select documents* (Vol. 4): Oxford University Press London.

Qadri, Hussain Mohi-ud-Din. (2013). Countering Extremism, Building Social Resilience through Community Engagement. London, UK: Imperial College Press.

Qadri, Hussain Mohiuddin. (2013). Pakistani Youth's Role in Preventing Dissemination of Pro-Violence Ideology Based on Religion. *Working Paper*.

Sajjad, Mohammad Waqas. (2012). *Madrasas in Pakistan : thinking beyond terrorism-based reforms*. Lahore: Idara Talimat e Islam.

Sayed, M. H. (2011). *Recommended Policy Thrusts and Contours of Counter/ De-Radicalization Strategy*. Paper presented at the National Seminar on"Recommended Policy Thrusts and Contours of Counter/ De-Radicalization Strategy, Lahore, Pakistan.

Sethi, Najam. (December 2, 1993). Educational apartheid must end, *The Friday Times*.

Sir-Syed(1817), Ahmed Khan, Birth. Graham, Graham, Irving, George Farquhar, & Ḫān, A., & Umer, Z. Y. (1974). *The Life and Work of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan*. London, UK: Oxford University Press.

Skeem, Jennifer L, & Cooke, David J. (2010). One measure does not a construct make: Directions toward reinvigorating psychopathy research—reply to Hare and Neumann (2010).

Soofi, Sajid Bashir, Hussain, Imtiaz, Mehboob, Nelofer, Hussain, Masawar, Bhatti, Zaid, Khan, Saiqa, . . . Bhutta, Zulfiqar A. (2013). Impoverished Rural Districts of Pakistan: An Independent Evaluation of Impact on Educational and Cognitive Outcomes in Sindh Province, Pakistan. *IDS Bulletin, 44*(3), 48-56.

Tahir-ul-Qadri, Dr. Muhammad. (September 2011). *Peace for Humanity*. Paper presented at the Peace for Humanity Conference, Wembly Arena, London, UK.

Tahir-ul-Qadri, Muhammad. (2010). *Introduction to Fatwa on Suicide Bombings and Terrorism*: Minhaj-ul-Quran Publications.

UNESCO. (2006). The diversification of secondary education: School curricula in comparative perspective (Vol. 10). Israel, Jerusalem.

Zia, Rukhsana. (2003). Religion and education in Pakistan: an overview. *Prospects, 33*(2), 165-178.