

## **PASSPORTS TO PRIVILEGE: THE ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS IN PAKISTAN**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Based on two recent surveys of some selected urban areas of Pakistan, the author draws interesting conclusions in this article about the English-medium schools in Pakistan. The elites of the country have long realized the power of the English language and have even institutionalized the process of acquiring the same. As seen elsewhere in South Asia, the English-speaking elites of the country profess one thing about their national languages and practise something else for their own children. The craving for excellence in English language as a tool for a more successful life is not confined to the city elites but has penetrated the army, the air force, and the naval branches of a country that has frequently been ruled by army generals. It is also clear from this article that the privileged children of Pakistan are westernised in terms of lifestyle and liberal in attitude towards India, although after joining the state, they are seen supporting the militaristic policies of the state.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

English is the official language of Pakistan. It is used in all domains of power - government, bureaucracy, military, judiciary, commerce, media, education and research - at the highest level. Because it is empowering to learn English, people all over the country are ready to invest in it for the future of their children.

Because of this demand, all over the cities of Pakistan one can see boards advertising institutions which claim to be English-medium schools or tuition 'centres' claiming to teach spoken English and English for passing all kinds of examinations and interviews. They are present in areas ranging from the most affluent to the slums and even in the rural areas. Indeed, going by numbers alone, more of them are located in middle-class, lower-middle-class and even in working-class areas than in the more expensive localities of the cities. Besides the claim made by the boards, these schools share little else in common. It is a far cry from the rolling green grounds of Aitchison College in Lahore to a two-room house in a slum which advertises itself as the 'Oxford and Cambridge Islamic English-medium school'. Indeed, if there is anything which links such diverse establishments together it is that they cater to the persistent public demands for English education. English is still the key for a good future - a future with human dignity if not public deference; a future with material comfort if not prosperity; a future with that modicum of security, human rights and recognition, which all human beings desire. So, irrespective of what the state provides, parents are willing to part with scarce cash to buy their children such a future.

The English-medium schools are of three major types: (a) state-influenced elitist public schools or cadet colleges, (b) private elitist schools, and (c) non-elitist schools. Within each category are sub-categories. Indeed, the non-elitist English-medium schools are so varied that they defy classification. Let us, however, focus only on the major categories in order to understand what type of inequality exists in them. The state-influenced institutions are the top public schools, cadet colleges, the federal government model schools, and the armed forces schools. For this article I carried out a survey in March-April 2003 on the faculty and students of elitist English-medium schools and cadet colleges/public schools. A similar survey was carried out on non-elitist English-medium schools in 1999-2000 but these schools have been left out of the 2003 survey. Although the latter survey is the most important basis of this article, we will come to it later. First, let us look at the history of English-medium elitist schools in South Asia to provide a historical context to our study.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Under British rule, there were two kinds of elitist schools in India: those for the hereditary aristocracy, called the chiefs' colleges; and those for the newly emerging professional classes, called European or English schools, including English-teaching schools and armed forces schools which taught all subjects in English. Both kinds of institutions served political and social purposes. The chiefs' colleges were meant to Anglicise young rulers, to encourage loyalty to the crown, and preclude events like those of 1857. This was the principle of 'indirect rule' discussed by J.M. Mangan in some detail in the context of schooling (1986: 125).

Children of the newly emerging professional upper middle class Indian families sought admission in the European schools. Since such schools admitted only 15 percent Indians (except in Bombay where 20 percent were allowed), not everybody could get in. The schools which admitted more than 20 per cent Indian students were called English-teaching schools (PEI 1918: 185). The English schools - to choose a convenient term for all such institutions, which taught most subjects through English - were generally run on the lines of British public schools, whether the administrators were missionaries or others. In the area now comprising Pakistan, such schools existed only in the big cities.

There was no doubt that these schools were better than the Indian ones. But the 'higher standard of instruction' and 'more efficient discipline' were products of higher investment which the PEI report referred to above does not mention, although it does provide figures such as the salaries of teachers and cost per pupil, which lead to that conclusion. The high cost of European schooling was justified as follows:

The cost of European Education is high compared with education in India generally, the cost per pupil in Anglo-Indian and European Institutions being Rs. 156 against Rs. 14 only in all types of institutions from a university to a primary school. This, however, is not altogether a valid comparison and it is to be noted in this connection that 69 per cent of this cost is met from fees and private donations; in other words public funds bear only 31 per cent of the expenditure (Edn India 1941: 113).

Even 31 per cent of the public funds (Rs. 48.36), however, was Rs. 34 more than the average amount spent on ordinary Indian students. Moreover, ordinary Indians were too poor to be able to afford anything but the free or cheap primary schools. The products of English-medium schools were what people call 'brown Englishmen' (Vittachi 1987). This attitude was also common in South Africa as none other than the man who contributed to the decolonization of the African mind, Nelson Mandela, says about his boyhood:

The educated Englishman was our model. What we aspired to were "black Englishmen", as we were sometimes derisively called. We were taught—and believed—that the best ideas were English ideas, the best government was English government, and the best men were Englishmen (Mandela 1994: 32).

This was true about schools in British India and is still true for elitist English-medium schools today.

### **ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS IN THE EARLY YEARS OF PAKISTAN**

The parallel system of elitist schooling did not change because of the establishment of Pakistan. Indeed, as the military and the higher bureaucracy both came from this elite background, these schools multiplied in Pakistan as the professional middle-class started expanding in 1960s. Thus it is no surprise that the government - dominated by members of these two elitist groups - came up with policies that supported English-medium schools. The commission on students' welfare and problems, generally called the Hamoodur Rahman Commission, defended the missionary schools on grounds of religious freedom for Christians and others on the grounds of excellence (GOP 1966: 17-18). Disagreeing with the view that such schools produced snobs, the commission took the paradoxical plea that they were meant to produce the military and civilian administrative elite (GOP 1966: 18).

The commission did, however, agree that the existence of such schools violated the constitutional assurance that 'all citizens are equal before law' (Paragraph 15 under Right No. VI) and even recommended that the government 'should not build such schools any more' (GOP 1966: 18). Thus, despite the criticism leveled by students - such as the All-Pakistan Students' Convention held at Lahore in 1966 - against elitist schools (Abdullah 1976: 184), these schools continued to thrive during the Ayub Khan era.

The most significant anti-English policy of Zia ul Haq was the order that Urdu would be the medium of instruction in all schools from 'class 1 or K.G. as the case may be from 1979' (*Pakistan Times*, 4 February 1979). Thus, all students appearing in the matriculation examination in 1989 would use only Urdu. Moreover, the Ministry of Education also said that the nomenclature 'English medium' schools would be abolished (*Dawn*, 18 February 1987). The students, parents and supporters of English-medium schools, however, opposed this.

On 11 October 1987, General Ziaul Haq himself allayed the fears of the English lobby by declaring that English could not be abandoned altogether

(*Pakistan Times*, 12 November 1987). According to Lady Viqarunnisa Noon, the General had assured her earlier that she could continue to use English as the medium of instruction in her school. This suggests that the General was under pressure from the westernized elite and that he did not want to alienate them (Noon 1994).

The real change in policy occurred in 1987 when Ziaul Haq gave legal protection to the elitist English schools by allowing them to prepare students for the 'O' (or ordinary) and 'A' (or advance) levels School Leaving Certificate of British Boards of Education through Martial Law Regulations 115 (*Pakistan Times*, 6 October 1987). The reversal of the 1979 education policy, the most momentous step taken in favour of Urdu, was allowed to take place almost silently (see editorials, *The Nation* and *The Muslim*, 13 November 1987).

## THE PRESENT SITUATION

At the moment the federal government has its own English-medium schools. Some of them teach some subjects in English and others in Urdu. The 19 model colleges of the federal government are English-medium schools and colleges. At the moment their enrollment is 30,488 and the cost per student per year is Rs. 6039, which is much higher than the cost in the Urdu-medium schools of the provincial governments. The military controls 88 Federal English-medium schools in cantonments and garrisons. Moreover, there are elitist public schools under boards of governors such as the Boys' Public School and College in Abbottabad and the Sadiq Public School in Bahawalpur as well as cadet colleges and military schools, which are discussed later. Other state-controlled bodies such as the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), the Customs Department, the Pakistan Railways, the Telephone Foundation, and the Police also run English-medium schools. As mentioned earlier, they provide schooling in English, though of varying quality, for an affordable fee from their own employees while charging much higher fees from the ordinary public. The armed forces, besides controlling many English-medium schools, also get subsidized education for their dependents from some elitist English-medium schools located in garrisons and cantonments. This means that English-medium schooling can be bought either by the elite of wealth or that of power. And this has not happened through market forces but has been brought about by the functionaries or institutions of the state itself. Indeed, the state has invested heavily in creating a parallel system of education for the elite, especially the elite that would presumably run elitist state institutions in future. This leads to the conclusion that the state does not trust its own system of education and spends public funds to create and maintain the parallel, elitist system of schooling.

Such a situation is not peculiar to Pakistan. David D. Laitin, for instance, tells us that in Kazakhstan laws for the learning and use of the Kazakh language were enacted in 1989 but there are 'ardent nationalists who vote to promote "their" language, yet send their children to more cosmopolitan schools, where the national language is given at best symbolic support' (Laitin 1998: 137). This kind of strategy is observable in all situations where a more empowering language is in clash with a less empowering one. The less empowering one is generally allowed to become the language of the masses while the more empowering one is the preserve of the elite. Such an unjust policy can be reversed but it is generally not. In Pakistan, for instance, it is still in place after more than half a century of the country's existence.

The non-elitist system of education, fully dependent upon the state, functions for the most part in Urdu (or in Sindhi and Pashto at places). Most significantly, the non-elitist stream of public education functions in the vernacular rather than in English, which means, *prima facie*, that its products would have greater difficulty in the competition for lucrative and powerful jobs and participation in the elitist domains of power than their English-educated counterparts.

### MILITARY INFLUENCE ON ELITIST ENGLISH-MEDIUM EDUCATION

Through the Fauji Foundation (Army), Shaheen Foundation (Air Force) and the Bahria Foundation (Navy) the forces created institutions specifically for beneficiaries (retired military personnel) from 1970s onwards. The Fauji Foundation, for instance runs 88 secondary and 4 higher secondary schools. These schools charge low tuition fees from beneficiaries while charging much higher fees from civilians. The rates of tuition fees vary from rural to urban areas and from category to category. Beneficiaries pay much lower fees than civilians. In Rawalpindi, for instance, the following rates of fees prevail: retired army non-commissioned ranks pay Rs. 150; retired officers Rs. 310; serving non-commissioned ranks Rs. 260; serving officers Rs. 450 while civilians pay Rs. 1000 per month for the education of their wards from class 6 to 10 (information given by the head office of the Fauji Foundation, Rawalpindi). In army Burn Hall College (Abbottabad) wards of army families pay average monthly fees of Rs. 803 while civilians pay Rs. 1458 (the fees is different in all classes but average fees from class 7 to A level has been calculated here). The fees for the boarders are Rs. 2956 for those from army families and Rs. 3506 for civilians (information from Burn Hall's office). The Airforce says in its manual on the Air University that 'the PAF has come to establish over 25 schools and colleges at various Bases with an enrollment of over 43,000 students and almost 2000 teachers'. In short, the armed forces have entered the field of English-medium, elitist education and generally provided cheap English-medium schooling to their own dependents.

The Military College Jhelum, a cadet college administered by the army, charges Rs. 400 per month as tuition fees to armed forces beneficiaries and Rs 1000 to civilians. The cadet colleges are subsidized by the state. According to the information given by some of them the subsidies are as follows:

**Table 1. Subsidies to Cadet Colleges in Pakistan**

Institution	Donation from Provincial Govt in Rupees	Number of Students	Yearly cost per student to Govt. in Rupees
Cadet College Kohat	5,819,800	575	10,121
Cadet College Larkana	6,000,000	480	12,500
Cadet College Pitaro	14,344,000	700	20,491
Laurence College	12,000,000	711	16,878
Cadet College Hasanabdal	8,096,000	480	16,867

Source: Information about donations and number of students has been supplied by the offices of the respective institutions.

They also receive donations from rich former students, visiting dignitaries and students' parents. In some cases, especially of schools administered by the armed forces, the salaries of officers serving in the schools come from the defense budget. In Military College Jhelum the cadets are given free rations. These too are forms of subsidy that poor children do not receive in the same measure and of the same quality.

The cadet colleges/public schools are quite expensive - though some are affordable for the middle classes - and their tuition fees increase in senior classes. Since most of their students are boarders, there is also a fee for board and lodging. Then there are other incidental expenses as well as the cost of making European clothes - coat, shirt, trousers, boots, socks, caps, etc - which make them elitist institutions. The following table gives their budget, average tuition fees (only tuition) and what percent of the budget comes from fees (according to the institution itself) and the cost per student per year.

**Table 2. Institutions, Budget, and Tuition Fees**

Institution	Budget in Rupees	Average monthly tuition Fees in Rupees	Part of the budget covered by fees in Rupees	Number of students	Total cost per student per year in Rupees
Aitchison	204,000,000	5950	80% (163 million)	2120	96,226
Kohat	19,981,217	4701	44% (8,785,923)	575	34,750
Larkana	23,176,006	550	95% (22,017,205)	480	56,617
Pitaro	71,720,000	6000	80% (57,376,000)	700	102,457
Lawrence	98,886,181	2000	18.19% (17,987,396)	711	139,080
Hassanabdal	48,223,000	1350	12.75% (6,148,433)	480	100,465
Mastung	36,300,000	2200	15.75% (5,500,000)	360	100,834

Source: Offices of the respective institutions except for the cost per student per year which was obtained by dividing the total budget by the number of students.

It is because of this that, while cadet colleges have excellent boarding and lodging arrangements, spacious playgrounds, well-equipped libraries, laboratories and faculty with masters' degrees, the ordinary Urdu-medium (and Sindhi-medium) schools sometimes do not even have benches for pupils to sit on. In short, contrary to its stated policy of spending public funds on giving the same type of schooling to all, the state (and its institutions) actually spend more funds on privileged children for a privileged (English-medium) form of schooling. This perpetuates the socio-economic inequalities that have always existed in Pakistani society.

56.90 % boys in the cadet colleges belong to middle class backgrounds. The textbooks of cadet colleges are in English but they are mostly from the Textbook Boards. Moreover, as most students are boarders they are not exposed to cable TV as their elitist school counterparts are. Thus, possibly because of regimentation and closeness to the military in some cases, they are somewhat more aggressive and intolerant towards the religious minorities and women than the students of elitist English-medium schools. Their views about Kashmir, religious minorities and women are given below:

**Table 3. Militancy Among Cadet College/Public Schools  
(N=130)**

<b>Q. What should be Pakistan's priorities?</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
1	Take Kashmir away from India by an open war?	36.92	60.00	3.08
2	Take Kashmir away from India by supporting <i>Jihadi</i> <sup>1</sup> groups to fight with the Indian army?	53.08	40.00	6.92
3	Support Kashmir care through peaceful means only (i.e., no open war or sending <i>Jihadi</i> groups across the line of control)	56.15	36.92	6.92

Source: Survey 2003.

They are also less tolerant towards religious minorities than their counterparts in the elitist English-medium schools as the figures below illustrate:

**Table 4. Tolerance Among Cadet Colleges/Public Schools 2003  
(N=130)**

<b>Q. What should be Pakistan's priorities?</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
1	Give equal rights to Ahmedis <sup>2</sup> in all jobs etc?	41.54	36.92	21.54
2	Give equal rights to Pakistani Hindus in all jobs etc?	64.62	31.54	3.85
3	Give equal rights to Pakistani Christians in all jobs etc?	76.92	18.46	4.62
4	Give equal rights to men and women as in Western countries?	67.69	25.38	6.92

Source: Survey 2003.

They are as alienated from the peoples' culture and aspirations as other elitist children. Like them they too desire to preserve and perpetuate their privileged position by supporting English as the language of the domains of power in the country (see survey 2000 in Rahman 2002). The teachers of these schools are generally (56%) males from the middle classes (see Annexure-1 for details).

The teachers of these schools appear to be supportive of peace rather than war as the following figures indicate:

**Table 5. Militancy Among Cadet College/Public School Teachers  
(N=51)**

	Yes	No	Don't Know
1 Open War	19.61	68.63	11.76
2 <i>Jihadi</i> Groups	39.22	52.94	7.84
3 Peaceful means	66.66	19.61	13.73

Source: Annexure-2

They are tolerant of Hindus and Christians but not of Ahmedis and women as far as equality of rights is concerned:

**Table 6. Tolerance of Religious Minorities and Women in Cadet  
College/Public School Teachers -2003  
(N=51)**

	Yes	No	Don't Know
(1) Ahmedis	29.41	62.75	7.84
(2) Hindus	60.78	35.29	3.92
(3) Christians	60.78	33.33	5.88
(4) Women	37.25	58.82	3.92

Source: Annexure-2

These figures should be taken with a note of caution because the sample of 51 teachers is rather small. Moreover, in some schools military officers also teach the boys, albeit such schools were not part of this sample.

### **PRIVATE/ELITIST ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS**

Apart from the schools run by agencies of the state itself - the federal government, the armed forces, the bureaucracy - in contravention of the stated policy of providing vernacular-medium education at state expense, there are private schools, which deal in selling English at exorbitant prices. Private schools catering to the elite have existed since British times. In Pakistan the convents were such schools and most Anglicised senior members of the elite are from such institutions. These schools were not as expensive as those, which replaced them from 1985 onwards. The new schools have campuses spread all over the country though all are not of equal quality. They charge tuition fees of Rs. 1500 and more per month. They prepare students for the British Ordinary and Advance level examinations. Their faculty, especially at the senior levels, is paid better than government school teachers (Rs. 10,000 per month plus). However, there are vast differences in salaries even within the same school and full data on salaries are not released. On the whole women from the middle classes, some of whom are themselves from English-medium schools, are employed as teachers. Male teachers, however, tend to be from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The teaching methods in these institutions are more humane, modern, innovative and interesting than in the Urdu-medium schools and the *madrassas*<sup>3</sup>.

Books are printed abroad, have pictures and more general knowledge than is found in Textbook Board textbooks. The classics of English, generally in an abridged form, are used to teach English. However, the 'O' level examination makes the study of Pakistan studies, Islamic studies and Urdu compulsory even for these children.

Because of textbooks containing discourses originating in other countries as well as exposure to cable TV, fiction, etc. from Western countries the children from such schools tend to be more tolerant of the 'Other' - be it religious, the West or India - and less supportive of militant policies in Kashmir than their counterparts in other schools.

The present survey is on 116 students, 62 males and 52 females, of the average age of 15 who are in class-10 ('O' level) in schools of Islamabad and Lahore charging tuition fees of at least Rs 2500 per month. Most of them belong to the upper-middle and the upper classes (see Annexure-1 for details).

Besides what the students have written, an indicator of their socio-economic background is the high tuition fee their parents pay; their dress (Western and expensive); their lifestyle (travelling in cars, eating out, going to concerts, celebrating birthdays with parties and expensive gifts etc), and the houses they live in (modern, expensive, urban). They do not support militant policies as the following figures indicate:

**Table 7. Militancy Among Elitist English-medium School Students  
(N=116)**

<b>Q. What should be Pakistan's priorities?</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
1	Take Kashmir away from India by an open war?	25.86	64.66	9.48
2	Take Kashmir away from India by supporting <i>Jihadi</i> group to fight with the Indian army?	22.41	60.34	17.24
3	Support Kashmir cause through peaceful means only (i.e., no open war or sending <i>Jihadi</i> groups beyond the line of Control)	72.41	18.97	8.62

Source: Annexure-2. Figures do not add up correctly because some students ticked 'Yes' for questions 1 and/or 2 as well as 'Yes' to 3, which is contradictory.

They are also more tolerant of religious minorities and more supportive of giving equal rights to women than their counterparts in the Urdu-medium schools and the *madrassas*.

**Table 8. Tolerance Among Elitist English-medium School Students (N=116)**

<b>Q. What should be Pakistan's priorities?</b>			
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
1 Gives equal rights to Ahmedis in all jobs etc?	65.52	9.48	25.00
2 Give equal rights to Pakistani Hindus in all jobs?	78.45	13.79	7.76
3 Give equal right to Pakistani Christians in all jobs etc?	83.62	8.62	7.76
4 Give equal rights to men and women as in Western countries?	90.52	6.03	3.45

Source: Annexure-2.

However, it must be pointed out that some of those students who subsequently join the state as bureaucrats, military officers, or politicians create and implement policies, which are not always consistent with democratic values because of their strong elitist base. Moreover, whatever they may say in private in keeping with the fashion of their social circles, they do not change the militaristic and often risky policies about Kashmir as that would be unacceptable in the official circles they inhabit. Moreover they often mistake the corporate interest of their institutions with that of the country and support policies in the 'national interest' which, in fact, is in their own class or group, or institutional interest. Thus some of the policies of the older generation of students surveyed here contradict what is suggested by this survey.

The teachers of these schools, who happen to be mostly women, are also supportive of a peaceful foreign policy but are not as tolerant of religious minorities as their students.

**Table 9. Militancy and Tolerance Among Elitist English-medium School Teachers (N= 65, F= 47, M=18)**

<b>Abbreviated Questions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Open War	26.15	64.62	9.23
Jihadi Groups	38.46	50.77	10.77
Peaceful means	60.00	33.85	6.15
Ahmedis	43.07	36.92	20.00
Hindus	61.54	26.15	12.31
Christians	81.54	10.77	7.69
Women	78.46	13.85	7.69

NB: Figures for (3) are uninterpretable because some respondents ticked opinion (1) and/or (2) while also ticking (3). For details see Annexure-2.

One explanation for this observation - of teachers being less tolerant than their students - is that the teachers belong to middle-class socio-economic backgrounds (see Annexure-1 for details) whereas the students belong to more affluent and Westernized ones.

### CAREER PROSPECTS OF ENGLISH-MEDIUM STUDENTS

Products of English schools either go abroad to join multinational corporations and the international bureaucracy or drift back home to fashionable NGOs and foreign banks. Not as many join either the civil bureaucracy or the officer corps of the armed forces as they did in 1950s and 1960s. Those who take the armed forces and civil service competitive examinations do better than their vernacular-educated counterparts. As the armed forces release no figures, one can only conjecture by personal observation that those who are most fluent in English are at a great advantage in their career. For the bureaucracy, however, figures are available to confirm that products of English schools stand better chances of passing in the public service examination.

**Table 10. Results of Civil Services Examinations Expressed in Percentage**

	Year	Appeared %	Passed %
Vernacular-medium (including pseudo-English-medium)	1996	78	65
	1997	75	67
	1998	67	58
English-medium	1996	3	11.5
	1997	21	34
	1998	20	31

Source: *Annual Reports of the Federal Public Service Commission of Pakistan 1996, 1997, 1998*, Islamabad: Federal Public Service Commission, 1999.

Those classified here as pseudo-English-medium institutions are not given as such in the reports. They are such Federal Government and private schools that claim to be English-medium. They are included among the vernacular-medium schools because their students are only marginally more competent in English than the students of vernacular-medium schools.

### PRIVATE NON-ELITIST ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS

By far the largest numbers of the so-called English-medium schools are English-medium only in name. Accordingly to a 1987 survey of Rawalpindi-Islamabad there were 60 English-medium schools in Islamabad and 250 in Rawalpindi. Out of 250 only 39 were recognized schools (Awan 1987). In the matriculation examinations of 1999, a total of 119,673 candidates appeared from the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Lahore. Out of these, according to the records in the Boards' office, 6923 (5.8 percent) were from English-medium schools. Most of these candidates (6448) were from the city itself. The recent survey conducted by the government has given a total of 33,893 institutions of general education in the private

sector. Though the medium of instruction is not given most of them profess to be English-medium schools (Census Private 2001: 12). And, indeed, one can see such schools concentrated in the cities though they are fast appearing even in small towns now all over the country. Their fees range between Rs 50 and Rs 1500 per month, which is far higher than the fees in an average state vernacular school but lower than that of the elitist private English school. In these schools pretence is made of teaching most subjects in English. In general teachers write answers of all subjects on the board that students faithfully copy, memorize and reproduce in the examination. The Principal of the Federal Government Girls High Secondary Model School in Islamabad told the present author that her school was only a 'so-called' English school. Only mathematics and science subjects were taught in English while all the other subjects were taught in Urdu. And yet, so high is the demand for English that there are about 3000 students half of whom attend the evening classes (Naqvi 1999).

Recently, chains of non-elitist English-medium schools run by organized bodies have sprung up in Pakistan. One such organization is Language Enhancement and Achievement Programme (LEAP) run by the Aga Khan Education Service in the Northern Areas and Chitral. The LEAP courses 'attempt to impart teacher-specific language and to improve teachers' command of classroom language'. The teachers are taught English for three months in courses. In 1997 the programme was also extended to Chitral. It was expected to train 88 teachers in Chitral and 132 in the Northern Areas by the end of 1997. By the end of 1997 there were over 20 English-medium schools in the Gilit and Ghizer districts, which sent their teachers to the LEAP courses. In short, LEAP is increasing competence in English at the school level in a hitherto neglected area of Pakistan. (This information is from LEAP 1997 & field research.)

Another chain of schools goes by the name of Hira English-medium schools. It has been created by the Hira Educational Project in 1990 in Lahore. In 1997 the name was changed to Hira National Educational Foundation. The aim of this project is to educate students along both Islamic and modern lines. Thus Arabic and Islamic moral lessons are taught from class I but the books of science and mathematics are in English. Social studies is in Urdu and Urdu is compulsory. Since the children are from modest backgrounds, as are the teachers, interaction is generally in Urdu or the local language. At present there are 13 regions in which the schools operate. The total number of institutions is 215 including 4 colleges. About 45,000 students are enrolled in these institutions (Hira Central Directorate 2003 in Ahmed 2003). The author found class I children mostly speaking in Khan Kohistani in Hira School Matiltan, 9 kilometres from Kalam (Swat), though the teachers spoke to them in Urdu (Nabi 1998).

Yet another chain of Islamic schools, both Urdu- and English-medium, is the Siqara school system. A girls' school in a lower-middle-class locality in Lahore makes both students and teachers wear the *hijab* (scarf covering the head and breasts) while books are checked for their anti-Islamic content. Indeed, the principal of one of the boys' schools of the Siqara system told the present author that he had changed the pictures of women by drawing full sleeves and head scarves by his own pen in English books for use in their schools.

Indeed, it seems that the Islamic revivalist thinkers have realized how empowering English is and want to attract lower income groups through it. Thus, Khalid Ahmed has a point when he says that '90 percent' of the English-medium institutions are middle-class 'Islamist institutions' (Ahmed 1999: 5). While the percentage figures may be contested, there is no doubt that Islamists, especially those who are politically oriented, teach English because it enables students to enter the mainstream for positions of power in the *salariat*<sup>4</sup>. This policy has also been endorsed by the Jamaat-i-Islami which, while being against English-medium elitist schools, does not deny either secular education or English to the students who study in its institutions.

Yet another experiment is going on the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) where the children of the industrial workers are given English-medium education in schools, which are cleaner and better maintained than government Urdu-medium schools. Their teachers also claim to function in English and, judging by the qualifications of some of them, may be doing so. As yet 8 such schools have been established in different cities of the NWFP. They have 4388 students and their cost per student per year is Rs. 7138. But this includes free textbooks, free transport and even free uniform for the children of the workers. The tuition fee is Rs 30 per month for industrial workers but other children are charged higher fees (Hasan 2003 and information from the office of the Directorate of Education, NWFP). On the whole, for the cost, the workers' children have a better deal under the circumstances than they would get anywhere else.

### **PRODUCTS OF NON-ELITIST ENGLISH SCHOOLS**

The products of these schools are, in any case, less Westernized than those of the elitist English schools, especially schools with students from Westernized families. They are also not as fluent in English as the students of missionary schools used to be and those from the private elitist schools are now.

It seems to me that the idea behind the non-elitist English schools is good but, nevertheless, illusory. People want their children to learn English because it is the language of power and prestige. But calling a school English-medium does not make it cross the class boundaries, which go by the name of English. One learns to operate in a certain manner and speak English spontaneously through interaction with the peer group and family rather than teachers who themselves cannot operate in English naturally. This is where the illusion comes in. The parents spend a lot of money, which they can ill afford, chasing the elusive chimera of English. These are dreams these schools sell. This by itself would be wrong but what makes it worse is that people, deluded by the seemingly easy availability of English, make no effort to change this system..

### **CURRICULA OF ELITIST ENGLISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS**

The curricula of the elitist English-medium schools and the other English-medium schools are different. Let us first take the curricula of elitist schools like Beaconhouse, City School, Froebels, and so on. The books on English and Urdu (the only languages taught in these schools) are generally not of the Pakistani Textbook Boards till class IX and only if the student wants to appear in the Pakistani matriculation (Class X)

examination. Some schools, like Froebels, do not even permit their students to appear in the matriculation examination. All students take the British ordinary and advanced level school certificate examinations. Thus, most students study books originally written for Western school children. Some books have been especially reprinted for Pakistan but the changes made in them are minor - the clothes of women are Pakistani and characters sometimes have Pakistani names - while other books are still meant for a Western readership. These texts socialize a child into English-speaking Western culture. Children read about such classics as *Lorna Doone*, *Little Women*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Tom Brown's School Days* and famous figures like Florence Nightingale and so on. The world portrayed here is Western, middle-class, and successful. It is a secular world of nuclear families where women generally perform the household chores though they are sometimes seen as doing other work too. The overwhelming message of the texts is liberal and secular. Concepts like the segregation or veiling of women, ubiquitous religiosity, sectarianism or ethnicity get no support.

Even the Urdu textbooks are published by private publishers and are less supportive of state ideology than those of the textbook boards. However, all Pakistani children have to study Urdu, Pakistan Studies, and Islamic Studies, which expose them to official state ideology in varying degrees. In the 1950s and the early 1960s elitist English-medium school children did not study such subjects at all and may have been more Westernised than even elitist children are today.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, the products of English schools can be roughly divided into two kinds. The products of the elitist private schools, especially those which have a large majority of children from Westernized elitist homes; and those of the state-influenced schools. As for the products of the private English-medium non-elitist schools, they are not very different from the products of ordinary state-controlled vernacular-medium schools. Thus they cannot be included in the English medium elite, which genuine English-medium schools produce. There are, of course, shades between the elitist private school category and the state-influenced (cadet college) category. Very roughly, however, the former are more Westernized than other Pakistani children. The negative consequence of this is that they are alienated from Pakistan, especially from its indigenous languages and cultures. While many such people are neither aware nor in sympathy with the values, feelings and aspirations of their countrymen they are generally believers in liberal-humanist and democratic values. Thus they are less susceptible to sectarian prejudices or the persecution of non-Muslims in Pakistan. Being less exposed to nationalistic and militaristic propaganda they are also less prone than others to India-bashing and undue glorification of war. However, this liberalism is often held as an ideal norm. In real life most members of this category of people respond to situational pressures. Those among them who join the state machinery in any capacity persist in making and implementing policies that not necessarily reflect these ideal norms. Indeed, the memoirs of Pakistani senior military and civilian officers, many of them from English-medium institutions and trained in Anglicized services, reveal a mistrust of the norms of democracy which sometimes goes as mistrust of politicians and sometimes suspicion of illiterate voters.

The products of the state-influenced English schools have more in common with middle-class urban Pakistanis than the ones we have just described.

However, like them, they too are alienated from villagers and have little understanding of the indigenous cultures of the country. They are not susceptible to sectarian prejudices but, being nationalistic and militaristic, they are quite vocally anti-India and supportive of the military.

All the products of English schools, even those that are English-medium only in name, agree in regarding themselves as an elite - not about money and power, which they have any way - but with regard to talent and knowledge. They are alienated from their society whose values they hold in contempt. While there is no doubt that some of these values, such as that of the honour-killing of women for suspected sexual transgressions, are abominable and should be opposed, it does not mean that everything about Pakistani society is to be condemned. The English schools, then, produce people with only one redeeming feature that some of them, because of their liberal-humanist values, support human rights, democracy and freedom. Many of them, however, are liberal only in their lifestyle but not necessarily in values. Those with power in the state, at least so far as the generation in power at present is concerned, create and support militaristic policies, try to prevent the people from being genuinely empowered and acquiesce in discriminatory policies against religious minorities.. In short, the English-medium schools do not really contribute towards the creation of a democratic culture in Pakistan despite the fact that its products are aware of democratic values in the abstract.

## NOTES

1. This means those who believe in armed struggle in the name of Islam.
2. This refers to the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century declared himself a prophet, claiming to be a renewer of Islam. The Pakistan National Assembly declared the Ahmedis non-Muslims in 1974.
3. This means traditional Islamic school where Islamic theology and law are taught.
4. This is an English term concocted by the late Hamza Alavi or he might have borrowed it from somewhere. It means those who work for a salary with the state. In other words, state employees.

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## Annexure-1

### Monthly Income and Social Mobility of Students and Faculty in Different Educational Institutions in Pakistan

The figures below give the monthly income of the families of students and faculty as reported by them in our sample. Those who have not written the income, as well as those who have, have been tabulated separately. The correspondence with socio-economic class, however rough, is as follows:

Working (lower) class	=	Upto Rs 5000 per month.
Lower middle class	=	5001 – 10,000
Middle class	=	10,001-20,000
Upper middle class	=	20,001 – 50,000
Lower upper class	=	50,001 – 100,000
Middle upper class	=	Above 100,000

The income is for the whole family and not of the individuals earning it. In most cases income of women has not been written presumably because they are housewives and do not get paid. In case their income is written, the family income is calculated by adding their income to the income of the male earning member's income.

**Income of the Families of Elitist English School Faculty**

N = 65 (Percentages in brackets)

	Not written	Upto 5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001–20,000	20,001–50,000	50,000–100,000	Above 100,000
Pay self	11 of 65 (16.92)	03 of 54 (5.55)	22 of 54 (40.74)	18 of 54 (33.33)	10 of 54 (15.38)	01 of 54 (1.85)	Nil
Pay spouse	55 of 65 (84.62)	Nil	1 of 10 (10)	6 of 10 (60)	02 of 10 (20)	01 of 10 (10)	Nil
Husband and wife	N.A	Nil	Nil	3 of 10 (30)	04 of 10 (40)	02 of 10 (20)	01 of 10 (10)

Analysis: Most teachers have written their own income but not of their spouses. They fall between middle and upper middle class brackets. When husband and wife both earn, the family goes up in income even going into the lower upper class.

**Income of the Families of Elitist English School Students**

N = 116

	Not written	Upto 5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001 – 20,000	20,001–50,000	50,000–100,000	Above 100,000
Pay father	81 of 116 (69.83)	Nil	01 of 35 (2.86)	03 of 35 (8.57%)	18 of 35 (51.43)	08 of 35 (22.86)	05 of 35 (14.29)
Pay mother	101 of 116 (87.07)	1 of 15 (6.66)	03 of 15 (20)	02 of 15 (13.33)	08 of 15 (53.33)	1 of 15 (6.66)	Nil
Father and mother	N.A	1 of 15 (6.66)	02 of 15 (13.33)	Nil	04 of 15 (26.66)	05 of 15 (33.33)	03 of 15 (20)

Analysis: Most of them have not written their parents' income. Out of those who have most belong to the upper middle class. More than one third belong to the upper classes.

**Income of the Faculty of Cadet Colleges/Public Schools**

N= 51

	Not written	Upto 5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-20,000	20,001-50,000	50,000-100,000	Above 100,000
Pay self	1 of 51 (1.96)	1 of 50 (2.00)	17 of 50 (34.00)	28 of 50 (56.00)	4 of 50 (8.00)	Nil	Nil
Pay spouse	45 of 51 (88.24)	Nil	1 of 6 (16.66)	5 of 6 (83.33)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Husband and wife	N.A	Nil	Nil	1 of 6 (16.66)	5 of 6 (83.33)	Nil	Nil
Analysis:	Most have written their own income but not their wives'. They fall mostly in the middle class with families, where husband and wife both earn, falling mostly in the upper middle class.						

**Annexure-2**

**SURVEY 2003**

**Survey of Schools and *Madrassas***

This survey was conducted between December 2002 and April 2003 with the help of two research assistants Imran Farid and Shahid Gondal whom I take this opportunity to thank. The survey was conducted in Islamabad (myself), Rawalpindi (myself), Peshawar (myself), Karachi (myself), Mandi Bahauddin (Shahid Gondal), Lahore, Faisalabad and Multan (Imran Farid). It was a stratified, non-random, survey because a complete list of all target institutions was not available. Moreover, we had to restrict ourselves to urban areas because we neither had the time nor the resources to venture into rural ones. The survey was financially supported by the Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC), Karachi, to which I am very grateful.

Institutions were used as clusters but only students of class 10 and equivalent were given questionnaires in Urdu or English. They were told that, since they were not supposed to give their names, they should not hesitate to give their real views. After this the questionnaire was read out and explained. The filled-in questionnaires were collected at the end of the session.

The major strata are (1) Urdu-medium school, (2) elitist English-medium schools (3) Cadet Colleges/Public Schools and (4) *Madrassas*. There is a further stratification between the students and the teachers of these institutions. Gender-wise breakdown is also available. The following chart helps explain these strata:

<b>TEACHERS</b>			
	Men	Women	Total
English-medium	18	47	65
Cadet college/public schools	51	Nil	51
Urdu-medium	42	58	100
<i>Madrassas</i>	27	Nil	27
Grand Total	138	105	243

<b>STUDENTS</b>			
	Men	Women	Total
English-medium	62	52	114
Cadet college/public schools	130	Nil	130
Urdu-medium	123	107	230
<i>Madrassas</i>	142	Nil	142
Grand Total	457	159	616

As the views of each stratum are taken separately, they do not represent their proportional share in the student population of Pakistan. The ages of the students are as follows:

<b>Institutions</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Range</b>
Cadet colleges	15.5	15	12-19
<i>Madrassas</i>	19	20	14-27
English-medium schools	14.1	15	13-18

In the case of the *madrassas* the range is higher because some of the class groups had older boys who had joined the seminary late. In the 'O' level groups both 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> were represented. Urdu-medium schools had only class-10 clusters.

There are two shortcomings: first, the number of *madrassa* teachers is very less; and secondly, the population of rural areas as well as Baluchistan, the interior of Sindh, Northern Areas could not be represented. The first problem is because *madrassa* teachers were very reluctant to fill in the questionnaires. The second, as already mentioned, is because of lack of time and resources.

**Consolidated Data of Opinions Indicating Militancy and Tolerance Among three Types of Schools Students in Pakistan in Survey 2003 (in percentages)**

Abbreviated Questions			<i>Madras</i>	Urdu-medium	English-medium	Cadet Colleges/ Public Schools	Govt Colleges (326)	Public Universities (206)	Private Universities (133)
1	Open War	Yes	59.86	39.56	25.86	36.92	46.01	34.95	35.34
		No	31.69	53.04	64.66	60.00	48.47	55.34	57.89
		Don't Know	8.45	7.39	9.48	3.08	5.52	9.71	6.77
2	<i>Jihadi</i> groups	Yes	52.82	33.04	22.41	53.08	50.00	46.12	34.59
		No	32.39	45.22	60.34	40.00	38.04	43.20	57.14
		Don't Know	14.79	21.74	17.24	6.92	11.96	10.68	8.27
3	Peaceful means	Yes	33.80	75.65	72.41	56.15	60.43	58.25	57.14
		No	54.93	18.26	18.97	36.92	22.70	28.64	35.34
		Don't Know	11.27	6.09	8.62	6.92	16.87	13.11	7.52
4	Ahmedis	Yes	12.68	46.95	65.52	41.54	38.04	38.83	40.60
		No	82.39	36.95	9.48	36.92	38.34	49.51	36.84
		Don't Know	4.93	16.09	25.00	21.54	23.62	11.65	22.56
5	Hindus	Yes	16.90	47.39	78.45	64.62	59.20	54.37	69.92
		No	76.06	42.61	13.79	31.54	31.90	38.83	21.05
		Don't Know	7.04	10.00	7.76	3.85	8.89	6.80	9.02
6	Christians	Yes	18.31	65.65	83.62	76.92	72.09	66.99	78.95
		No	73.24	26.52	8.62	18.46	21.17	29.13	14.29
		Don't Know	8.45	7.83	7.76	4.62	6.75	3.88	6.77
7	Women	Yes	16.90	75.22	90.52	67.69	65.34	64.56	76.69
		No	77.46	17.39	6.03	25.38	30.98	31.55	17.29
		Don't Know	5.63	7.39	3.45	6.92	3.68	3.88	6.02

NB: Figures for (3) are uninterpretable because some respondents ticked opinion (1) and/or (2) while also ticking (3).

**Comparative Chart for Opinions of Faculty Members of Different Educational Institutions**

			<i>Madras</i> ssas (27)	Urdu- medium schools (100)	English- medium schools (65)	Cadet College s/ Public Schools (51)	Govt Colle ges (127)	Private Univer sities (44)	Public Universit ies (127)
	Open War	Yes	70.37	20	26.15	19.61	20.47	20.45	14.17
		No	22.22	70	64.62	68.63	68.50	63.64	77.17
		Don't Know	7.41	10	9.23	11.76	11.02	15.91	8.66
2	<i>Jihadi</i> groups	Yes	59.26	19	38.46	39.22	18.11	34.09	25.98
		No	26.63	68	50.77	52.94	63.78	45.45	62.99
		Don't Know	11.11	13	10.77	7.84	18.11	20.45	11.02
3	Peace ful means	Yes	29.63	85	60.00	66.66	77.17	68.18	75.59
		No	66.67	10	33.85	19.61	13.39	18.18	18.11
		Don't Know	3.70	5	6.15	13.73	9.45	13.64	6.30
4	Ahmedi s	Yes	3.70	27	43.07	29.41	32.28	59.09	50.39
		No	96.23	65	36.92	62.75	52.76	29.55	34.65
		Don't Know	NIL	8	20.00	7.84	14.96	11.36	14.96
5	Hindus	Yes	14.81	37	61.54	60.78	41.73	68.18	66.14
		No	85.19	58	26.15	35.29	48.03	22.73	25.98
		Don't Know	NIL	5	12.31	3.92	10.24	9.09	7.87
6	Chris tians	Yes	18.52	52	81.54	60.18	59.06	75.00	68.50
		No	77.77	42	10.77	33.33	32.28	15.91	24.41
		Don't Know	3.70	6	7.69	5.88	8.66	9.09	7.09
7	Women	Yes	3.70	61	78.46	37.25	66.14	79.55	71.65
		No	96.67	33	13.85	58.82	30.71	15.91	22.05
		Don't Know	NIL	6	7.69	3.92	3.15	4.55	6.30