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## PROSPECTS OF TEACHING OF PAKISTAN STUDIES: AIMS, PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

### Abstract

*Pakistan studies is taught as compulsory subject at secondary and higher secondary level to disseminate knowledge about history, establishment, geography, resources, climate, industry, foreign policy, administrative structure, human and constitutional developments in Pakistan. This paper examines the problems, issues and challenges related to teaching of Pakistan Studies at secondary and higher secondary level. Paper based on the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews from male and female teachers teaching Pak studies as a subject at public and private schools of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Results revealed that students feel Pak Studies as a boring subject. Teachers prefer to teach this course through lecture method instead of applying activity based teaching and discussion method. Students, school administration as well as parents give more preference to science subjects. Any school teacher can teach Pakistan Studies. It does not matter if he/she has knowledge about this course or otherwise. Classes of Pakistan Studies are usually held in last periods. Text books of Pakistan Studies usually do not contain activities. Textbooks contain more facts and less explanations. The subject is exclusively taught through books, teachers just convey the information text books already containing.*

**Keywords:** Secondary School Teachers, Teaching method, Pakistan Studies, Problems and Issues.

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## **Introduction**

In Pakistan Teacher education is leaping into the future. Scheme of Study for Pakistan was updated during 2006 and augmented by National Professional Standards during 2008. This is the latest milestone in journey toward standards based teacher education in the country (GoP, 2012). Pakistan Studies is a compulsory subject and an integrated area of study that draws upon various social science disciplines such as geography, history, anthropology, economics, political science, and sociology related to Pakistan. This subject is compulsory at the secondary school and higher secondary school levels in Pakistan (GoP, 2012). Similarly, many departments of social sciences of universities are offering Bachelor Studies, Master Studies, and Philosophy degrees in this subject. In addition, many research institutes, international and national organizations are engaged in collaborative teaching, research, and exchange programmes in the field of teacher education in Pakistan. These organizations are providing pluralist platforms for discussions to teachers (GoP, 2012). Pakistan Studies is being taught at secondary and higher secondary level to inculcate knowledge about history, cultures, geography, resources, climate, industry, foreign policy, contemporary problems and issues of Pakistan (Ali, 2010). Teaching of Pakistan Study aims to enhance student's knowledge about society, culture, people, history and geography of Pakistan (GoP, 2010). Moreover, teaching of this discipline aims to inculcate knowledge about languages, literature, resources in Pakistan, historical perspectives, administrative system of the country, foreign relations, supports, political & constitutional developments,

human rights, knowledge about renowned *sufis* and economic developments in the county (GoP, 2010). Teaching of Pakistan Studies as a subject provides a background knowledge to the students about creation of Pakistan, Pakistan Movement and the political developments in Pakistan. Teaching of this subject also covers teaching about the salient features of Pakistan such as land, economy, human development, and domestic issues and international current affairs. Moreover, this subject aims to create awareness among students about Pakistan as an enlightened nation and to assist students in identifying various perspectives on current, persistent, and controversial issues in Pakistan. Similarly, teaching of Pakistan Studies aims to create a sense of patriotism, tolerance, active citizenship, respect for cultural diversity and religious harmony to make students active and responsible citizens (GoP, 2012). Contents included in Teaching of Pakistan Studies covers areas as concept of civilization, skill development, two-nation theory, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Allama Iqbal, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, key economic, social, and political factors contributing to the development of modern Pakistan (GoP, 2012).

It seems that contents included in the curriculum are quite comprehensive and cover all the aspects about Pakistan. Although Pakistan Studies is taught as a compulsory subject from 9th class to university level, yet majority of students not know about the life achievements of famous leaders of Pakistan and remained unaware about the important historical events of Pakistan. Books of Pakistan Studies being taught from class IX to university level contain almost similar topics. Selected topics are being taught in this subject since long, but students do not consider these topics

beneficial. Text books contents should not mould learners to parochial; rather they should be to open to reflect over past mistakes (Dawan, 2010). There is need to include more informative current topics in Pakistan Studies text books, especially the problems youth are facing in the country. Text books may contain interesting stories causing enlightenment to motivate students to achieve what their ancestors failed to achieve, instead of containing stereotyped contents. Researcher developed interest in this area and intended to study the problems related to the teaching of Pakistan Studies.

### **Literature Review**

Inclusion of Pakistan Studies as a compulsory subject at higher secondary and secondary level during 1980 aims to promote national integration, cohesion, solidarity and harmony among the new generation (Malik & Zaheer, 2012). Teaching of Pakistan Studies aims to generate devoted Pakistanis having no provincial and spiritual biases, but there is a dire need to teach this subject through projects relating to students' real life and through audio visual aids to make this subject more interesting for learners (Sufiana 2012).

Almost similar contents are being taught in social studies from primary to secondary level. On the whole both subjects facilitate students to discuss and analyze societal issues of Pakistani society. Social studies include international, national and local community issues. Social studies is an interdisciplinary subject, incorporating geography, literacy, history, government and current affairs. Both subject aims to produce well-informed citizens. Similarly, teaching of Pakistan Studies is a major subject

being taught to prospective teachers in Teacher Training Institutes (TTI's) to enable future teachers to learn about all aspects Pakistan. Teachings of Pakistan Studies to prospective teachers contain methodologies, strategies and planning for effective teaching of this course. Major objectives of teaching of Pakistan Studies include:

- To define the salient features of Pakistan such as its land, economy, human development, domestic, international and current affairs.
- Understanding about society, democratic citizenship, cultural diversity, and religious harmony.
- Explore values and dispositions such as commitment to the common good, justice, social responsibility and action.
- Developing personal qualities such as self-esteem, confidence and initiatives.
- Understanding strategic position in international politics, especially its relations with neighboring and Muslim countries.
- To develop patriotism in the hearts of students so that they may become good citizens (Gop, 2010, GoP, 2012).

It seems proper attention is given to develop the curriculum and scheme of studies of the subject. Why students remained unaware of importance of the subject? Why students take less interest in the subject and give importance to other subjects. The following factors may contribute towards lack of interest of students in Pakistan Studies:

- Usually schools give more preference to science subjects and hardly 3-4 classes of Pakistan Studies are held in a weak.
- Any teacher in-competent to teach other subjects can teach Pakistan Studies. It does not matter if he/she has knowledge about it or not.

- Classes of Pakistan Studies are usually held in boring way, teachers' keeps on giving lectures without ensuring students class participation.
- Teachers do not explain well, they just ask students to read one topic and assign homework to their students.
- Pakistan Study textbooks contain more facts, less explanations and fewer activities for students.
- The subject is exclusively taught through text books, teachers just convey the information text books already containing.

### **Objectives of the study**

This study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To study the aims and objectives of teaching of Pakistan Studies reflected in curriculum at secondary and higher secondary levels in Pakistan.
2. To study the problems and issues involved in the teaching of Pakistan Studies at Secondary and Higher Secondary level.
3. To suggest way forward recommendations to cope with the problems involved in the teaching of Pakistan Studies.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by following research questions:

1. What is importance of teaching of Pakistan Studies reflected in national level documents?
2. To what extent teachers and students take interest in Pakistan Studies subject at secondary level in Pakistan?.
3. Which type of problems Pakistan Studies teachers are facing at secondary level in Pakistan?
4. Which types of practices of teaching of Pakistan Studies are existing at secondary level?

## **Methodology**

The research design of this study was qualitative survey in nature and it was delimited to the male and female teachers teaching Pakistan Studies in public and private secondary & higher secondary schools situated in rural and urban areas of Rawalpindi Islamabad. Convenient sampling technique was used to select the sample. The interviews were conducted in person by taking prior consent and permission from the participants and concerned authorities. Researcher recorded the interview by using audio recorder and mobile phone recorder.

## **Research Instrumentation & Validation**

The study was qualitative in nature therefore; an interview guide was used for data collection. Validation of the research instrument is crucial to maintain accuracy of results. Therefore, research pilot tested the interview questions to remove the ambiguities, misconceptions, and weaknesses of the question statements. Pilot testing was conducted with two subject experts and two respondents. Questions were revised in the light of suggestions given by the experts and keeping in the views of respondents.

## **Results**

Almost similar contents are taught to the B.Ed level prospective teachers in various teaching training institutes. A comparison of the contents being taught at International Islamic University Islamabad and Government College University of Faisalabad is available at Annex-I: Results revealed that there was no difference between the views of male and female secondary school teachers on the problems which are negatively affecting teaching of Pakistan Study. Common problems shared by

respondents include: lack of class room resources; students interest in Pakistan Studies subject; parent's attention and lack of interest of heads towards the teaching of this subject. Results revealed that teachers of Pakistan Studies were facing following problems while teaching this course to secondary and higher secondary students:

### ***Pakistan Studies as a Boring Subject***

Teachers reported that secondary and higher secondary level students perceive Pakistan Studies as a boring subject. Majority of teachers reported that students take less interest in Pakistan Studies as compared to other subjects. There may be multiple reasons that of student's take less interest in Pakistan Studies lack of interest. Teachers fails to engender their students interest in this subject. Teachers usually teach this subject through traditional approach such that lecture method instead of discussions and activity based teaching.

### ***Time Table related issues in teaching of Pakistan studies***

Majority of Pakistan Studies teachers reported that "Usually Pakistan studies subject period is reflected in the time table at the end of the day. Students feel tired and take less interest. Perhaps Head teachers and teacher deputed to set time table do not understand the importance of Pakistan studies as compared to other subjects.

### ***Students consider Pakistan studies as an easy subject***

Many teachers reported another problem that, 'students consider Pakistan studies as an easy subject. Consequently, students do not take full interest and give due time to this subject as compared to other subjects'. Majority of secondary level students prefer to opt science combination in future. Therefore, they not pay due attention to Pak Studies.

### ***Audio-visual aids for Pakistan studies***



Majority of respondents considered that audio-visual aids, especially multi-media, video lecturer, videos of historical events are not provided to them to make the teaching process more effective.

### ***Professional development related issues***

Majority of school teachers reported that training programmes are precisely meant for university and college teachers. There is a dire need to arrange workshops, symposiums, and conferences for Pak Study teachers to enable them to learn about evidence based effective teaching approaches. In Pakistan, teachers have very little involvement in such matters as policy development, the process of curriculum development or writing of textbooks etc., (Vazir, & Retallick, 2007). Teaching applies knowledge and scientific principles for setting an environment which facilitate students' learning. It is a skillful activity which entirely based on an interaction between the teacher and the students. (Malik, 2012).

### ***Absence or Lack of Resource Material***

Many teachers pointed out the importance of class room sources. Teachers were of the view that Pakistan study teachers manage to develop classroom resources. Class room resource center may contain textbooks, encyclopedia, photographs, historical letters, maps, charts, videos, cassettes, coins, stamps and old remnants to make the teaching of Pakistan studies more effective. Many teachers reported that practice to invite guest speakers, renowned personalities, famous authors, journalists not exists in their schools. School management preferred to invite politicians, ministers or secretaries. The effectiveness and quality of teaching depends upon academically competent teachers and quality of material provided to the teachers, and teachers care about the wellbeing of learners (Suleman et al 2012).

### ***Special field trips***

Majority of private and public school teachers reported that they failed to take their students to selected sites, rather school administration decides the destiny. Special field trips in the perspective of teaching of Pakistan study are rarely managed. Teachers were facing difficulties in describing the tip management practices existing in their schools. As a practice school management, last periods after break are reserved for this subject.

### ***Methodology related Issues***

Majority of teachers were teaching Pakistan Studies through lecture method. Teachers rarely bring maps or globe or try to organize cultural sessions in which students can share their culture. Teachers were of the view that it's a really a difficult task to teach Pakistan studies in an effective way and to attract students towards this subject. But they were of the view that they can make teaching more interesting through different classroom activities and field trips to forts and museums. Going to that particular place is much better than telling them about those in a classroom. Field trips help out students to learn in a better way. Pakistan study include about geography and history, students consider these subjects very boring, its challenging for them to motivate students to take interest in this subject. Similarly, many students confessed that history and geography are very dull and boring subjects. No subject is boring only teachers make it boring due to absence of humor. Using lecture method may frustrate the students and students take less interest in the subject. Due to boring lectures in Pak Study lesson becomes more casual for students. Teachers may decide that which contents can be best taught through lecture method and which contents can be taught through discussions or visits to historical places. I prefer to teach Pakistan studies through lecture method, as it is content based subject and difficult for teachers to plan classroom activities.

Teaching through activity method is more difficult as compare to lecture method. ABL required time to plan interesting activities for students. Time management to plan activities remained a challenge for teachers. School management prefer to teach through lecture method. Learning through ABL is time taking process. Storytelling method, discussions method, question answer method and participatory method are suitable to teach Pak Study, but teacher solely rely on lecture method.

I provide a chance to my students to give their point of view, but students belonging to rural areas failed to provide their point of view according to the topic. Limited resources provided to the public-sector schools become hindrances to manage field trips to museums. The societal perception and parents' negligence about the subject lead students to take less interest in this subject. Parents always prefer their children to concentrate on science subjects. Consequently, students do not take Pak Study seriously. Teachers failed to invite student's attention towards the importance of Pak Study, consequently students think it's a boring subject.

Major challenges involved in teaching of Pakistan Studies include, special in-service training of Pak Study teachers, limited resources, lack of awareness about the importance of the subject and less interest of students. Under such circumstances, it is very difficult to achieve the objectives of teaching of this course.

The students think that it is difficult to memorize lengthy historical part included in Pak Study. Similarly, it's a digital age students are not habitual to memorize data. Students are living in push button era. They dislike memorizing dates and events. Consequently, students perceive it's a very boring subject. The repetition of contents is also one reason of boredom. Teachers, students and parents equally are not aware that Pak study is taught to produce good and well civilized citizens. The most important thing is to generate student's interest in this subject by asking students about their backgrounds, their interest, and how

they perceive the real societal issues. Teachers need to do a lot of study, and they need to give correct information to the students because many things are written wrong in the texts. Teacher should increase his/her learning first.

Teachers love for country and self-motivation to disseminate knowledge about this homeland also affect the teaching of Paki study. Pak study teachers may launch a campaign to display charts, pictures of national heroes and cultural distinctions of provinces. Teachers ought to take students to national assembly, senate and courts to facilitate them to understand the functioning of various institutions. Students found the subject boring because they are forced by the teacher to memorize the historical events. Teachers' commitment ascribed to them by the community, parents and students is a major factor in determining the quality of teaching. A number of factors can be attributed to the syndrome of teachers' lack of professional commitment (Vazir, & Retallick, 2007).

### **Recommendations**

1. Text books of Pak study should be developed in a way that it should develop students interest towards the subject to widen their outlooks and open new vistas about real societal issues.
2. Text books should carry a variety of activities and questions, so that students may learn Pak Study with fun. Social Studies text books developed by Oxford press set a good analogy to prepare Pak study text books. Similarly, Pak Study text books should contain a variety of web and printed material references to facilitate learners to learn more about Pakistan.
3. The placement of Pakistan studies subject in the time table should be reflected in school time table at proper hours, so that student's may not feel get tired & dull and take interest in subject actively.

4. Pakistan studies teachers should plan interesting activities for students so that students may not take this subject as dull and boring. Activity based teaching and watching selected movies, recorded interviews to students can be change the perspectives of students about this subject. Teacher of Pakistan study may set class room resources, containing memorable pictures of historical events, quotations of Pakistani heroes to develop interest of students in this subject. Frequent fields trips to historical places, museums must be arranged for students of Pakistan studies to enable them to develop better understanding of the subject.
5. Pakistan Study teachers may invite guest speakers, historical personalities, national heroes, aged persons, especially local social workers in the Pakistan study class to make the learning process more interesting.
6. The practice that any teacher can teach Pakistan Studies should be banned. Qualified teachers having specialization in teaching of Pakistan studies should be hired only for the teaching of Pak studies. There is a dire need to ensure the professional development of Pakistan studies teachers.
7. Pakistan Studies being one of the most important and most interesting subjects is dealt with the worst way. The problems related to Pakistan Studies are not only confined to the textbooks of Pakistan Studies. Rather problems related to Pak Studies are multi-dimensional ranging from the teachers to curriculum development.
8. It seems that teaching of Pakistan studies has not achieved the dreamed goals, because serious efforts have not been made to ensure that to what extent Pakistan Study teachers are contributing to make secondary and higher secondary level students responsible. To what extent Pak Study teachers are motivating students for social services.
9. It is said that lesson itself is not interesting, only teachers made it interesting. It is responsibility of Pak Study teachers to make

their lessons more interesting, enjoyable and informative for students. Pakistan study teachers need to understand the vitality of teaching of the subject and responsibilities.

10. Provision of class room resources related to teaching of Pakistan Studies to the subject teachers can play an important role in strengthening the teaching practices of teaching of Pakistan Study teachers. Resources like audio visual aids relating to the content of Pakistan studies for SL may be provided in schools (Malik, 2012).

## **Discussions**

Findings of this study revealed that Pakistan Study teachers emphasized on memorization of concepts related to this subject. Teachers are not satisfied that objectives of teaching of this subject are achieved. Pakistan studies teachers perceived that oral lectures can develop in students' chosen social values and traits of a citizenship desired by the state. Majority of teachers use lecture strategy for teaching of Pakistan studies. Inquiry strategy, project strategy and discussion method are usually ignored by the Pakistan studies teachers. Although usage of Audio Visual aids makes lessons more interesting for students, yet Pak Study teachers do not prefer to use maps, charts, or other teaching aids during Pakistan Study lessons. Teachers do not plan lesson to make learning of Pakistan studies interesting for students. Findings of the study this study matches with the findings of the study conducted by (Malik, 2012) Pak study teachers believe on memorization of taught concepts and emphasize on oral lectures. Teaching of Pakistan Studies cannot develop in students' desired traits of a citizenship and requisite social values. Maps, charts or other teaching aids for teaching of content related to Pakistan Studies are not available in secondary schools. Importantly, Pakistan studies teachers do not relate the taught concepts with real life situation (Malik, 2012).

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