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Political Education and Civic Engagement in Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Youth Participation

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Abstract: *The following study analytically discusses political literacy, citizenship and youth participation in the format of Pakistan education system. In this paper, the role of political education through the delivered and taught curricula in secondary and higher learning institutions is discussed. Examining curricular content, teaching approaches, and political learning environment within and through institutions, the research maps areas of weakness in the development of civility, political awareness and education, and democratic citizenship engagement. Furthermore, it explores how extra curriculum activities, Youth Structuring Organizations and social networking sites influence the political dispositions of the youths of Pakistan. From interviews conducted with various educators, policymakers, as well as on the content analysis of the textbooks and teaching materials, the study uncovers a subject-object relationship which situates state democracy and the youth's emancipative democracy in conversation. On this premise, the study postulates that contrary to the belief that formal education, youth has few avenues to exercise critical political engagement, information channels including activism, social networks, and civil society structures are central in fostering political participation among youths. Finally, this analysis presents proposals for enhancing the causes of political education to enhance youth capabilities and agency to participate effectively in Pakistani politics and other related activities.*

Key Words: Education, Pedagogy, Civic Engagement, Youth Participation, Political Education

Introduction

Political enlightenment and democracy are preminent for any democratic nation, these act as basic tenets of informed and active citizenship as well as the preservation of democracy. In a commonly volatile political environment like Pakistan which has undergone a transition phase in the last couple of years and is a developing country mainly with a young population, politics as an aspect of education or civil knowledge and its insignificance for the young generation remains a neglected area of concern which is least addressed at both primary and secondary educational level. But even today, political awareness is considered a crucial aspect with increased technological advancement, more connectivity and political instabilities around the globe, Pakistani education system fails to enable young citizens to be politically aware and active. This deficit in the political education is further worsened by the political culture characterized by patronage, inequality and restricted young people's political participation opportunities. The educational purpose with regard to the development of political awareness and the strategies of active civil involvement presents the most crucial interest concerning the degree to which young people in Pakistan are ready to be involved in the processes of democracy (Hahn, 1998).

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State curricula for formal education are expected to foster political identity and social responsibility. However, concerns persist about the promotion of specific political ideologies, the procedural focus of political education, and the lack of emphasis on competencies essential for active citizenship. This review examines the nature of political education in Pakistan, including the content of political science and social studies syllabi, teaching strategies, and opportunities for student engagement in the political arena. Beyond the classroom, political learning extends to youth participation in social and political movements, activism, and social media. With young people increasingly leveraging these informal platforms to voice concerns and mobilize for change, it raises questions about how these pathways complement or challenge formal education structures. This study critically analyzes curriculum, pedagogy, and youth political participation in Pakistan, focusing on how the education system facilitates or hinders youth engagement. Employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, the study assesses the impact of political education on fostering political awareness and empowering responsible citizens. It also provides actionable recommendations to enhance political education, ensuring future leaders are well-equipped to contribute effectively. Ultimately, this research adds to the discourse on how education shapes political socialization, leadership development, and democracy in Pakistan. (Nguyen, [2019](#); Iqbal et al., [2023](#); Shafique, [2024](#)).

Literature Review

This study examines the professional development of three key groups in education: policymakers, institutional leaders, and teachers. Through an analysis of existing literature, it highlights significant research interest in teachers' professional development, as they are central to education delivery. However, there is a notable lack of research on the professional growth of institutional leaders and policymakers. While teachers receive substantial attention, school leaders like principals and administrators—who implement policies and manage daily operations remain marginalized in discussions on professionalism. Similarly, scant attention is given to policymakers, whose roles involve creating educational laws, policies, and resource allocation. Despite the far-reaching impact of their decisions, their professional learning needs are largely overlooked. The study begins by outlining the characteristics of professional development, emphasizing its importance in enhancing knowledge, skills, leadership, and management capabilities across all levels of education. It then reviews theories and practices relevant to professional development for teachers, leaders, and policymakers. This includes examining collaborative learning, leadership development frameworks, and capacity-building strategies. Practical examples are assessed to explore the structure of professional development, the training programs available, and their effectiveness for different groups within the educational system. (Kadiwal & Durrani, [2018](#); Maguire, [2019](#); Dean, [2005](#)).

This article addresses a gap in the literature on professional development, particularly at the meso level (institutional leaders) and macro level (policymakers). Meso-level professional development focuses on individuals at the institutional level, such as principals and administrators, who play a critical role in enhancing teacher and learner capacities, thereby influencing professional practices. Macro-level professional learning targets policymakers, including government officials and education ministries, who shape the overarching framework of the education system. Despite their importance, these groups receive significantly less attention in professional development studies compared to teachers. By exploring this underrepresented area, the study enriches academic understanding of the unique needs and challenges faced by educational leaders and policymakers. It critically examines the current state of professional development across teachers, institutional leaders, and policymakers, highlighting the abundant literature on teacher development while underscoring the scarcity of research for the other two groups. Through a comprehensive review of the literature on knowledge mobilization and professional learning, the study offers insights into how these groups can be better supported, aiming to bridge this gap in understanding and practice. (Lall, [2012](#); Khan, [2022](#)).

The structure of political education in Pakistan's school system is shaped by three main components: ideologeme, traditional teaching methods, and rote learning-based assessment. These elements influence what students learn about politics, democracy, and citizenship, with far-reaching consequences for their understanding. While the education system aims to provide fundamental knowledge on political systems, governance, and history, there are several issues with current approaches. The curriculum is heavily influenced by the state's political agenda, focusing on nationalism and ideological discourses. In subjects



like Pakistan Studies, taught from primary to secondary levels, students primarily learn about the country's history, the creation of Pakistan, and the role of its founding fathers. This selective approach often discourages critical thinking and original analysis, offering a polarized view of history and political development. A 2017 British Council report highlighted how textbooks promote ideological propaganda, leaving little room for alternative viewpoints. For example, students learn about the leadership of figures like Muhammad Ali Jinnah in the context of the independence struggle, but the complexities of governance, politics, and state-building post-independence are rarely addressed. Additionally, the curriculum reflects a military-dominated culture, with minimal attention to civilian government or democratic processes. Political education is weak in areas like current political affairs, democracy, rights, and active citizenship. While students learn about government structures, there is little focus on how these systems operate or how individuals can participate. A 2019 Gallup Pakistan survey revealed that only 38% of youth aged 18–30 received formal education on democratic processes, voting, and politics, highlighting the curriculum's failure to prepare students for active political engagement. From a teaching perspective, political education remains traditional, with most instruction focused on rote memorization. Teachers typically present content without encouraging critical thinking or group discussions. This outdated approach reinforces the practice of cramming for exams rather than fostering deep understanding. Saud et al, [2020](#); Westheimer & Kahne, [2004](#); Bano et al., [2021](#)).

This approach is prevalent in subjects like Pakistan Studies and Civics, where the focus is primarily on memorization rather than analysis and argumentation. A 2020 UNICEF report found that 73% of Pakistan's educators use low-engagement teaching methods, relying heavily on textbooks and rote learning, with minimal student participation. Many teachers also lack training in modern teaching methods, which makes it difficult to encourage critical thinking on political content. A 2018 Pakistan Education Task Force survey revealed that 65% of teachers in rural areas had not received training on teaching political subjects, and 35% of those who had received training still didn't learn effective discussion techniques. In contrast, some urban private schools have adopted more student-centered teaching methods, such as group discussions and the use of modern teaching aids like PowerPoint. However, these practices are not widespread due to the unequal distribution of resources. A 2019 World Bank report noted that rural students have limited access to these modern techniques, which affects their learning outcomes. The assessment methods in political education also have significant drawbacks. In Pakistan, paper-based exams dominate political subjects, including Pakistan Studies and Civics. These exams focus on factual knowledge rather than critical thinking or the ability to apply knowledge to real-world political issues. The Punjab Education Department's 2016 report revealed that 80% of assessments in public schools were written exams that tested historical facts, political leaders, and constitutional provisions, without allowing students to demonstrate analytical skills. This exam-based system stifles creativity and discourages political engagement. A 2018 study by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics found that less than 30% of students engaged in debates or political discussions in class. As a result, students are not prepared to actively participate in political processes. The 2017 Gallup Pakistan Youth Survey revealed that only 20% of youth participated in political activities, such as voting or attending meetings, and just 7% volunteered for civic issues. Therefore, the political content taught, the teaching methods used, and the assessment practices in schools significantly shape students' understanding of politics and citizenship. The curriculum's ideological bias, reliance on rote learning, and the focus on exams limit students' ability to develop critical thinking skills, engage with contemporary politics, and actively participate in the political process. Reforms should focus on updating the curriculum to be more diverse and culturally sensitive, increasing student involvement, and introducing more constructive methods of assessment. These reforms would enhance political literacy and foster a politically informed and active youth, capable of contributing to Pakistan's democratic processes. (Wiseman, [2010](#); Yasir et al., [2023](#); Lall, [2009](#)).

This paper explores the connection between political education and youth political participation within the context of Pakistan's educational system, social culture, and political environment. While political education is meant to prepare youth for engagement in the political sphere, providing them with the necessary knowledge to understand political processes, in Pakistan, it is often formalized and disconnected from actual political processes and civic activities. As a result, the impact of political education on youth political and civil engagement remains minimal. Political education in Pakistan is mainly confined to subjects like Pakistan Studies and Civics, which are compulsory. These subjects focus heavily on Pakistan's

history, founding fathers, political initiatives, and systems, but are often criticized for presenting a politically biased, one-sided view of Pakistan's political history. The curriculum rarely addresses current political issues, democratic principles, or the role of citizenship, leading to an oversimplified understanding of leadership and politics, without critical reflection on the current political state. Teaching methods in political education are also limited. They focus on bottom-up transmission of material, where students memorize information from textbooks and reproduce it in exams, with little room for discussion or critical engagement. Group learning, debates, or discussions on political issues are virtually absent, leaving students without the necessary skills for political engagement or citizenship. A 2018 study by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics found that few students engage in political discussions or debates in the classroom, further hindering the development of critical thinking and analytical skills needed for civil engagement. Moreover, the exam-based assessment system reinforces memorization rather than encouraging political analysis or debate. The current system focuses on factual knowledge, such as political leaders, historical events, and constitutional provisions, without encouraging students to critically evaluate or apply political knowledge. This approach limits students' understanding of politics and civic participation, preparing them only for exams, not for active political engagement. The Gallup Pakistan Youth Survey of 2019 reported that less than 20% of youth were registered voters or participated in voting, rallies, or community projects, indicating that political education does not adequately prepare youth for political activities. Additionally, the lack of political experience and engagement opportunities in schools exacerbates the gap between political education and action. The ban on student unions since the 1980s has eliminated platforms for students to engage in political activities or develop leadership skills. The absence of such opportunities has led many youth to feel alienated from politics. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2020), the ban has contributed to the disconnect between youth and political processes. Pakistan's political culture, characterized by instability, authoritarianism, and military influence, further shapes youth perceptions of politics. Many young people view politics as the domain of elite political families and military leaders, rather than as a space for ordinary citizens to influence decisions. A 2018 Youth Development Foundation survey found that most youth in Pakistan feel excluded from politics due to these perceptions. This is compounded by the narrow focus of political education, which does not address inclusiveness, justice, or youth participation in decision-making. Finally, socio-economic factors also play a significant role in shaping political participation. Youth from rural areas, especially those from non-mainstream backgrounds, face lower education standards, limited exposure to politics, and fewer opportunities to engage. According to a 2020 UNDP report, rural youth are less informed about political events and issues compared to their urban counterparts, highlighting the structural inequalities that hinder political participation in Pakistan. (Hinnant-Crawford, 2016; Aziz et al., 2014; Lall, 2014).

With increasing political awareness, civil society organizations, educators, and stakeholders have recognized the need for a shift in political socialization to better prepare youth for participation in the democratic process. There has been growing demand for a more active, student-centered approach to political education, moving away from rote memorization of historical facts. While some provinces like Punjab have introduced reforms in civic education to promote political consciousness and youth participation, these efforts remain limited, and more substantial changes are needed in the national curriculum and teaching methods to make political education more engaging and relevant. In conclusion, political education in Pakistan, which should foster civic responsibility and critical thinking, is currently hindered by a curriculum focused solely on historical facts and ideological narratives. Teaching methods emphasize rote learning, while the assessment system fails to develop practical civic skills. This results in a disengaged youth with low levels of political activism and voting. To enhance political education and encourage greater citizenship and democracy, the system needs to be reformed to emphasize critical thinking and real-world problem-solving, involving youth more actively in Pakistan's political system. This article analyzes youth political engagement and voting behavior in Pakistan, particularly focusing on the 2013 elections. The author examines the political opinions of young people, especially those in their late teens to late 20s, who make up a significant portion of Pakistan's population over 59% are under 24, and 67% are under 30. Understanding their perspectives is crucial for predicting the future political dynamics of the country. The article uses empirical analysis to explore the reasons behind youth disinterest in political processes. Despite early optimism about the youth vote as a potential force for change, many



young Pakistanis remain skeptical about the voting process and mainstream political parties. This disillusionment highlights a generational gap with the political leadership. By presenting recent survey findings, the article sheds light on why young people feel alienated from formal political processes and their rights and duties as citizens. It challenges the common notion that youth indifference to politics is merely a lack of interest, revealing deeper issues such as distrust in political institutions, frustration with the corruption of the political system, and a sense of exclusion from decision-making. The article contrasts the views of young Pakistanis with institutional solutions that often overlook youth voices. It suggests that the youth, who make up a large and growing portion of the population, are often excluded from political discussions despite having valuable insights about the country's future. By examining youth alienation, this article contributes to a broader understanding of citizenship and political participation in contemporary Pakistan. It offers a useful perspective on how the political system may evolve, considering the increasing importance of youth opinions and their growing frustration with the current political environment (Naseer et al., [2018](#); Idowu, [2017](#); Munir & Zaidi, [2023](#)).

This study examines the dynamics of political education and socialization among university students in Pakistan, focusing on the role of universities in developing leadership and political participation during a transformative political phase. The objective is to assess the level of political awareness among Pakistani youth and evaluate the political knowledge and activity fostered by university education. The research takes an inclusive approach, exploring how factors such as curriculum design, faculty influence, and student activities contribute to students' political knowledge. It considers both public and private universities, acknowledging that the type of institution may impact the depth and nature of political education. The study surveys students' opinions on the political content of their courses, faculty influence on their political views, and participation in politically motivated student activities. Using a percentage method to analyze data, the research provides a quantitative perspective on students' attitudes and behaviors related to political education. The findings suggest that political education, when effectively integrated into teaching practices, enhances students' understanding of their basic rights and improves their political literacy. This education empowers them to engage in politics thoughtfully, avoiding negative biases and fostering a positive impact on society. The study also highlights the role of universities in producing politically aware youth, recognizing both the curriculum content and student activities as key components. Subjects like political science, history, law, and current affairs provide students with theoretical knowledge about political systems, governance, and citizenship. Hypothesis H₄ of the study proposes that faculty members influence students' political attitudes by engaging with them and modeling political views through their teaching methods. Moreover, faculty involvement in political science and related courses encourages students to critically engage with political ideas, governance, and democracy. Additionally, student activities such as political discussions, awareness campaigns, and organizing student unions provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and practice political activism. These activities foster political engagement and give students a platform for collaboration and advocacy. The study recommends that universities encouraging such activities can help develop a politically informed generation that actively participates in decision-making for societal betterment. The study concludes that education, particularly political education, is crucial for youth participation in political processes. University education plays a significant role in equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to understand their rights and duties, contributing to societal and political change. Universities are not merely academic institutions but political formations that should be politicized to support students' active involvement in the democratic process. (Khalid & Khan, [2006](#); Bari, [2021](#); Muhammad, [2019](#)).

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques, to evaluate the state of political education in Pakistani schools and its impact on students' political awareness. The research will collect data through documents from relevant sources, surveys, and interviews. Curriculum materials, textbooks, and other teaching resources available in schools will be reviewed to assess the scope and content of political education programs. Additionally, questionnaires will be distributed to students to gauge their political awareness and their views on the effectiveness of political education. Focused group interviews with teachers and policymakers will further explore practical teaching strategies, challenges encountered, and policy concerns related to political education. The analysis will

incorporate both thematic and statistical methods to identify patterns, trends, and potential correlations. This will provide a comprehensive evaluation of the current political education system and its impact on youth participation in political processes. The study seeks to answer both the "what" and "how" of political education, exploring the achievement of its goals and the experiences of students and other stakeholders involved in political education.

Discussion

The study highlights the challenges and limitations of political socialization and education in Pakistan's schools. Historically, political education has been shaped by ideological narratives, a focus on nationalism, and a lack of critical thinking regarding political issues. While the curriculum aims to foster patriotism, historical literacy, and political awareness, it has been criticized for its ideological bias, particularly in how it portrays Pakistan's creation and military involvement in politics. The curriculum tends to overlook crucial issues like democratization, human rights, and political liberalization.

A 2017 British Council survey noted that the focus in schools is primarily on a state-sponsored version of history and little attention is given to contemporary global political dynamics, such as those in neighboring countries like India, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh. This absence of critical political education prevents students from engaging in meaningful debates on current political issues or understanding global politics. Furthermore, the teaching methods are often traditional and teacher-centered, which stifles student engagement with political topics. The lack of opportunities for critical thinking and the absence of discussion on political matters hinder the development of political awareness and activism.

A 2020 UNICEF report added that, despite extensive coverage of topics like Pakistan Studies, there is no space for critical analysis, as teachers primarily focus on rote memorization rather than fostering political reasoning. The lack of properly trained teachers, coupled with insufficient teaching methods for promoting political awareness, exacerbates the issue.

In urban private schools, there is a shift towards a more diverse and modern approach, where students may engage in debates on current political issues and democracy, as well as use global political perspectives. However, these opportunities are often limited to a select group of students, making quality political education a privilege rather than a universal right.

Moreover, research has shown that political education in Pakistan has minimal impact on students' political activism and awareness. A 2018 Gallup Pakistan survey revealed that only 38% of youth between the ages of 18 and 30 had received formal education in Political Science or Civics during their school years. Additionally, a 2019 study by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) found that only 28% of young people were politically active, whether through voting, canvassing, or participating in political discussions. This lack of political engagement suggests that the current political education system is failing to prepare students for active political participation. (Asma & Rauf, [2024](#); Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, [1995](#); Muzaffar et al., [2020](#); Ullah & Khan, [2023](#)).

One of the key issues contributing to the shortcomings in political education in Pakistan is the lack of emphasis on civility, civil engagement, and democracy within the curriculum. Political education is often viewed as a subject to be memorized rather than an avenue for developing active citizenship. In many universities, students' unions, once a strong base for political and civil engagement, have been banned since the 1980s, further limiting opportunities for youth activism and political involvement. The assessment methods used in political science education, especially in MA programs, focus primarily on factual knowledge of political systems, historical events, and political facts. These methods do not encourage the development of critical thinking or the ability to analyze political issues or participate in deliberative processes. This focus on rote learning and memorization results in students failing to engage with political education in a meaningful way, as it does not cultivate an understanding of civil activities or the skills necessary for democratic participation. A 2016 report by the Education Department of Punjab also highlighted that Pakistan's examination system encourages memorization rather than the development of critical and analytical skills essential for fostering politically informed citizens. Another significant factor affecting political education in Pakistan is the regional disparity in education quality. In rural areas, students face a lack of resources, poorly trained teachers, and limited access to educational materials, all



of which contribute to a substandard political education. In contrast, urban centers like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad tend to offer more diverse teaching methods and resources, allowing students to engage more with current political issues. The World Bank's 2020 Education Report pointed out that these geographical disparities in education exacerbate the uneven distribution of political education between rural and urban areas. In rural schools, students often rely solely on textbooks and factual, mechanical teaching methods, which restrict their ability to engage critically with political content. The curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment approaches in schools play a crucial role in shaping students' political participation. However, the restrictive nature of the current political education system in Pakistan hinders students from developing the critical thinking skills necessary for active political engagement. Subjects like Pakistan Studies, Civics, and Social Studies significantly influence students' perceptions of politics and political citizenship. However, the curriculum is often criticized for promoting a state-approved, nationalist view of history and political events, with limited focus on democratic values, human rights, governance, and contemporary political challenges. For instance, Pakistan Studies, which is taught at all grade levels, tends to emphasize the country's history, political leaders, and ideology without providing a critical analysis of modern political issues or democratic systems. This lack of depth in political education results in students being inadequately prepared for active participation in the democratic process. (Khan et al., 2019, Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008, Sain, 2023).

The political education in Pakistan's schools has historically provided only a limited view of the nation's history, focusing primarily on the struggle for independence, the formation of the political state, and the role of political leadership, while neglecting aspects of political systems, democracy, and pluralism. This narrow focus restricts students' understanding of their place in the political system, limiting their political knowledge to nationalism and patriotism. As a result, while students may be aware of basic political structures such as the president, prime minister, and parliament, they lack a deeper understanding of democratic processes or the ability to critically analyze current political events (Huang & Asghar, 2016). A report from the British Council in 2017 highlighted the shallowness of political education in Pakistan, noting that it often discourages critical thinking and fails to encourage students to question or explore alternative viewpoints. This ideological bias stifles students' ability to reason politically and narrows their analytical skills. The pedagogical approach in many public schools remains traditional, with a strong focus on rote memorization of political facts, rather than fostering the ability to analyze and discuss political issues. This is particularly evident in rural areas, where resources are limited, and teachers are not trained to encourage critical thinking. In these settings, students are rarely given opportunities to engage in political discussions or develop the skills necessary for active political participation. A study conducted in September 2019 revealed that only 29% of students had ever participated in any form of political discussion during their schooling, confirming the findings of other studies that the current educational culture does not foster political consciousness or citizenship. In contrast, private schools, particularly in urban areas, tend to use more varied teaching methods, such as multimedia, group work, and discussions on political events. However, this more progressive approach remains limited to a small segment of the population, and the majority of students, especially in rural or government schools, continue to experience a traditional, knowledge-based education focused on rote learning. According to UNICEF's 2020 report, while some private schools engage students in critical thinking and learner-centered teaching methods, most students in Pakistan still experience a more conventional approach to political education. Moreover, the evaluation methods in Pakistan's schools exacerbate the lack of critical thinking in political education. Most assessments focus on students' ability to reproduce factual knowledge about political systems, historical events, and political leaders, rather than assessing their ability to think critically about political issues or engage in democratic practices. The 2016 report from the Education Department of Punjab revealed that more than 80% of assessments in political education were objective-type tests, which do not measure students' understanding of political ideas or their ability to solve real-world political problems. As a result, students are not encouraged to actively engage with political content or develop the skills necessary for responsible citizenship. The ideological nature of the curriculum, with its emphasis on state-approved historical narratives and political ideologies, further limits students' ability to critically engage with political issues. A survey by Gallup Pakistan in 2018 found that only 38% of youth aged 18-30 had received any formal education in Political Science or Civics during their school years, which indicates a significant gap in political education. This lack of engagement with politics is

reflected in the low voter turnout and limited participation in political processes among youth. According to the Pakistan Youth Development Index (2017), only 29% of youth were actively engaged in political activities, such as voting, political campaigning, or discussions. Through interviews with teachers, students, and policymakers, this study explored the perceived deficiencies of political education in Pakistan. There is widespread agreement on the need for political education, but concerns remain about its current state and the extent to which it prepares students to actively participate in the political process. Many teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the outdated curriculum, with over 60% of government school teachers describing it as irrelevant to current political challenges. Teachers also cited the lack of professional development and training to teach political concepts in a way that encourages critical thinking or political engagement. These limitations hinder the effectiveness of political education and restrict students' ability to participate meaningfully in the democratic process (Saud & Ashfaq, 2024; Shahzad & Omar, 2021; Bosso, 2017).

The role of political education in preparing students for active civic participation in Pakistan has drawn significant attention, yet opinions on its current quality and effectiveness are varied. Teachers, students, and policymakers each contribute unique perspectives, but a common concern remains: the limitations of the existing approach to political education. Teachers express frustration with the rigid curriculum and lack of resources, particularly in public schools, which constrain their ability to engage students in meaningful political discussions. Many teachers, especially in rural areas, report feeling restricted by outdated and narrow curricula, with over 60% of government school teachers believing that the current curriculum does not adequately address contemporary political challenges (Pakistan Education Task Force, 2018). A UNICEF survey (2020) found that 75% of teachers in rural areas lacked the resources needed to create engaging, interactive learning environments, often relying on textbooks that promote a narrow, nationalistic perspective. This lack of diversity in teaching methods has led to concerns that students are not being adequately prepared for democratic engagement. Students, for their part, often view political education as a compulsory subject focused on rote memorization rather than fostering critical thinking or political awareness. A Gallup Pakistan survey (2019) revealed that only 35% of students felt that political education had encouraged them to engage in political discussions, while 58% saw it as simply memorizing facts about political history and leaders. The lack of opportunity for dynamic discussions is evident in the limited political debates and civic engagement activities. According to a 2018 study by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), only 30% of students in public schools had ever participated in a political debate or discussion within the classroom. Furthermore, a Gallup Pakistan (2017) report found that less than 20% of youth aged 18-24 were actively involved in political activities such as voting or joining political organizations. These findings highlight the gap in civic engagement, particularly in rural and public schools, where political education is less interactive and more focused on memorization. Despite growing recognition of the importance of political education, policymakers remain hesitant to implement reforms that would allow for a more critical, diverse, and interactive approach to political learning. Some policymakers see political education as a tool to foster national unity and loyalty, often through a lens of ideological consensus. However, this approach has been criticized for stifling critical thinking and engagement with broader political issues. A 2019 report by the Ministry of Education expressed concerns that opening political education to more critical perspectives could threaten the state's ideological position. Recent calls for reform have been sparked by international organizations such as UNESCO and the World Bank, advocating for a curriculum that promotes democratic values, human rights, and civic competencies. The National Curriculum Council of Pakistan (2020) has acknowledged that progress in teaching democratic values has been slow, with some provinces, like Punjab, beginning to implement more liberal and effective models for developing students' civic competencies. However, there is still no comprehensive, systemic approach to political literacy that could foster a more active and informed citizenry, a crucial step toward strengthening democracy in Pakistan.

Future Directions

For improving accreditation of the Pakistani youth and political participations, all the policy through makers, educatorist and practitioners should come together on single platform with multiple strategies that enclose all the barriers and develop the sense of responsibility & awareness and politics to participate



in congress. To positively shape the attitudes of the youth regarding political and civic participation the following recommendations are proposed for each stake holder group.

Recommendations for Policymakers

Integrate Civic Education into National Curriculum

Policy makers should also pay special attention to promoting civics as part of the national curriculum, meaning that students should know about their rights, their obligations and political organizations from their childhood. It should not be in-bookish manner only but should involve some sort of activities that would enable the students to 'see' the practical aspect and effect of these political activities.

Create and Strengthen Youth-Engagement Platforms

The policy makers should recognize, promote and facilitate the development of youth councils forums and platforms at the national, provincial and local levels in which youth can debate on the policy issues affecting them and being made for them. Such platforms would facilitate the closeness of the youth with the political leaders and provided ways through which youth can engage in political affairs.

Promote Political Awareness Campaigns

Other levels of government should work with civil society organizations to start large-scale campaigns to engage young people politically. These campaigns should at least touch on the duties of voting, political systems, levels of political affiliation purposely to demystify or de-campaign any coldness or political illiteracy from the youth voter.

Address Barriers to Youth Participation

The socio-economical, culture and institutions should be reacted on to explain why youths are not participating in politics. This encompasses, poverty, illiteracy, political favoritism and undermining the political participation of youths in the society. Those policies relating to youth-employment and/or education, training and mentoring schemes will underpin socio-economic enfranchisement for greater political participation.

Support Youth Leadership Development

Establish national programs for a leadership capacity of youths. These may include training in Youths leadership, placements in government parastatals, and other challenges where youths can be involve in development projects. They would develop realistic leadership skills and foster political commitment, through actual participation.

Recommendations for Educators

Foster Critical Thinking and Debate

Teachers should ensure that students understand the politics of different systems, ideologies and policies hence develop proper ways of thinking that allows proper evaluation of these important aspects of any society. Debate and discussion sessions, group discussions and student led seminars on current political affairs would make the students aware of the multiple side of the policies they come across and would in general make them more politically active.

Incorporate Real-World Political Experiences

The literal sense that the educators could use might be real political games and simulations like mock elections that allow the students to practice democracy and other models like model United Nations' conferences and systems of student democracy. Any of such activities would enable the students to practice decision-making, governance, leadership, among other political factors in practice as they also develop more political insight on how the systems will function.

Provide Platforms for Student-Led Political Activities

Promote and support students to form associations, political party, the awareness creation organisations or any other innovation and development association. These make it possible for students to be involved in the civic life outside the classroom and can make or be given ownership of their political education and endeavours.

Encourage Engagement with Local Governance

Schools and universities should introduce ideas about local politics to students and offer them to participate in the initiatives of local governments or join local political parties. Students are able to observe first hand the effects of their active participation in the local governance systems and have the enthusiasm of the civic responsibility.

Train Educators on Civic Education Methodology

Teacher training institutions should avail appropriate learning techniques to enable teachers develop on how to teach civics appropriately. This involves getting to know how to get the learners discuss politics, how to address students on political issues, and how to foster tolerance of the learners on politics.

Recommendations for Practitioners (Civil Society, NGOs, and Activists)

Facilitate Youth-Centric Civic Engagement Programs

CSOs and NGOs working with young people should aim at developing and executive effective civil action youth engagement programs. These programs could be as diversified as, leadership development and community organizing, for instance, voter mobilization and political campaigning, for example. These programs should be popularized by practitioners, in collaboration with schools and universities.

Advocate for Youth-Friendly Policies

International and local NGOs and actors of civil society should campaign for policies that promote youths' voting, leadership, and participation rights. This entails: fighting for a lower voting age, increase youth seats in decision making forum, and policies touching on youth unemployment and education.

Leverage Digital Platforms for Political Education

It is a high time political practitioners embraced the use of various form of technology and especially the social media when developing fun and befitting political awareness content for youths. It could involve creation of short educational materials such as online classes, web based seminars or social media awareness on matters concerning politics, voting systems, and issues. problems such as high mobile phone usage and Social media network Activity among Youths of Pakistan it thus becomes easy to organize young people via digital platforms to reason more on political issues.

Promote Grassroots Political Engagement

Help youth become politically active by contributing to campaigns that affect everyone, including, education, poverty, or healthcare in a particular region. Youth politics make young people become active in supporting their communities through development of interaction between them and the political system.

Provide Mentorship and Networking Opportunities

Community activists and practitioners should organize role model pairing in which youths should be paired with political leaders, activists, or other professionals. This kind of mentorship can assist young people in their political endeavours, in terms of job opportunities, or follow through within the political arena.

Overall Recommendations

Promote Inclusivity in Political Education

Every attempt to encourage the youth to be involved in politics must bear in mind that youth in Pakistan come from different gender, ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds. Political education should be general and take cognizance of the plight of the deprived people.



Encourage Collaboration Across Sectors

It is crucial that policymakers, formalists and practitioners are able to provide a coherent approach to youth's civic participation. This could mean engaging the school, university, government and non government organizations and other community based organizations to ensure a concerted effort in imparting the education on politics.

Support Long-Term Engagement

There is danger of perceiving youths engagement in the processes as a one of a kind affair; one may engage his or her youth hood in a certain process say voting in the election then disengage after the election is over, then the youth engagement here should be as seen as a life time engagement to the processes of governance and development. That is why programs and policies should aim at the youth's constant participation in the process, young people's continual political education and their further active participation in the society.

Considering these recommendations, it will be beneficial for the policymakers and the educators and the practitioners to enable bringing the politically informed and more engaged young generation in Pakistan which will strengthen the democracy and development of the society of this country.

Findings

The outcome of the current study comprising previous questions on political education system in Pakistan, youth engagement and political/civic participation has pointed out following findings that explain the present state of the political education and the factors that occupies more importance for youth political/civic engagement. Below are the central findings from the research: This study concludes that although political education is included in the system of education in Pakistan to some extent but the given education is still incomplete and inadequate and does not effectively develop the Political consciousness or voter sensibility amongst students. The nature and manner in which political education content is handled in the curriculum, is concerned as being largely outdated, piecemeal and lacking a Citizenship orientation, critical issues, and real life emphasis. And the curriculum prescribes a mechanical approach to learning rather than cultivating an active political participation or democracy involvement. One of the discussed discoveries is the comprehensive, structured concepts' void related to political literacy education in schools and universities. The political education given is informative but abstract from original political situations, and thus insufficient to equip students to be active democrat citizens. Further, the curriculum allows for the breakdown of rights, responsibilities and functions of political institutions as a way of enabling the youthful population to engage in politics. Human resource and co-curricular activity reveal the largest predictor in developing students' political consciousness. If a teacher practices the use of politics, democracy, and governance in his or her teaching practices, then such a teacher will foster politically conscious learners. In the same respect, the issues to do with political clubs, debates, and awareness campaigns by the students make them contribute adequately to the fascia of civic life. These activities serve practical training, as well as afford a student the experience with participating in political matters outside the lecture room. The study reveals that while young people can participate in politics, there is a wide range of hurdles that discourages participation. Some of these barriers are; Socio-economic and cultural which include poverty, lack of formal education and have a low political status. This mainly stems from the fact that young people have lost faith in the political systems in most countries, due to a perceived political corruption, and therefore tend to be politically involved due to perceived hopelessness. One of them is that the majority of young people in Pakistan has lost trust in the traditional political system. This disillusionment is due to absence of perceived leadership from politicians and political parties' differential failure to address the issues that affect the youths. These realities combine with perceived political system illegitimacy and thus generate electoral non-interest and disengagement. This disillusionment is supported by the finding of the research that political parties and leaders have not deemed it necessary to reach out to the youth. The study stresses the need for education especially political education in the promotion of civility among human beings. On the same note, when young people embrace political education, more so through practicing, they possess the potential of embracing their rights, participating in political activities, and embracing their responsibility in the ticket of societal

responsibilities. Students who engage in activity directed outside of class, including volunteering and political debates, exhibit a higher level of self efficacy, and as a result engage in community or political activism. The research therefore shows that for political empowerments among youths to be significantly desirable there must be demonstrated systemic changes in the education system. These reforms should concern itself with the incorporation of political education in the curriculum as an all inclusive part that is defensive in nature, fostering of youth's thinking skills consistent with civility, and creation of space for participation both in school and off). It also underscores the need to heed faculty development, and the part that faculty plays in putting together a politically informed and active student population. An equally significant discovery is the increasing centrality of digital media technologies in organizing youths' political citizenship. As more and more young people are active on social media and active on the Internet there is a great opportunity to address them and involve in the political process. The study reveals that when organized properly, social media is a reasonable means of political education, campaigning, and mobilisation among youthful individuals in the urban regions. The importance of the current study emerges from the fact that engagement of youth in Pakistan has been reported as neither homogeneous. Interstate differences, social and economic status, and gender differences are markedly different from one another. For example, young people from agriculture or poverty stricken backgrounds have limited chances in being able to afford quality education as well as being active in politics, on the other hand, young people from urban backgrounds have a lot of exposure to political lessons in schools but they still lack interest in politics because they do not see it as being part of their experiences. As a result, NEET and other disengaged youth need targeted strategies to involve them in proper political process.

Conclusion

The present study therefore emphasizes the urgent necessity to address the flaws in the Pakistani context to create awareness among children as the future citizens of the country. This study thus finds that although political education is taught in schools, it is usually dissemination in small doses and therefore limited in depth; failing to support students as they learn what their roles are as active citizens. In the formation of students' political views both curricular and co-curricular activities have the same importance , however after all, there are constraints that restrict the students' political awareness like socio- economic difficulties, political apathy , lack of support at institutional level . The findings also raise the question of how broader and more inclusive political education can be incorporated in schools, how critical thinking can be encouraged and how space for youths political participation can be adequately fostered. In order for responsible youth to act effectively the future mechanics need structural changes in the way education prepares the youth for citizenship and political activism for the betterment of Pakistan.

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