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Where Girls Rule the World: Lessons for Pakistan in the Bangladeshi Educational Phenomenon

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Where Girls Rule the World:
Lessons for Pakistan in the Bangladeshi Educational Phenomenon

by

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A Thesis

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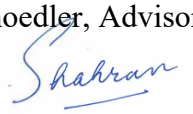

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Table of Contents

Preface

Most of my educational upbringing has been in Pakistan. From kindergarten to A-levels, I had the unique privilege of enjoying the best education my country had to offer. Unfortunately, this is a privilege not afforded to most women in Pakistan. In a question as old as time itself, why are some human lives more valued than others? Why has my education been uniquely different from any other girl in Pakistan?

In 2022, education is well established as a basic human right for all. 193 countries - including Pakistan and Bangladesh - have committed to achieving the UN's sustainable development goals by 2030, which include access to quality education and gender equality

With a primary school completion rate of 55 percent, a lower secondary school completion rate of 45 percent and an upper secondary school completion rate of 23 percent, a girl in Pakistan has a 5.6 percent chance of pursuing a higher education. By comparison, with a primary school completion rate of 89 percent, a lower secondary school completion rate of 71 percent and an upper secondary school completion rate of 7 percent, a girl in Bangladesh has a 17 percent chance of pursuing a higher education.

If education is a fundamental human right, why does any girl randomly chosen from Pakistan have a 5.6 percent chance of pursuing and completing a higher education. By comparison, a girl from Bangladesh has a three times higher chance of doing so.

The ability of any woman to obtain an education shouldn't be determined by arbitrary factors such as nationality or level of income. And for those of you who may be more poetic this may be a matter of fate. Well, why is the fate of a Pakistani girl so starkly different from any other female in the world? If education is my fundamental right then it should be as important as my ability to eat, drink, and breathe. If that is the case, then why is a Pakistani woman three

times less likely to survive than a Bangladeshi woman? And that is simply a comparison between developing countries with a similar history, culture, and standard of living. The difference expands ever more greatly when the educational standards of a developing country are compared with a developed one, such as America.

This thesis aims to compare the educational structure of Pakistan and Bangladesh in order to examine the gender disparities in education that exist, specifically in Pakistan. How has Bangladesh emerged through historical trauma with a different sense of rights for its women than Pakistan? What can Pakistan learn from the Bangladeshi educational phenomenon? This thesis aims to search for those answers.

Chapter 1: Introduction

As Amartya Sen has argued, the gender gaps in education create a direct link between illiteracy and women's security. An ILO report established a connection between increasing child labor and a preference given to boys in educational decision making. The report found that in a culture in which male education is more highly valued than female education, girls risk being taken out of school and are then likely to enter the workforce at an early age. Of the more than 100 million girls involved in child labour, many were exposed to some of its worst forms. Additionally, surveys in 55 developing countries reveal that girls are more likely to be out of school at a lower secondary age than boys, regardless of the wealth or location of the household. With this, almost two thirds of the world's 775 million illiterate adults are women.

In forsaking the opportunity to invest in female education, households and countries deprive their women of the chance to improve their state of being. Increased education has shown to increase female labor force participation, wages, and overall productivity. Additionally, as mothers, numerous studies maintain that women with formal education are much more likely to use reliable family planning methods, delay marriage and childbearing, and have fewer and healthier babies than women with no formal education. Perhaps most importantly, each additional year of formal education a mother receives promotes increased educational opportunities for her children, who continue to stay in school for one-third to half a year longer.

Literature Review[1] and Research Question

This thesis aims to explore the extent of educational disparities in gender in both countries at large as well as the factors that have caused increased disparity in educational levels in Pakistan. To do so, it is imperative to understand the history and educational account behind both Pakistan and Bangladesh.

In 1947, Pakistan found itself as an independent nation, separated from India, after British colonial rule dissolved. In this situation, Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) found itself in a unique place in history as part of Pakistan, yet separated from it by another newly formed country (India) that had turbulent ties with Pakistan. This geographic position, in addition to language discrimination, wealth disparities, and political disempowerment, led Pakistan to neglect its counterpart to the extent that it triggered the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971 that led to what is now an independent Bangladesh.

Aside from their separation from British rule (and from each other), Pakistan and Bangladesh are comparable in a number of other aspects. Extensive research establishes both countries as patriarchal societies in which women are not given access to the same resources and opportunities as their male counterparts. The gender disparity in education is simply one facet that demonstrates such a culture. Additionally, both countries have also been subjugated to military rule.

In 2022, education is well established as a basic human right for all. Additionally, 193 countries - including Pakistan and Bangladesh - have committed to achieving the UN's sustainable development goals by 2030, including access to quality education and gender equality. In the case of Pakistan and Bangladesh, these goals seem idealistic, to say the least.

[1] The following discussion was taken from (Hunter, 2020) and (Schwab, Klaus, et al, 2017)

There are gender disparities across all three educational levels - primary, secondary, and tertiary - between both countries.

Gender disparities are rampant in Pakistan, with boys outnumbering girls at every stage of education. These disparties are caused by a host of factors, including safety concerns, poverty, patriarchal cultural practices, especially child marriage, and a lack of appreciation for the value of female education.

The problems with Pakistani education are manifold. These include poor educational infrastructure, rampant corruption, and under-qualified teaching staff that detract from providing quality education. While these issues take root at the elementary level, they ripple through the entire education sector. This is evident from a gross enrollment rate (GER) in secondary education of 43 percent, which falls to 9 percent at the tertiary level. In contrast, Bangladesh has a GER of 73 percent at the secondary level.

Crucially, Pakistan devotes comparatively few resources to education, spending 2.9 percent of GDP on education (well below the 4 percent target).

As for Bangladesh, after it gained independence in 1971, the country transitioned from one the least developed countries in the world to a lower middle-income country in 2015. In addition to economic input, it now outperforms Pakistan on several gender-based indicators, including the Gender Development Index (GDI) in which Bangladesh, in 2017, achieved a higher GDI value of 0.881, compared to Pakistan's GDI of 0.750. In terms of female labor force participation, Bangladeshi women accounted for 33 percent of the labor force, compared to 24.9 percent of Pakistani women in 2018. Finally, in 2017, Bangladesh ranked 47th in the the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) in 2017 (the best amongst all other South

Asian countries), whereas Pakistan ranked second to last at the 143rd position from a list of 144 countries.

To this end, and in terms of education in particular, Bangladesh has implemented strategies in its national education policy which gives special attention to women. Education is centrally steered by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Dhaka. In addition, there is a dedicated ministry for elementary education and non-formal education programs for out-of-school children and adults called the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. Bangladesh has a coordinated government effort that seems to explain part of Bangladesh's success story.

Pakistan, as a country with greater resources at the time of independence, lags behind Bangladesh in education, especially for women, in recent decades. As part of this project, the thesis will examine aspects that unite the countries in their gender disparities - predominantly poverty, limited government spending towards education, and cultural restrictions for girls pertaining to education (including childhood marriages, household size, distances from schooling institutions, facilities present at school, etc). It will also review factors that set the countries apart through a historical analysis of the political stance towards education in each country as well as initiatives employed to reduce the gender disparity in education - and the consequent results of such approaches.

As secondary education serves as the gap between a basic education and specialization of skill and knowledge through higher education, there has been an increased interest in academic literature and on behalf of both the UN and Bangladeshi government to strengthen the country's secondary education. While this educational level is important, highlighting the primary level of education is also paramount as both the seed and the harvest of one's educational capacity. Not only does this thesis add to the literature by focusing on gender disparities at the primary and

secondary levels, which have been less carefully studied in the literature, it also compares the gender based educational strengths and deficits of two historically comparable and culturally parallel countries.

Chapter 2: Pre-Colonial and Colonial History

Before this study can begin, one must understand the context in which the subcontinental people (i.e., those from Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan), particularly subcontinental women, received their education. It will be through these historical policies that a precedent will be set for educational attainment in Pakistan and Bangladesh centuries down the line.

With reference to this history, Education in the Indian Sub-continent began as an indigenous educational system in ancient times (around the 5th century), continued through an Islamic style of education in the medieval period as a result of Muslim invasions (7th century), and then became a form of imperialistic education delivered during British colonization (17th century). The British settled in India for more than three centuries (1608-1947) and slowly deepened their hold on the continent. Through a carefully crafted plan aimed at the inevitable British conquest of India, The Subcontinent was later colonized for nearly a century (1858-1947). During British rule in particular, the English language played an integral role in justifying and perpetuating colonial rule.

Pre-colonial Education

Before the British took over, during pre-colonial times, the educational system in the region was based on indigenous languages such as Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit, and later Urdu amidst other vernacular languages (Chandio et al, 2014). This system was based on an oriental pattern, in which knowledge was imparted orally without a textbook or curriculum and often at the teacher's house or place of residence (Radhakrishnan, 1990). It included Pathshalas (a Hindu-run village school), Madrassas (Muslim-run schools), and Persian schools known as Maktabs, in which Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit were mediums of instruction (Chandio et al,

2014). The education was also hierarchical, specifically in Hindi schools, which followed a strict caste system with the Brahmins at the top and the untouchables at the bottom (Radhakrishnan, 1990).

Throughout this period, education was nearly inaccessible to women from all castes. The only exception was found in upper class women, who were encouraged to study classical literature and religious texts. Girls from all other castes and classes were trained in child-rearing practices supplemented by practical home-skills such as sewing, cooking, and other household tasks. Muslim girls were expected to read the Qur'an and were also taught accounting to manage property related issues. Thus, women's education focused on skills that did not prepare them for the workforce or tasks outside of the household. In this time, the British conducted a number of surveys to examine the extent of female education. The Governor of Bombay conducted a survey between 1823 and 1825 and found that there were no schools for girls and that common schools only catered to boys. Similarly, another survey conducted between 1835 and 1838 showed that there was no formal female schooling except home schooling that taught household skills (Naik and Nurullah, 2004).

The Zenana System: Challenges for Female Education in Pre-Colonial Times

There was a clear bias between male and female education, with the former prioritized over the later. In response to this, the Zenana system played a pivotal role to mitigate the severe lack of female education. The word "Zenana" referred to the often-neglected portion of a household where women were secluded (Srivastava, 2002). This type of education was dedicated to women from upper castes who could not receive formal schooling due to existing social norms such as

purdah, in which women were not able to interact with members of the opposite sex outside of their familial and marital relations. An absence of female teachers further complicated a female student's ability to pursue an education. Child marriage was also problematic and hindered female education. This was an "upper caste" practice that became widespread across society by the 19th century. It served to protect "blood purity" and social boundaries by ensuring childbearing was confined within one's caste and religion. Therefore, young girls as young as ten years old were often married as soon as an "ideal match" was found (Nirantar Trust, 2015). Finally, the practice of sati ensured that a widow's life ended along with the death of her husband as she was burnt alive with her husband's dead body (Srivastava, 2002). This amplified the notion that a woman's life revolved around the well-being of her husband.

Colonial Education

Under British rule, a Western education system was introduced which was based on scientific knowledge and literature, with English later established as the medium of instruction. During the early period (early 18th century), the East India Company (EIC) solely focused on providing education to the European children whose families traveled to India on business and commercial enterprise. Regardless, some upper-class Indians still enrolled their children in such schools. The EIC, however, did not encourage educational development for the Indian people in the last quarter of the 18th and the first decade of the 19th century. This was owed to a fear of interference with the present educational system that would result in confrontation and resistance from the Indian people due to a conflict with their local cultures (Chandio et al, 2014).

Towards this end, the British established the 'Kolkata Alia Madrasah' in 1781, which was the first government college in the Indian subcontinent to produce officials well-versed in

Islamic Law. They also established the 'Benaras Sanskrit College' that aimed to promote the study of Sanskrit along with other related fields (Shivakumar, 2017).

Amidst this, there was a growing difference of opinion among colonial officials regarding the purpose of educating the Indian people as well as the medium of education and the management and expansion of educational facilities. During such discussions, a pro-orientalist engraftment approach was introduced through the Charter Act of 1813, which aimed to uplift oriental languages and literature whilst increasing Western knowledge amongst the Indian population. Through this act, the content of Western knowledge was then to be translated through indigenous languages (Chandio et al, 2014). This Act also incorporated English in Indian schools so that it would coexist with the local languages (Chandio et al, 2014). This was a crucial political strategy that allowed the British to expand colonial rule by "harmonizing with the natives" (Chandio et al, 2014). Not only that, but this policy intended to produce a class of elites who would serve as intermediaries between the colonists and the colonized and boost the "moral and social development of the Indians" (Chandio et al, 2014).

The Zenana System Under Colonial Rule

Many upper-class Indians were swayed by this Western influence and wished that their female companions be educated in Western values so that they could serve as "intelligent companions" (Srivastava, 2002). However, they were conflicted because they were torn between the strong patriarchal traditions and well-established customs that often dominated their households. The Zenana system was the answer to this dilemma, which was fueled by Christian missionaries who visited women from upper class families. The missionaries taught them

English mannerisms and introduced them to English culture. All the while they hoped that teaching such subjects to the "pure heathen" would plant the seeds for Christianity (Srivastava, 2002). They were unsuccessful in these attempts, as few converted to Christianity. Still, the Zenana system was instrumental in teaching females' skills such as reading, writing, letter composition beyond scriptural knowledge (Srivastava, 2002).

This system was well-received and highlighted the need for female teachers as well as the need for women in the medical field. This latter need was especially important because women often failed to get proper medical advice or to get proper medical attention during childbirth due to a staunch purdah system. Therefore, by 1882, training schools for female teachers had produced thirty-four trained teachers; seventeen women were enrolled in the Grant Medical College by 1887 (Srivastava, 2002). Thereafter, they pursued careers as doctors, nurses, and midwives. An exclusively female hospital was also established in Bombay.

The sheer importance of the Zenana system was brought forth in the Wood's Dispatch of 1854 and the Hunter Commission's Report of 1882. The former brought all schools for girls, including the Zenana system, under a comprehensive educational system which was assisted by grant-in-aid (Srivastava, 2002). As the Zenana system was prevalent in Bengal, the Dispatch was one of the first documents that advocated for the formal education of girls in Bangladesh (then the Bengal area of India). Female education was focused on because it was believed to enhance the educational and moral tone of the people at large (history of secondary education, find page number). To counter a culture where education was based on training women to be mothers and home keepers, the Dispatch aimed to educate women for paid employment and tertiary education. These ideas were reiterated in the Hunter's Commission, which had to following to say about the Zenana system in particular:

> "*But in the existing circumstances of the women of India, the mere establishment of schools will be by no means sufficient to bring about the general spread of education among them. Public sentiment keeps them secluded in the Zenana, many from their infancy and many more from the age of eleven or twelve. From this it follows that the education of girls of the better classes cannot be carried on in schools to anything like completion, and that in the case of many it cannot even begin. Some plan is needed for conveying instruction to those who cannot leave their homes to seek for it and for prosecuting further the teaching which may have been begun in schools. Agencies for Zenana teaching are conducting this work with considerable success. Actuated in many cases by religious motives, Zenana teachers have brought some measures of secular instruction into the homes* ***of*** *those who would otherwise have been wholly debarred from it. We see no reason why this secular instruction, imparted under the supervision of ladies worthy of confidence, should not be recognized and assisted so far as it can be tested by a proper inspecting agency*." (Report of the Indian Education Commission, 1882).

Therefore, under British stewardship, the system was allowed to flourish. Suffice to say, the mid to late nineteenth century marked a shift in British and societal attitudes towards female education. The table below captures the growth rate in the number of colleges for women, as well as the number of women in these colleges, and the percentage of female scholars to the total number of scholars in Bombay.

Growth of professional college in Bombay Presidency

Year	No. of Colleges	No. of Colleges for women	No. of Women	Total Number	Percentage of Women
1881-82					
1881-82		3	Not available	570	--
1886-87		4	-do-	678	--
1891-92		4	8	495	1.62
1896-97		4	20	760	2.63
1901-02		5	45	1064	4.23
1906-07		5	39	1450	2.69
1911-12		4	29	1239	2.34
1916-17		6	52	1841	2.83
1921-22		7	79	2595	3.04

Sources: *A Review of Education in Bombay State 1855-1955*, pp, 265.

Table examining the growth of professional colleges in Bombay, particularly for women

Source: Srivastava, 2002

The table above displays the fact that, over a period of 40 years (from 1881-1882 to 1921 to 1922), the number of colleges for women nearly doubled (from 3 to 7). Additionally, the number of women in these colleges increased nine-fold (from 8 to 79) in a span of 30 years (between 1891-1892 to 1921-1922). This number increased to 264 women by the end of the 19th century (Sarkar et al, 2008). The growth is undeniably slow, but does mark progress in patriarchally staunch circumstances.

Public Reception to Increasing Female Education

It is important to consider how the public reacted to these growing societal changes. Were they receptive or antagonistic? Certain social reformers such as Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Jotirao Phule, and Pandita Ramabai went against the grain and actively provided education to girls.

Other national figures like Balgangadhar Tilak and Vishnu Shashtri Chiplunkar, however, voiced strong opposition to the idea of a female education. Tilak believed that education would hinder a woman from performing her duties as a housewife and mother. He outrightly opposed the first girls' high school in Poona in 1884 stating that the curriculum for girls should be different from that of boys. That it should consist of knowledge about vernaculars, needle work and sanitation instead of English, mathematics and sciences as given to boys. He also stressed giving moral and religious instruction through education and maintained that this knowledge, coupled with household skills, should be taught by native women and not the missionary women (Rao, 2007). He frequently supported his claims by citing the case of Rukhmabai, who fought a court case against her husband (to whom she was married to in childhood) when he sought to restore their marital status. Rukhmabai was educated and could clearly articulate her troubles and gain public support for her case. She ended up winning the case, which became an instrument for Tilakites to display their contempt for the English language. As Tilak explicitly noted: "teaching Hindu women to read English would ruin their precious traditional virtues and would make them immoral and insubordinate" (Rao, 2007).

Rukhmabai (1864-1955): Feminist and Physicians

Known as the first practicing female doctor in colonial India

Imperialism Through the English Language

Ultimately, despite the attitude of native reformers towards education, the tone of education was inevitably determined by those in de facto power, namely the colonizers. During the last quarter of the 18th and the first quarter of the 19th century, the British approach towards Sub-continental education took a stronger tone of cultural imposition. Soon enough, the British maintained that "the subject should acquaint themselves with western knowledge and culture for their assimilation with the rulers and not the vice versa" (Clive, 1973).The Minutes of Macaulay in 1835 firmly established English as the sole mode of communication and Western-based schooling as the primary form of education (Chandio et al, 2014). As Macaulay notes, "the western English-based educational system would groom a band of the natives who would be Indian in color but English in taste and intellect." After the War of Independence (1857), and a deepening entrenchment of British rule, the British government replaced a policy of "reconciliation and cooperation with antagonism and oppression" (Chandio et al, 2014). This major shift in attitude had three profound losses on education and language teaching in the Subcontinent. Firstly, the gradual process of engraftment of Western-rich content ceased. Had this process continued, however, indigenous language would have been enriched with modern knowledge. Secondly, the worth and scope of oriental knowledge was belittled by the colonizers and pushed to the background of colonial discourse. Thirdly, the English now took an active role in dominating indigenous languages and halted their progress and development (Chandio et al, 2014).

Following The Minutes, a resolution was passed in which the promotion of European science and literature was made essential and all funds were reserved solely for an English education (Chandio et al, 2014). The aim of this resolution was to mesmerize the Indian subjects

by influencing them with European knowledge – thus exerting political and social control over them.

Additionally, The Minutes suggested the abolition of Sanskrit College and Calcutta Madrasa and the discontinuation of funds both used to print books in Arabic and Sanskrit and as stipends for students pursuing an oriental education (Chandio et al, 2014). As a result, the institutions imparting education in the classical and regional vernaculars were affected and their funds were allocated towards the investment of an English education system. Systematically, the English language replaced Persian in "office, court, administration and diplomacy" (Chandio et al, 2014). Job requirements were based on a Western education and English competence which increased the demand for English in the region. Furthermore, to reduce company expenditures, Governor-General Bentick wanted to replace British expatriates with Indian natives. As such, a sub-clause in the Act of 1833 was introduced in which individuals could qualify for government posts based on merit and "irrespective of religion, birth, descent or color" (Adams & Adams, 1971). The job incentives aggrandized the demand for English in India (Chandio et al, 2014). By the 19th century, Bentick had ensured that English was used as the official language in higher courts, for record-keeping as well as the medium of instruction in "law, higher education, administration, commercial enterprise, science, technology, business and trade" (Chandio et al, 2014).

The ultimate effect of the ubiquity of the English language in the subcontinent is captured by one author, who notes that this highly pervasive language was used "for the subservience of the mind of the local people… particularly in higher educational institutions" (Chandio et al, 2014). To this end, the universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras were founded in 1857, in Punjab in 1882, while a number of universities were set up in Allahabad in 1887 (Chandio et al,

2014). All these universities created a culture in which knowledge was catered towards students belonging to the upper middle class and who yearned for a government post. In 1880, approximately eight thousand pupils completed high school, while 500,000 completed secondary school (Chandio et al, 2014). After passing primary school, students would join an "Anglo-Vernacular" high school for their secondary education. Upon completion, students had the possibility of pursuing higher education in one of 140 state-run or private colleges. In 1901, nearly 17000 students were enrolled in such colleges (Chandio et al, 2014), from a population of roughly 238 million (Gait, 1903). While the British established a system of private education they kept a keen eye on the many public schools - often remnants of a precolonial era. The control of textbooks was one of the measures by which the State maintained supervision over the vast body of public schools. The pedagogical content of secondary schools was prescribed by the British Crown; even colonial officials exercised the right to reject textbooks used in private schools, such as madrasahs (Bhatt & Aggarwal, 1969). The schools were strict to follow learning exercises and schedules, or regulations directed by the British rulers. (Rahman et al, 2010)

Result of Colonial Educational Policies

Despite all the attention and debate the British education system in India took in the British Parliament, this system was only able to educate a small number of people in India. The literacy rate in 1911 was only 6%, gaining only two points by 1931 to 8%. By 1947, during independence, India's literacy rate was only 11%.

As noted above, the enrollment in universities or the degree-awarding institutes was also very low. In 1935, only 4 out of 10,000 people were enrolled in any degree-awarding higher

education institute. Besides the literacy rate, the quantity of published books and number of publications also help to estimate higher levels of learning and creative thought. In 1935, however, only sixteen thousand books were published for the nation consisting of over 350 million people. This translates to one book for twenty thousand people (Chandio et al, 2014). Therefore, while the British education system nurtured a few intellectual figures, it also produced "a vast class of semi-educated, low-paid English speaking subordinates" (Chandio et al, 2014).

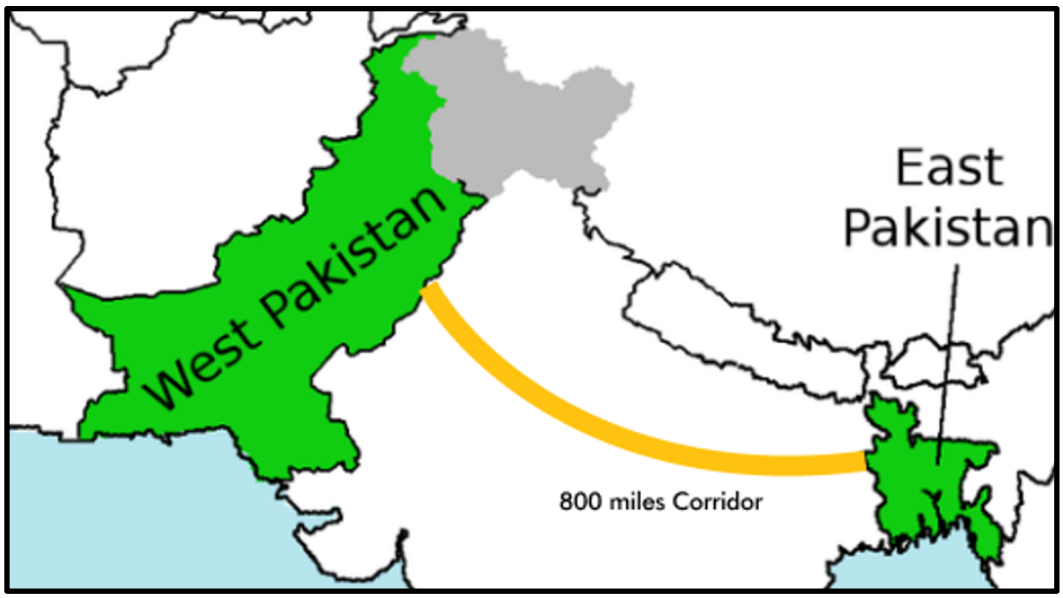
This concludes the discussion on pre-colonial and colonial educational practices.

Chapter 3: East and West Pakistan

Before the discussion can proceed to the post-colonial section – following independence from the British – it is useful to understand what occurred geographically during the partition in 1947.

Essentially, Pakistan and India gained independence from British rule and partitioned along religious lines. India, which was predominantly Hindu, was considered a separate state and Pakistan (comprised of West and East Pakistan), was a newly formed and predominantly Muslim state.

What is Pakistan today was then West Pakistan and modern-day Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan. Perhaps what was most unfortunate about the way Pakistan was divided was that it consisted of two regions that were 800 miles apart from each other and separated by a country that it has never had good relations with.



Map of East and West Pakistan

with the 800-mile corridor between them through India displayed

So, as one might anticipate, things went South quickly. In a little over two decades, the East and the West would irreparably split. What is omitted from history books in Pakistan is the second colonization of East Pakistan by West Pakistan using many of the same instruments of colonial rule. So, Urdu (the national language of Pakistan) was preferred to Bangla (the national language of Bangladesh). The British had also left behind myths about the lethargy, cowardice, and untrustworthiness of the Bengalis. And West Pakistani rulers added to this the promiscuity and semi- Hinduism of the Bengali Muslims. These stereotypes were readily accepted by a large segment of the West Pakistani elite who benefitted greatly from discriminating against the Bengalis (or then East Pakistanis). Various aspects of this colonization will be discussed in the quantitative section of this discussion. For now, the basis and means of educational colonization will be elaborated.

In the time Pakistan and Bangladesh were united, the two regions shared the same political structure in which a Central government run by the Muslim League managed decisions pertaining to foreign affairs, defense, and commerce. Meanwhile, topics concerning education and health were managed by each respective provincial government (Asadullah, 2010). This was inevitably an imperfect system as the Center would often exert influence on provincial matters. Therefore, decisions concerning education, for example, were undertaken by both the provincial and central government.

The Beginning of West Pakistani Colonization

To begin, a crucial political transition in Pakistan's history came when the Central government was set up in the Western wing of Pakistan because most of the upper-class Muslim refugees - known as Muhajjirs - migrated to that region of the newly independent state. The ruling elite - Punjabis and Muhajjirs - dominated the center and controlled both the bureaucratic apparatus and the armed forces. Crucially, the Bengalis, concentrated in East Pakistan, remained severely under-represented at the Center (Asadullah, 2010).

To add to this problematic arrangement, the period from 1955 to 1971 marked the "One Unit Era." During this time, the Centre brought the four ethnic provinces under one administrative unit known as West Pakistan. This process not only secured the dominance of Punjabis and Muhajjirs over other ethnic minorities, but also boosted the Centre's control over the provincial government of East Pakistan (Asadullah, 2010). This particular era also marked two military takeovers (Ayub Khan from 1958 to 1968 and Yahya Khan from 1969 to 1971). As such, the decision-making process remained biased towards the ruling elite.

In addition, while there was a civilian government from 1947 to 1954, the ruling party (The Muslim League) remained pro-Centre. As a key instrument of control, the Center usurped provincial incomes from East Pakistan - namely, the sales and income tax as well as import and export duties. This left East Pakistan with very limited income to finance its educational sector (amidst other forms of development). Such disparities were only amplified during the "One-Unit" era, (Asadullah, 2010) which created further division through three biased Five-Year plans. In all three plans, the industrial development of West Pakistan was prioritized in order to support a large urban population. East Pakistan, however, which was largely agrarian and thus

with a predominantly rural-oriented population, was left out of such development processes. This is evident from the disparities in per-capita in both wings in the 1950s,when per capita income in East Pakistan rose by 0.7% while that in the West rose by 2% (nearly three times higher). To worsen this situation, the central government systematically transferred "visible and invisible" resources[2] away from the East and towards the West (Asadullah, 2010).

Educational Colonization

Availability of Schools

Beyond such systematic transfers of key resources, the third five year plan planned to raise universal literacy under an overarching policy of Universal Primary Education in Pakistan (Asadullah, 2010). To this end, a failed attempt was made to increase gross primary enrollment to 70% (by the end of the Third Year Plan, it stood at 55 percent) by increasing the number of schools. However, while 42,500 schools were constructed in West Pakistan, only 4000 were set-up in the East (Asadullah, 2010). This seemed illogical as 66 percent of Pakistanis resided in the East at the time of independence and could not help but exacerbate the discrepancies between the two regions. This region also had a higher population growth rate than the West in subsequent years, which was mirrored by an increase in the school age population, evident in the table below (Asadullah, 2010). East Pakistan, therefore, accounted for most of the school age population, yet was still severely underserved in this regard.

[2] Particularly, this was done through unfair trade policies, limited allocation of foreign aid, and a transfer of agricultural surplus from the East towards industry in the West (p.6).

TRENDS IN TOTAL AND SCHOOL AGE POPULATION IN EAST AND WEST PAKISTAN, 1950-75

Year	Total population, in 000		School age population			
			Population aged 5-14, in 000		Population aged 6-11, in 000	
	EP	WP	EP	WP	EP	WP
1950	41,783	39,659	9,603 (23)	9,078 (22.9)	5,873 (14.1)	5,513 (13.9)
1955	46,295	43,737	10,467 (22.6)	9,924 (22.7)	6,325 (13.7)	6,042 (13.8)
1960	51,785	48,767	12,696 (24.5)	11,549 (23.7)	8,000 (15.4)	7,158 (14.7)
1965	58,493	54,762	15,587 (26.6)	13,603 (24.8)	9,674 (16.5)	8,405 (15.3)
1970	66,292	61,840	18,046 (27.2)	15,605 (25.2)	11,151 (16.8)	9,601 (15.5)
1975	75,171	70,275	20,595 (27.4)	17,758 (25.3)	12,674 (16.9)	10,906 (15.5)

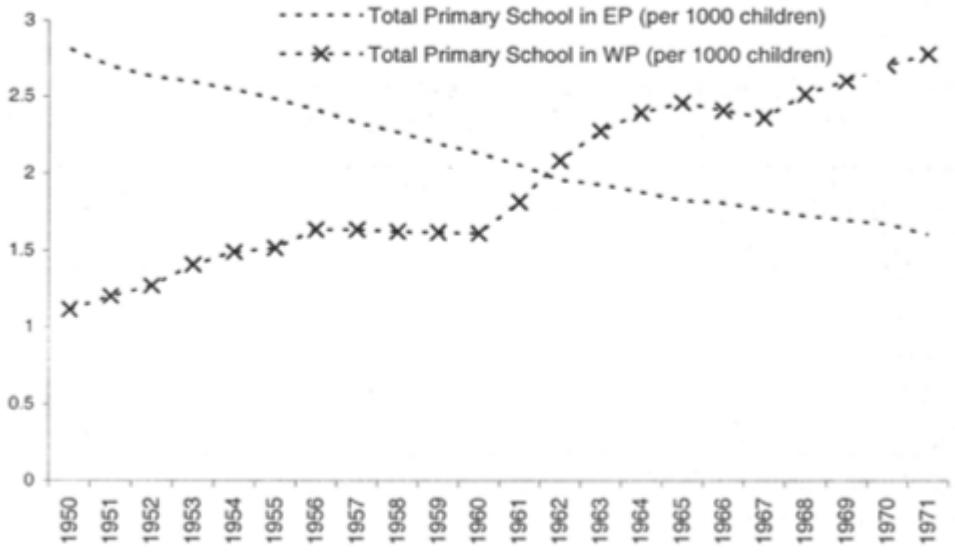
Note: Figures in parentheses indicate school-age population as percentage of total population. Reported figures correspond to median variant[12].

Source: Asadullah, 2010

Despite an increased gross enrollment rate due to population growth, in reality the East never had an advantage over the West in terms of primary education. This is because, while more children could potentially be enrolled into schools (given the number of schools available), it seemed unlikely that they would finish their schooling. The school dropout rate (68.25 percent) was highest in East Pakistan in 1947 and remained high in the following years. For example, in the 1960s, only 40 percent of students enrolled in grade one made it to grade two, and only 20 percent survived till grade five. West Pakistan, in contrast, had both a higher and improving retention rate over time (Asadullah, 2010) with 38 percent-50 percent of students remaining enrolled until grade five in the 1960s. Therefore, despite a lower enrollment rate, West Pakistan still had a larger population of students in grade five than East Pakistan. Unfortunately, these statistics are also consistent with a higher incidence of child labor in East Pakistan in the 1960s, where in 1961 38.2 percent of children between 10-14 years of age were found in the civilian labor force in East Pakistan, compared to 23.3 percent in West Pakistan (Asadullah, 2010).

In terms of the number of schools available, at the time of independence, East Pakistan did inherit a more resource-rich structure. As such, there were three primary schools available per one thousand school age children while less than one was available per one thousand school age children in West Pakistan. As the figure below shows, however, this disparity not only reversed, but played into West Pakistan's favor over time.

Figure 1: Primary School Availability in East and West Pakistan, 1950-1971



Note: Annual school age population (aged 5-14 years) figures have been projected using published data on annual growth rate for the respective provinces. Data on total number of schools was obtained from Fifty years of Pakistan in statistics, Government of Pakistan (1998).

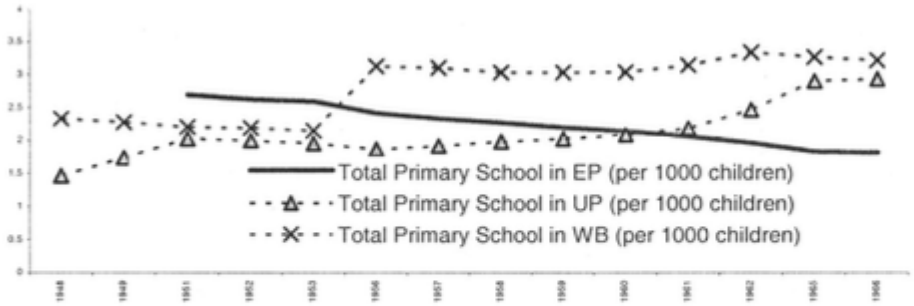
Source: P.14

In the first decade of independence, school availability doubled in West Pakistan, from 8,357 in 1948 to 16, 474 in 1958 (p.14). This trend is shown to continue thereafter, so much so that by 1961, the education infrastructure of the two regions first equaled each other and then diverged in the subsequent years before partition, with West Pakistan taking the lead over East Pakistan.

Importantly, this was despite a constitutional declaration in 1962 that called to eliminate inter-regional disparities (Asadullah, 2010). Unsurprisingly, given this trend, West Pakistan had both an absolute and relative advantage in the total availability of primary schools in the post 1960 years (Asadullah, 2010).

To further corroborate the extent of the disparities in the educational structures between the two regions, Asadullah compared the primary school availability in East Pakistan with that of West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh (UP) in India. The objective was to show that if a similar regime within the same region displayed different results, it would point to a narrative of active discrimination that could explain the educational disparity prevalent in East Pakistan. To this effect, in 1947, West Bengal had a school structure and socio-economic background of students similar to that of East Pakistan at the time (Asadullah, 2010). Meanwhile, UP was one of the "most educationally backward states in India" (Asadullah, 2010). The figure below shows that despite these similarities while East Pakistan was objectively ahead of both Indian states in the early years after independence (1948 to 1952), the scenario soon reversed as the school supply in East Pakistan stagnated while it steadily grew in both Indian states. By 1959, East Pakistan had fallen behind West Bengal and even UP had surpassed it by 1961.

Figure 3: Primary School Availability in East Pakistan, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, 1948-1966



Notes: Data on the total number of primary schools in the Indian provinces are from 'Education in India', 1994, Central Publication Branch, Government of India (GoI). School age population data for the Indian states have been projected using state-wise annual population data from 'Report on the Population Projections Worked Out Under the Guidance of the Expert Committee Set Up by the Planning Commission Under the Chairmanship of the Registrar General, India', Office of the Registrar General, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 1968.

Source: Asadullah, 2010

Availability and Quality of Teachers

Not only were there fewer schools in East Pakistan over the years, but fewer teachers as well. As with the number of schools, at the time of independence, East Pakistan also had a larger stock of teachers (Asadullah, 2010). However, the negative growth in the total number of primary schools as well as a dwindling number of primary and secondary school teachers meant that classes became increasingly overcrowded, which obviously impacted the quality of education for these students. While the number of schools in East and West Pakistan were nearly the same in 1948, they soon diverged, particularly after the 1950s as the number of primary and secondary school teachers increased in the West (Asadullah, 2010). As a result, by 1970, East Pakistan had a class size which was 14 percent higher compared to pre-independence levels, whereas the STR in West Pakistan was 34 percent lower (Asadullah, 2010).

Teachers in East Pakistan also tended to be untrained and poorly paid. The average salary of a trained primary school teacher in 1956 per month was $4.60 (Rupees 841), which later increased to $12 (Rupees 2196). Untrained teachers, however, had salaries that remained as low as $6.80 (Rupees 1244) (Asadullah, 2010). This would inevitably create problems in terms of the recruitment and retention of more qualified teachers based on higher pay scales. In contrast, the starting salary of an untrained primary school teacher in West Pakistan was nearly three times as high, with average salaries almost double those paid to teachers in East Pakistan (Asadullah, 2010). Unfortunately, these underpaid and untrained teachers accounted for nearly two-fifth of the teaching staff in primary schools in East Pakistan, as evident from the table below.

TABLE XIII
UNTRAINED TEACHERS AS A % OF TOTAL PRIMARY TEACHERS, 1952

	% of Teachers without training
East Pakistan	42
West Pakistan	36
Punjab	23
N.W.F.P.	13
Baluchistan	18

Percentage of Untrained Teachers:

East Pakistan vs. West Pakistan (and provinces of West Pakistan)

Source: Huq, 1954

Ultimate Effect through Literacy Rates

The effect of these factors could be felt across all levels of the education sector of East Pakistan. To begin, the census data capturing the literacy rates in Pakistan between 1951 and 1961 presented East Pakistan with a false advantage.

TABLE VI
LITERACY RATES IN PAKISTAN (FOR POPULATION AGED 5 YEARS AND OLDER), 1951-1961

	1951	1961
Pakistan	14.0	17.5
East Pakistan	18.8	19.9
West Pakistan	7.6	14.4

Note: The literacy data for Census 1951 was adjusted for intercensal differences in the definition of literacy. For details, see Akther (1963).

Source: Asadullah, 2010

While it may seem East Pakistan had a higher literacy rate in both 1951 and 1961, this is inconsistent with the evidence shown earlier of an unfair distribution of educational and financial resources between East and West Pakistan. The false literacy advantage is driven by the presence of a large number of individuals in East Pakistan who had a very low educational attainment and were unlikely to have attained functional literacy - defined as those who report themselves as literacy and have completed at least five years of schooling. Particularly, the older population and the five-year-old's were among those artificially driving up the literacy results. The second factor misrepresenting the literacy rate refers to functional literacy by examining how many children stayed in school. Measuring literacy in a population five years and older contains a wide age bracket that does not consider school dropout rates. For those that dropped out, the gains in literacy due to school attendance would undoubtedly have been short-lived. As seen earlier, this problem plagued students in East Pakistan, the vast majority of which dropped out after completing grade 1.

Due to this, Asadullah notes that an objective comparison of literacy rates must exclude these two groups of individuals and start with an analysis of functional literacy rates among individuals ten years and older. Taking data from (Akhtar, 1963), Asadullah finds that the

revised figures yield a literacy rate of 10.1 percent for West Pakistan compared to 7.8 percent in East Pakistan.

The table below summarizes West Pakistan's literacy advantage across all levels of education. The only advantage East Pakistan seems to have is in primary education. However, once again, once school dropout rates are factored in, the Western province dominates over the Eastern education system.

TABLE VII
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF (SELF-REPORTED) LITERATES BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, 1961

	East Pakistan	West Pakistan
No Education	15.8	11.6
Primary Education	63.5	47.1
Secondary Education	16.9	29.9
Matriculation	2.8	9.0
Intermediate	0.6	1.9
Graduate	0.4	0.5

Source: Population Census of Pakistan, 1961, Census Bulletin No. 4, Literacy and Education (1962).

Source: Asadullah, 2010

Chapter 4: Basis of Comparison

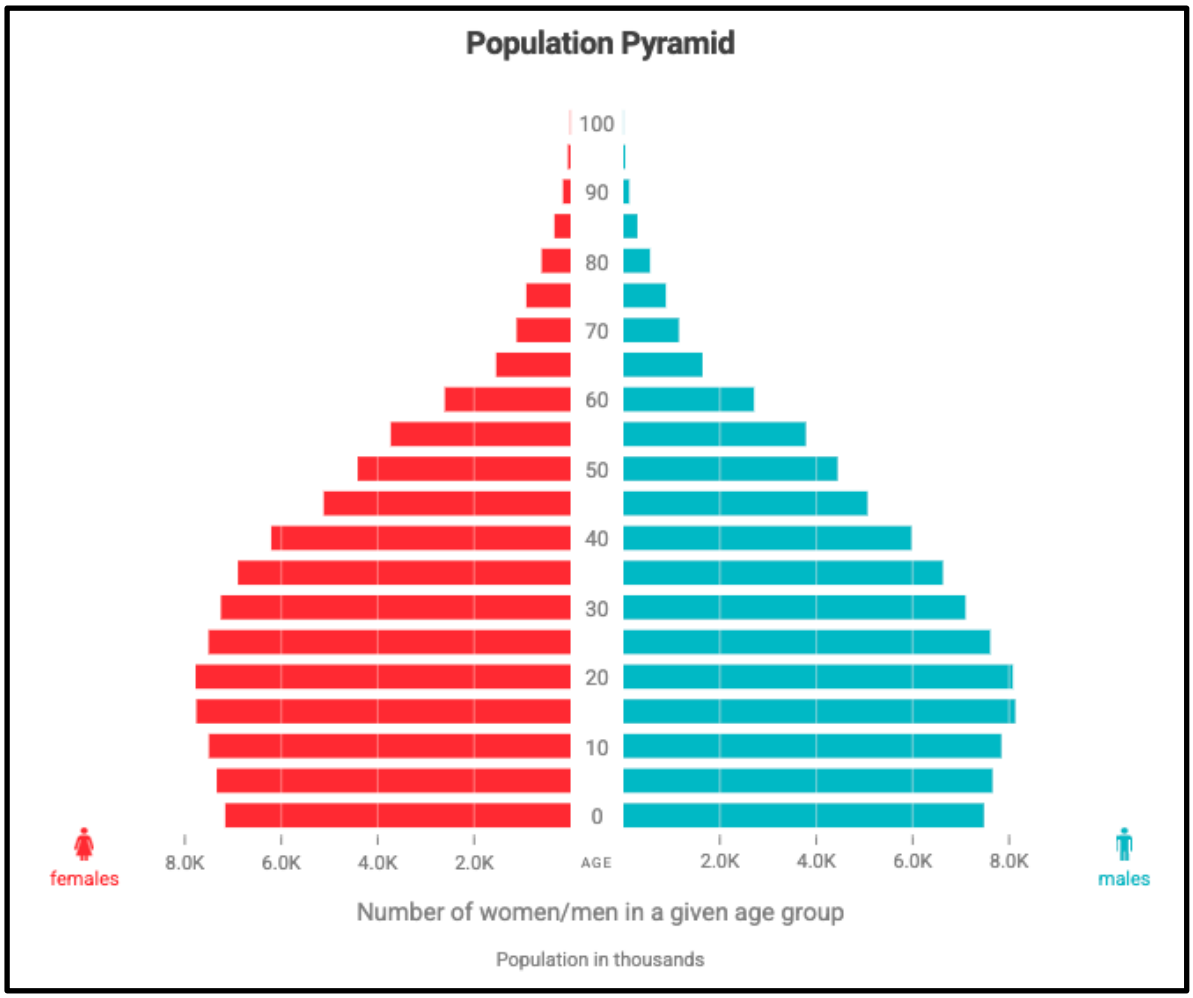
With this foundation in mind, this discussion can shift towards a quantitative analysis of the current educational state for children, particularly girls, in both Pakistan and Bangladesh. To form a basis of comparison, one must first identify how the two countries are comparable.

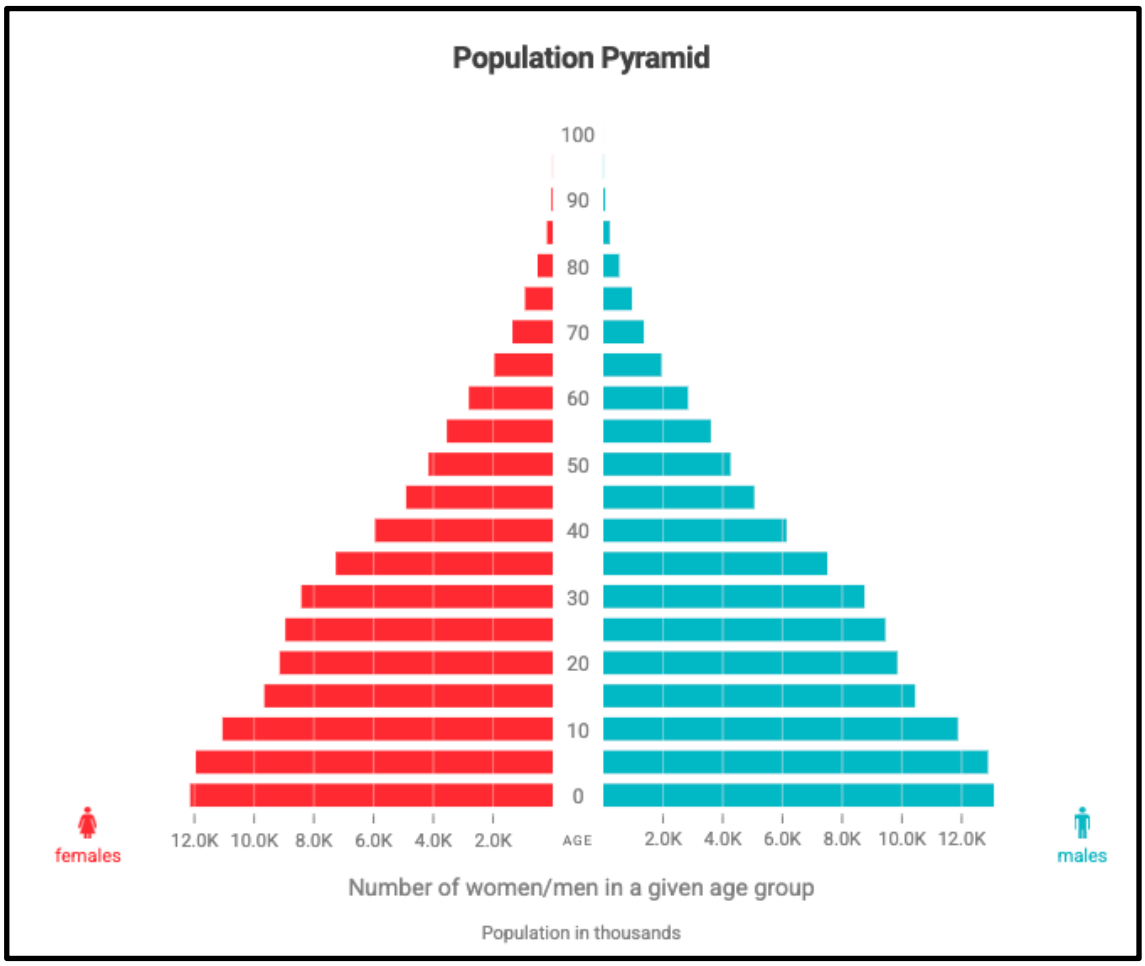
Structural Similarities

In addition to the shared political structure before partition, the two countries share several attributes, even after their separation. Both Pakistan and Bangladesh are Muslim majority nations with high population densities. As evidence, the countries are two of the top ten most populous countries in the world. Their populations are also predominantly youthful (64% of the population of Pakistan and 54% of the population of Bangladesh are between the ages of 0-24 years in 2022 (UNFPA, 2022).

The following two graphs provide a sense of this population distribution in 2022, from ages 0 to 100.

Population Distribution Bangladesh - 2022





Population Distribution Pakistan 2022

Both population pyramids show similar trends, with the majority of the population clustered at between the age of infants and 15-20 years old. While the distribution is linear in Pakistan, it is symmetric in Bangladesh between the ages of infanthood and 20. The age bracket most affected by educational policy (15 and under) comprise a large majority of the population in both countries. By this age, most children should be in secondary school, but as this discussion will observe, that is not the case for many children – especially in Pakistan. Education, therefore, affects most residents in each respective country.

The population is also mainly rural (61.8 percent of the population resided in rural areas in Bangladesh and 62.8% resided in Pakistan in 2020 - World Bank data).

In terms of employment, agriculture is the main economic activity in each country. According to the World Bank Report, in 2016 "More than 70 percent of Bangladesh's population and 77 percent of its workforce lives in rural areas. Nearly half of all of Bangladesh's workers and two-thirds in rural areas are directly employed by agriculture, and about 87 percent of rural households rely on agriculture for at least part of their income" (World Bank, 2016). Meanwhile, in 2017, nearly half of Pakistan's labor force was employed in the agricultural sector, which accounted for over a third of the country's export earnings (IFPRI, 2017). Furthermore, the rural-to-urban shift is a major trend affecting urban development (Hamid and Shahnaz, 2010). And infrastructure is also lacking in many areas of each country. (Akbar et al, 2021).

Patriarchy

Crucial to this discussion, however, is the nature of patriarchy that existed when the countries were under the same flag, and that continues to persist thereafter.

When Pakistan came into existence, it inherited an already politically conscious group of women. Educated women from East Bengal, Punjab, Sindh and KPK (then NWFP) were part of the struggle for independence and were keenly involved in women's reforms and education. With the creation of Pakistan, however, came the political dominance of deeply traditional and patriarchal forces that increasingly marginalized their political rights. Women were thus excluded, isolated, and confined to domestic spaces. Female education was low and restricted to the household. Much like in pre-colonial times, women were deprived of a secular education,

and were instead instructed in religious education while being taught how to be good homemakers.

It is important to note that the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, recognized the civil, political, and social importance of women in Pakistan. As such, he encouraged women to play an active role in building the new nation. Unfortunately, to secure its foundation as a newly formed nation, the state had to form an alliance with feudal and obscurantist forces. These forces advanced a patriarchal agenda under the guise of the two-nation theory and their interpretation of a 'Muslim nation.' As such, the women of Pakistan quickly found their political and social rights usurped. In 1956, the constitution of Pakistan allowed ulema to have an advisory role in legislation. As a result, Maulana Madudi, the founder of the prominent political party Jamaat-e-Islami, argued that voting rights should be extended to all adult males, but only to educated females. Given the problematic structure of female education, this view would have severely undermined women's political power in Pakistan. In a subsequent declaration by the Jamaat-e-Islami, it was explicitly stated that public offices remained reserved for pious and learned men, whereas women would not be allowed in public offices where they could come in contact with men. This ideology came to a head in 1979, under the dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq, who introduced a set of discriminatory laws against women under the pretext of creating a rigid form of Sharia based order in Pakistan. Through the Hudood Ordinance, the Law of Evidence, the Qisas and Diyat laws, and the Family Laws,[3] the state sought to regulate public

- [3] The Hudood Ordinances – a set of laws that, among other things, criminalize adultery and non-marital sex, including rape – were enacted in 1979 and have led to thousands of women being imprisoned for so-called "honor" crimes
- Law of Evidence states that women's testimony is worth half that of men in certain civil matters
- Under Islamic law the punishment for murder, homicide or infliction of injury can either be in the form of qisas (equal punishment for the crime committed) or diyat (compensation payable to the victims or their legal heirs). Women were discriminated against when these laws were amended under Zia-ul-Haq's reign. A distinction was made between intentional murder and murder for honor. Concessions were granted for the latter.

morality and monopolize women's bodies. It therefore imposed restrictions on their attire and their presence in public spaces. It also introduced laws concerning sexual crimes that merely subjugated women further towards male authority, strengthening the patriarchal hold on society as a whole.

Although women's rights have improved in both countries since that period, a strong sense of patriarchy still underlies the social structure of both Pakistan and Bangladesh. According to a report by the UNDP, Bangladesh remains a patriarchy in which women are still denied several human rights. Gender inequality in Bangladesh is characterized by "limited female access to economic resources, male guardianship and control over women's life choices, male control over social institutions, the confinement of women to household tasks and to the private sphere, lack of female access to higher education and employment, and a very high prevalence of violence against women" (Karim et al, 2018). Due to these features, it ranks 133 (out of 188 countries) in the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII), with gender inequality higher in rural areas. However, the situation is worse in Pakistan, which ranks 154 in the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII). In addition to the factors listed above for Bangladesh, women's positions are mediated by zar (wealth), and zamin (land), in conjunction with the notion that a "man's honor depends on his possession and control of wealth, women, and land (zar, zan, zamin)" (Chauhan and Khalid, 2014).

Despite these similarities, there was a unique difference between Pakistan and Bangladesh that makes the Bangladeshi education miracle even more miraculous. That is, that

despite two exploitative colonization's, the country still emerged with sound educational infrastructure.

The Re-Colonization of East Pakistan

To really expand on why this may have seemed like an insurmountable task, the discussion will now delve into further details regarding the second colonization.

To begin, before partition in 1947, East Bengal (later East Pakistan) was dominated by Hindu and other non-Muslim businessmen. East Bengal produced jute for industries solely located in West Bengal. East Bengal did not have a single jute mill. Even in terms of land, all landlords in East Bengal were Hindu and almost all rural Muslims were peasants (Ahmed, 1972). This large difference in resource allocation based purely on religious lines resulted in an enormous power vacuum in East Bengal because of partition. As Hindu landlords emigrated to India, Hindu land in West Bengal was redistributed among the Muslim peasantries.

In the urban areas of East Bengal, there was a real absence of a bourgeois class. The Bengali elite essentially consisted of the elements of a "decaying Muslim aristocracy" (Ahmed, 1972). The petty bourgeoisie was instead composed of small traders, shopkeepers, teachers, and clerks, all of whom became the most important class. While this class had a predominant cultural influence, economically it was weak.

This is opposed to the class struggle of West Pakistan, which also lacked a bourgeoisie class. This void was filled by landlords who became the most powerful class at the time of independence in 1947. While the landlords were economically powerful, they were not politically organized and were, thus, incapable of running the newly formed state. The political

strings were then pulled by the West Pakistani bureaucracy - which was composed predominantly of Punjabis and Urdu speaking Muhajirs that had settled in Sindh. The bureaucracy was specifically trained by the British as an instrument of colonial rule. While it had strong ties to the landlord class, the urgent needs of the new state and the chaotic conditions surrounding partition allowed it to act semi-autonomously and fill the void left by the British departure.

Finally, West Pakistan also received immigrants from well-established trading communities in Gujarat **and** Bombay. These immigrants settled in Karachi and later became the industrial capitalist class. Due to their "small size, narrow community base, and lack of roots in Pakistan," however, these industrial entrepreneurs never asserted themselves as a political force (Ahmed, 1972). They merely maintained a marriage of convenience with the bureaucracy that ensured policies that supported their growing enterprise.

The capitalists, feudal landlords, bureaucracy, and military of West Pakistan essentially came together to dominate East Pakistan which effectively lacked all four instruments of political and economic power.

To begin, West Pakistani capitalists invested in the jute trade established in East Pakistan. At the time, East Pakistani jute was well established in the world market and jute from this region alone made up more than 80% of world supply. However, despite the export of raw and processed jute accounting for 70% of Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings, East Pakistan only received 25%-30% of its total import earnings (Ahmed, 1972). A large chunk of earnings was instead used to industrialize West Pakistan. In addition, policies were set in by the West Pakistani bureaucracy that ensured that factories had a steady supply of cheap raw materials, which further burdened and exploited the West Bengali peasants. Finally, these factories were

overseen by West Pakistani managers due to a distrust of the East Pakistani population amongst Western capitalists (Ahmed, 1972).

Barred from industry, official civilian and military roles, and even managerial positions, all classes of East Pakistan felt the oppressive weight of the West Pakistani power structure.

In line with British colonial tradition, West Pakistan exploited East Pakistan's raw materials and abundance of cheap labor. The West Pakistani also created an unfair balance of trade, taking a page from colonial expertise by using a colony as a market for the mother country's manufactured goods. The East Pakistani market was then made to consume a large chunk of manufactured goods, which greatly benefited West Pakistan when it could not market these goods in the global market. East Pakistan, on the other hand, primarily exported tea to West Pakistan, which faced stiff competition in the world market. Eventually, India and Sri Lanka would oust East Pakistan from this market (Ahmed, 1972).

After a century of colonial subservience, however, West Pakistani entrepreneurs were not so adept as to impose such tight monopolistic control over East Pakistan. In order to further multiply their fortunes, West Pakistani capitalists sought collaboration with foreign capital. In exchange for this cooperation, West Pakistan was willing to offer certain benefits, as will be explained below, to foreign powers at the expense of the people of Pakistan.

The United States was prominent amongst these outside forces. It was the leading money lender since World War II, and in its search for Cold War allies, it was eager to provide economic and military "assistance" to third world rulers (Ahmed, 1972). In 1951, Pakistan entered into a marriage of convenience with the U.S towards this end. By 1955, it had signed a handful of treaties meant to establish American control in Asia. In 1969, Pakistan received $1.5 billion to $2 billion in military aid in exchange for the establishment of an American military

base near Peshawar, along with permission to use its civilian airfields for espionage flights (Ahmed, 1972). So strong was Pakistan's bond with America, that Pakistan's first military dictator and president, Ayub Khan said, "if there is real trouble, there is no country in Asia you will be able to put your foot in. The only people who will stand by you are the people of Pakistan." (Ahmed, 1972).

By 1969, the United States had provided $3 billion in grants and loans for Pakistan's economic development. Amongst the conditions that came along with these economic benefits was an explicit guideline to encourage "private enterprise" in Pakistan (Ahmed, 1972). America sent advisors to Pakistan to tailor its economic enterprise. And Pakistani bureaucrats and military officers alike, followed this advice down to a T. To this effect, a top advisor to Pakistan at the time said, "Policies have been frames to assure that the government intervenes in the economy when such intervention is in theory desirable, while leaving in private hands decisions which, according to theory, should be left to private initiative" (emphasis underlined in original - Ahmed, 1972).

Guided by American economic advice and having accepted billions of dollars in aid over the course of two decades, Pakistan developed a colossal dependence on foreign aid. A very real example of this dependence is evident from the portion of funding used for Pakistan's five-year plan. U.S money made up 35% of Pakistan's first five-year plan, 50% of its second plan, and 26% of its third plan. The lowest percentage also does not indicate Pakistan's self-sufficiency, but rather a strain in Pak-American relations (Ahmed, 1972).

A strictly capitalistic model of development would inevitably only benefit Pakistan's robber barons. As a result of U.S oriented economic development policies, 20 families in

Pakistan came to control 80% of the banking system, 70% of the insurance, and 66% of the industrial assets of Pakistan (Ahmed, 1972). The subsequent gap in income due to an accumulation of wealth at the hands of a few, disrupted traditional life and alienated the masses. So immense was public discontent that there was a massive countrywide revolt that overthrew Ayub Khan's dictatorship before it was quelled by another martial law.

These developments not only intensified the class struggle, but also aggravated existing regional strains. Since capital was entirely controlled by West Pakistan, these capitalists chose to solely invest in the West. By the end of Pakistan's notorious "decade of development" (1958-1968), West Pakistan GDP exceeded that of East Pakistan by 34 percent. Disparity in per capita income stood at 62 percent and the real difference in the average standard of living had widened to 126 percent (Ahmed, 1972).

Chapter 5: Quantitative Analysis

Given the above set of events and demographic and political characteristics of the two countries, the subsequent separation, and the educational policy of Bangladesh, thereafter, serves as a natural experiment through which I am able to compare educational trends pre and post 1971 across both countries. The policy differences between these two periods can then be exploited to test whether there are effects on gender equity in educational attainment. With this analysis, the aim is to examine how educational policy shapes gender disparities within this sector.

To test this, I will adopt a difference in difference strategy with a Treatment (Bangladesh) and Control (Pakistan) along with a treatment period (post 1971) and a control period (pre-1971). I hypothesize that the difference in difference estimate for women will be positive and greater than the difference in difference estimates for men. This will indicate that Bangladesh has succeeded in closing the gender gap in education to a greater degree than Pakistan.

The difference in difference process is a 'controlled-before-and-after study' that uses longitudinal data from control and treatment groups in order to determine an appropriate counterfactual to estimate a causal effect. This method is useful for this study because it estimates the effect of a specific treatment by comparing a change in outcome over time in a population subjected to the treatment (the intervention group) and a population that was not (control group). In this case, the treatment is the separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971. The outcome measured in this case is the adult literacy rate among men and women, which according to UNESCO and the World Bank is defined as the percentage of people ages 15 and above who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement about their everyday life (UNESCO, 2021).

This youth literacy rate reflects recent progress in education and measures the accumulated outcomes of primary education over roughly the past ten years by calculating the number of individuals who have graduated from primary school and acquired a basic degree of literacy and numeracy skills. This definition is accepted by both Pakistan and Bangladesh in their measures of adult literacy. This study will examine male and female adult literacy of both Pakistan and Bangladesh pre-treatment (pre-1971) and post-treatment (post-1971) to find the intervention effect of a new political order on the outcomes of education for female students in Bangladesh. The data is taken from the compiled literacy database of the UNESCO institute of statistics, which calculates literacy rate across countries using national census data and household surveys.

These results are captured in the tables below. Table 1 captures the difference in results of adult female literacy between the years 1961 and 2011.

The results show a positive difference between Pakistan and Bangladesh, which can be interpreted as the effect of policy measures in Bangladesh that help to close the gender-gap in education over what would have been accomplished prior to Bangladesh's partition from Pakistan. Given the patriarchal social structure of both Pakistan and Bangladesh, the positive difference in adult female literacy (as well as the extent of the difference) compared with the negative difference-in-difference result in adult male literacy across the same time frame indicates a remarkable change in the Bangladeshi education system.

Table 1: Difference-in-Difference display of Adult Female Literacy

Adult Female Literacy				
Literacy Rate	Pre (1961)	Post (2011)	Difference	Difference-in- Difference
Pakistan	4.1	41.9	37.8	52.9-37.8= **15.1**
Bangladesh	2.2	55.1	52.9	

Source: UNESCO, 2021 and Akhtar, 1963

Table 2: Difference-in-Difference display of Adult Male Literacy

Adult Male Literacy				
Literacy Rate	Pre (1961)	Post (2011)	Difference	Difference-in- Difference
Pakistan	15.1	67.0	51.9	49.6-51.9= **-2.3**
Bangladesh	12.9	62.5	49.6	

Source: UNESCO, 2021 and Akhtar, 1963

The literacy rate is an indicator for educational attainment that can be used as a proxy instrument to evaluate the effectiveness of the education system. A high literacy rate would suggest the capacity of an education system to provide a large population with opportunities to

acquire literacy skills. Such skills provide the foundation for further intellectual growth as well as social and economic development.

Chapter 6: Explaining the Bangladeshi Phenomenon

In 2015, during the Oslo Education Summit, Pakistan was described as among the world's worst performing countries in education. In 2018, the government recognized that a significant number of children - nearly 22.5 million - were out of school. Amongst these numbers, girls were particularly vulnerable. According to a 2018 Human Rights Watch report, 32% percent of primary school age girls were out of school in Pakistan, compared to 21 percent of boys. By grade six, 59 percent of girls were out of school, against 49 percent of boys. And only 13 percent of girls were still in school by the ninth grade (Matinez, Ellin, 2018).

By 2019, the situation remained more or less the same. Less than 46 percent of women were literate in Pakistan compared to more than 70 percent of men. Since then, female education remains a pressing issue that continues to evade societal and political significance.

On the other hand, as noted earlier, Bangladesh has high completion rates for females across primary and secondary school. According to the World Bank, the primary school completion rate for a Bangladeshi girl is 89 percent, the lower secondary school completion rate is 71 percent, and the upper secondary school completion rate is 27 percent. Therefore, the chances of a Bangladeshi girl being able to pursue a higher education stands at 17 percent, given these statistics. Compared to Pakistan, Bangladesh has a fairly high completion rate for its female students. Nearly three-fourths of Bangladeshi women are also literate compared to less than half of Pakistani women.

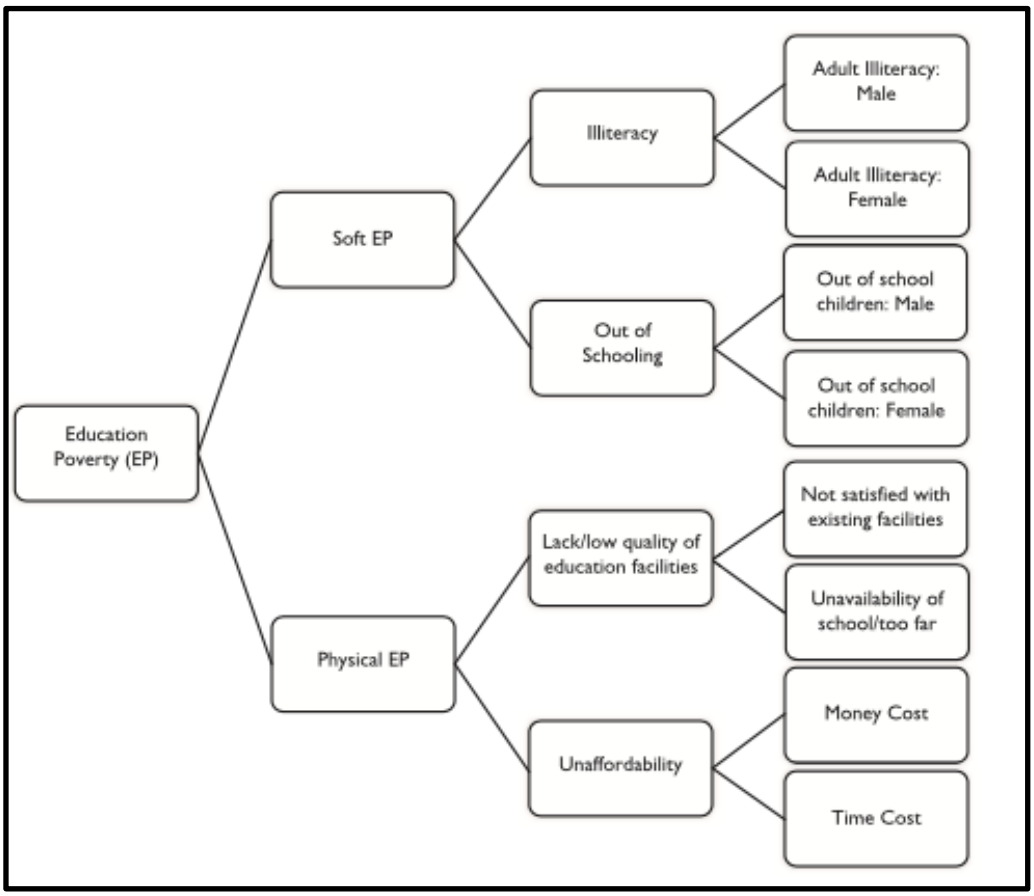
In the context of repeated colonial exploitation, Bangladesh's ability to exceed Pakistan's educational capacity and afford opportunities for its women shows the remarkable resilience of its people. Despite this resilience, it is still quite an enigma how the country's educational system

advanced so quickly. The following section will aim to explain Bangladesh's success and Pakistan's challenges towards educational attainment.

Education Poverty in Pakistan

To examine disparities in education, Iqbal and Nawaz used the Alkire Foster (AF) method[4] to calculate the educational poverty (EP) in Pakistan at the district level. EP refers to a lack of access to educational facilities. It is a situation where a household does not have access or cannot afford to have the basic education and/or education facilities to achieve quality education. This multidimensional phenomenon captures the extent of deprivation of basic education facilities which limit the level of education and skills in a particular area. The model reflects two types of EP: (a) soft EP; and (b) physical EP.

[4] The Alkire-Foster (AF) method, developed by Sabina Alkire and James Foster, is a flexible technique for measuring **poverty** or **wellbeing**. It can incorporate different dimensions and indicators to create measures adapted to specific contexts. This means the AF method can be used in several different ways.



Source: Nawaz et al, 2016

Soft EP is defined as the deprivation in education and skills. This type of poverty is captured using two dimensions including adult literacy and schooling. Adult illiteracy represents the current deprivation in education while out-of-school children represent the future level of deprivation.

Physical EP is defined as the deprivation in education facilities and affordability. A lack of proper education facilities in the vicinity and the cost of these facilities contribute to household educational poverty. Physical EP is captured using two dimensions which include quality and cost. Physical EP has a direct bearing on soft EP. If educational facilities in a

particular area are inaccessible due to poor quality or high costs, the area struggles to eliminate soft EP (Nawaz et al, 2016).

There are common factors underlying the educational poverty within the districts of Pakistan. According to the resource dilution model[5], parental resources are finite. Therefore, as the number of children in a family increase, the educational opportunities available to each child diminish. In patriarchal societies this reduction is often gendered, with resources disproportionately invested in boys over girls due to a belief that investing in a boy's education will have a greater rate of return. These beliefs are supported by a culture and tradition that negatively views a female's education. In the rural areas of Pakistan, girls are often married when they reach adolescence - before they complete secondary school. Since many parents maintain that their daughters must ultimately fulfill the role of motherhood, they fail to see the point of educating them. And since they will be married off, they believe their education will only benefit their husband and the family they will be married into. For these parents, pursuing an education ultimately detracts girls from their household responsibilities (such as cooking, cleaning, taking care of younger siblings, etc.) and does not have enough payoff to encourage parental investment. This situation is worsened by poverty, which adds on tuition, books, and uniform costs that families often cannot afford (Nawaz et al, 2016).

The gender of the head of the household has also shown to influence the educational attainment of children within that household. Research suggests that children from developing regions such as Asia and Africa have higher educational attainment if they come from a female headed household (Nawaz et al, 2016). This is true of female headed households in the rural

[5] "The resource dilution model posits that parental resources are finite and that as the number of children in the family increases, the resources accrued by any one child necessarily decline. Siblings are competitors for parents' time, energy, and financial resources and so the fewer the better. Even one sibling is too many" (Downey, 2001)

areas of Pakistan as well. However, female headed households are still poorer than male headed households and are therefore less able to financially invest in their children, especially over longer periods of time.

The educational attainment of the head of the household also transfers onto their children. Illiterate parents tend not to keep up with their child's progress in school (Suleman et al, 2015). Educated parents visit the school to stay abreast of their child's performance and are also more equipped to help their child with homework and assignments, facilitating the child's success in school. As educated parents are aware of the importance of school, they continue to support their child's education. The probability of a child going to school increases by 8 percent if the schooling of the head of the household increases by 1 percent. For daughters in particular, King and Bellew noticed a positive impact of a parent's education on their daughter's 'completed years of schooling.' They also found that a mother's education had more significant positive effects for her daughter's education as opposed to her son's. Furthermore, another study found that if a girl's parents were educated, she was more likely to be admitted for higher schooling (Suleman et al, 2015). Children from female headed households in Pakistan are then naturally disadvantaged due to the increased difficulty a female faces in educating herself.

Economic factors influencing the head of the household also fuel educational poverty. Employment status, level of income, and asset ownership of the head can all affect a child's ability to attend school. For example, research shows that children from households whose heads are employed are more likely to go to school because of a lack of income fluctuations (Nawaz et al, 2016). With a stable income, the head of the household can afford to pay tuition and other basic costs of schooling consistently. Income levels similarly affect EP. With a higher level of income, household heads are less likely to compromise on their children's education to save

resources and are also less likely to have their children work as a source of new income (Nawaz et al, 2016). Therefore, higher income positively influences schooling. Finally, asset ownership influences education poverty as households with assets are more likely to attain more education than those without.

Beyond details of the head of the household, other factors influencing education poverty include the awareness and perception of the importance of education as well as the availability of educational facilities (Nawaz et al, 2016).

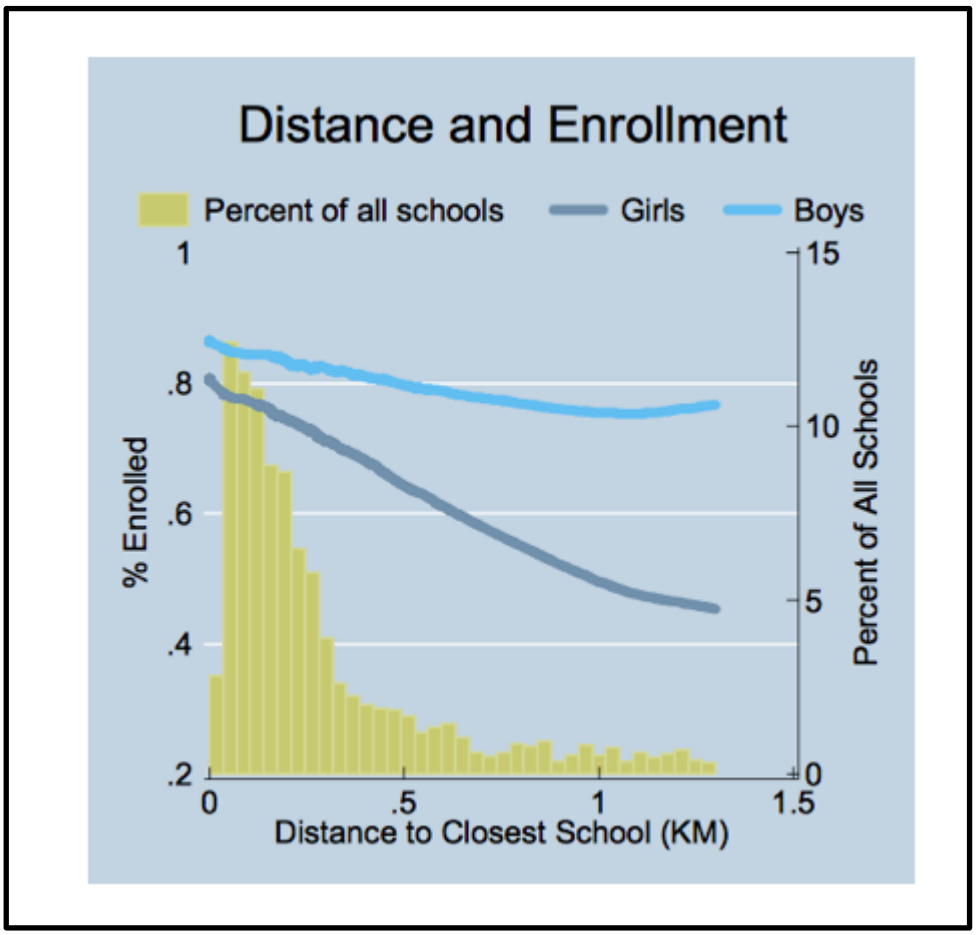
Based on these factors, Nawaz and Iqbal conducted an analysis of district-wise educational poverty in Pakistan, and found that the gender of the head of the household has a significant impact on EP. The results indicate that the likelihood of being non-poor, increased by 30 percent as the gender of the head of the household changes from female to male. In terms of household size, the likelihood of being non-poor is reduced by 20 per cent in Pakistan as the household size increases. And as income plays a crucial part in educational attainment, when income increases, the likelihood of being non-poor increases by 63 per cent. Because awareness about the use and importance of educational facilities creates a demand for educational services, the likelihood of being educated non-poor is increased by 28 per cent among the households using different media sources as compared to the households not using media[6].

One way accessibility to educational facilities is determined is by means of transport, the likelihood of being “education non-poor" is increased by 39 per cent among the household having personal transport facility as compared to the household not having this facility (Nawaz et al, 2016). Long distances from school create several issues for girls. A lack of sufficient educational facilities is the main barrier to a girl’s education, particularly in the rural areas of

[6] Results as found in the study conducted by Nawaz et al, 2016

Pakistan. What facilities do exist, fail to meet the emerging needs of rural girls. Ensuring a girl's privacy and safety whilst maintaining cultural expectations are tantamount amongst these needs. In the Karak District of KPK, girls are not only challenged by a lack of basic educational facilities (desk, benches, books, stationary, sufficient classrooms, adequate teaching staff, electricity, fans, a playground, drinking water, and scholarships for poor students) but also a lack of transport facilities, female teachers, a boundary wall, and separate bathrooms (Suleman et al, 2015). These last four factors significantly impact a girl's safety. In a male dominated environment, parents are constantly worried their daughter's will be sexually assaulted or mistreated. Therefore, inadequate educational facilities and a long distance from school can deter parents from ensuring their daughter's education. In the Karak District, most secondary schools are located in district centers which require girls over 11 years old to travel long distances, which they are often unable to do (Suleman et al, 2015).

This was true of households in Punjab as well. A study conducted by LEAPS found that most households in the province have a primary school within 500 meters, but girls' enrollment plunges with distance while boys' enrollment descends only slightly. For children who live right next to a school, there is almost no gender difference, but for children who live 100 meters away, a boy is more likely to attend school than a girl. And the gap widens from there (Mohydin and Vestal, 2018).



Effect of Distance on School Enrollment by Gender

Source: Mohydin and Vestal, 2018

ln addition to the lack of female teachers, teacher absenteeism also negatively affects a girl's education. This was particularly true for girls in KPK, such as those in the Karak District. Here, the continuous absence of teachers severely affects the quality of instruction children can receive.

The results of a survey conducted by Suleman et al. in the Karak District of KPK are shown below. The researchers questioned 480 girls regarding various barriers that prevent them from pursuing a secondary education.

Factors affecting Girls' Education	Frequencies	%age	Item Number
Lack of basic educational facilities	436	91.6	01
Poor financial status of the parents	421	88.4	02
Marriage at early age	402	84.4	03
Lack of teaching staff	397	83.4	04
Girl's involvement in household affairs	396	83.2	05
Unpunctuality of teachers	392	82.3	06
Negative attitudes of parents about girls education	366	76.9	07
Unfeasibility of school buildings	336	70.6	08
Long distance to school	327	68.7	09
Illiteracy of the parents	322	67.6	10
Teacher's absentees	296	61.7	11
Political interference in school management	267	56.1	12
Lack of parental encouragement	252	52.5	13

Table 11 indicates that there are a wide range of factors that affect girls' education. Female students responded that lack of basic educational facilities (91.6%); poor financial status of the parents (88.4%); marriage at early age (84.4%); lack of teaching staff (83.4%); girls' involvement in household affairs(83.2%); unpunctuality of teachers (82.3%); negative attitudes of parents about girls education (76.9%); unfeasibility of school buildings (70.6%); long distance to school (68.7%); illiteracy of the parents (67.6%); teacher's absentees (61.7%); political interference in school management (56.1%); and lack of parental encouragement (52.5%) are the factors that affect girls education.

Survey of Factors Affecting Girls' Education in the Karak District of KPK, Pakistan

Source: Suleman et al, 2015

Finally, as all factors contributing to educational poverty are accentuated in rural areas over urban areas, the location of a household determines the educational poverty of a household. With this, the results show that the movement from rural to urban areas significantly enhances the chances to uplift households from educational poverty.

The Shift in Bangladesh

It seems educational poverty does not hinder Bangladeshi children, particularly girls, to the extent that it devastates Pakistani girls. It would be remiss to state that this is due to a weaker

patriarchal hold on the Bangladeshi social fabric. Bangladesh was, and remains, quite patriarchal. Gender inequality in Bangladesh is characterized by "limited female access to economic resources, male guardianship and control over women's life choices, male control over social institutions, the confinement of women to household tasks and to the private sphere, lack of female access to higher education and employment, and a very high prevalence of violence against women" (Karim et al, 2018). Due to these features, it ranks 133 (out of 188 countries) in the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII), with gender inequality higher in rural areas. By comparison, Pakistan ranks 154 in both the GII and the GDI.

It is not the patriarchy, but the particular mold that patriarchy took in the face of monumental struggle that allows women in Bangladesh different freedoms than women in Pakistan.

Initially, before partition in 1971, there was much stronger incentive in Pakistan to educate sons, in order for them to attain lucrative public sector employment which was restricted to West Pakistanis. Only wealthy Bengalis families could partake in such employment. Most of the Bangladeshi population, instead, relied on agriculture and had little incentive to educate their children (Hossain and Kabeer, 2004).

With independence, West Pakistan no longer had a monopoly on educational opportunities. Not only was there an increase in public sector employment, but banking and industry expanded while the population boomed. The pressure of this growing population on land during a period rife with traumatic events from war, a devasting cyclone, famine, displacement, death, rape, and extreme political instability led to a massive rural to urban migration.

All these factors led to a cultural shift in educational attitudes towards women. The 1970s was marked by a decline in fertility rates which can be attributed to a realization of the investment in the quality of children over the quantity of children. As one mother is quoted as saying, *"What is the use of having many (children) if they cannot be raised properly? If there are many, they would get no food, no education...I can raise few children well...It is good to have few. I can feed, educate, raise well…" (Mother in 1970s Bangladesh,* Hossain and Kabeer, 2004*).* In the crisis ridden 70s, it was essentially difficult to reconcile the old 'patriarchal bargain', by which women relinquished control of their mobility, assets, and earning potential in return for male protection and provision, with these tougher, more uncertain circumstances The famine of 1974 appears to have been a turning point, when new patterns of behavior began to emerge among poorer women, who ventured into the public domain in search of employment. Research since the 1970s has also documented the increasing fragility of the marriage bond, particularly among very poor women who appeared to be losing faith in marriage as a means of security; for many mothers, the education of daughters was seen as a source of security which their own lack of education had denied them (Hossain and Kabeer, 2004).

Amidst this, the microcredit revolution, founded in Bangladesh by Bangladeshi banker, economist, and social entrepreneur Muhammad Yunus, allowed women to remove children from the labor market and send them to school and were more likely to include girls along with boys. A new export- oriented garment industry also emerged in the early 1980s. Currently employing 1.5 million women, the garment industry has drawn women into urban areas. These women have often migrated on their own, on a historically unprecedented scale. The need for at least primary education to take advantage of these new forms of employment opportunities is likely to have added extra incentive to educate girls.

In essence, the historical accident of Bangladeshi separation led to a series of events that deeply changed the traditional views on education. Within a perpetual cycle of necessity, Bangladeshi women invented and owned new roles in society that allowed them to challenge the existing patriarchal structure.

Elite Attitudes

While society itself was transforming in Bangladesh, it became important to observe elite attitudes towards educational attainment in Bangladesh as compared to Pakistan. After all, the distribution and allocation of resources are often dictated by the societal elite within a capitalistic economic structure. As a result of U.S intervention, such structures were well established in both Pakistan and Bangladesh.

For Pakistan, elite attitudes were shaped during the Ayub Khan regime (1958-1969). At the time, Pakistan's education system was elitist, with no apathy towards educating the masses. This remains a legacy of colonial education, which aimed at keeping education exclusive to a select few. In addition to this legacy, psychologically, middle class individuals are often skeptical of an educated mass of people fearing loss of their monopoly in the job market (Hossain and Kabeer, 2004).

The following excerpt from a Balochi student[7] will help understand the current condition of the elite in Pakistan:

> *"I might be extraordinarily intelligent, well read, and analytical, but would that change my life in Pakistan? Not really! Because I don't belong to Lahore American School, Karachi Grammar School, or any other private schools that only caters to those super elites in Pakistan who can afford the price tag of expensive private education.*

[7] Balochistan is the most deprived province of Pakistan

I belong to a 'taat' (floor mat) school of a small village in Balochistan, where students have to beg teachers to teach. I belong to the area that the government of Pakistan and its people have left at the hands of sardars or the military, as long as the continuous supply of gas is provided. Is it, then, fair for us studying at these schools, or perhaps fair to any of those who cannot study at elite private schools? Can we really compete for jobs, scholarships and opportunities with those studying at American and British schools in Pakistan? Never! Not until we are provided the same quality education as the elite in Pakistan get.

The elite in Pakistan has created fortresses in the form of these private schools where an average Pakistani cannot study or interact with the elite students. And this isolation continues throughout the lives of the elite students who graduate from these schools.

Perhaps it is by design that the elite students are kept into isolation from the real Pakistan, the same way British kept the Indian nawabs and maharajas under their training, at a distance from the local Indians, so the young nawabs could view themselves as more British than Indian, and rule their own people without emotions.

Tragically, the elite mindset honed in these private schools goes beyond the schools. The elites dine at different restaurants, their hangout spots are different, and as a matter of fact, they have reduced themselves to living in a small bubble far away from the daily life. Not much has really changed since the partition. While the British left the country, they not only left behind their legacy in the form of nawabs and maharajas but also left the imprints of a highly Orientalist mindset: the ability of our own people to look

down upon and mistrust other locals, and instead look up and serve those above us in the food chain.

To think of it, the elite of Pakistan is more closely knit together than what meets the eye. They come to people in the form of Pakistan People's Party, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf. But if you scratch a little under the political rivalries, you'll realize that they all are the same. Their children go to the same schools, clubs, and restaurants, and they intermarry. Some of them even have family members in each political party. For most of the elite it seems there is only one rivalry: the poor middle class of Pakistan that has over the years been pushed into the poor class." (Nadim, 2018)

This account was conveyed in 2013. Given my own elite education in Pakistan, I can affirm that all these claims remain true of Pakistan's elite today

By contrast, families in Bangladesh, however, have a different attitude towards universal education. Not only do these families value education for their own children, but recent research suggests they also strongly support the idea of mass education as a prerequisite for tackling poverty (Hossain and Kabeer, 2004). Furthermore, they envision a mode of education that moves away from technical competence, which although important, often creates subordinates like those pursuing government jobs under colonial rule. The elite in Bangladesh instead support an educated society that is less focused on discipline and more on humanistic and cultural learning, and a rounded 'awareness' (Hossain and Kabeer, 2004).

The difference in attitude can partly be attributed to Bangladesh's societal structure composed predominantly of 'petty bourgeois." By neglecting East Pakistan, West Pakistan inevitably transferred power into the hands of a few. The Bangladeshi people, however, have

remained steadfast to the same roots. Unanimously coming from economic hardship and existing in the absence of deeply entrenched caste distinctions, they moved upwards as one. In the relative homogeneity of Bangladesh's social class, education is one social marker that can distinguish one individual from the next. Most elites themselves recently left their village communities and continue to retain strong connections with them. The fact that they themselves may have recently experienced upward mobility from humble backgrounds is a fresh and potent image in their minds. As education was a crucial means for Bangladesh's elite to achieve this rapid upward mobility, they maintain that formal schooling will help the poor masses in a similar way.

Political Will[8]

Finally, in order to take responsibility for the education of millions of females, action must be taken at the macro level. Essentially, governments must take responsibility for their people. For Pakistan, a lack of political will has been a major factor holding back women's education – and education in general. There has never been a definite time frame for making free and compulsory primary and secondary education available to the nation as its Fundamental Right. Policies have also failed because they were hastily proposed, and without significant research to support their implementation. As research demonstrates, educational policy at the federal level in Pakistan rarely manifests in tangible outcomes. A continually increasing defense budget also negatively impacts education and Pakistan is often controlled by civil and military bureaucracies which are often wary of teachers and students.

It was not until the 1990s (more than 40 years after its independence from British rule) that the government of Pakistan finally acknowledged the underrepresentation of females in

[8] Further details regarding Pakistan's poor political will towards education can be found in the appendix.

education (Roof, 2015). Also in the late 1990s, the Pakistani government shifted the burden of accountability by relying on the development of education programs by non- governmental organizations which were supported through incentive grants. However, ghost schools (schools that only exist on paper) impacted international aid to Pakistan by discouraging international donors and aid agencies. For example, the United States Agency for International Development allocated funds to repair 60 schools. However, several of these schools are now identified as ghost schools. In this same time frame, it was observed that ghost schools reflect the domination of the feudal elites to retain a servile illiterate population (Roof, 2015).

This was not the case in Bangladesh. During Liberation, education was given prominence because the student movement played an active role in the political struggle for independence. Two military regimes - Maj. Gen. Ziaur Rahman (1975-1981) and Lt. Gen. H.M. Ershad (1982-1990) changed Bangladeshi identity politics and used education as a vehicle to 'Bangladeshi' nationalism (Rahman et al, 2010). Ever since then, at the political level, there has been inter-party competition over the definition of national identity which can be effectively transmitted through the school's curriculum. Since educational policy is a means to democratically compete with other parties, educational policy has always been and continues to be prioritized on the Bangladeshi national agenda.

Mass literacy along with gender disparities were emphasized in the third five-year plan between 1985 to 1990 and tangible programs were initiated to address these issues. The food for education program targeted girls and poor children and provided 15kg-20kg of wheat to selected families in exchange for their child's regular school attendance. By 1999, this program had reached 2.2 million children (Rahman et al, 2010).

The female stipend program follows a similar model but provides scholarships for girls to attend secondary school. By allowing girls to complete their secondary education with this financial support, the program has inadvertently delayed child marriages as girls often drop out before or early into secondary school to marry (Chowdhury, 2002).

Finally, there was a massive provision of education due to NGOs that were happy with Bangladesh's continuous commitment towards education. BRAC in particular contributed greatly towards female education by using new and innovative approaches to education that promoted 'joyful learning' (Chowdhury, 2002). Girls make up 70 percent of BRAC's enrolment, and it has catered its educational plans to meet their needs. Therefore, more than 90 percent of BRAC school teachers are women. The program also minimizes travel and adjusts its timings to facilitate domestic responsibilities (Chowdhury, 2002).

With all these initiatives, Bangladesh effectively supports 82.3 million females and gives them opportunities to choose their own path in life. With an emphasis on development that can be seen – such as roads and bus routes – along with corruption and continuous strife between Pakistan's political party, the Pakistani government has failed time and time again to support all its children – much less its female students. Education has failed to become a priority, jeopardizes the lives of millions of children, and wastes such immense, *immense* potential.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

What is education? In pre-colonial times, it was a privilege extended to a select few, based on gender and social class. In colonial times, English was used as a means to destroy local languages, divide the people of the subcontinent, and instill an air of subservience amongst the masses. Post-independence, it has been used to hold back those who struggled together for freedom – to advantage some at the cost of the majority. Throughout Pakistan's and Bangladesh's traumatic history, education has been a means to assert power and a means to control. This interpretation is meaningful but should be taken cautiously.

Nobel prize winning developmental economist, Amartya Sen, posited an idea of development, not in terms of numerical growth, as is convention, but in terms of freedom. For Sen, this idea of freedom is distinctly defined by one's capabilities. Freedom implies not just doing something, but to have the capabilities to make it happen.

Education is a means to foster these capabilities; to discover your true potential – or as Sen calls it your functioning - and to actualize that potential. It also allows an individual the choice to choose the path that they think is best for them. Through historical analysis, this thesis has portrayed a woman's role being limited by cultural values in which they were restricted to the role of mothers or housewives. To make it very clear, there is absolutely nothing wrong with either of those roles. The problem lies in the fact that all these women were unable to choose if that was what they wanted. Those in power deprived them of that choice, and therefore their freedom, because it was in their best interest to do so. Essentially, half of the world's population is deprived of their freedom.

To be able to regain this right, in the case of Pakistan, it is possible through policy recommendations. Some of these measures include:

•A free education and/or to model the Female Stipend Program or other financial incentives for parents to educate children.

As noted earlier, parental attitudes towards education, particularly female education, coupled with poverty can severely hinder a girl-child's ability to attend school. This unfortunate situation must be considered and mitigated. Other alternatives include scholarships for female students pursuing a higher education.

•To Establish centers of instruction for female teachers

Patriarchal norms have a strong chokehold on Pakistani society. As such, the absence of female teachers can deter parents from educating their daughters altogether. By training female teachers, the government will be able to support females through employment whilst also educating the next generation. Traditional and patriarchal environments are also manifested in the distance a girl has to travel to school. To remedy this dilemma, more schools should be established, bearing in mind the unique needs of girls, particularly those from rural areas in Pakistan. This may create issues in terms of the quality of education provided. If more schools are established with poorly trained teachers, young girls will be deprived of future opportunities. Therefore, a **public transport system**, preferably with female drivers, could help ensure girls safely arrive at their educational institutions.

These are a few of the many steps Pakistan can take to model Bangladesh's educational phenomenon. But a key limitation of this study was the lack of sufficient data available to carry out a more rigorous regression analysis and produce statistically significant results. While the results of this thesis are eye-opening, they are inevitably unconfirmed. Pakistan (and Bangladesh) needs to spend considerable effort in consolidating their educational data. With inconsistent data, the real problem of education inflicted on the people can never be understood.

Therefore, before any policy measure can be taken, the problem must first be effectively identified.

Finally, the message of this thesis extends beyond two countries in Asia. The ultimate goal has been to show that this study truly has strong implications not only for Pakistan but also across the world, where the deprivation of education results in chaos. In Russia, control is exerted through a deprivation of information. Almost 30 percent of the Ukrainian population are slipping below the poverty line and a further 62 percent are expected to fall within a year (Treisman, 2022). How will these people escape this poverty? It becomes much harder to do so when their capabilities are limited. Women in Afghanistan are putting their lives on the line to seek an education. Why is it so important to them? And we don't need to look back far to see the disaster caused during the Capitol Hill riots, spear-headed by low-income white individuals with at most a high school degree.

To conclude, education has power. Education is power. And it should matter for all human beings.

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Appendix 1: Timeline of the History of Education in Pakistan

1970s

The government sought to improve primary school enrollment and had increased the federal expenditure on education to 2.8% of the country's GNP by the early 1980s (Bray, 1983).

By 1988 however, education accounted for only 2.4% of the country's GDP.

In the 1970s through the 1980s, poverty began to decline in Pakistan, but this trend reversed in the 1990s.

Several policy documents alluded to this goal. For example, the 1970s national education policy reaffirmed the government's commitment "to the objective of universal elementary education" (Roof, 2015).

In general, during the 1970s, Parveen identifies some of the main causes for failure to achieve a system of free and universal schooling as: a lack of planning, financial limitations, decreasing exports, low GNP, and substantial population expansion (Parveen, 2011).

Implementation of 1970s educational policies was also interrupted due to the war with India, the secession of East Pakistan, and the collapse of the military government (Bengali, 1999).

1972

Education policy centered primarily on eradicating illiteracy through universal elementary education, supplemented by adult education programs (Roof, 2015).

The government nationalized the nation's private education institutions, in line with its commitment to achieving universal free education (Parveen, 2011).

While the government outlined a policy initiative that included increasing enrollment, provision of free textbooks, revising curricula, and developing teacher training courses, these changes were never implemented. Although teacher training did improve, the 1970s were riddled with inadequate planning.

In 1972, the overall literacy rate was 21.7% (Bengali, 1999).

1980s

The target of compulsory, universal, and free primary education continued as a national target in the 1980s.

A five-year plan had aimed for universal enrollment by 1986-1987 (Roof, 2015).

Despite this aim, enrollment ratios have varied between provinces. For example, the enrollment ratio in the 1980s was around 32% in Balochistan, 59% in Sindh, 52% in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP, now often referred to as 'Khyber Pakhtunkhwa'), and 48% in Punjab.

The enrollment rates of girls in these provinces also varied with 10% in Balochistan, 14% in NWFP, 16% in Sindh, and 29% in Punjab (Lloyd et al, 2007).

The enrolment rate of girls dropped drastically (far outpacing boys) in their primary educational years from the 1980s. This trend continues to this day. The gender gap was also exacerbated for secondary school enrolment (Latif, 2009).

In addition to enrollment, literacy was a major focus of education policy. The sixth plan in the 1980s contained a national literacy plan for 1984-1986. The aim of this plan was to raise literacy rates from 26.2 to 33%. Towards this end, the government proposed opening over 25,000 literacy centers.

A plan to diversify the mode of education was also proposed. As such, education policy in the 1980s advocated for the development of mosque schools for boys ("madrassas"). The government envisioned opening 5,000 mosque schools for boys, 5,000 more schools for girls, as well as 1,000 workshop villages where vocational training such as carpentry, masonry, and agriculture would be promoted (Bengali, 1999).

To fund their educational endeavors, the government introduced a new tax under the 1985-1986 federal budget, called the *Iqra tax* in the 1980s. This tax consisted of a 5% charge on imports to help finance education and literacy projects. Unfortunately, the funds generated through this program were often diverted to other expenditures. The *Iqra* project was, as a whole, unsuccessful. (Bengali, 1999).

1981

The goal to achieve mass literacy continued. The Literacy and Mass Education Commission was established by the federal government with achieving mass literacy as its primary goal. The resulting policy stated, "Islam assigns great importance to the acquisition of knowledge and makes its pursuit incumbent upon every Muslim" (Bengali, 1999).

In 1981, Pakistan adopted the definition for literacy (readopted in 1998) which classifies the literate person as one who can read a newspaper and write a simple letter (Samady, 2007)

1983

A national workshop on female literacy was also developed.

Government research and aid agencies have also identified inadequate financing as a major obstacle to education development in Pakistan (Bray, 1983).

1990s

The failure of Pakistan's policies towards achieving mass literacy were evident by the 1990s.

In 1990, Pakistan had one of the lowest literacy rates in the world at 34% (UNESCO, 2012).

In 1998, Pakistan ranked 142 out of 160 countries in terms of literacy—demonstrating a high rate of illiteracy (Bengali, 1999)

In the early 1990s, education policy was also aimed at constructing educational facilities for children over a larger geographical area to increase accessibility. The plan also called for separate schools for boys and girls (Bengali, 1999).

However, despite acknowledging gender disparities in enrolment at both the primary and secondary level, it was not until a decade later, in the 1990s, that the government acknowledged the underrepresentation of females in education.

However, to this day, they have not sufficiently addressed the issue. While significant gender disparities in educational opportunity exist throughout Pakistan, this disparity is exaggerated between rural and urban areas (Chaudhry and Rahman, 2009).

The 1990s were also beset by challenges in federal funding for education and showed a lack of commitment to improving education (Roof, 2015).

1993

The Eighth Five Year plan launched

1996

Additional short-term, in-service, teacher training programs were conducted (Parveen, 2011).

Late 1990s

The government received support from outside forces to develop Pakistan's education system. Ths period, therefore, marked a shift to the development of education programs by non-governmental organizations which were supported through incentive grants (Bengali, 1999).

By the 2000s, however, Pakistan had lost this trust. Ghost schools impacted international aid to Pakistan by discouraging international donors and aid agencies. As an example, The United States Agency for International Development allocated funds to repair 60 schools. However, several of these schools are now identified as ghost schools (Roof, 2015).

In this same year, Farhan Bokhari (journalist with the Christian Science Monitor) noted that ghost schools reflect the domination of the feudal elites to retain a servile illiterate population (Bokhari, 1998).

From 2000 to 2010

Some disparities in education were reduced and retention rates improved.

The number of schools and teachers in Pakistan increased. However, the population of Pakistan also doubled, and the population growth outpaced any gains.

Policies also failed because they were hastily proposed, and without significant research to support their implementation (Khalid and Khan, 2006).

As Lodhi and Faiz determined, educational policy at the federal level in Pakistan rarely manifested in tangible outcomes (Lodhi and Faizi, 2009).

A continually increasing defense budget has also negatively impacted education as it stripped funds that could have been spent on developing Pakistan educational infrastructure.

The strength of the bureaucracy has further increased in this time. Since Pakistan is often controlled by civil and military bureaucracies, which are often wary of teachers and students, initiatives to develop education often fail to develop (Khalid and Khan, 2006).

2004

By 2004, gender disparities in education still existed with large differences in education between rural and urban areas. For example, in 2004, the primary school completion rate for girls in rural areas was three times lower than that for boys (Latif, 2009).

Urban females also have more access to education than their rural counterparts (Roof, 2015).

2007

Federal funding increased to only 2.9% in the 2007-2008 school year (Roof, 2015). This was only a 0.1% increase from the funding pledged in the 1970s – over three decades ago.

2014

To address the lack of expenditure on education, a UNESCO report recommends increasing tax revenues to fund education. The report states that, as of 2014, in Pakistan, "...tax revenue is just 10% of GDP and education receives only around 10% of government expenditure. If the government increased its tax revenue to 14% of GDP by 2015 and allocated one-fifth of this to education, it could raise sufficient funds to get all of Pakistan's children and adolescents into school" (Roof, 2015).