THE GROWTH OF MADRASSAS AND PERCEIVED RADICALIZATION: THE CASE OF THE KHAIRPUR DISTRICT, SINDH, PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

For centuries, the madrassa (Islamic religious seminary) has been the highest seat of learning and knowledge transfer of the Qur'an, Sunnah (traditions/sayings of Prophet), and fiqh (sharia law). In addition, it has also served as a centre for producing scholars, administrators, and Qazi (judges) in Muslim societies, particularly during the glorified days of the Islamic empires. However, over the last two decades, madrassas have come under strict scrutiny and severe criticism from both western and non-western scholars who claim that these institutions have become the major source of promoting violent radicalization and terrorism. In connection, this article attempts to investigate the role of madrassas in the process of radicalization by analyzing aspects such as funding, syllabus, ethnic and religious affiliation, as well as religious gatherings. The focus of this study is the madrassas of the Khairpur District in Sindh, Pakistan. The study applied a quantitative approach to examine and investigate these factors and the model was tested with a sample of 748 respondents from madrassas in the Khairpur district. The data analysis was conducted using structural equation modelling with AMOS. The findings suggest that seven out of the nine hypotheses were found statistically significant. Perceived relative deprivation and syllabus in the madrassas emerged as highly significant factors leading to radicalization in the madrassas in the district. In other words, the findings demonstrate that feelings of perceived deprivation can lead to increased radical tendencies. Nonetheless, future research is needed to authenticate these findings in other parts of the country where a longitudinal approach would be appropriate.

Keywords: madrassa, radicalization, perceived relative deprivation, funding, syllabus, religious gatherings, ethnic and religious affiliation

INTRODUCTION

Madrassa in Islam is considered the centre for the dissemination of Islamic knowledge, it includes tending to socio-economic problems of society (Ismail, Ahmed & Aziz, 2018) and attaining educational needs; such as transferring knowledge of the Quran and Hadith to coming generations (El-Merheb & Berriah, 2021; Alam, 2011). Madrassas serve as centres of interpreting Islamic knowledge (Zaman, 2021). The interpretation by different schools of thought lead to the division of society on sectarian grounds, eventually leading to conflict among different religious sects (Zaman, 1999). Such a state of madrassas offers opportunities to violent radical groups to infiltrate and use

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madrassas and madrassa students for religiously motivated violence. This in turn results in instability within society and increased violence (Alam, 2011).

Over the last two decades and especially since 9/11, madrassas have remained the focus of international scrutiny and criticism as many have argued that these institutions have become the source of violent radicalization and terrorism. That said, the madrassa is a centuries-old system of education, which has produced countless scholars and scientists in Muslim societies. The term madrassa is defined by scholars in different ways. According to Bosworth (1980) madrassa, the plural of which is madaris, carries two different meanings, the first meaning school and the second, a religious educational institution, which not only teaches Islamic texts, such as the Quran, Hadith (traditions/sayings of Prophet Muhammad PBUH) and jurisprudence (Sharia law) but general academic subjects as well. As such, for a long, madrassas have served as a seat of higher learning throughout the Islamic world.

According to Bulliet (1994), in most of the Arab and non-Arab states where secondary and higher education or instruction related to Quranic reading *(Qir'at),* explanation (*tafsir*/exegesis), dialectic doctrine *(Ilm e Qalam)*, or jurisprudence (*fiqh*), foundations of Islamic law (*Usul-al-fiqh*) are taught, are considered madrassas. The nature of these schools is different in every country, therefore, no matter what the curriculum or affiliation is, they are still considered madrassas (Bergen & Pandey, 2006).

Whereas other studies by Rayess et al., (2020) Talbani (1996), Hefner (2010), and Leirvik (2008), argue that for generations, these institutions have played a unique role in preserving Muslim culture and transferring the knowledge of the Qur'an and Hadith. The madrassa education system before the British colonization of the Indian sub-continent was comprised of religious instructions as well as general subjects. However, with British colonization, a secular education system with English as the medium of instruction was also introduced, aimed at mainly producing sub-ordinate civil servants to support its administration. As a result, the madrassas in the sub-continent not only objected to the use of the English language and the secular education system but even removed the general subjects from their curriculum such that the madrassas now began focusing entirely on the Quran, Sunnah and Sharia (Andrabi et al., 2006).

Define Radicalization:

As far as research on radicalization (Trimbur et al.,2021) and religiously-motivated violence is concerned, the last two decades have seen a greater number of scholars linking the madrassa as the root cause of global terrorism (Moghaddam, 2005; Hesterman, 2020). Diverse explanations were provided for the process of radicalization (Barrera et al., 2020). McGilloway, Ghosh, and Bhui (2015) describe the process as a change in an individual's behaviour from one that is peaceful to one that is radical, violent, extreme and linked to violence as well as those to propagate or are responsible for the violence. However, Borum (2011) in his study argues that every radical path does not necessarily lead to violence and terrorism. He further cautions that mixing up terrorism and radicalization can lead to dangerous consequences. Nevertheless, Roy (2003) associates radicalization with people's past and present conditions and their beliefs (Eidelson & Eidelson, 2003; Agostino et al., 2021). Whereas, Moskalenko (2011), describes radicalization as a change in behaviour, belief, and feelings of an

individual, where he is determined to offer justification for violence with other groups and is willing to give his life for the group. However, Moghaddam (2005) differs suggesting that it is difficult to differentiate, due to the choice of an individual because the one we consider or declare a terrorist, can be a freedom fighter for another. Therefore, to him, it is essential to understand the reasons behind such choices. Meanwhile, Young, Rooze, and Holsappel (2015) argue that it is a general assumption that radicalization leads to terrorism (Hesterman, 2020) but according to his understanding, not every radicalized individual ends up as a terrorist. He further says that it is not the radicalization but the perspective of an individual or a group about the established norms of a society.

Keeping in view the aforementioned debate about radicalization, this study is an attempt to investigate how the madrassas in the Khairpur district in Pakistan have been contributing to radicalization which often takes the form of religiously-motivated violence and acts of terror.

Literature Review

The perceived relative deprivation (or perceived deprivation) theory has emerged as the most utilised theory in social, psychological, sociological, and behavioural studies. The eminent American sociologist of the mid-20th century, Samuel Andrew Stouffer (1900-1960), presented this theory during World War II and since then his research on American soldiers has emerged as the most popular socio-psychological concept (Stouffer, 1949; Stephens & Sieckelinck, 2021; Stouffer, 1962). Scholars in the field of social sciences have used this theory to study and identify the feelings of injustice, frustration, unfairness, resentment, and anger. The basic purpose of relative deprivation theory is to investigate the impact of objective and subjective socioeconomic conditions on human (individual) behaviour (Crosby, 1979). Nevertheless, Kiendrebeogo and Ianchovichina (2016) conducted an opinion survey of the unemployed in 27 countries and found them less inclined towards radical trends but committed to doing anything that they believed in. The studies by Dittmar, Bond, Hurst, and Kasser (2014) as well as (Walsh & Piazza, 2010), suggest that it is fundamental to understand the socio-psychological factors (Trimbur et al., 2021), which may have negative effects on people if they lack proper education, health, and job opportunities. Having the potential yet deprived of the proper opportunity for development could cause frustration and disappointment, which resultantly can turn people to radicalize (O'Hearn, 1987; Cleary, 2000; Klausen, 2005). There is an increased feeling of deprivation amongst the less privileged especially when they compare themselves with more privileged segments of society, particularly from the perspective of economic status. Nonetheless, Crosby argues that when an individual desires something his fellow group member may feel that he deserves it as well. He may also not see it as a failure related to his capabilities or potential but rather as a result of being unjustly treated and deprived by his superiors, organization or state. Such realization creates bitterness in his attitude which in turn leads to a feeling of being aggrieved (Crosby, 1976).

Nevertheless, Davis (1959), argues that society is divided into the haves (non-deprived) and have nots (deprived) and that relative deprivation is a resultant state when a deprived individual relates himself with the non-deprived which may create a condition described as "social distance". The state of relative deprivation is felt more deeply if the comparison is made with an individual, who possesses the same potential like him, yet that person is in a better condition. Further, Gurr (1970) suggests that "felt

deprivation" is a situation, where the individual does not have it but desires it and believes he should have it too. His inability to achieve it is mainly due to the absence of opportunities coupled with prevalent injustices, such that it makes him think that it is impossible to achieve it. Such cleavages among the haves and have nots increase the pressure in the condition of relative deprivation. Studies conducted by Chang and Arkin (2002), Kasser (1995), and Zhang (2016), support the above argument with their findings that people with the backward socioeconomic conditions are defined by their economic status in society.

Similarly, a 2010 study by the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies suggests that there is greater potential for radicalization in the underdeveloped regions of Pakistan when compared with the more developed areas (Manzar Zaidi, 2010). Young people frustrated by unemployment, poverty and conditions of relative deprivation are more likely to be attracted to radicalized groups. As such, any deradicalization program undertaken should focus on addressing the root causes of radicalization (Ghanem, 2017). Keeping in view the increased trends of radicalization in the Khairpur District, such a situation surely requires a systematic study aimed at identifying the root causes of increased radical tendencies.

**Figure 1: Location of Study**
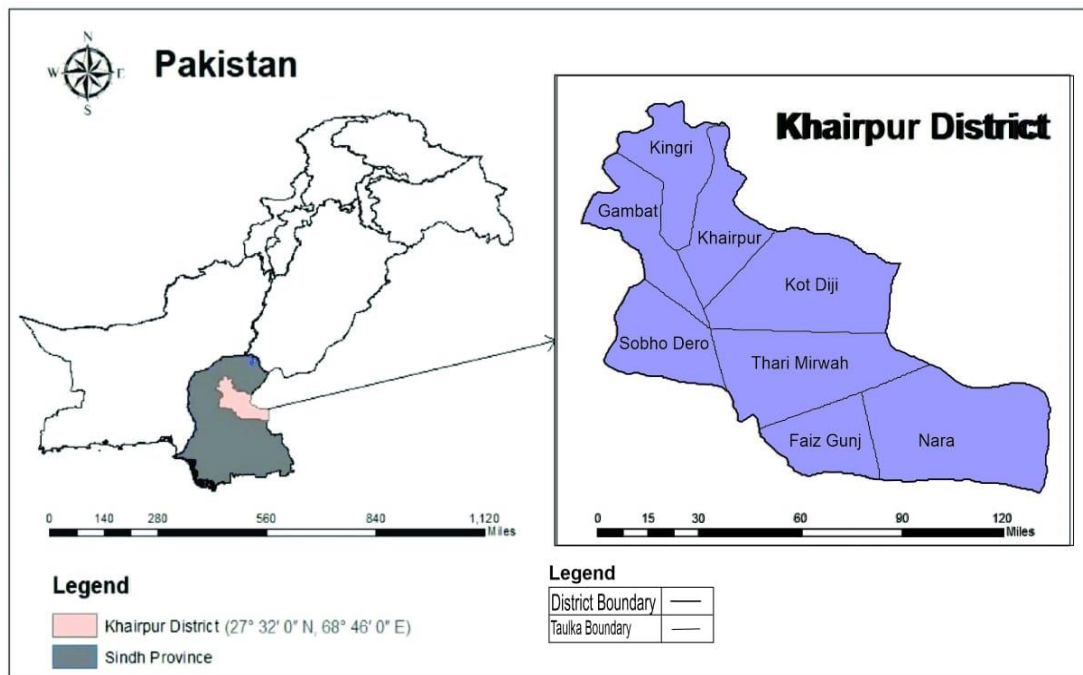
Model and Hypothesis

Based on past literature, an integrated framework model was developed applying relative deprivation theory to investigate and examine the significant factors leading to the growth of madrassas and their possible role in increased radicalization. After a substantive review of the literature, only high-frequency variables were selected for

radicalization such as perceived deprivation, religious gatherings, syllabus, funding, ethnic and religious affiliation and radicalization.

Figure 2: Theoretical Framework Model
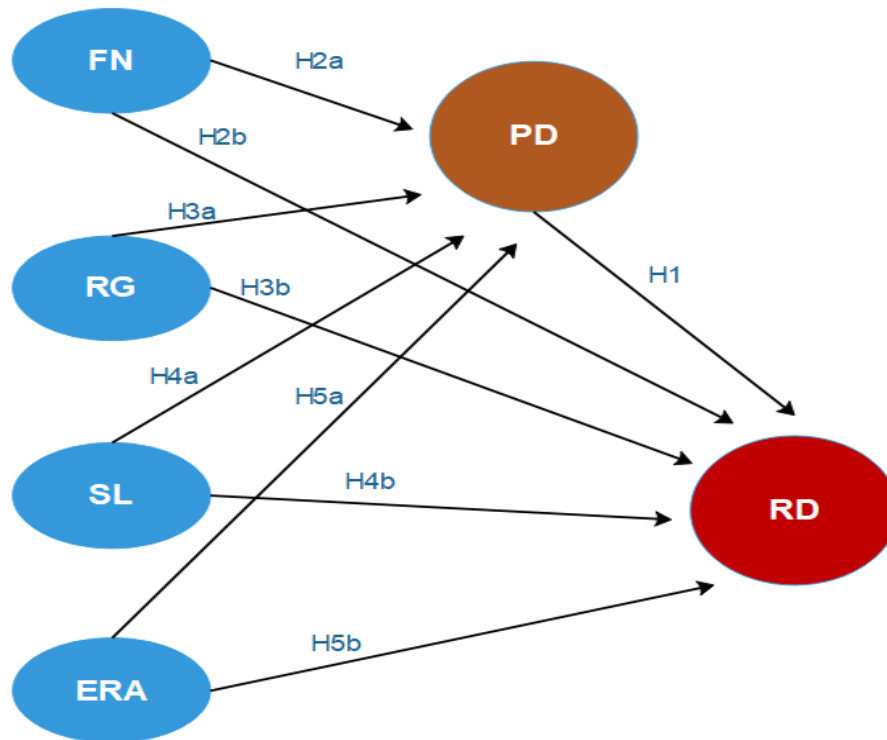
Constructs: FN stands for Funding, RG for Religious Gatherings, SL for Syllabus, ERA for Ethnic and Religious Affiliation, PD for Perceived Deprivation, and RD for Radicalization.

Perceived Deprivation

As a majority Muslim state, people in Pakistan consider religious education compulsory and an important part of their lives. Although students enrolled in madrassas come from all walks of life, nonetheless most are from poor backgrounds or orphaned. Once the parents choose by sending their children to a madrassa, soon after the children are at the mercy and whim of the madrassa administration. The madrassa students become completely reliant on their funding; such as on food, clothing and shelter. The total reliance of madrassa students on madrassa owners leads them to do their bidding, whether it is to participate in demonstrations, block roads, close cities, or collect funds in the name of charity for madrassa administration and help them achieve their political objectives. Continued exploitation and victimization of madrassa students and their realization with madrassa education, they are limited or no opportunities for jobs or even in becoming a useful citizen of the country. To understand the above scenario, this study applied Stoufer's (1949) theory of relative deprivation. Merton (1950) suggests that Stouffer's study provided the theoretical base for further research into the thought

of the sense of deprivation or personal relative deprivation. Past research in child psychology suggests that children's education, living environment, and surrounding profoundly affects their behaviour. Stouffers relative deprivation theory identifies multiple factors which may contribute toward the enrolment into madrassas as factors that might be shaping the students thinking towards society and their worldview. Moghaddam (2005) coined the word 'perceived deprivation' to explain such a situation. He argued that an individual's emotional or psychological state and his assumptions and perceptions about other individuals and groups are shaped by his feeling of perceived emotions, and unfair treatment, besides his inability to achieve what he believes and deserves. On the other hand, Miller (2013) argues that instead of complete or overall deprivation, it is perceived injustice and relative deprivation that shapes the individual's approach toward society. Nevertheless, Seul (1999) argues that taking into account the distinctive ability of religion and requirements for religious identity, perceived threats to one's identity are essential requirements for the rise of such feelings. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived relative deprivation has a significant positive influence on radicalization

Funding

Since medieval times, madrassas have served as the highest seat of learning for the impoverished classes in Muslim societies as these institutions offer free education, food, accommodation, health, and other facilities. Nonetheless, they also need financial resources to carry out these services. According to Kahf, (1999) and Shahab, (2021), the madrassa largely depends on funds from different sources but mainly the *zakat* (tithe) derived from contributions made by the *waqf* or *awaqf* (a government department that manages and distributes the *zakat*). Zakat, the fifth pillar of Islam, is usually contributed by the more privileged segments of society and is aimed at helping the less fortunate (Blanchard, 2007; Rayess, 2020).

Although in the past, madrassas in Pakistan used to receive full funding from the government, currently however they only receive partial funding while the rest is procured through public donations. In this case, Glen (2003) suggests that the funding for building the madrassas and funds to be used explicitly or indirectly for encouraging religiously motivated violence must be differentiated to avoid creating difficulties for the poor madrassa students. He further says that in the past the Gulf States have been suspected or blamed for allowing Islamic charitable organizations having links with Al Qaeda to collect donations (Simpson, 2003). The past studies by Afzal (2019), Wasif and Prakash (2017), Sial (2015), including Weinbaum and Khurram (2014), claim that Saudi Arabia has remained the major source of funding for the Deobandi madrassas. It is further argued that Saudi Arabia and Iran's competition in Pakistan to export their brand of religious philosophy is the main reason for funding Pakistan madrassas because both countries are trying to exert their influence in the region (Samenasayeh et al., 2021).

Thus, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2a: Madrassas funding has a significant influence on perceived deprivation.

Hypothesis 2b: Madrassas funding has a significant influence and positive tendency towards radicalization.

Religious Gatherings

According to the 2017 census, Pakistan's population was 207.8 million (Rana, 2017) out of which 96% profess the Islamic faith. Noteworthy to mention is that Pakistan is the first country in the world to declare itself as an Islamic state in 1956 such that religion and religious practices have had greater importance in the daily lives of its people. The country's majority Muslim population is divided into different sects, which comprises as follows; Baralvi 50%; Deobandi 25%; Shi'ite 15-20%; and Ahle Hadis 5% (Suleman, 2018). This sectarian divide has given way to many problems, such as sectarian violence, increased madrassa enrolment, increased influence and popularity of religiously violent groups, increased participation of madrassa students in religiously motivated demonstrations and so on (Rizwan et al., 2018). The trend of religious groups to hold rallies, demonstrations, roadblocks, and use violent methods to achieve their objectives has endangered the peace and prosperity of the country. The participants in these rallies and violent demonstrations are generally made up of students from madrassa and followers of the relevant sect (Templin, 2015; Syed et al., 2016). Participation in such events is ensured by two facts, one, the madrassa students participate because they are dependent on that sect for their future and have no choice. And secondly, the followers of the group join due to two reasons, either they are very committed to that group or due to the threat to their life should they fail to join the rallies or demonstrations (Vestenskov, 2018). People who do not participate in these rallies frequently face threats to their lives. The killing of a college principal in 2017 by a student in Charsadda for not attending their procession is evident in the severity of the threat (Suleman, 2018). This violent trend in religious groups in Pakistan has forced common people to participate in religious gatherings. In Sindh, religious groups such as Sipah-e-Sahaba and Lashkar-e-jhangvi are believed to be most active in sectarian violence (Mahmood, 2015) and organizing violent demonstrations against the Shi'ite minority. The religious seminaries have a large following in Pakistan in general and Sindh in particular. They regularly participate in the gatherings, rallies and demonstrations of these religious groups (Ahmed, 2004). The death of Mashal Khan, a student of Abdul Wali Khan University on the pretext of blasphemy by a group of Barelvi students in 2017 is evidence of such tendencies (Yousuf & Hasan, 2015). Seminaries in Sindh have remained active in arranging rallies on different occasions, whether on local or international issues, such as Kashmir (Tribune, 2017) and the Rohingyas Muslim of Myanmar (Abbas, 2010). It is therefore hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3a: Increased participation in religious gatherings has profound effects on perceived deprivation

Hypothesis 3b: Participation in religious gatherings has a significant influence on radicalization.

Syllabus

Before the British introduction of the secular education system in India, madrassas also used to teach general subjects apart from the Quran, Hadith, and jurisprudence. It is since then that Muslims, afraid of losing their identity, started teaching only religious texts (Bano, 2007; Ramzan & Rabab, 2013). Although a small number of madrassas do

teach secular subjects, in general, most of the madrassas only offer a religious-based curriculum, focusing on the teachings of the Quran and other related Islamic texts. Beyond instructions in basic religious tenets, some argue that a small group of radicalized madrassas, specifically located near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, promote a militant form of Islam and teach their students to fight nonbelievers and stand against what they see as the moral depravity of the West (Haqqani, 2002). Some view the teaching of religious curricula informed by Islamic traditions common in the Gulf region as threatening the existence of more moderate beliefs and practices in other parts of the Muslim world (Blanchard, 2007; Agostino et al., 2021). According to some other scholars, these madrassas are least concerned about Islamic teachings, instead, they preach and encourage religiously motivated violence (Richards, 2001; Stern, 2001). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 4a: Madrassas' syllabus has a far-reaching influence on perceived deprivation.

Hypothesis 4b: Madrassas' syllabus has positive tendencies towards radicalization.

Ethnic and religious affiliation

Sindh is divided into sectarian groups, comprised of Shia and Sunni, Barelvi and Deobandi. Since 2001, the Shi'ite, Baralvi, and Deobandi madrassas have experienced unparalleled growth. While in 2000, there were only 75 madrassas in Khairpur by 2017 it was at 275. Based on the list of madrassas obtained from the madrassas registration office, established by the government in every district after the 9/11 incident reveals that after 2000, 19 Shi'ite, 81 Baralvi, and 119 Deobandi madrassas were established in the district in just 17 years. This growth is alarming and has shown the increasing trend in sectarian divide and religiously motivated violence. Most of the radical violent outfits in Pakistan belong to the Deobandi school of thought. Therefore, anyone who has any link with Deobandi madrassa is the most suitable recruit. Therefore, the Deobandi sect and students related to their madrassas are claimed to be the most common reason for sectarian violence in Pakistan (Fair, 2006). Deobandi orientation in the sub-continent and Pakistan have a similar trend (Rizwan et al., 2018). The visible end of the Mughal empire and the rise of the Marhata (Hindu) empire on one hand and British colonization on the other brought Muslims to a situation, where their survival, identity and religious values were at stake (Brit & Lewis, 2013; Ansari, 2016). Looking at the state of Muslims, Shah Waliullah decided to focus on religion and give up the general subject to protect the Muslim identity and ensure the Islamic knowledge of the Qur'an and sunnah is transferred to the coming generation. This in turn will ensure Muslim survival and keep their identity intact (Tarafdari & Tavoosi, 2020; Hussain et al., 2020). Nevertheless, Dalgaard-Nielson's study suggests that rather than concentrating on similar philosophies and celebrating language and, racial and spiritual varieties, the society in Pakistan has been divided into ethnic and sectarian lines, which has benefited radical groups to fill up the cove and bring radical change into the thinking of people. This in turn has severely undermined national peace and stability in the country Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008; Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010). Hassan Askari Rizvi, a Pakistani political scientist, argues that most people are inspired by radical philosophy and states that it is easy to get radical inspiration because belief in violence is deeply rooted in Pakistani society. Radicalism and rights are viewed as an essential and inseparable part of society. Many people in Pakistan view national and international issues, particularly from a religious perspective. Rizvi further argues that young people

in Pakistan are driven to radical groups as they have a feeling of alienation from their home country and thus become susceptible to calls by radical groups. As such, they adopt a radical mindset, which forms their outlook toward the nation and the world (Askari, 2011; Askari, 2017). It is therefore hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 5a: Ethnic and religious affiliation has a significant influence on perceived deprivation.

Hypothesis 5b: Ethnic and religious affiliation has a positive influence on radicalization.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

Consistent with the past research on madrassas and radicalization (Hanif, Ali & Shaheen, 2019; Husain, 2018; Qadri, 2018), a quantitative approach is applied to test and examine the proposed model in figure 1. The researcher developed a survey instrument to collect data from madrassa students. The researcher identified eight clusters based on population mainly aimed at ensuring the avoidance of replication of the same population sample. To achieve representative samples, five madrassas were randomly selected from each cluster and 125 questionnaires were distributed according to the cluster. From the total of 275 madrassas in the Khairpur district, 40 madrassas were selected and 1000 questionnaires were distributed. This research study's inclusion criterion was that the participants must be madrassa students in the Khairpur district.

Measure

Since the evolution of social sciences research, understanding and measuring human feelings, behaviours, attitudes, and opinions have remained a challenge for researchers. In an attempt to measure such attitudes and feelings in a scientific way that they can be validated, Likert (1932), introduced the Likert scale to measure human feelings, behaviour, and opinions. His effort to change individual subjectivism to objective reality brought a new era in quantitative research, where researchers can quantify the feelings, opinions, and attitudes of individuals. Therefore, this study applied a 5-point Likert scale to measure the feelings and attitudes of madrassa students. This approach further helped the researcher to measure the level of perceived relative deprivation in an objective survey of the participants.

Analysis of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

The structural equation modelling (SEM) technique was adopted to test the proposed hypothesis for understanding the relationship between madrassas, perceived deprivation, and radicalization. SEM, in the words of (Tabachnick, 2007) "is a collection of statistical techniques (approaches) that are used to examine a set of relationships between one or more independent and dependent variables". Under SEM, researchers are now able to test complex models and the relationship among constructs simultaneously. The measurement model is explained in terms of confirmatory factor analysis and is used for checking relationships between items and their underlying

constructs. It is also used to check the reliability, validity, and unidimensionality of latent variables, whereas the structural model is used to test causal paths or commonly known as hypothesized paths. In this step, the relationship between independent and dependent variables is specified for examining the level of significance among them.

Results And Discussion

The survey respondent's demographic details are presented in Table 1. The results reveal that the majority of respondents were male. However, the researcher tried to get a response from female madrassa students but due to conservative practices common in local madrassas located in rural areas, the researcher was not allowed access to these students. Nevertheless, the results of age statistics reveal that majority of respondents 40.24% were aged between 21 to 25, whereas the second-highest number of respondents (28.07%) were aged between 16 to 21 years.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Gender		
Male	748	100.00
Female	0	0.00
Age		
10-15	53	7.08
16-20	210	28.07
21-25	301	40.24
26-30	88	11.76
31-35	46	6.15
36-40	30	4.01
40 and Above	20	2.68
Total (N)	748	100.00

Step One: Assessments of Hypothesized model; Examining its Reliability and Validity

As mentioned earlier, the main purpose of measurement model specification is to assess the reliability, validity, and unidimensionality of the constructs. The construct validity can be measured in two ways: 1) discriminant and convergent validity. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), to check the internal validity of the construct, the researcher needs to use convergent validity (for the level of correlations) between the latent constructs or observed variables. The effective way to evaluate the convergent validity, and the parameters used should be factor loading, average variance extracted and composite reliability (Hair Jr, 2006).

The measurement model was specified with six factors, as hypothesized in the proposed model. Confirmatory factors analysis (CFA) was performed on the measurement model. The Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation test was used to evaluate the measurement model. In SEM, there are three major categories of fit indices, namely (a) absolute fit (b) incremental fit, and (c) parsimonious fit. Absolute fit indices are mostly applied to check the overall fitness of the model to the data set. It also helps to diagnose the level to which the proposed model yields the same results (Byrne, 2001). The obtained results fit the indices and the recommended levels as suggested by Joe F Hair Jr, Howard, and Nitzl (2020) are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of Fit Indices

	Absolute fit measures			Incremental fit measures		Parsimony fit measure
	x^2	GFI	RMSEA	NFI	CFI	AGFI
Criteria	>0.05	≥0.9	<0.05	≥0.9	≥0.9	≥0.8
Obtained	0.00	0.942	0.040	0.910	0.920	0.925

The results revealed that the absolute fit measures (GFI & RMSEA) are at 0.942 and 0.040 respectively. GFI value is higher than the recommended value (>= 0.90) and RMSEA is lower than the threshold (<0.05). Similarly, incremental fit measure namely, NFI is at 0.910 and CFI is at 0.920, both values are greater than the recommended threshold (>=0.90). Finally, the obtained value of the parsimonious fit measure (i.e., AGFI) is 0.95, which is also higher than the recommended threshold (>=0.8). All these values demonstrate an adequate level of acceptability and suggest that the model fits the data well.

It is important that for convergent validity of every construct and the value of factor loading, should be equal to or more than 0.7 as a conventional method. The value of composite reliability of constructs should be more than or equal to 0.7 and AVE

extract for the construct must be more than or equal to 0.5. The focal point of this test is to ensure that the latent variables are accurate and distinctive from each other (Hair Jr, 2006). The results reveal that the squares for inter-construct correlations are smaller and average variance extract for related latent construct was achieved. Thus, it was concluded that the proposed construct model was unique, which suggests that the discriminant validity of this study was achieved. The results of item loadings are presented in tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3: Construct Validity and Reliability

Construct	Item	Standard factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Construct Reliability	Average variance extracted
Religious Gatherings	RG1	.774	**0.755**	0.722	**0.558**
	RG2	.837			
	RG3	.840			
	RG4	.842			
Funding	FN1	.874	**0.781**	0.851	**0.569**
	FN2	.798			
	FN3	.851			
	FN4	.871			
Syllabus	SL1	.782	**0.836**	0.814	**0.547**
	SL2	.766			
	SL3	.825			
	SL4	.806			
Ethnic and Religious Affiliation	ERA1	.765	**0.806**	0.725	**0.510**
	ERA2	.778			
	ERA3	.766			
	ERA4	.897			
Radicalization	RD1	.585	**0.826**	0.718	**0.554**
	RD2	.722			

	RD3	.784			
	RD4	.731			
Perceived Deprivation	PD3	.877	**0.716**	0.762	**0.593**
	PD4	.622			
	PD5	.796			
	PD6	.807			
	PD7	.820			

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

	ERA	PD	FN	RG	SL	RD
ERA	**0.747**					
PD	0.453	**0.754**				
FN	0.537	0.488	**0.740**			
RG	0.592	0.439	0.664	**0.714**		
SL	0.532	0.405	0.632	0.633	**0.744**	
RD	0.589	0.748	0.566	0.456	0.459	**0.770**

Step 2: Structural Model Assessment

The results of Table 5 indicate that seven out of nine hypothesized paths for dependent and independent variables were supported and proved statistically significant. For example, the hypothesized path between the perceived deprivation and radicalization with a CR value of 5.659 ($> \pm 1.96$) was strongly supported and statistically significant at (p=0.001). Similarly, religious gathering, ethnic and religious affiliation, funding, and syllabus were found statistically significant and positively influenced the criterion construct (perceived deprivation). Syllabus, ethnic and religious affiliation were found statistically significant at p =< .05 and had considerable influence on criterion construct. However, the p-value of two hypothesized paths, namely funding and religious

gatherings, with criterion construct indicates that it did not exceed the cut-off point value of $(> \pm 1.96)$. Therefore, it was found statistically insignificant, suggesting that the facilitating conditions and hypothetical relationship were expected or supposed to be positive but were found negative.

Further exploration of hypothesized paths of test results shown in table 5 suggests that out of the proposed nine hypotheses, i.e. H1, H2a, H3a, H4a, H4b, H5a, H5b were found statistically significant and positively supported. In contrast, the hypotheses paths for (H2b and H3b) were rejected based on their coefficient values. Moreover, the standard estimates (β) of hypothesis (H1= 0.227, H2a = 0.093, H3a = 0.242, H4a = 0.23, H4b = 0.527, H5a = 0.115 and H5b = 0.141 respectively) were seen to be statistically significant and were supported. These hypotheses indicate that the predicted variables' paths strongly influence the criterion (dependent) variable. (i.e. the past practices in research and data analysis predict that the higher the β value the greater the impact on predictor variables). Whereas two hypotheses having standard estimates of (H2b = 0.051 and H3b = -0.021 respectively) are found statistically not significant; therefore, those hypotheses are rejected.

Table 5: Results of Latent Construct Regression Estimates

Hypothesis	Relationships	Standard regression weight (β)	CR (t.value)	Remarks
H1	PD→RD	0.227	5.659	Supported
H2a	FN→PD	0.093	2.464	Supported
H2b	FN→RD	0.051	1.528	Rejected
H3a	RG→PD	0.242	6.159	Supported
H3b	RG→RD	-0.021	-0.678	Rejected
H4a	SL→PD	0.23	5.394	Supported
H4b	SL→RD	0.527	8.783	Supported
H5a	ERA→PD	0.115	3.193	Supported
H5b	ERA→RD	0.141	3.987	Supported

The students studying in madrassas come from economically impoverished backgrounds, hence their family background, living conditions in madrassas and above all their comparison with friends studying in English medium schools coupled with their prospects for future success and better life led to the feelings of perceived deprivation. The proposed hypothesized path H1, perceived deprivation (PD) and radicalization (RD) were found statistically significant. These results demonstrate that feelings of perceived deprivation can play a crucial role in potentially radicalising

students in the madrassas of the Khairpur district. The study findings are in line with past literature on perceived deprivation and radicalization (Greitemeyer & Sagioglou, 2019; Kunst & Obaidi, 2020; Saraswati, 2018; Sklad, Park, & Psychology, 2017; Tahiri & Grossman, 2013; Toizer, 2016). Further exploration of this study's findings demonstrates that the hypothesized relationship for hypotheses H2a, H3a, H4a and H5a was found statistically significant and positively influenced criterion construct perceived deprivation (PD). These results reveal that the funding, syllabus, religious gathering, as well as ethnic and religious affiliation, plays a crucial role in the increased feelings of perceived deprivation amongst madrassa students in the district, leading to the increased radicalization of madrassa students. The study results are in line with past research on the relationship between the selected variables and perceived deprivation in the context of madrassas.

The research findings demonstrate the positive influence of syllabus on hypothesized relationship with radicalization, suggesting that it can be a major source of madrassa radicalization in the Khairpur district. The research findings of this study are in line with past literature (Husain, 2018; Shafiq et al., 2019). The findings for the hypothesized relationship between ethnic and religious affiliation and radicalization demonstrate that the results are positive and support the past research on criterion constructs (Stewart, 2012)). However, the past studies by MA Zaidi (2013), Lakshman (2006) and Qadri (2018) have considered funding as a major contributing factor toward madrassas radicalization. The findings of this research for the hypothesized relationship between funding and radicalization were negatively correlated and statistically insignificant. The study results do not support the hypothesized path and demonstrate that funding has no role in madrassa radicalization. The only rational explanation for this finding is the location of the madrassas. The Khairpur district madrassas are located in the countryside and students have limited or no information about the funding sources of these institutions.

The past research by Butt (2016) and Suleman (2018) suggest that increased religious violence, sermons and religious gatherings in Pakistan are giving rise to violent radical trends. However, the hypothesized path in this study for the relationship between religious gathering and radicalization was found statistically insignificant and does not support the proposed hypothesis. The rationale for these findings can be the location of madrassas. Most of the madrassas in the Khairpur district are located in the villages, hence the participation in religious gatherings of these madrassas may be limited to their owners and teachers and that is why students may have limited information about the religious gatherings taking place in the other areas within the district and outside the district.

CONCLUSION

This study focused on income (subjective) poverty and perceived deprivation as possible contributing factors to the radicalization of madrassas. Hence, all variables selected from literature, such as Funding (FN), syllabus (SL), religious gatherings (RG) and ethnic and religious affiliation (ERA) were measured in the acquired data from madrassa students of Khairpur district madrassas with perceived deprivation and radicalization. Thereafter the influence of perceived deprivation was measured with radicalization. The study tested variables to measure the moderating impact of high

income and low income on the criterion constructs and their effects on madrassa students' tendencies towards radicalization. Apart from that literature, the literature variables were measured for their mediating effects on perceived levels of madrassa students.

This research examined and investigated the link between funding, religious gatherings, syllabus, and ethnic and religious affiliation constructs with perceived deprivation as well as radicalization. The findings demonstrate that all four independent variables showed a positive relationship with perceived deprivation. Similarly, the results of the syllabus and ethnic and religious affiliation showed a positive relationship with radicalization, whereas the relationship between funding and religious gatherings with radicalization was found statistically insignificant, and therefore, this hypothesis was rejected. Nevertheless, the relationship between perceived deprivation and radicalization was found significant. The findings of this research offer external validity to the theory of perceived relative deprivation, particularly from the context of madrassas radicalization in the vicinity of the Khairpur district. The perceived deprivation, syllabus and ethnic and religious affiliation were found most significant contributing factors to the radicalization in the madrassas of this district.

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