PAKISTAN’S AND PALESTINE’S ROLE IN PROMOTING VIOLENT IDEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

by

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Violent ideology is fostered by promoting religious extremism within the Pakistan madrassah system and the Palestinian National Authority educational system. Success in countering this methodology may lie in the ability of the U.S. to engage the international community to contain this threat. The purpose of this research was to determine if the Pakistan madrassahs and Palestinian education systems promoted extremist ideology and if so, determine how the global community can effectively reduce and contain this trend. The research method used for this paper was the problem/solution method. This research method found that both school systems contribute to the education and promotion of violent ideological causes, though the exact level of this threat is not fully known. The entire educational system of both countries lends credence to this threat and requires international attention. This research recommends addressing this problem by pursuing a commitment from the respective national governments leadership, increasing oversight of conditional monetary aid, and the creation of an international education authority.
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Abstract

Violent ideology is fostered by promoting religious extremism within the Pakistan madrassah system and the Palestinian National Authority educational system. Success in countering this methodology may lie in the ability of the U.S. to engage the international community to contain this threat.

The purpose of this research was to determine if the Pakistan madrassahs and Palestinian education systems promoted extremist ideology and if so, determine how the global community can effectively reduce and contain this trend. The research method used for this paper was the problem/solution method. This research method found that both school systems contribute to the education and promotion of violent ideological causes, though the exact level of this threat is not fully known. The entire educational system of both countries lends credence to this threat and requires international attention. This research recommends addressing this problem by pursuing a commitment from the respective national government’s leadership, increasing oversight of conditional monetary aid, and the creation of an international education authority.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Pakistan and Palestine possess a cultural identity based on the Islamic religion. Islam is woven into every aspect of their life and impacts their thoughts, words, and behavior. Due to the overarching influence of Islam in their life, the religion is taught within their education system. Pakistan even has the teaching of the Holy Quran as a requirement within their 1973 Constitution to “...promote unity and observance of the Islamic moral standards.”\(^1\) Though peace and tolerance for non-Islamic people is a common belief by moderate Muslims, recent acts of violence by Islamists that attribute their actions of Jihad and Shadada to religion, have raised international alarm.

For clarification, “jihad” is defined as a struggle. In traditional Islam there are two types: greater and lesser. “Greater jihad” describes the struggle within the soul of a person to be more righteous, against the “devil within.” “Lesser jihad” is the fight against the “devil without,” such as a military struggle to defend Islam.\(^2\) “Shahada” refers to self-sacrifice in battle for Allah’s sake and anyone killed in battle with non-Muslims is a shahid or martyr.\(^3\) Both are significant within the Islamic faith and if achieved, garner favor from Allah.

Worldwide “calls to Jihad” and increased terrorist attacks and suicide bombings in the name of religion have driven many to seek the ceaseless source of such violent acts and led to numerous studies on the education systems that promote ideological indoctrination and terrorist training. Violent ideology is fostered by promoting radical Islam through Pakistan’s madrassahs and the Palestinian education system. This paper will explore these separately. The Pakistan madrassahs will be examined with regard to student demographics, school curriculum, funding sources, links to militancy and governmental reform. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) education system will be analyzed with regard to conflicting data on curriculum/incitement
allegations, governmental reform, links to militancy, and U.S./International role in reform. Solutions to mitigate this threat will be explored. Due to contradictory data on the nature of the threat in Pakistan and Palestine, this paper will attempt to determine the legitimacy of the threat, whether the schools seek to incite violent extremist ideology, and propose solutions to deter this violent education.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

In 2001, Thomas Friedman, a New York Times columnist and Pulitzer Prize winner, discussed the Afghan and Pakistani madrassahs and stated, “The real war for peace in this region is in the schools.” He also wrote a letter to the Saudi Minister of Islamic Affairs stating,

The American people…have come to fear that your schools, and the thousands of Islamic schools your government and charities are financing around the world, are teaching that non-Muslims are inferior to Muslims and must be converted or confronted…On Sept. 11 we learned that another country’s faulty education…can destroy.  

Multiple U.S. leaders to include George Bush, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld and Condoleezza Rice have implicated the madrassahs as being responsible for the violent mindset and behavior of some terrorists. Following 9/11, numerous journalists and organizations accused the schools of advancing ideological and military training. According to a 2004 Congressional Research Service (CRS) report, the Taliban movement originated with extremists who had attended Pakistani religious schools. In 2005, Pakistan officials even acknowledged that suspects in the London terrorist attacks may have spent time in madrassahs. The link between continued teachings of violence and intolerance and the schools’ connection with terrorist organizations has sparked international interest, and has led many to believe the madrassah education system is a threat to regional and international security.

Similar to the suspected violence-promoting madrassahs, the education of Palestinian students is believed to foster radical tendencies and propagate intolerance. According to Nathan
Brown, a professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University and an author on politics in the Arab World, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) acquired control of the education of students in the West Bank and Gaza in 1994, after Israeli authorities had previously administered the education since 1967. Poor education, connected to violent extremism, has been a concern with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the early 1990’s. According to a 2005 CRS report, many believe the PNA education system encourages children to reject Israel, Judaism, and peace in the region. For example, textbooks depict maps of the Middle East in which Israel does not exist and the Israeli land is marked as ‘Palestine’. These same maps are shown on television news reports multiple times throughout the day. The religious components of Palestinian textbooks may advocate exceptions for violence, which may promote engaging in anti-Israeli acts. Additionally, violent themes such as “jihad” and “martyrdom” are encouraged in the textbooks and some believe the curriculum “continues to embrace Palestinian individuals who participate in such activity.” For example, one textbook states,

Muslims must protect all mosques…and must wage a Jihad both of life and property, to liberat al-Aqsa Mosque from the Zionist conquest…If the enemy has conquered part of the land [of Palestine] and those fighting for it are unable to repel the enemy, then Jihad becomes the individual religious duty of every Muslim, man and woman, until the attack is successfully repelled and the land liberated from conquest.

Education that fosters these beliefs will perpetuate the extremist ideology that begets conflict in future generations and further delay peaceful progress in the region.

CHAPTER 3: PAKISTAN MADRASSAHS

The Pakistan education system consists of public schools, private schools, mosque schools, and madrassahs. According to Christina Fair, author of *The Madrassah Challenge*, the mosque school, known as a maktab, is a pre-primary and primary religious school. Maktabs are
informal, offer limited subjects such as reading/memorizing the Quran, and educate fewer than thirty students. Children between five and nine years old attend in the morning or afternoon and may also attend mainstream schools during the day. A madrassah is a “school that imparts secondary and postsecondary religious education using a specialized curriculum.” Madrassahs educate hundreds and even thousands of students. The schools typically provide a full-time education with room, board and free instruction, which is believed to be appealing to underprivileged families. The main difference between the maktab and the madrassah is the Dars-i-Nizami curriculum, which will be addressed in a subsequent section. This curriculum is taught at madrassahs and absent from the maktab instruction.

Madrassahs originated in the tenth century and exist in many Muslim societies to include Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Like most, the Pakistan madrassah prepares students for religious duties and focuses on promoting Islamic sciences and art. According to Rahman and Bukhari, there are five types of madrassahs: Shia, Jamaat-e-Islami, Ahl-e-Hadith school of Sunni, Barelvi, and Deobandi. Each school modifies their curriculum in accordance with their sect beliefs. The Deobandi madrassahs teach extremism and are the most anti-Western. The Deobandi schools are the most prevalent among madrassahs since they account for two-thirds of the madrassahs in Pakistan. Furthermore, Deobandi madrassahs became known for educating Taliban leaders and supporting the Taliban politically, financially, and militarily, as well as supporting organizations that conduct sectarian violence within Pakistan.

Though some madrassahs have a propensity to teach violent ideology, others successfully combine worldly subjects with the madrassahs’ traditional Islamic studies without promoting radicalism. Since Islam is the foundation of a Muslim society’s culture, religious training granted by madrassahs preserves Islamic tradition and creates experts in Islamic studies.
Darul Uloom Islamiya, a Jamaat-e-Islami school, is a madrassah institution that was founded in 1986 which produces students with college degrees, as well as religious certificates. Additionally, some madrassah systems have opened fee-based private school for parents that want their children to receive a worldly education in an Islamic environment.\(^{17}\)

Numerous statistics exist on the number of madrassahs within Pakistan and the number of students enrolled in these institutions. The International Crisis Group issued a report in 2002 that claimed that one third of all Pakistan children were enrolled in madrassahs.\(^ {18}\) A 2004 CRS Report claimed that 10% of all Pakistan children attend madrassahs and 10% of the schools have ties to militant organizations. Though countless sources exist, the following list illustrates the complexity in establishing an exact number due to conflicting reports:

1. A 2004 CRS claimed that 10,000 madrassah schools are training up to two million children.\(^ {19}\)

2. A 2008 CRS Report for Congress claims that there are 15,000 madrassahs teaching 1.5 million students and some of these institutions teach militant values.\(^ {20}\)

3. The L.A. Times cited as few as 5,000 madrassahs and as many as 18,000, in multiple reports in 2001 and 2002.\(^ {21}\)

4. The Financial Times has reported the existence of 40,000 to 50,000 madrassahs.\(^ {22}\)

5. The Philadelphia Inquirer reported 8,000 registered and 25,000 unregistered madrassahs.\(^ {23}\)

Acquiring an accurate figure on the number of schools and attendees is a daunting task. In 1994, madrassahs were declared exempt from registering with the government. Though the registration requirement was reinstated after 9/11, the previous exemption resulted in an explosion of unregistered madrassahs which make an accurate number difficult to obtain.\(^ {24}\)
According to Christina Fair, though it may be advantageous to count the madrassahs in Pakistan, it may be nearly impossible to do so. First, there is no central database of registered madrassahs due to district registration that is not reported beyond the local level. Additionally, it is highly probable that the existing records are outdated. Lastly, the limited records exist only for registered schools. Further, an estimate of non-registered madrassahs is impractical and an accurate estimate of total madrassah schools is unfeasible at this time. Though the schools appear to promote violent ideology and the exact numbers of schools are unknown, it will be beneficial to determine the demographics of school attendees.

Who Attends?

Many reports have claimed madrassahs are attended only by the poor and underprivileged. However, Christina Fair reported several findings by the Andrabi research team. They discovered that in settlements with both public and private schools, 30 percent of the poor families sent their children to private schools. In these areas, madrassahs were attended by less than 1 percent of the children, with no difference between poor and rich families. Additionally, evidence demonstrated that parents chose Islamic education because they preferred this instruction, not because poverty allowed no other alternative. These families value the religious benefits that are gained from religious education. Likewise, Fair suggests that the schools may not produce intolerant students but intolerant parents may choose the schools because the curriculum will provide worldviews similar to their own. For example, parents who possess the values and norms taught by ideological madrassahs will choose this education alternative for their children, in an effort to allow the madrassah to contribute to the formation of those values.

The team also interviewed madrassah administrators and obtained household survey data
to conclude that although many students came from low and low-middle class backgrounds, almost every madrassah had 10-30 percent from upper-class households. Additionally, Andrabi found that in low-income, multiple-children families, typically one child is enrolled in a madrassah while the other children attend public schools, which is likely due to traditional custom of devoting one child to religious service. However, it was discovered that in locations without public and private schools, poorer families tended to use madrassahs. Lastly, it was noted that female students came from wealthier families since fees were paid for the female’s madrassah education. Madrassah-educated females gain better marital options and education becomes associated with the female’s decency. So while poor families do take advantage of the madrassah education, middle-high income families also utilize the education.

Curriculum

Madrassahs have been described as “jihadi factory” and referred to as “schools of hate” due to the violent ideology they promote. Madrassahs use the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum with 20 subjects, of which half are religious, such as theology, life of the Prophet, and Islamic law with texts that date as far back as the eleventh century. Madrassah instructors believe the classic texts enable them to preserve identity and Islamic tradition. Other subjects such as medicine, math, and astronomy were added in the nineteenth century. However, not all madrassahs teach these subjects. The following is a typical madrassah curriculum:

1st Year
- Biography of the Prophet (Syrat), Conjugation-Grammar (Sarf), Syntax (Nahv),
- Arabic Literature, Chirography, Chant illation (Tajvid)
2nd Year
- Conjugation-Grammar (Sarf), Syntax (Nahv), Arabic Literature,
- Jurisprudence (Fiqa), Logic, Chirography (Khush-navisi), Chant illation, (Tajvid)
3rd Year
- Qur’anic Exegesis, Jurisprudence: (Fiqh), Syntax (Nahv), Arabic Literature, Hadith,
- Logic, Islamic Brotherhood, Chant illation: (Tajvid), External study (Tareekh Millat
and Khilafat-e-Rashida – these are Indian Islamic movements).
4th Year
- Qur’anic Exegesis, Jurisprudence (Fiqa), Principles of Jurisprudence,
- Rhetorics, Hadith, Logic, History, Chant illation, Modern Sciences (sciences of cities
of Arabia, Geography of the Arab Peninsula and other Islamic countries)
5th Year
- Qur’anic Exegesis, Jurisprudence, Principles of Jurisprudence, Rhetoric, Beliefs
(Aqa’id), Logic, Arabic Literature, Chant illation, External study (History of Indian
Kings)
Table 1. Dars-e-Nizami Curriculum

The Dars-e-Nizami curriculum ranges from recitation and memorization of the Quran to mathematics, science, and commerce.\textsuperscript{31} Madrassahs supplement the curriculum with non-curriculum texts catered to the beliefs of their specific sect. Yet, while Bukhari and Rahman claim jihad and militancy is not part of a madrassah curriculum, Dalrymple claims “it is estimated that as many as fifteen percent of Pakistan’s madrassas preach violent jihad, while a few have even been known to provide covert military training.”\textsuperscript{32} However, since the government retains no direct control over the curriculum and the teaching methodology cannot fully be ascertained, the level of this threat is difficult to discern.

Funding

Many madrassahs are supported by militant funding. According to Rahman and Bukhari, madrassahs receive most of their funding from non-governmental sources.\textsuperscript{33} They are usually funded by their religious sect and supportive donors. According to a 2008 CRS, many of Pakistan’s madrassahs are funded by Pakistan Islamist political parties such as Jamaat-e-Ulema Islam (JUI) as well as other entities and countries, such as Saudi Arabia.\textsuperscript{34} Though there is no data on the amount of funds the Saudi’s donate to madrassahs, international concern has been expressed over the spread of radical Islam through Saudi-funded schools in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and even the U.S.\textsuperscript{35} Further, 7,500 Pakistan madrassahs were funded by the Saudi’s, yet the U.S. is hesitant to address the issue due to political and economic interests in the region.\textsuperscript{36}

As shown above, most reports claim that madrassahs do not rely on government funding
but receive resources from their affiliated religious sect.\textsuperscript{37} Yet other reports assert that madrassahs acquire some of their funding from the government zakat tax.\textsuperscript{38} This is a charitable obligation specified as one of the Pillars of Islam. If this is true and the government indeed provides a portion of funding, then the government should have a voice in the operation of the school system. However, if there is indeed a lack of reliance on the government for funding, this complicates the ability to control and positively influence these schools.

**Madrassahs Link to Militancy**

“Are we capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the *madrassas* and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us?”\textsuperscript{39}

Many believe that the madrassa system poses a significant threat to the South Asia region and U.S. national security. However, extensive contradictory information exists that claims an exaggeration in the connection between madrassahs and militancy. Yet, the Pakistan President admitted, “There are many (madrassas) which are involved in militancy and extremism.”\textsuperscript{40}

Taliban members did emerge from madrassahs in Pakistan. In the 1980’s, these schools grew in size and numbers due to multiple reasons. An influx of Afghan refugees and donations from other countries, including the U.S., were contributed toward defeating the Soviets in Afghanistan. The International Crisis Group explained the U.S. involvement in Pakistan’s madrassahs when the schools were exploited to train militants to fight the Soviets:

Special textbooks were published in Dari and Pashtu, designed by the Centre for Afghanistan Studies at the University of Nebraska-Omaha under a USAID grant in the early 1980s. Written by American Afghanistan experts and anti-Soviet Afghan educators, they aimed at promoting jihadi values and militant training among Afghans. USAID paid the University of Nebraska U.S. $51 million from 1984 to 1994 to develop and design these textbooks, which were mostly printed in Pakistan. Over 13 million were distributed at Afghan refugee camps and Pakistani madrassa [sic] "where students learnt basic math by counting dead Russians and Kalashnikov rifles."\textsuperscript{41}

After the Afghans victory over the Soviets, the military dictatorship fell in Pakistan and the
madrassahs continued to thrive and increase in numbers due to Pakistan’s poor education system and the mujahideen’s persistent interest in continuing Jihad. The madrassahs mastered militancy and some evolved from historic centers of education to Islamic extremist indoctrination centers, which recirculated the aforementioned textbooks to promote Jihad against the West. The madrassahs radicalism has influenced regional and sectarian violence as well as transnational terrorism with involvement in the Sunni and Shia sectarian conflict, the struggle over Kashmir, and the rise and fall of the Taliban.

A 2008 CRS report stated that schools run by Jawaat-al-Dawat serve as recruitment avenues for extremists in terrorist groups. Madrassahs have close ties with organizations linked to the Taliban and have been involved in terrorism acts such as kidnapping, hijacking, and murder, to include the Wall Street Journal reporter, Daniel Pearl. These madrassahs have an interdependent relationship with militant groups. The militants provide armed backing for the schools and the schools provide recruits for the militant groups.

Finally, though several reports confirm the connection between madrassahs and militant organizations, Fair surveyed 141 mujahideen families and discovered that only 14 were madrassah graduates. Likewise, she revealed that terrorist groups often have standards for recruitment based on education and previous job experience. Militant groups have the luxury of choosing among multiple applicants, some of which are highly educated individuals. So even if madrassah students apply, the group may have more highly educated recruits available for hire. This eludes to the militant supply being greater than the demand. Though not reported, one may conclude that the militant groups prefer recruits with a higher level of education based on the discipline and work ethic that is normally associated with such individuals. Still, this willingness and desire to apply and serve in a militant group may be targeted through education. If a child is taught there is honor in serving as a martyr for Allah, they will likely aspire to fulfill that duty as an adult and obtain the necessary qualifications to
do so. Yet, an education without violent ideological encouragement may stifle such desires. This supports the necessity for a sound, non-ideological basic education for all children within this school system. Lastly, though it is known that Pakistan madrassahs provide suicide attackers in Afghanistan, it is difficult to determine the population of persons aspiring to be a militant since all may not be selected for recruitment.\textsuperscript{45} Still, evidence links students to sectarian terrorism within Pakistan and other terrorist organizations beyond the state.

**Education Reform**

**Pakistani Government Action**

Due to recent international attention, the Pakistani government has attempted to reform the education system to promote accountability and increase control over both public and madrassah schools. Pakistan has the distinction of being one of seven countries that spend less than 2 percent of GDP on education, yet they have a state obligation to provide free education in accordance with their 1973 Constitution. In 2001, Pakistan launched an Education Sector Reform (ESR) and a Madrassah Education Board. The ESR provides grants, teacher salaries, textbooks, and equipment to madrassahs that expand their curriculum to include “formal subjects, English, math, social/Pakistan studies, and general science.”\textsuperscript{46} However, madrassah administrators continue to resist change because their schools have thrived without government oversight. Madrassah families seek to preserve this privilege and the traditional Islamic education.\textsuperscript{47}

In 2002, in an effort to begin regulating Pakistan’s religious schools, President Musharraf launched a five-year, $113M plan to aid 8,000 madrassahs if they registered with the government. However, by June of 2002, 115 madrassahs were denied government aid due to their link to militancy.\textsuperscript{48} As a result, the government mandated registration for these madrassahs by December 31, 2002 or the schools would be closed, yet the government has failed to close
madrassahs that have not registered or abandoned their militant ties. Additionally, many more
madrassahs have remained unregistered, as they oppose government oversight of their finances
and the Madrassah Education Board has no means to require cooperation.\(^49\) Lastly,, many of the
madrassah administrators refuse to concede, do not want to change their religious teachings, and
choose not to accept money from the education ministry because they believe the funds are
provided by the U.S.

**U.S. Commitment to Pakistan Education Reform**

Internationally, the madrassahs are being held responsible for the spread of intolerance
and terrorism and being pressed for reform, with the U.S. actively engaging the Pakistan
government.\(^50\) The U.S. continues to significantly contribute to Pakistan’s education system.

According to the 2004 CRS report titled “Education Reform in Pakistan”:

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is implementing
a five-year $100 million bilateral agreement (signed in August 2002) to increase
access to quality education throughout Pakistan. The most notable project is
Education Sector Reform Assistance (ESRA), which accounts for more than
three-quarters of the USAID budget — reported to be $77.7 million to date. In
this project, USAID contracted with the North Carolina-based Research
Triangle Institute. USAID reports that FY2005 funding for its Primary Education
and Literacy program in Pakistan will grow to nearly $67 million, almost
tripling the FY2004 outlay of $24 million.\(^51\)

Likewise, a 2008 CRS report titled “Pakistan-U.S. Relations” demonstrates increased financial
support for Pakistan’s education system.

About $256 million has been allocated for education-related aid programs since
2002. In 2006, the U.S.-Pakistan Education dialogue was launched in Washington
to bolster further engagement. In April 2008, USAID launched a new $90 million
project to bolster the effectiveness of Pakistan’s public education sector. Requested
funding for FY2009 includes a total of $166 million for basic and higher education
programs in Pakistan.\(^52\)

In 2008, the State Department Budget request called for an additional $52M for general
education programs within Pakistan.\(^53\) Yet, Pakistanis are suspicious of U.S.-supported efforts in
reformation since they believe the U.S. seeks only to de-Islamize the education system. This attitude may stall progress in overcoming the madrassah challenge. While the U.S. and international community strive to impede the threat associated with Pakistan madrassahs, the Palestinian education system also deserves considerable attention.

**CHAPTER 4: PALESTINIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Prior to August 1994, there were three types of schools for Palestinian children: governmental, United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA), and private. Israeli government schools were regulated and controlled by the Israeli military. Their methods were designed to discourage teaching and learning about the Palestinian culture. UNRWA schools provided education for Palestinian children in refugee camps but they possessed no control over curriculum or policy since they were bound by the rule of the Israeli government. Lastly, private schools used the curriculum of the country that controlled their region prior to 1967. For example, Gaza used an Egyptian curriculum while the West Bank used a curriculum from Jordan. They were funded by private donations but still subject to Israeli government control.

In August 1994, as a result of the peace accord between Israel and Palestine, the Palestinians assumed control of their education system for the first time in over 450 years. The Palestinian Ministry of Education (MoE) was developed to organize and direct the educational system. In 1996, the MoE created a Curriculum Development Center (CDC) comprised of Palestinian educators and supported by foreign funding. The CDC was entrusted with reviewing the existing curriculum and providing a proposal to reform the curriculum as necessary.

Since the existing education system had Egyptian and Jordanian books that were wrought with violence and anti-Semitism, the CDC established a proposal for new textbooks to support a
new curriculum. In 1998, the Palestinian Legislative Council approved the curriculum and the CDC started phasing in the new books in 2000.\textsuperscript{57} The books are being used by government, UNRWA, and private schools. Additionally, due to a lack of properly trained teachers, the MoE initiated a teacher training program since 8,000 of the 18,000 teachers had no bachelor’s degree and those that did, had no training in education.\textsuperscript{58} Still, there has been international attention and concern over the PNA’s new education system. Many argue that the new curriculum and textbooks promote hatred, intolerance, and violence while others argue the PNA teachers promote these values. The PNA transmits their violent message to children even beyond the classroom via music videos, cultural events, and media. Similar to the Pakistan madrassah education, there are numerous allegations and counter-arguments to these claims that make it difficult to ascertain the true nature of this threat. Still, the allegations, opposition, reform, and possible links to militancy with regard to the PNA education system, will be evaluated.

\textbf{Curriculum/Incitement – Conflicting Reports}

\textbf{Curriculum/Incitement Allegations}

The Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP) has published multiple reports detailing the content of the new PNA textbooks. These reports have been widely circulated and influenced educational donations that were previously provided to the Palestinians. In CMIPs June 2005 report on 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} grade textbooks, they discover that many of the flaws from previous textbook publications still existed. Within the textbooks, Israel was not recognized as a state, did not appear on maps and was often replaced by Palestine on geographic maps. Additionally, references that encouraged children to jihad and martyrdom remained.\textsuperscript{59} Ultimately, this report was one of five on the Palestinian textbooks and the CMIP concluded that the books did not contribute to peace and reconciliation, though previous reports directly accused
the books of encouraging violence, hatred, and intolerance.

Further accusations of the textbooks have been made by David Bedein, the director for the Center for Near East Policy Research. In 2006, he noted that textbooks still contained maps that did not display Israel and instead depicted Palestine on maps of Israel. The books show Zionism only as an enemy movement in 5th grade books. The books claim Arabs to be the only inhabitants of Israel with no mention of Jews. Additionally, the books teach that Palestinians must resort to war and violence, specifically martyrdom, to achieve their goals.60

In February 2007, Itamar Marcus and Barbara Crook from the Palestinian Media Watch reported on the contents of the new 12th grade textbooks that were implemented at the end of 2006. Their research discovered that the books did not attempt to educate peaceful relations with Israel. Instead, a religious conflict with Islam, a portrayal of the Middle East without Israel, and rejection of their right to exist, were presented.61 The books justify Hezbollah terror against Israel. Additionally, Palestine is depicted as a state in place of the state of Israel. Likewise, cities such as Jerusalem and Nazareth are referred to as Palestinian cities instead of Israeli cities. Numerous maps throughout the texts display states throughout the Middle East, except for Israel. It is also reported that there is no map within the Palestinian educational system that displays any territory as Israel.62 However, most disconcerting is the textbooks promotion of Jihad and Martyrdom.

The books instruct that Jihad and Shahada are basic Islamic goals that should be pursued. These ideals are taught as basic Islamic values and often focused toward Israel with the Quran and Hadith (traditions attributed to Muhammed) used as justification.63 As Marcus and Crook elude, the textbooks serve to instruct the next generation that Israel is to be hated and destroyed. The Funding for Peace Coalition expressed similar concerns by reporting that the Palestinian
MoE has imposed a curriculum that does not meet international standards. Children are taught that every Muslim should remove foreigners from their land via Jihad. This type of education will contribute to continued violence in the region. While the education of children reflects the ideology of a culture, other sources in a daily environment contribute to a child’s learning.

Itamar Marcus spoke at a Senate Hearing in October 2003 to express concerns of the PNA inciting violence and hate within Palestine’s entire social-educational structure. Examples such as children’s sports events bearing the name of terrorists and summer camps named after suicide bombers serve to idolize the actions of these extremists. Cultural events and education programs named after these terrorists portray them as role models. Music videos are also used to display hate and Shahada and portray the act as heroic. Marcus’ claims were concurred with in a 2004 Honest Reporting article in which official PNA TV is accused of glamorizing suicide bombers and televised sermons encourage jihad against Jews.

Marcus and Crook also reported the PNA’s admiration for terrorist murderers as revealed in school names. Several schools are the namesake of an honored mother in Islamic tradition that praised the Shahada death of her children. Recently, a local school and main street were named “Martyr Saddam Hussein.” Many other schools are named after suicide bombers, murderers, and terrorist leaders. Clearly, the international community has reason to be concerned with a society that promotes violent attitudes and actions among their children and idolizes terrorism in their daily culture. Still, many argue the claims that have been reported are exaggerated and unsubstantiated.

**Curriculum/Incitement Counter-Arguments**

Much of the allegations toward the textbooks and curriculum for incitement and intolerance were regarding the Egyptian and Jordanian textbooks. In a Senate Hearing, Dr.
Zaid Asali described the CMIP’s report on Palestinian textbooks as “misleading and highly unreliable.” The Center’s report has been widely circulated in the international community and has led to some donors to terminate funds for Palestinian education. In 2000, the Center claimed the PNA rejected international requests to modify books when in fact, the PNA had made curriculum changes and were implementing the new books per a published schedule. In 1998, the Center’s report described violent statements about Israel and Jews from Palestinian textbooks. The textbooks reviewed by CMIP for that particular report were the old Jordanian and Egyptian books that were replaced between 2000 and 2006, in accordance with the new curriculum. Further, Dr. Asali explains that the maps, terrorist names, and textbook quotes are used in the CMIP report out of context.  

Akiva Eldar expressed similar views at the Senate Hearing. He explained that the EU researched the CMIP report findings and discovered that quotations in the report indeed referred to the older books and quotes from the 2001 report were badly translated or taken out of context. Similarly, Nathan Brown reported in Teaching Islam that early reporters discussed the extremist ideology from the Egyptian and Jordanian books instead of the new PNA-established curriculum. Brown was hired by the U.S. Institute of Peace to review the PNA curriculum and he concluded, “Harsh external critics PNA curriculum and textbooks have had to rely on misleading and contentious reports to support their claim of incitement.” Brown also stated the PNA curriculum “does not incite hatred, violence, or anti-Semitism.”

**Links to Militancy**

The international community seems to be most concerned with the textbooks of the Palestinian education system and the incitement that surrounds a child’s daily environment. However, research has demonstrated that in fact, the teachers within the education system may
be advocating a message that promotes violence.

One of the main providers within the Palestinian education system, UNRWA, is suspected of directly supporting the Hamas terrorist organization. Before this assertion is discussed, a brief look at UNRWA is warranted. UNRWA was created in 1949 when the UN passed Resolution 302 to establish an agency to “direct relief and works programs” for Palestinian-Arab refugees. Though UNRWA was originally intended to be temporary, it has adjusted to meet the changing needs of refugees and the mandate has been continually renewed. UNRWA is unique in that it is the only U.N. group with a longstanding commitment to a single group of refugees. Palestinians are treated differently than most internationally recognized refugees. In 1948, the UN passed the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” that stated everyone had a right to leave a country and return to that country. However, since Palestine was never a country and it is unclear if the law applies to descendants of the original refugees, this placed the Palestinian refugees in a unique situation that resulted in a separate U.N. agency to address the issue. Today, UNRWA provides education, health, and social services to approximately 4.6 million Palestinians which includes the original refugees and their descendants.

The UNRWA budget exceeds $457 million and is funded by multiple donors, with education consuming fifty percent of the budget. Additionally, unlike other aid organizations within the area, UNRWA is staffed by locals – with 23,000 employees, only 100 are international UN workers with the remaining employees working for the very organization they receive aid from. With regard to UNRWA employees, David Bedein reported that the salaries are paid by contributions from 38 countries with the U.S. providing 30% of the UNRWA budget, Canada providing 4%, and European countries providing over 55% of the budget. Benefiting
from these generous funds are members of Hamas. According to Professor Rashid Khalidi, from Columbia University, UNRWA employs members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. UNRWA provides services that the government should provide while Hamas diverts money for weapons.\textsuperscript{78}

UNRWA views Hamas and other terrorist organizations as part of Palestine and embraces them. This was substantiated in 2004 when Peter Hansen, the Commissioner-General of the UN agency in Gaza admitted:

I am sure there are Hamas members on the UNRWA payroll and I don’t see that as a crime. We do not do political vetting and exclude people from one persuasion or against another.\textsuperscript{79}

This is disturbing given the documented connections between UNRWA and Hamas terrorist organizations. Multiple marked UNRWA vehicles, that are allowed freedom of movement within Israel, have been used to transport terrorists and weapons. UNRWA schools have been used to house snipers and terrorist groups have used schools to conduct summer schools. In 2000, 25,000 children attended a camp in which paramilitary training was taught.\textsuperscript{80} Additionally, UNRWA employees have been tied directly to terrorist attacks.

Most disturbing is the fact that UNRWA schools employ Hamas members that teach the messages they value. Many UNRWA teachers are graduates of UNRWA schools and propagate the old curriculum they were taught. With the teacher’s past education combined with their chosen extremist lifestyle, it makes for a radical instructor entrusted with future Palestinian generations. These teachers publicly associate with radical groups and create a teachers bloc to ensure elections of Hamas members. Finally, it is well-publicized that UNRWA institutions have produced numerous terrorist leaders. While the Palestinian education system may possess a controversial challenge with their curriculum and textbooks, the quality of their teachers and influence on students, particularly within UNRWA, should not be underestimated.
Education Reform

PNA Government Action

As can be deduced from above, the PNA government undertook the education of Palestinian students in the West Bank and Gaza in 1994. The PNA established a Ministry of Education to direct and control the education system. The MoE created a 5-year plan for 2000-2005 with five goals: 1) provide access to education for all children, 2) improve quality of education, 3) develop formal and non-formal education, 4) develop management capability in planning administration and finance, and 5) develop human resources across the system. 81

Additionally, the MoE created a new curriculum and a Curriculum Development Center. When the CDC develops/changes the education curriculum, the MoE submits the proposals to the Palestinian Legislative Council. As such, the government retains oversight of the education system. Though the PNA has been accused of promoting a society of violence and hatred, they appear to act upon international requests to modify the school curriculum in an effort to minimize the instruction of extremist ideology.

U.S./International Role in Reform

When the PNA was first created, it had no tax base or budget. However, donors were revealed within weeks of the peace accords in which $2.4 billion was donated over a 5-year period. Eventually, the MoE gained funds through taxes and revenue, and as recent as 2004, the PNA’s budget for education was 21% of its total budget. Between 1996 and 2000, donors contributed between $38 and $58 million annually to PNA education. 82 Since the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993, the U.S. alone has contributed $1.2 billion to the PNA, with most of this money going directly to non-governmental agencies. In 2003, the U.S. provided $20 million to
the PNA for educational purposes.\textsuperscript{83}

The U.S. Institute of Peace has taken significant steps to denounce the violence and hatred thought to exist within the PNA education system. They have trained teachers, through multiple training programs, on conflict resolution and cross-cultural training. The U.S. Institute of Peace also developed a Religious and Peacemaking Program which resulted in the signing of a declaration in 2002 by prominent Jewish, Muslim and Christian leaders. The agreement stressed that none of the three faiths would legitimize political violence and called for an end to violence in the region. This emphasizes the importance of utilizing religious leaders to denounce extremist actions.\textsuperscript{84}

Additionally, the institute used lessons from Northern Ireland and the Balkans to focus on improving the quality of teachers in the education system. The institute worked with the Middle East Children’s Association to train over 250 teachers to counter the incitement that surrounds their classrooms and encourage peaceful coexistence among their students.\textsuperscript{85} The U.S. and international community have significantly contributed to the PNA and remain essential to the successful future of the PNA educational system.

\textbf{CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS}

\textbf{Conclusion}

Both Pakistan and Palestine are undergoing separate, yet related, challenges within their education system. Both are faced with international, regional, and state pressure to address the perceived education of violent extremists. In the case of Pakistan, the madrassah education system has served as a productive and effective means to promote the Islamic faith and for centuries. Yet, in recent years this system has become the target for those seeking the origin and continuance of violent ideology. With regard to Palestine, the PNA has been under scrutiny
since they assumed control of their own education system in 1994. The PNA has been accused of establishing a curriculum and textbooks for their school system that promotes violence, intolerance, and ultimately terrorism. Though there are numerous conflicting reports on both issues, there does appear to be a link between the education in Pakistan madrassahs and Palestinian schools with violent extremists. Though the level of this threat is difficult to ascertain, it does not diminish the need for a solution to this threat.

During the course of research on the Pakistan madrassahs, it was discovered that Pakistan’s primary school system ranks as one of the world’s least effective and public and private schools have been proven to teach extremism and religious intolerance. Public education has been used as a means for political ends that has created social problems and encouraged violence. According to a 2008 CRS report, research indicates that the majority of Pakistan violent extremists emerge from the dysfunctional public or private school systems instead of the madrassahs.\textsuperscript{86} Interestingly, the poor quality of the public education system has increased enrollment in madrassahs. However, since public schools educate 70 percent of enrolled students and madrassahs educate less than 1 percent, attention should be placed on the entire education system.\textsuperscript{87}

The public school system is plagued with problems of corrupt/underqualified teachers, a curriculum and textbooks that incite, and a political agenda that overshadows educational requirements. Teachers are tenured civil servants that get promoted based on political ties versus qualifications. Additionally, “ghost schools” expend government resources and have been described by a local observer as “one of the country’s worst corruption scandals.”\textsuperscript{88} In 1998, one local government had 4,500 ghost schools and during a three-month period in 1999, an education department had 7,000 absentee teachers who attended school only to collect a paycheck.\textsuperscript{89} The
Curriculum Wing of the Ministry of Education creates textbooks that encourage militancy and intolerance, claim inaccuracies as fact, and omit critical information, yet they control all educational material of the public school system. Since the textbooks and curriculum are established at the federal level, they become a tool to spread ideology and political plans rather than fulfilling educational requirements. As such, the U.S. has identified the significant reform needed within Pakistan’s education system and deemed this relevant to U.S. interests in the region. The 9/11 Commission Report even recommended a long-term commitment by the U.S. to support Pakistan, particularly in the area of education improvement. Though the below recommendations will capture the Pakistan public school system, additional research is recommended on this topic.

With regard to the Palestinian education system, research revealed an unexpected link between UNRWA employees and militancy. This connection reaches beyond textbook and environmental influences on a child’s education. The UNRWA teachers associated with Hamas possibly pose a greater threat to spreading religious ideology than textbooks and media encouragement. UNRWA appears to be an ineffective organization due to its large, unwieldy size coupled with questionable leadership. As such, this subject will be addressed but additional research should be conducted on UNRWA to determine the legitimacy and depth of ties that exist with extremist organizations.

**Recommendations**

The current state of the Palestinian and Pakistani educational system poses an immeasurable, yet valid, threat to regional and international security. As such, a three-pronged approach should be pursued by an international coalition to curb the spread of violent ideology within these education systems. The three requirements are: 1) Leadership-committed reform, 2)
Conditional and monitored financial aid and 3) Development of an International Education Authority (will be referred to as IEA for the purpose of this paper).

First, the leadership of both countries must be engaged to actively implement and enforce reform within their system. Pakistan has pursued reform of their ailing education system for years, yet failed to carry through with implementation or enforced policy. The Pakistan leadership must set educational standards and insist on compliance. For example, Rahman and Bukhari reported that the madrassahs have never been under government control and they run their own education system and curriculum. Without forcing the madrassahs to become public schools, government oversight and laws should be placed on the schools to ensure they meet registration standards and do not encourage incitement. While opponents to madrassah reform may argue that the most harmful madrassahs obtain external funding and do not rely on government support as has been shown, laws can be established that require registration/standards within the madrassahs to fall under government purview. The Pakistan Madrassah Education Board and/or the Ministry of Education must be given authority to enforce registration and non-violent curriculum requirements. If found to be in violation, the illegal schools should be closed.

Likewise, the PNA must commit to educational reform. The PNA should be engaged to uphold standards that will be established in the forthcoming discussion of monetary aid and the IEA. Still, with regard to education, the political agenda of the PNA must be overridden by the extreme necessity for a quality system that does not promote violent ideology. Failure by leadership to commit to reform should directly impact the international community’s commitment to monetary aid.

Second, the U.S. should immediately place conditions and encourage our international
partners to place conditions upon the enormous amount of unmonitored aid that is contributed to Pakistan and Palestine. Aid to Pakistan should be contingent upon their government taking a greater interest in the education of their children. A 2004 CRS report stated that Islamabad spent $16 on defense for every $1 spent on education. While the country is showered with aid for their ailing education system, they continue to bolster their military might and internally curtail spending on the future of their children. Though a sufficient military capability is an implicit requirement for Pakistan’s national security, it comes at a cost far beyond monetary measures. The result of this inequitable distribution between education and defense hinders the country’s education system. If left unchanged, it will continue to negatively impact present and future generations and ultimately, the entire society within Pakistan. Additionally, Pakistan has failed to uphold their pledge to increase their GDP spending on education from 2% to 4%. As such, international aid should be provided only after they have taken active steps to devote their own resources. The 2008 CRS report on Pakistan suggests “conditioning” contributions to Pakistan by both U.S. and other international donors. Opponents believe this would support Pakistan’s perception of the U.S. being an “unreliable partner” and claim it has failed in previous attempts. Conditioning international aid will impact the behavior of both countries. With today’s economy, aid should not be provided indiscriminately or with no accountability. Though conditioning may not be well received initially, failing to take this action will result in the status quo. Without change to our current aid donations, we risk funding the very threat that the aid is intended to thwart.

With regard to Palestine, oversight on the monetary aid provided by the U.S. and international community is paramount. A review of a 2006 Senate Hearing provides evidence that monetary aid to Palestine is unchecked. During the Hearing, Senator Sechter candidly
queried a member of the PA on the use of a $20 million U.S. contribution and subsequently queried a U.S. Institute of Peace representative on the utilization of a $17 million U.S. contribution. The Senator’s questioning is proof that U.S. aid was given arbitrarily with no knowledge of its use, intended recipients, or impact of its influence. This further validates the requirement for an international organization to provide oversight of educational aid.

Some argue that it is difficult to ascertain the degree to which U.S. aid to UNRWA contributes to violent incitement. As such, conditions should be placed on this aid. This research has revealed that the teachers employed by UNRWA have ties to Hamas and abuse their teaching role as a platform to espouse their ideology message. UNRWA must be held accountable for the Hamas teachers it knowingly employees. U.S. aid to Palestine’s education system must be stopped until it is vetted through the IEA. The IEA will release the money only after UNRWA meets established criteria for employees. To avoid a sudden shock to the UNRWA schools, a date should be established within a 1-2 year timeframe to allow UNRWA to remove the questionable employees and train teachers that can provide unbiased education. If the IEA determines their program, teachers, and curriculum to be adequate, aid may resume. All future aid should, in turn, be contingent upon meeting and maintaining IEA standards.

The third requirement for the three-pronged approach is the development of an IEA. This international committee or organization would create broad standards for curriculum and textbooks, teacher qualifications, and monitor educational programs to determine conditional receipt of monetary aid. The IEA would work directly with the Ministry of Education in both countries to communicate established standards. Similar to an International Crisis Group recommendation, local boards can be established to select teachers and assist in curriculum creation.6 The MoE would, in turn, create the curriculum and provide teacher training
consistent with IEA standards.

Islam studies should not be targeted in madrassah or public school curriculums, but can be taught without violent extremist incitement as proven by successful, non-threatening madrassahs in Pakistan. Likewise, concerns have arisen over UNRWA’s use of textbooks that promote incitement and this argument has been excused since UNRWA uses the curriculum and books mandated by the PNA MoE. However, curriculum and textbook standards would be established and monitored by IEA to ensure the absence of violent ideology.

Teachers in both countries would be required to meet qualifications and training requirements as set forth by the IEA. Teachers will be held accountable for their instructing methodology and known Hamas members would be removed from the payroll to avoid funding these terrorist supporters. The IEA would regularly evaluate both the curriculum and teachers within the education system to ensure IEA standards are upheld.

Oversight of monetary aid would be conducted by a sister organization linked closely to the IEA or by a finance arm within the IEA. This agency would increase or decrease the international monetary aid a country receives based on the implementation of IEA standards. This would link the conditional monetary aid and the enforcement of IEA standards to further encourage leadership commitment to the education system.

Though daunting, the pursuit of this three-pronged approach by the international community could significantly reduce the current supply of violent extremists. One less student trained in violent ideology is one less threat to the global community. The international community should be engaged to delicately, yet effectively, counter this threat with the recommendations annotated above, while not giving rise to destabilization that further promotes violent ideology.
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