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THE STATUS OF MINORITIES IN EDUCATIONAL SETUP OF MALAKAND DIVISION, KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Schooling for minority groups plays an important and integral role in the economic growth of a country. Unfortunately, the Subservient minorities minority living in the area of Malakand division face many challenges when it comes to education. This study aimed to look into the main factors that affect the education of the Subservient minorities people in Malakand division, which is part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. To do this, a qualitative research method was used to find out the key problems faced by the Subservient minorities community in getting an education. The research was conducted through thematic analysis, where 03 participants were selected using purposeful sampling. The main findings show that several factors are affecting the educational activities of the Subservient minorities people in this area. These include the lack of educational facilities for girls, shortage of female teachers, poor transportation system, low quality of teaching, ineffective educational methods, and early marriage of girls. Additionally, most of the respondents had a positive attitude towards the educational institutions of the Subservient minorities community and were encouraged to support these institutions to improve the quality of education.

INTRODUCTION

The quiet group is an important part of the general public, and their education plays a big role in the growth of a society's economy. People believe that education helps shape a person's behavior in a friendly and calm way. It is also agreed that teaching people from different groups can improve life for everyone. Since Pakistan became independent, there has been a problem with differences based on race and ethnicity, like non-Muslims being treated unfairly in all areas of life, especially in remote areas where these quiet groups face many problems in getting an education. Also, in many parts of Pakistan, minority groups are not allowed to have the basic right to education at any level (Naz et al., 2013). Social issues are the main reason why education for minorities in these areas

is poor because they are forced to follow all the rules and traditions of the society. Therefore, people from minority groups are treated as separate in these areas, which is the main cause of low education levels from schools. The percentage of minorities getting an education has always been low due to old traditions from the area, so they don't attend school at the basic level because they feel uncertain about being accepted (Ebrahim, 2012). Also, there is a lack of transportation to schools and other education centers, which is why parents don't let their daughters go to nearby private schools (Mehdi, 2007).

Pakistan also faces many other problems and is often stuck with low education levels, especially among minority groups, like in other South Asian countries. A major problem is the biased content in the curriculum that either pushes minority communities away from success or creates hatred through anti-minority messages in textbooks (Jan et al, 2020). There is also fear and stress about the religious schools, or "madrassahs," in Pakistan. These schools teach extreme views that push people toward fanaticism and exploit the culture of the society. Young people are taught to see non-Muslims as enemies, and some Christian schools teach extreme ideas. This kind of content is clearly a main cause of religious fanaticism and social separation, leading to more conflict in South Asia (Ghai, 2005).

According to Sagheer (2014), the main problem for students from religious minorities is access to education. Although the government says it provides education according to religion, the content in government-run school books includes offensive comments against religious minorities. Naveed et al. (2021) say that the content in school books paints a dark picture of discrimination and oppression against minority students. This discrimination leads to serious hatred and cruel behavior that can violate the basic rights of people, especially minority groups. In the school textbooks, minority students are often seen as poor or less important and are not considered part of Pakistan. Muslim teachers in schools are also biased against minority students. Zafar, Changoor, and William (2014) pointed out in their study that minority students are often told to eat at separate tables in government schools because of their religion and beliefs.

The government of Pakistan separates minorities based on their religion, especially Christians, even though they are trying to get access to education. The children of religious minorities are often forced to eat at separate tables in government schools. Minority students face a lot of discrimination in how teachers treat them. Hussain (2009) in his Congressional Research Service Report for Congress showed how discrimination affects the way minority groups are treated in their daily lives, especially in schools. Gill (2006) explained the attitude of secondary schools towards minority students. Naveed (2011) found that the content in school textbooks promotes hate and separation towards minority students. This strong hatred leads to serious aggression and harmful behavior that can break the fundamental rights of minority people. Teachers' behavior in school is biased towards minority students. The textbooks released after the 2006 curriculum change failed to follow the required process. Minority students, especially those with Muslim teachers, are very unhappy because of the teachers' unfair behavior towards them.

Research Methodology

The study looks at university students at the University of Malakand division in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, who are aged between 18 and 24. These students are studying at different levels, from BS to MA and M. Phil program. The university has more than 20 academic departments located in the Malakand division district. To start the study, the researcher used a random sampling lottery method to select 6 departments. In total, around 1200 students are enrolled across all 6 departments, and among them, the Subservient minorities minority group makes up about 6%. Since the study is qualitative in nature, the researcher used a purposive sampling method to choose 03 participants from the selected six departments for interviews. The data was analyzed by carefully interpreting and verifying the information to understand the key points, review the findings, and plan based on the

data (Creswell, 2010). These topics were important for explaining the answers to the research questions. The researcher also connected individual thoughts and previous writing with emotional analysis to better understand the viewpoints of the participants.

Result and Discussion

Instruction is an important system meant to teach cultural individuals about the values and standards of society, and to prepare them for future roles in it. One of its main roles is to give people opportunities to interact with others around them. A complete educational program helps meet the physical, mental, social, and financial needs of individuals, groups, and society as a whole, and also improves their ability to work together. Having consistent and easy access to education reduces social inequality in the community and helps create people who are helpful, calm, and full of energy(Ihsan et al, 2019). When asked about access to education, one person responds:

Access to Education

"We live in a very remote part of Pakistan. This is a real challenge that students from strict religious minorities face when trying to get an education. Although the constitution says "education according to religion."

The statement shows that Subservient minoritiesa students do not have equal access to education. Even though the government provides primary and secondary schools right in their communities, there are still problems. According to Gill (2006), minority students in a Muslim-majority country often face difficulties in accessing education. One of the respondents explained how this issue affects access to higher education in Pakistan.

"Access to higher education is a major problem for the Subservient minoritiesa minority community. This problem isn't just affecting the Subservient minoritiesa people but also other religious minorities in Pakistan. Because of the negative label they carry as non-Muslims, these minorities are often overlooked when it comes to getting access to higher studies."

There are many different things involved in training groups that are in the minority around the world. A respondent talks about most of these things in the following way.

"Instruction is one of the main ways to help minorities fit into standard society. It plays a very important role, especially in cases like that of the Roma people, where being excluded from society leads to social problems. (See conversation for clarification.)"

Discussion

Issues related to minority students in school are a bit more complicated and need to be looked at both at the school level and the basic level. Children from minority groups often face social challenges. Many come from extreme poverty and can't afford to buy clothes or school supplies and other things needed to go to class. These social conditions also affect their access to tutoring (they can't afford the cost of transportation if they live in very far away areas), and their overall experience. In a time of ethnic violence and the rise of patriotism, the importance of building multicultural, tolerant societies is becoming clearer. The presence of minorities can be seen as a cultural treasure and a source of diversity, or as a cover for division and suspicion. Schooling plays a key role in deciding which of these outcomes will happen. The social value of education isn't automatic but depends on its content and structure; compulsory education can have either a socially harmful or beneficial effect (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000). Basic rights expect education to adapt to minorities in a more fundamental way than just removing very negative generalizations from textbooks. Issues like the language of teaching, integration, and the balance of opportunities require basic rights responses. In Europe today, this need is especially felt by minorities, particularly the Pakistani community.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Unfortunately, the Pakistani academic community isn't speaking out much about the educational problems faced by religious, ethnic, and racial minorities. That's why it's important to start some strong research that can highlight the real educational challenges these groups have faced since Pakistan was formed. Although the general public is interested in improving the situation for

minorities, they usually focus on rights and political issues. They don't often look at how education can be improved using available religious protections, political opportunities, and legal guarantees. This study found some problems in primary, secondary, and higher education at the local level. The researcher believes that the findings of this study could also help in improving education in Pakistan. The study suggests that hiring teachers and experts from religious minorities could help create a fair and unbiased curriculum for better educational development in Pakistan.

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