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## Topic:- Challenges and Opportunities in Mainstreaming Madrasa Education in Pakistan.

### • Outline:-

- 1) Hook
- 2) Background Information
- 3) Thesis statement:-

Madrasa education merged with modern education can produce well-versed workforce.

### • Mainbody:-

- i) Challenges in Mainstreaming
  - i) Limited Madrasa Curriculum:-
    - Lack of modern education
    - Children lack modern skills
  - ii) Resistance from madrasa leadership:-
    - Take modern education as taboo
    - Donot want merger
  - iii) Regulation and Structural issues:-
    - Lack of coherent system
    - Lack of finance and capacities
  - iv) Fear of losing religious essence
    - Mistrust changes
    - Marginalized sector refuses modern education
- 2) Opportunities in Mainstreaming
  - i) Educational equity
    - Religious and modern education acquired



- Madrasa students at par in skills with contemporary students
- ii) Enhanced security control
  - Madrasa taken as educational institute rather than militancy camps.
  - Breaking militancy chains, as Madrassas used as training camps
- iii) Workforce for economy
  - Madrasa students acquiring skills
  - Usefull for economy
- iv) Wholistic approach
  - Students learn religious as well as modern knowledge
  - Balance between social and spiritual life.

#### • Conclusion

- 1) Re-state thesis
- 2) Summurize
- 3) End



## Essay

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According to a hadith of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) "The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim". Education is a vital part of a human life. It leads to attainment of knowledge and skills. Education mainly is of two types, madrasah education and modern education. People are often seen in a dilemma to whether put their children in schools or madrasahs to get education. Some try to balance it out by dividing the years of education between a school and a madrasah. Modern education lacks the <sup>detailed</sup> religious aspect, although it covers basic religious knowledge. And madrasah education system lacks modern knowledge which makes children difficult to cope up with modern world when they are exposed to it. Mainstreaming madrasah education in Pakistan can be a long and difficult process but can be fruitful for the country and its people in many ways. Madrasah



education if merged with modern education can give children a basic skillset and knowledge to cope with contemporary world. Madrassah students often have vast knowledge of religion but they face difficulties in gaining jobs because they lack modern knowledge and skills. Madrassa education merged with modern education can produce well-versed workforce. This mainstreaming can do wonders.

There are several challenges in mainstreaming madrassa education in Pakistan. One of the basic challenge is the limited madrassa curriculum. Madrassa education system is focused on religious education and leaves out modern education. The distance from modern scientific knowledge creates a gap in madrassa graduates and university graduates. Madrassa students only gain religious knowledge which university graduates attain modern knowledge and skillset. While entering the



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workforce this gap widens and shows its consequences. Madrassah students are well-versed in arabic and quaranic knowledge while modern education students are better with english, a global language and have critical analysis and problem-solving skills. Both are forms of knowledge equally important, but one goes parallel with developing world needs and the other is limited. Apart from the skills and knowledge, the lifestyle is also impacted. Madrassa graduates are often seen more practicing and religious and university graduates are either a good balance of religion and worldly needs or are on the other extreme. The education majorly impacts the lifestyle, ideology and behavior of the students.

Resistance from the madrassa leadership in mainstreaming the madrassa education can be a vital challenge. The madrassa leadership often takes modern education as something foreign and see it



as a taboo. Madrassa system teaches some basic contemporary subjects, but that is on a very basic scale. Modern education is seen as a negative influence on the youth which takes them away from the religion. This conservative mindset leads to limited scope of modern subjects in madrassah. Examples from co-education systems are given as a system against religious norms and settings. The madrassa leadership opposes the mainstreaming because they think that modern education is something very different from religious education and cannot exist together. The clash of ideas lead to more herdles. Although the religion teaches us to attain modern knowledge as well as religious knowledge. Religion teaches us to keep a balance, but cultural interpretations of the religions have taken over the actual lesson. Resistance is seen on various levels to mainstream the madrassa education just because of this culturally associated taboo.



Another challenge in mainstreaming madrasa education is the regulation and structural issues of madrasa system. The madrasa system lacks a coherent functioning system. There is no single set of functioning, that can be reformed or improvised. The madrasa setups are independent setups without any link with one another. They follow different functioning styles based on their ease. Moreover, there are several sects and madrasa system follows certain sect which creates difference in their teaching methodologies and knowledge set. Secondly, problem of lack of finance and resources exist. The madrasa system is not a fully established system in terms of finance. Some madrasas are good in terms of finances, while majority lack proper funds. ~~Thad~~ resources in terms of infrastructure and human resource are also limited in madrasa sector. The mainstreaming requires alot of funds, to firstly



establish madrasah system as a technical and resourced system. And in addition the capacity building of madrasah teachers is required, to incorporate new changes. The system needs a multi-faceted evolution to come at par with other educational system and give value addition in the society.

Fear and mistrust of losing religious essence of madrasah education because of mainstreaming it, is another challenge. The new changes ~~are~~<sup>be</sup> seen as negative, as there is lack of trust between government and people. People of the madrasah sector oppose any new change because they are off the view that if religious education is taught side by side with modern education it will lose its essence and will be sabotaged. The large group of people who can't afford to send their children to schools because of high fees structures prefer madrasah as the right place to educate their children. Although madrasah are a good educational system but



they have a limited scope. Moreover, people who have no knowledge about modern education also prefer madrasa over schools and universities. All of these people form a part of society which resist any change in madrasa system.

As there are multiple challenges for mainstreaming the madrasa education in Pakistan. There are various opportunities too that can give quality impacts by mainstreaming the madrasa education.

Educational equity is one of the biggest advantage or opportunity of mainstreaming the madrasa education in Pakistan. There is a clear segregation between people who graduate from a madrasa and the one from university. With the mainstreaming of madrasa education the children of both the systems can be at par with each other. Madrasa students usually lack the scientific knowledge and skillset of modern subjects because they do not study <sup>that</sup> in madrasa



system. The subjects taught in madrasa are limited, so they can give knowledge regarding religion only. The university students acquire modern knowledge therefore they have right skillset, to enter workforce. By mainstreaming madrasa education, the madrasa students too can get skillset and knowledge of modern education and be equally resourced as other students. The gap needs to shorten in order to make the madrasa graduates equally knowledgeable.

Enhanced security control is one of the biggest opportunities of mainstreaming the madrasa education. Pakistan is a country where there are multiple security threats, and one of the threats is militancy through madrasa. Madrasa system is used to fund the militancy in the country by the anti-state entities and our enemies. Mad-rassas are used as militancy training and breeding camps as they are foreign funded and support anti-state



ideologies. Madrasa as religious education places are not trespassed by state agencies, so anti-state agencies try to breed in these areas. Once, the madrasa system mainstreams, these threats ~~can be~~ easily countered as regulation of madrasa can be done. It can be brought under structural system of the state. This can help break the militancy chains of the anti-state agencies and help law enforcement agencies to counter it. The religion card, the militancy plays can be countered greatly by mainstreaming the madrasa system and the networks of militancy can be brought under scrutiny. This can give clear picture of how our religion is illnamed because of the militancy which has nothing to do with our religion.

Another opportunities of mainstreaming the madrasa system is developing workforce for economy. Madrasa students if acquire skills of modern knowledge, they can be fruitful



for the economy. They usually lack modern skills, so they do less paying jobs, or very few get good jobs that too in a limited sector. If they have vast skillset, they can enter any sector of the economy and serve national economy. This is not only for the national good but is also beneficial on individual and household level. If they get good jobs, they can have good pay leading to better lifestyles and access to facilities. This is for collective good that madrasa students should learn modern skills too.

More opportunity of mainstreaming madrasa sector includes a wholistic approach. This way students can have a balance between religious and modern knowledge. This creates a beautiful balance of religion and social life leading to peace. A person who has acquired religious knowledge along with the modern knowledge can have the best of the both worlds as



he can follow religion while implementing modern skills for livelihood. Our Religion Islam, also favors balance in the life of a person, as equilibrium is the best state to exist.

To conclude, Madrasa education mainstreaming is important to bring great impacts on different levels. Madrasa education should be mainstreamed because it can finish the educational gap between children. It can create madrasa children with skill set of moderate technology. It can end the problem of militancy in our country, or if not end then it can decrease it. There are challenges in the way to implement it but these challenges can be solved with right decision-making. Making all the stakeholders participate in the decision making process, helps the efficiency of the decisions and its implementation. It can decrease the opposition as every stakeholder has



his concerns addressed. In short, Madrasa mainstreaming has many opportunities and benefits on various levels. It is a policy change that can do wonders.