Teaching Approaches of Madaris Teachers in Pakistan: A Gender and Location Based Study

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ARTICLE DETAILS

ABSTRACT

The teachers use teaching methods and techniques in their classrooms with clear goals and intentions to teach. These teaching approaches might be teacher-centred, intended to transfer information, or student-focused, intended to change students’ understanding. Apart from various contextual and personal factors, such as gender and institutional location, they can also explain the differences and variations in these teaching approaches. Literature on approaches to teaching in public schools is available. However, there is insufficient literature about Madaris teachers across the globe. In Pakistan, Madaris are parallel educational entities that cater to millions of students. Therefore, the current study identified the teaching approaches of Madaris teachers in relation to the gender and location of Madaris. Under a survey research design, data were collected from 790 Madaris teachers in Punjab. An ANOVA statistical test revealed that the interaction of gender and location could explain the difference in Madaris teachers’ preferred teaching approaches in Madaris in Punjab. Male teachers in rural and urban areas had a higher conceptual change student-focused approach and a higher information transfer teacher-focused approach. The Pakistani government and private sectors should design teaching training programs according to the particular curriculum in Madaris and assist Madaris with instructional teaching reforms.

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1. Introduction

Education is the sacred duty of every Muslim man and woman. Education and knowledge are highlighted in various Quranic verses and Ahadith. Numerous verses of the Holy Quran emphasize the rewards and importance of learning and knowledge for Muslims (Ibrar Ullah & Irshadullah, 2019). The Prophet Muhammad, Peace Be Upon Him, said that seeking knowledge is an obligatory duty of every Muslim (Mishkat al-Masabih). Likewise, numerous ahadith highlight the importance of knowledge and the effort to seek knowledge, and the blessings for Muslims in seeking knowledge (Muhammad, 2007).
Due to higher rewards in the hereafter and the benefits of knowledge in this material world, Muslim rulers, merchants, and communities emphasize educating Muslim children (Berkey, 2007).

Similarly, with the spread of Islam in the sub-continent, the Madaris were set up to educate Muslims in the region (Shahab, 2021). Madaris education is a tool to provide religious education to students, instill commitment and adherence to Islamic teachings and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him, and produce scholars in Islam (Shahab, 2021). These Madaris are a blessing for poor and low-income families in Muslim societies. Parents who are too poor to afford their children’s education in public and private schools send them to Madaris (Shahab, 2021).

2. Review of Literature

Madaris are the fundamental institutions of higher Islamic learning that train Muslim students in Islamic theology and law (Moosa, 2015). The tradition of Madaris has a glorious history to the extent that Arabic became the lingua franca after Latin. During that period of human history, Arabic was the language in which all human knowledge was available (Jafri, 2006). Madaris, centres of excellence in teaching different subjects in the Mughal period, underwent considerable change in the colonial period. Madaris had a vast network called maktabs in the Mughal Empire, which, after 1857, came under suppression by colonial governments (Hasan, 2006). The five central boards in Pakistan were estimated to have up to 15,000 Madaris and 1.7 million students (Ahmad, 2009). Madaris in South Asian countries have been recognized as the social agency for transferring and reproducing Islamic beliefs and practices in Muslim communities (Ahmad, 2002).

The roots of the current Madaris system in South Asia are linked with the movement for the revival of Muslim identity and traditions in the subcontinent, with the establishment of Madrasa Deoband in the latter half of the 19th century in British India (Ahmad, 2002; Moosa, 2015). In terms of administration, Madaris are mainly in the private sector, owned and administered by Ulema, and financially dependent on donations from the Muslim society (Ahmad, 2002). The students in these Madaris primarily come from low economic groups of the community, including children of imams, landless families, and rural and urban labourers. Madaris teachers also belong to the same low-income families (Rahman, 2005).

When there is an increase in poverty in Pakistan, and the state fails to function as the welfare state, the Madaris have become an alternative. They provide food, shelter, and education to the poor sections of society, which is the primary function of the welfare state. As a result, the number of Madaris has increased with the rise in poverty in Pakistan (Rahman, 2005). The students in these Madaris get enrolled to adopt the imam masjid profession, become an Islamic scholar, or gain Islamic knowledge. Madaris education is an instrument of social mobility in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Graduates of Madaris have the opportunity to climb the ladder of social stratification (Ahmad, 2002). While graduates of public schools struggle to find jobs, Madaris graduates are employed as imams, teachers of Islamic studies in public schools, and teachers in Deeni Madaris (Ahmad, 2002).

Madaris have introduced non-religious subjects such as Mathematics, English, and Science to help their graduates adapt to modern-day societies (Ahmad, 2002, 2009). Apart from parental religious tendencies, there is evidence that students attend Madaris after being disappointed by the poor quality of public school education (Zaidi, 2013). Madaris cater to more than a million students, and their network extends even to far-flung areas of Pakistan, making their teaching and learning activities significant. Considering the political, religious, social, and educational importance and contribution of Madaris in Pakistani society, the government launched a Madaris reform agenda that the Ulema of
Madaris are very unconvinced about, seeing it as an effort to encroach upon the independence of Madaris (Rabbi & Habib, 2019).

Most of the time, Madaris are known for their faculty but lack formal teacher training. Primarily, conventional teaching methods are used (Rahman, 2009). However, Madaris depend on lectures, and book readings, which require heavy memorization strategies. Thus, orthodox teaching strategies impact students’ interest and understanding (Ejaz et al., 2020). Hence, the teachers in Madaris apply their teaching strategies to develop specific teaching intentions. The teachers’ intentions to use particular teaching strategies with a clear choice to teach are called teaching approaches (Prosser et al., 1994).

2.1 Teaching Approaches
The teachers’ teaching intentions often match their applied teaching strategies, but there might also be inconsistencies (Vermunt, 2014). Prosser and Trigwell (2006) identified two teaching approaches among teachers in the West; information transmission/teacher-focused (ITTF) and conceptual change/students-focused approach (CCSF). These two approaches seem to be a version of learning approaches deep and surface to teach context (Kember et al., 2004). An information transmission teacher focus approach means that teachers intend to transfer information to students and try to transfer all details to the student. Students are expected to memorize that information passively. On the other hand, the teachers’ conceptual change student focus approach ensures the active involvement of students to change their concepts (Prosser & Trigwell, 2006). These teaching approaches depend on various teachers’ personal and teaching contextual factors. Substantial evidence indicates the association of teaching approaches with teachers’ conception of learning (Kember & Kwan, 2002; Trigwell et al., 2002), Learning approaches, self-efficacy (Cao et al., 2019) and teachers’ personalities (Henson & Chambers, 2002). Additionally, the teaching approaches are found to vary in teachers of different subjects in literature. The social science teachers used more CCSF approach than physics, chemistry and biology teachers. Science teachers use more ITTF than non-science teachers (Lindblom-Yläne et al., 2006).

2.2 Gender and Teaching
Gender differences are evident in education, and teachers’ gender stereotypes determine their interaction with students (Andersson et al., 2009). Female teachers are found to be more helping and accommodating to students to engage them actively in the learning process (Bullough, 2015; Kember et al., 2004). Although female teachers experience unpleasant and negative emotions more than men, they consistently involve students to change their mental state and overcome negative feelings. On the other hand, male teachers do not always do this (Olson et al., 2019; Raymond Lam et al., 2010). Male teachers in literature are reported to be authoritative and more eager to control students and lead the class. While female teachers involve students in group activities and allow students to do things on their own (Raymond Lam et al., 2010). Gender bias or implicit gender-based expectations among teachers is also observed in grading certain subjects such as mathematics (Doornkamp et al., 2022).

Female teachers have acceptable teaching dispositions, such as teaching efficacy, communication, and teaching practices (Alnahdi & Schwab, 2023; Ehrich et al., 2020). When female teachers teach females, their feedback can improve female students’ social adjustment and learning motivation (Gong et al., 2017). The gendered behaviour in female teachers was also observed by Alannisa (2018). It was found that female teachers interact differently with male and female students, considering the stereotypical differences between male and female students (Alannisa, 2018). Regarding social setup and gender expectations, gender-based teaching can enhance students’ achievements (Almasri et al., 2022). Specifically, female teachers teaching female students can be more beneficial to
female students than male students (Winkelmann, 2016).

3. Statement of the problem
The Madaris in Pakistan play a vital role in socioeconomic, ideological and educational developments (Shaikh, 2018). Though Madaris are criticized for various reasons, parents choose Madrassa education for their children for multiple reasons (Cockcroft et al., 2009). It is a fact that these serve millions of students without any government support in areas where governments fail to provide educational facilities (Cockcroft et al., 2009; Fandy, 2007; Pakistan Education Statistics 2020-21, 2023). Therefore, it is imperative to know more about the functions and teaching going on in these Madaris. Thus, the current study explored gender differences in teaching approaches in Madaris in Punjab. In an environment of Islamophobia, misrepresentation of role and importance of Madaris in Muslim world (Bergen & Pandey, 2006; McClure, 2009). This study can assist to neutralize and understand the misrepresentation of Madaris and adds new knowledge in the field of Madaris education.

4. Objective and Hypothesis of the Study
The study has the following objectives:
- To identify the differences in teaching approaches of Madaris teachers concerning their gender and location of Madrassa.
- The following hypothesis was formulated to achieve the above objective of the study:
- There are significant differences in the teaching approaches of Madaris teachers concerning their gender and the location of Madrassa.

5. Research Methods
5.1 Population
The population of the study was male and female teachers of different Madaris in Punjab and affiliated with the various Madaris boards. These Madaris do not have co-education, and there are separate educational arrangements for male and female students in these Madaris. According to Pakistan Education Statistics 2020-21 (2023), 17207 Madaris and 82114 teachers teach in these Madaris in Punjab. Among these are 66453 male and 15661 female teachers: 1062983 male students and 893929 female students in these Madaris. Overall, a considerable total of 1956812 students are in these Madaris.

5.2 Sample
The sample of the study has 790 Madaris teachers. Among these, there were 535 male and 255 female teachers. Concerning rural and urban locations, 373 rural teachers and 416 urban teachers. Concerning percentage, 34 % of teachers in the sample were male urban, 18.6 % female urban, 33.6 % male rural, and 13.6 % female rural.

5.3 Sampling Technique
The multi-stage technique was used in this study. Ten districts were selected randomly, ten Madaris were chosen from each district, and data was collected from those Madaris teachers who were volunteers and available for data collection in these selected Madaris.

6. Data Collection
An adapted Urdu version of approaches to teaching inventory (ATI), developed by Prosser and Trigwell (2006), was used in this study. The original ATI have 16 items. However, this study found 06 items of two approaches, ITTF and CCSF, appropriate for the Madaris population. The six items for two dimensions of teaching approaches, ITTF and CCSF, were valid and reliable. The respondents
responded to a five-point scale that ranges from rarely-1 to always-5. Among three items for each dimension, two questioned the teaching strategy, and one enquired about teachers’ intention to apply the teaching strategies.

Table No. 1: Item Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>CCSF</th>
<th>ITTF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intention</td>
<td>TM16</td>
<td>TM4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategy</td>
<td>TM9</td>
<td>TM7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TM14</td>
<td>TM12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researchers purposely visited the selected Madaris and handed the questionnaire to available volunteer teachers to provide their responses.

7. Data Analysis

The SPSS software calculated descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation, standard error, and 95% confidence interval mean upper and lower boundaries. Likewise, SPSS was also used to run the ANOVA test to locate significant differences in ITTF and CCSF approaches of male rural, female rural, male urban, and female urban Madaris teachers. Subsequently, the LSD Post Hoc test was used to identify the significant group differences that resulted in substantial ANOVA.

8. Results

Figure 1 shows descriptive statistics about the prevalence of the CCSF approach to teaching in Madaris teachers. Teachers of Madaris have a mean score of 12.17 (SD = 1.64, SE = 0.06, UB = 12.29, LB = 12.06). Concerning gender impact, it was found that male rural have the highest score (Mean= 12.38, SD = 1.69, SE = 0.10, UB = 12.59, LB =12.18). After this, the highest score in having the CCSF approach was that of Male urban Madaris teachers (Mean= 12.35, SD = 1.64, SE = 0.10, UB = 12.55, LB = 12.15). In this way, the male Madaris teachers seem to have CCSF more prevalent than the female Madaris teachers. The lowest prevalence of the CCSF approach to teaching was found in female urban Madaris teachers (Mean= 11.66, SD = 1.56, SE = 0.13, UB = 11.91, LB = 11.41). The second lowest mean in CSSF was for female rural Madaris teachers (Mean= 11.93, SD = 1.41, SE =0.14, UB = 12.20, LB = 11.66). The female teachers have a mean below the total mean score of Madaris teachers in the CCSF approach.

Figure 1: Conceptual Change Student Focus (CCSF) Approach
Figure 2 informs about the mean prevalence of the ITTF approach to teaching in Madaris teachers. Pakistani Madaris teachers’ mean score in ITTF is 11.84 (SD = 2.04, SE = 0.07, UB = 11.98, LB = 11.70). The gender and location of Madaris groups show discrepancies in having an ITTF approach in Madaris teachers. The male rural Madaris teachers have the maximum prevalence of reported ITTF approach (Mean= 12.06, SD = 2.15, SE =0.13, UB = 12.32, LB = 11.80). Urban male Madaris teachers reported the second highest presence of ITTF (Mean= 11.97, SD = 2.11, SE = 0.13, UB = 12.22, LB = 11.71 ). The comparatively lowest ITTF presence in four groups of Madaris teachers was in female urban Madaris teachers (Mean= 11.41, SD = 1.76, SE = 0.15, UB = 11.69, LB = 11.12 ). The female rural had higher ITTF scores than female urban but lower than the rural and urban Madaris teachers (Mean= 11.57, SD = 1.88, SE = 0.18, UB = 11.93, LB = 11.22 ). The female Madaris teachers looked to have low ITTF approach to teaching than male Madaris teachers.

![Graph showing mean scores for ITTF approach in different groups of Madaris teachers](image)

**Figure 2:** Information Transfer Teacher Focus (ITTF) Approach

Table No. 2 shows the results of the ANOVA test. The mean differences in the use of the CCSF approach to teaching among male rural, male urban, female rural and female urban Madaris teachers are significant (F (3, 786) = 8.380, p = 0.000). It means that Madaris teachers’ gender and location can impact and determine their adoption of the CCSF approach to teaching Madaris students. Subsequently, LSD Post Hoc test results (Table No. 3) affirmed that male urban Madaris teachers have a significantly higher CCSF approach to teaching than female urban and female rural Madaris teachers but significantly not different from male rural teachers.

**Table No. 2: ANOVA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCSF</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>65.453</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.818</td>
<td>8.380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>2046.440</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>2.604</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2111.894</td>
<td>789</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITTF</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>52.250</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.417</td>
<td>4.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>3245.654</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>4.129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3297.904</td>
<td>789</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The female urban Madaris teachers have a significantly low CCSF approach than male urban and male rural Madaris teachers. However, there is no significant difference between female rural and urban Madaris teachers using the CCSF approach. Likewise, male rural teachers have a significantly high CCSF approach than female rural teachers. Overall, male Madaris teachers have high CCSF approach than female Madaris teachers.

Table No. 3: Post Hoc Tests: LSD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Gender and loc</th>
<th>(J) Gender and loc</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCSF_3 Dependent Variable</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male Urban</td>
<td>Female Urban</td>
<td>.68958*</td>
<td>.16550</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.3647 - 1.0145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male Rural</td>
<td>-.03402</td>
<td>.13952</td>
<td>.807</td>
<td>-.3079 - .2399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Rural</td>
<td>.42352*</td>
<td>.18381</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.0627 - .7843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Urban</td>
<td>Male Urban</td>
<td>-.68958*</td>
<td>.16550</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-1.0145 - -.3647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male Rural</td>
<td>-.72359*</td>
<td>.16583</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.10491 - -.3981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Rural</td>
<td>-.26606</td>
<td>.20450</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>-.6675 - .1354</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Male Urban</td>
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<td>.13952</td>
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<td>.000</td>
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<td>.45753*</td>
<td>.18411</td>
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<td>.18381</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>-.7843 - -.0627</td>
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<td>.20450</td>
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<td>-.1354 - .6675</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.18411</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>-.8189 - -.0961</td>
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<td>ITTF Dependent Variable</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Urban</td>
<td>Female Urban</td>
<td>.55838*</td>
<td>.20843</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.1492 - .9675</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>.17571</td>
<td>.594</td>
<td>-.4385 - .2513</td>
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<td>.39247</td>
<td>.23148</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>-.0619 - .8469</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Urban</td>
<td>Male Urban</td>
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<td>.20843</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>-.9675 - -.1492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male Rural</td>
<td>-.65199*</td>
<td>.20884</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>-.10619 - -.2420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Rural</td>
<td>-.16591</td>
<td>.25754</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>-.6715 - .3396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Rural</td>
<td>Male Urban</td>
<td>.09361</td>
<td>.17571</td>
<td>.594</td>
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<td>.20884</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.2420 - 1.0619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Rural</td>
<td>.48608*</td>
<td>.23186</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.0309 - .9412</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Rural</td>
<td>Male Urban</td>
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<td>.23148</td>
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<td>-.48608*</td>
<td>.23186</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>-.9412 - -.0309</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Likewise, significant ANOVA results also affirmed the mean differences in reporting ITTF approach in male rural, male urban, female rural and female urban Madaris teachers (F (3, 786) = 4.218, p = 0.006). It is inferred that Madaris teachers’ gender and location are important in predicting their adoption of the ITTF approach to teaching in Pakistani Madaris (Table No. 2). In the next step,
9. Discussion

The study results indicate that Madaris teachers in Pakistan have a low tendency toward the ITTF approach than the CCSF approach. These findings add evidence contrary to prevailing myths about Madarisi education that teachers focus on transferring and ensuring memorization in Pakistani Madaris (McClure, 2009). So the case of focus on memorization in Madaris is challenged by the findings of this study. It is also pointed out that madrassa education started when papers and books were scarce, and teachers taught their students to memorize their lessons (Zafa, 2022). But now the case is different.

Moreover, memorization is emphasized at the start of madrassa education in the Ibtedahi (initial) stages (Malla, 2021) at the level of Quran memorization. However, later the teachers encourage understanding of the content so that students can learn to apply religious content to contemporary world issues at the level of Ulema (Malla, 2021; Zafa, 2022). At the same time, it is a fact that Madaris is teacher-centred too. Text interpretations require citations and references, so it is also necessary that students memorize texts and references for understanding (Malla, 2021). So, it differs from the standard memorization practices in non-Madaris educational institutions (Boyle, 2006).

However, the interaction of factors of the gender of the teacher and the location of Madaris significantly explained the variance in a higher tendency to exhibit a particular teaching approach. Male teachers in rural and urban Madaris tend to have a CCSF approach more than female teachers in rural and urban Madaris. In this way, being male is associated with having a higher propensity for the CCSF approach in rural and urban Madaris in Pakistan.

In the ITTF approach the teachers in Pakistani Madaris have a comparatively low tendency for the ITTF approach. The gender difference is noticeable. The female gender is associated with low propensity to have ITTF than male teachers in Madaris. Female urban teachers have a significantly low tendency to have ITTF. This study affirmed the prior studies that identified and reported gender differences in the teaching process (Andersson et al., 2009; Bullough, 2015; Kember et al., 2004). Female teachers demonstrated such teaching methods in classrooms focused on developing students understanding (Olson et al., 2019; Raymond Lam et al., 2010).

The focus on memorization is for the reason that there are dominant male teachers who teach the Quran at the initial levels (Ibtadahi classes) to students who aim to become Hafiz-e-Quran or memorizers of the Quran so that they can use the memorized Quran in their routine prayers. Most of the students in Madaris enter to memorize Quran. After memorization, they leave the Madaris to continue their Studies in public and Pakistani private schools. They spend their time just memorising the Quran, not understanding the Quran and learning Arabic. So here, the purpose of remembering the Quran is fulfilled. In my opinion, the objective of Quran memorisation cannot be regarded as an indication of the myth that Madaris promotes memorization.
Furthermore, memorization of the Quran and ahadith is required to practice Islam, adopt an Islamic lifestyle, and practice to exercise reason and embodiment and exhibit Islamic behaviour (Boyle, 2006). So, the criticism of Madaris for having memorization as central pedagogy (Fandy, 2007) is unjustified. Memorization as pedagogy needs to be understood in the specific religious and Islamic education context. Memorization is the standard pedagogy and learning strategy in non-religious schools in developed and underdeveloped state-sponsored education institutions (Almoslamani, 2022). It is associated with several mental processes culminating in understanding the content (GÜNEŞ1, 2020; Klemm, 2007).

10. Recommendations
Based on the findings of this study and discussion, the following are the policy recommendations:

1. It is a fact that there is no formal teaching training professional programs for the teachers of Madaris in Pakistan. The teachers’ training institutes in the public and private sectors should provide teachers training to teachers in Pakistani Madaris.

2. HEC Pakistan should develop a teacher training degree roadmap for Madaris teachers from Quran teaching to Alim level, so trained teachers should be inducted in these Madaris.

3. With public schools, the Government and private sector should provide and design teaching kits for different course teaching in Madaris to make teaching more students focus in Madaris.

4. There was a surge in research on Madaris education after 09/11, which declined over the years. It is a fact that Madaris in Pakistan are an integral part of Pakistani society, so government should grant funds to private and public sector agencies for research on Madaris so that problem of Madaris can be resolved based on data and research.

5. The disparity between urban and rural Madaris exists, and there is a need to reduce these disparities between rural and urban Madaris by the Madaris boards and the Government of Pakistan.

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