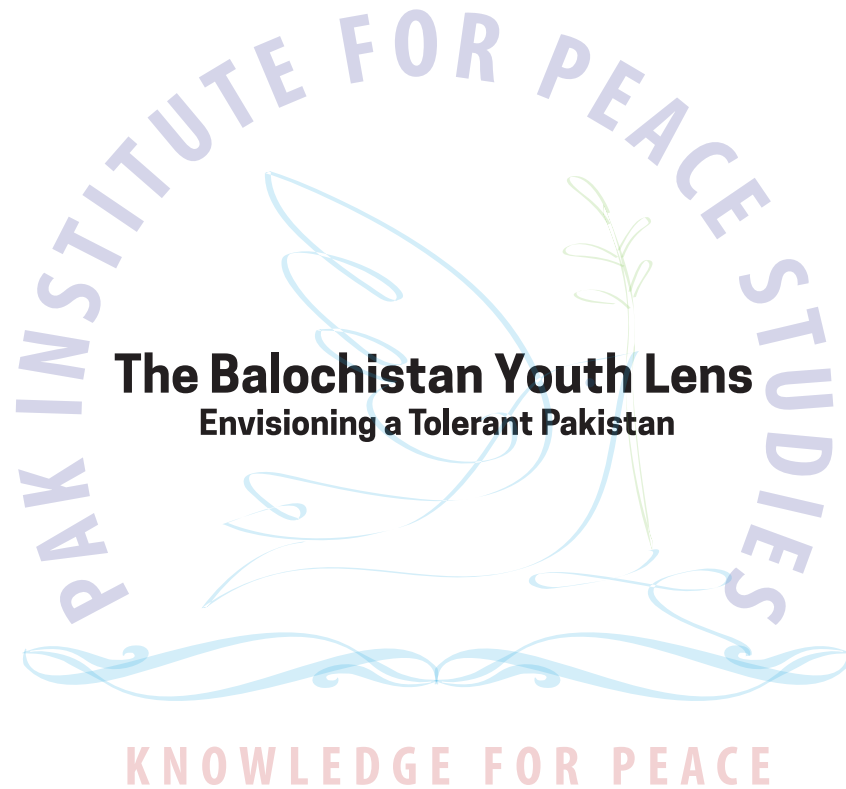




The Balochistan Youth Lens

Envisioning a Tolerant Pakistan





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Envisioning a Tolerant Pakistan

Project Director: Muhammad Amir Rana

Project Concept: Safdar Sial

Project Manager: Muhammad Murtaza Ali

Researchers: Esham Farooq and Hina Khaliq

Report Author: Hina Khaliq

Data Analyst: Hina Khaliq

By

Pak Institute of Peace Studies (PIPS)

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PO Box 2110, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Tel: +92-51-8359475-6

Fax: +92-51-8359475

Email: pips@pakpips.com

Web: www.pakpips.com

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Executive Summary

This survey study was conducted to assess general perceptions and social constructs regarding tolerance and inclusivity in society. It focused on critical issues associated with social structures, particularly concerning minorities and underrepresented groups. The findings provide insights into the attitudes of different demographics, especially youth from diverse backgrounds such as educators, students, human rights activists, representatives from religious seminaries, and professionals from various sectors, towards inclusivity and coexistence.

The survey fieldwork was carried out on April 21–22, 2025, during a two-day national workshop. Participants were first administered pre-workshop questionnaires, followed by post-workshop questionnaires in the second session of the final day. To ensure accessibility, the questionnaires were provided in both English and Urdu. A total of 33 respondents took part in the exercise. In addition, a select group of participants was given master questionnaires to enable a more in-depth assessment of their perspectives on peace and inclusivity in relation to religion, sect, age, and ethnicity.

Key Findings

- 82% of respondents perceive intolerance as prevalent in society, attributing it primarily to political (44%) and social (31%) factors. Additionally, 42% of participants reported having personally experienced religious bias.
- 73% of respondents believe that interfaith dialogue can improve communal harmony, and an equal proportion believe that peaceful coexistence among different communities is possible. Notably, 97% of participants see youth as a key driver of interfaith harmony, yet only 23% reported having previously engaged in related activities.
- 94% of respondents use social media primarily as a source of information, and 85% reported verifying content before sharing. However, 84% remain unaware of any legislation promoting interfaith harmony, while 70% believe the media should play a greater role in highlighting interfaith cooperation.
- A vast majority (89%) of respondents expressed optimism about their future, with unanimous agreement that education provides skills for a respectable career. However, only 50% reported clarity about their career path, and just 56% believed merit is valued in society.
- Respondents demonstrated high levels of critical thinking (100%) and commitment to human rights (89%), though awareness of constitutional freedoms was limited (67%), and only 55% felt that schools adequately teach fundamental rights.

- There was unanimous support for equal treatment of all faiths and interfaith harmony, alongside recognition of faith-based persecution (89%), underreporting of related violence (77%), and perceptions of media exaggeration. Ethnic and cultural understanding was seen as vital to national unity.
- While most respondents supported greater representation of women in leadership roles (78%) and opposed the notion that quotas are unfair (78%), over half (55%) still perceived women as lacking decision-making power. All acknowledged the seriousness of violence against women and nearly nine in ten advocated equal educational and employment opportunities for transgender persons.

A significant proportion viewed India as the greatest threat (67%) and an “eternal enemy” (66%), with 78% attributing domestic extremism to foreign conspiracies. Respondents also emphasized the need for stronger regional relations to enhance Pakistan’s international image.

Social media usage was universal among respondents, who saw it as an effective platform for exposing faith-based violence (89%) but also noted its role in spreading extremism (78%). Western media was widely perceived as running defamatory campaigns against Pakistan.

The results show that Balochistan’s youth show hope and value education despite limited career clarity and doubts about merit, reflecting systemic inequities. Their strong support for interfaith harmony and gender inclusivity signals progressive attitudes in contrast to the province’s traditional, often discriminatory social norms. However, perceptions of external threats and reliance on social media reflect the province’s conflict-driven narrative and digital vulnerabilities.

Recommendations:

- **Education and Capacity Building:** Expand career counselling services and integrate civic and rights education in schools to create merit-based opportunities for youth, building an informed and resilient society.
- **Social Cohesion and Inclusivity:** Promote interfaith and gender equality initiatives at the community level, while fostering dialogue and trust-building to strengthen social harmony and national cohesion.
- **Digital Literacy and Counter-Extremism:** Counter disinformation and extremism by advancing responsible digital literacy programs, safeguarding peace and stability in the long term.

This study serves as a foundation for further research and action to strengthen tolerance and inclusivity within society.

2. Introduction

2.1 Project background and objectives

The Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) organized a youth engagement in Quetta, Balochistan, as part of its nationwide series of workshops conducted under the banner “Building Bridges: Fostering Tolerance and Inclusivity among Youth.” This initiative was designed with two key objectives: first, to build the capacity of young people to critically engage with and dispel divisive and extremist narratives undermining social harmony; and second, to conduct a comprehensive study of youth perspectives in order to understand prevailing trends of tolerance and radicalization.

The Quetta engagement brought together participants from diverse educational and professional backgrounds, including students from universities, colleges, and madaris (religious institutes/seminaries), as well as young professionals from both urban and rural areas. Facilitated by trainers and subject experts, the sessions provided a reflective space for youth to share their experiences and to deliberate on themes of interfaith harmony, cultural and ethnic diversity, peaceful coexistence, and acceptance of differences.

PIPS conducted pre- and post-workshop impact surveys, and also extended a comprehensive semi-structured survey to the participants, the results of which are analyzed in this report. The findings reveal that youth in Balochistan struggle with a lack of clarity about their role in society, leading to frustration and disillusionment. Many feel alienated from the system and perceive it as unfair. The education system does not adequately equip them with the critical skills needed for today's job market. At the same time, exposure to divisive and irrational narratives undermines their ability to think critically and engage constructively. Political instability, economic hardship, and identity struggles further deepen their sense of hopelessness and alienation, which at times manifest in violent or exclusionary behaviors. To address these challenges, targeted youth engagement, inclusive education reforms, awareness campaigns, interfaith dialogue, and responsible use of social media are crucial to guide young people in Balochistan toward constructive citizenship and social harmony.

2.2 Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to develop a comprehensive understanding of youth perspectives on tolerance and inclusivity, and how these are reflected in social behavior. The inquiry focused on key areas, including general perceptions of religion, views on gender roles, ethnicity, and the influence of regional actors on patterns of thought.

A total of 33 participants were engaged in the study. Separate online registration links were created for each workshop across the country, and applications were carefully reviewed through a structured shortlisting and interview process. For the Quetta workshop, nearly 40 participants were shortlisted; however, some were unable to attend due to the prevailing security situation. Of those who attended, 21 were males and 12 were females; 10

participants were from rural areas, 22 from urban areas, while one did not specify. All 33 participants completed the pre-workshop survey. For the post-workshop survey, responses were received from 30 participants, comprising 17 males and 13 females, with 13 from rural areas and 17 from urban areas.

2.3 Surveys

Three types of surveys were designed for this study. The pre-workshop survey aimed to assess participants' initial thought patterns and understanding of diversity and inclusion before the sessions. The post-workshop survey was administered to examine potential shifts in attitudes and biases, as well as to measure the immediate impact of the engagement. These impact survey questionnaires were primarily quantitative in nature. Additionally, the main research survey was developed as a semi-structured tool, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative questions to capture measurable trends alongside deeper insights into participants' perspectives. The survey comprised a total of 95 questions, organized under the following key themes: personal development and career; diversity in Pakistan with respect to religion, ethnicity, gender, and cross-country relations; interfaith harmony; the Constitution, citizenship, and the rule of law; and the media.

The survey component enabled the collection of substantial data that could be systematically analyzed for frequencies, averages, and emerging trends, offering a structured overview of the issues under study. A total of 33 participants participated, of whom 30 completed both the pre- and post-surveys. To capture more nuanced perspectives, a semi-structured questionnaire consisting of 95 items was administered. From the group of 33 participants, nine students (five male and four female) were purposively selected based on their level of engagement and demonstrated critical thinking skills during the two-day workshop, and were asked to complete the semi-structured questionnaire.

The report is based not only on the survey but also on what came out of the workshop discussions. The workshop findings help explain the background, causes, and patterns of issues like faith-based violence, exclusion, and social disharmony. The survey results, on the other hand, show the actual trends of radicalization among youth and suggest possible ways to respond to the challenge.

2.4 Limitations

The variation in response numbers between the pre- and post-surveys was primarily due to participant availability and time constraints during the workshops. In addition, the survey data encountered some common limitations. Respondents may have provided answers they considered socially acceptable rather than fully accurate, a phenomenon known as social desirability bias. Some also declined to answer sensitive questions, resulting in gaps in the dataset. This nonresponse bias may have affected the overall balance of findings, as those who withheld responses could represent particular viewpoints that were not fully captured.



“Excessive use of gadgets and the decline of physical and recreational spaces have made our youth overly dependent on social media, which fuels frustration, apathy, and exposure to extremist narratives.” Jalila Haider Human Right Attorney & Political Activist

Speakers underscored that religious intolerance often manifests through violence, sometimes amplified by social media. Jamat e Islami Deputy Secretary Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi drew attention to Paigham-e-Pakistan, saying religious decrees categorically discourage imposing beliefs on others. He called for stronger national policies to counter extremism and promote peaceful coexistence across faiths.



“Religious decrees categorically discourage imposing one’s beliefs on others.” Jamat e Islami Deputy Secretary Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi

Imran Mukhtar defined faith-based violence as attacks on individuals or communities based on their faith, including attacks on Ahmadi worship places, temples, imam bargahs, and mob lynching, often triggered by false blasphemy allegations. He highlighted how social media spreads unverified blasphemy accusations and fuels mob hysteria, stressing that proper recourse is through law enforcement, not vigilantism. He linked this to societal divisions and called for narrative-building that discourages violence and promotes understanding.

The intersection of politics, media, and state policy was flagged as a contributor to polarization. Shahzada Zulfiqar pointed to irresponsible journalism and politicized narratives as fueling societal discord, urging impartial and verified reporting, particularly on sensitive issues. He also criticized how political parties weaponize misinformation for propaganda and create frenzy through misuse of religion and personal attacks.



“Irresponsible journalism and politicized narratives deepen societal discord. We need impartial and verified reporting, especially on sensitive issues.” Senior Journalist Shahzada Zulfiqar

He emphasized the need for responsible journalism, verifying both sides of a story, and avoiding sensationalism on sensitive issues. He observed that social media users often adopt self-righteous attitudes and manipulate religious or emotional sentiments for views and reach.

3.3 The Challenges of Diversity & Inclusion

Several panelists spoke about how societal attitudes and exclusionary policies undermine diversity and push youth toward alienation. Jalila Haider criticized one-sided government policies and the lack of meaningful employment, which alienates youth and can lead to extremism. She argued for education rooted in morality and tolerance to restore harmony.

Shahzada Zulfiqar observed that citizens were often reluctant to accept others based on different faiths, ethnicities, or languages, a barrier to social cohesion. Jalila Haider critiqued how one-sided policies, lack of economic opportunities, and state neglect of victims in conflict zones radicalize youth and erode social cohesion. She noted how societal pressure and unmet grievances push youth towards extremist groups like BLA, Zainabiyun, and others. She argued that the state rarely addresses the mental, financial, and social needs of victims' families after violent incidents, creating cycles of resentment and alienation.

Pakistan's diversity was celebrated as one of its greatest strengths, though several speakers expressed concern over its erosion and underrepresentation in national narratives. Yar Jan Badini likened Pakistan's diversity to a vibrant bouquet of languages and traditions, emphasizing the need to preserve indigenous languages and ensure fair representation of Balochi speakers in national statistics. Building on this idea, Muhammad Amir Rana highlighted that diversity is not limited to ethnicity or culture, but also exists in thought patterns, which shape societal common sense and influence the broader socio-cultural environment.

Jalila Haider cautioned against reducing diversity and inclusion to superficial displays, such as cultural performances like attan and chhap at events. She argued that tolerance must be rooted in indigenous, everyday values, respect for neighbors, kindness toward the disabled, and looking beyond religion and ethnicity rather than symbolic gestures. True acceptance and inclusivity, she stressed, should be demonstrated consistently in daily life rather than confined to staged events.

Jalila emphasized the need for the government to expand employment avenues, integrate technology into skill-building, and invest in recreational and educational reforms to address youth frustration and disorientation.

She also noted the societal obsession with past victors and the lack of focus on preparing youth for the future, stressing that only the smartest and most adaptable will succeed in today's world. Head of Department, Department of Social Sciences BUIEMS, Dr. Aurang Zaib Nasar stressed the need for collaboration among universities, civil society, and government to foster critical thinking and civic engagement among youth in Balochistan, who have unique opportunities. Ali Baba Taj urged students to prepare for practical life by developing empathy, open-mindedness, and critical thinking to better navigate diverse perspectives



“We need collaboration between universities, civil society, and government to foster critical thinking and civic engagement among youth in Balochistan, who have unique opportunities.” Dr. Aurang Zaib Nasar

4. SURVEY FINDINGS: MAPPING YOUTH PERCEPTIONS

The survey conducted was designed following a thorough assessment of Pakistan's unique social patterns and prevailing attitudes.

Youth Perspective on Interfaith Communal Harmony

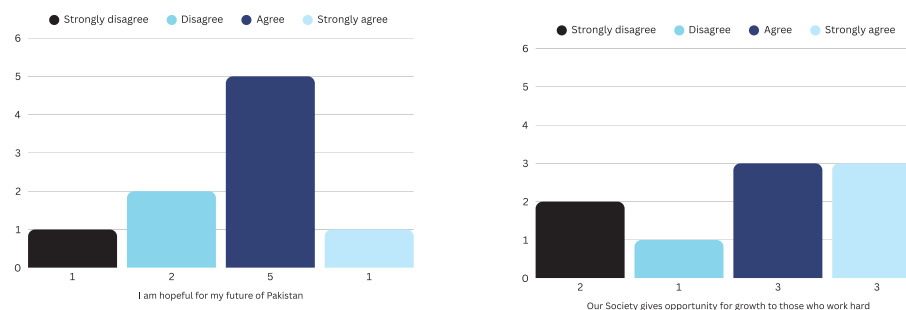
PIPS administered a comprehensive semi-structured research questionnaire to the participants, designed to capture their perspectives on interfaith harmony, diversity, and a range of religious-ideological, social, and political realities shaping their lives. The questionnaire also explored their personal experiences, challenges, and perceptions of inclusion within society. In addition, participants were asked about their future aspirations, goals, and the opportunities or barriers they perceive in pursuing them. The insights drawn from this survey provide a deeper understanding of the concerns, expectations, and outlook of youth, and the detailed findings are presented in the following pages.

Age, Gender & Background

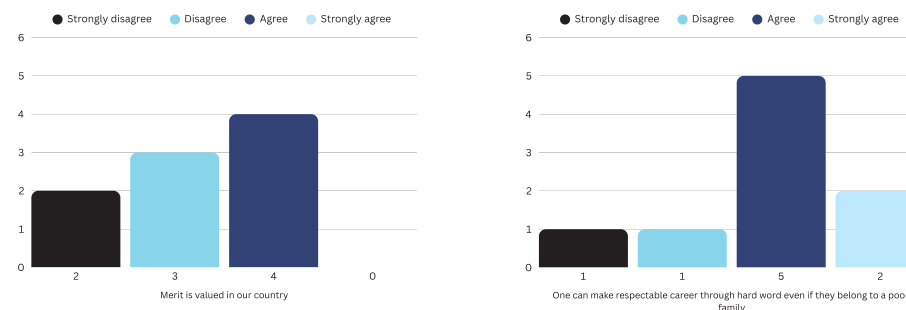
Variable	Category	Count	Percentage
Gender	Male	5	56%
	Female	4	44%
Age	15–20	2	22%
	21–25	4	44%
	26–30	3	33%
Background	Rural	4	44%
	Urban	5	56%
Province	Balochistan	9	100%

A total of nine participants from Balochistan were selected to respond to the master questionnaire, which explored perceptions related to the state, society, self, ethics, and merit. Of the respondents, five were male and four females. In terms of age distribution, 44.4% were between 21–25, 33.3% between 26–30, and 22.2% between 15–20. The sample included 55.6% from urban areas and 44.4% from rural backgrounds

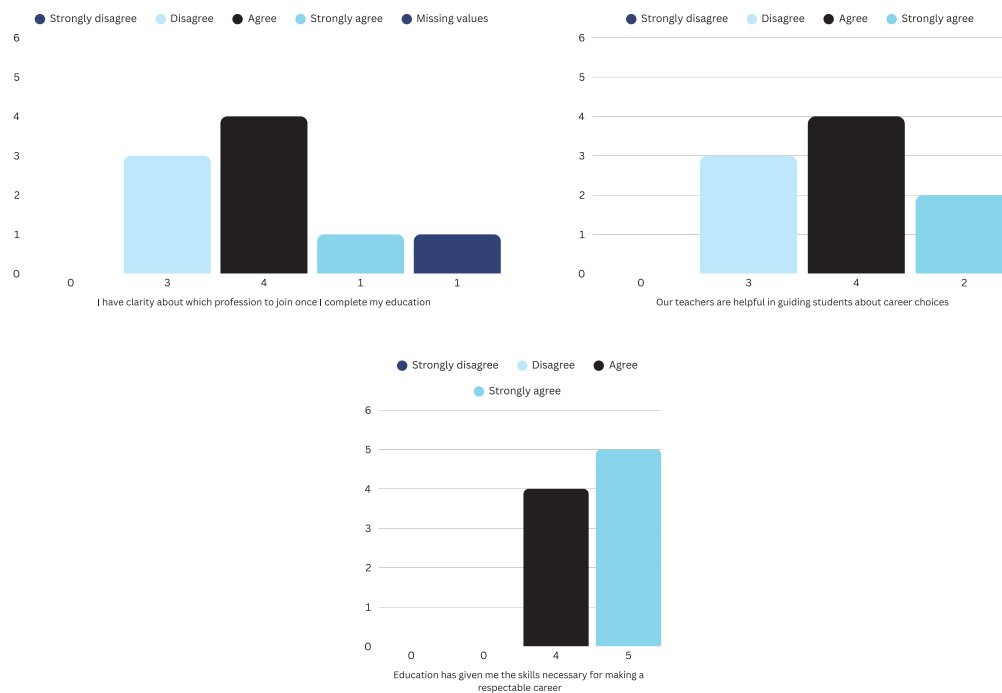
4.1 Personal Development and Career



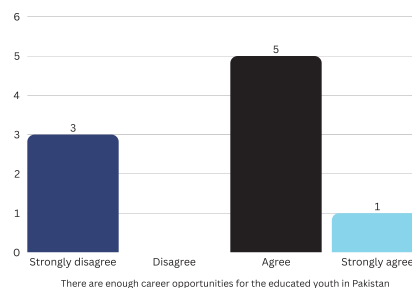
The data reflects a cautiously optimistic outlook among youth: 66.7%(6) feel hopeful about their future in Pakistan, suggesting resilience and confidence in the country's prospects. However, the fact that one-third 33.3%(3) express hopelessness or uncertainty highlights underlying anxieties, likely tied to political, economic, or social challenges. This split underscores the importance of addressing structural issues to strengthen youth confidence in their future. The responses show a mixed but insightful perspective on opportunity and fairness. 6(66.7%) feel that society provides opportunities to those who strive reflecting optimism and belief in individual agency.



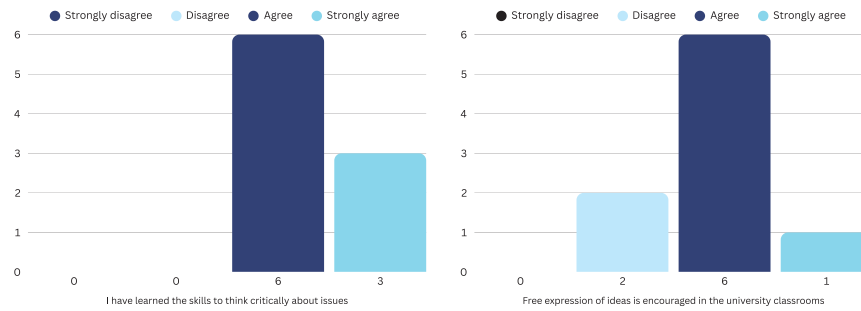
A strong majority 7(77.8%) believe hard work can overcome poverty while 2(22.2%) don't. However, only 4(44.4%) believe merit is genuinely valued, while a majority 5(55.5%) remain skeptical, suggesting concerns about nepotism, favoritism, or systemic inequality. This gap between perceived opportunity and perceived fairness signals a need to strengthen meritocratic practices to sustain hope and trust in the system.



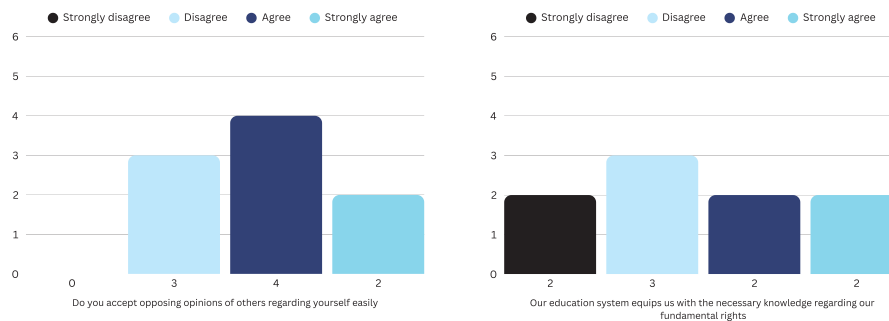
The findings highlight both strengths and gaps in career readiness among youth. A strong majority 6(66.7%) view teachers as supportive in career guidance, and a 100% of them feel education equips them with necessary skills indicating trust in the educational system's role. However, only 5(62.5%) report having clear post-graduation career plans, pointing to a significant lack of direction or personalized guidance. This suggests that while general skill-building and support exist, more targeted career counseling and planning interventions are needed to help youth make informed professional choices.



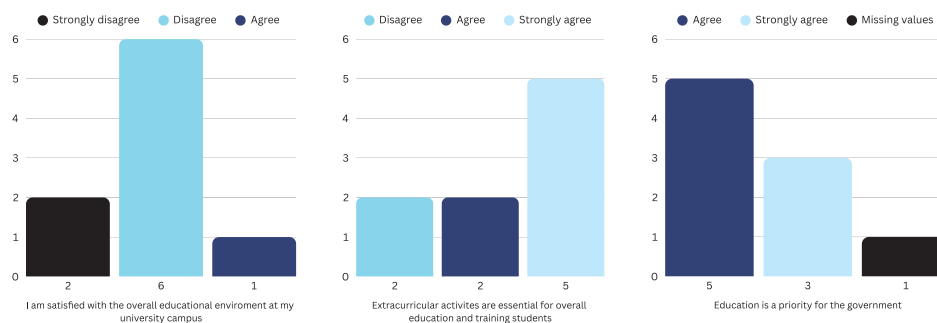
The data reflects a mixed outlook on career prospects among youth. 6(66.7%) express confidence that education opens career opportunities, a significant 3(33.3%) strongly disagree, indicating persistent doubts about the job market's ability to absorb educated individuals. This split suggests optimism among many, but also highlights underlying structural or economic challenges eroding trust in equal access to opportunities.



The findings indicate a positive academic environment. All respondents (100%) acknowledge gaining critical thinking skills, demonstrating effective educational impact. Additionally, 7(77.8%) feel free expression is encouraged in classrooms, though nearly a quarter still perceive limitations suggesting room to further enhance openness and inclusivity in academic discourse.

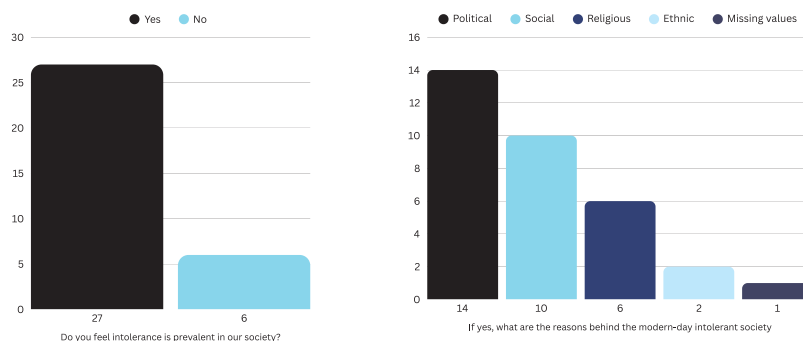


The results show moderate openness, with 6(66.6%) willing to accept opposing opinions, reflecting a positive attitude toward dialogue. However, only 4(44.4%) feel adequately educated about their fundamental rights, while a majority 5(55.6%) disagree, highlighting a gap in civic education within the current system.

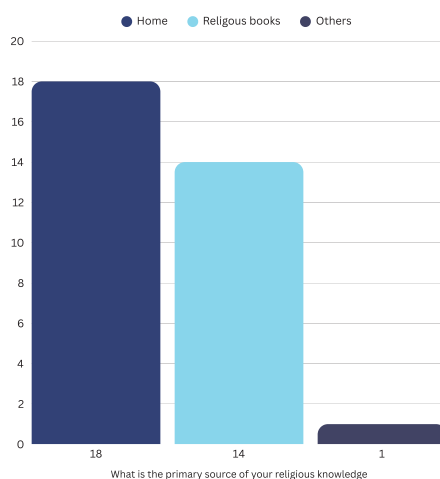


The findings reveal widespread dissatisfaction 8(88.9%) with the educational environment, suggesting systemic shortcomings. Yet, an equally high 8(88.9%) believe education remains a government priority, indicating faith in policy intent despite poor delivery. Additionally, 7(77.8%) value extracurricular activities, underscoring demand for more holistic, student-centered learning.

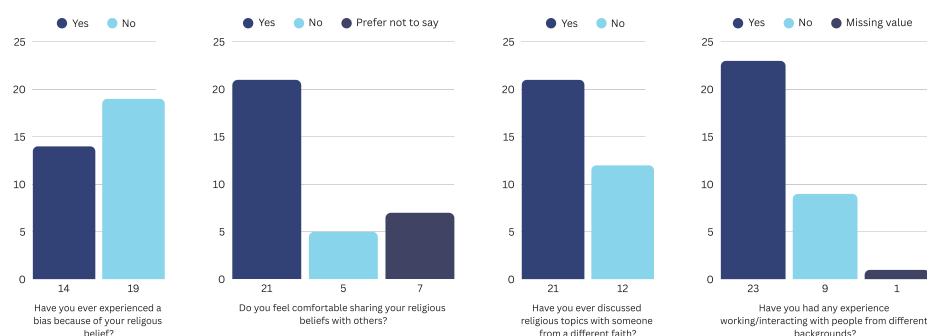
4.2 Religious Beliefs & Diversity



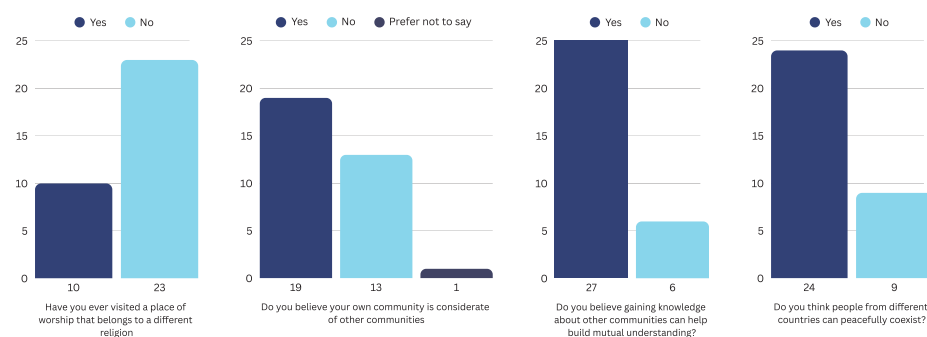
This data is part of the pre-workshop assessment that's why the number of participants is different i.e, 33. It indicates that a significant majority of participants, 27 (81.8%), believe intolerance is prevalent in society, while only 6 (18.2%) disagreed. Among those who acknowledged intolerance, the primary reason identified was political factors 14 (43.8%), followed by social factors 10(31.3%), religious factors 6(18.8%), and ethnic factors 2(6.3%). This highlights that intolerance is largely perceived as a result of political and societal dynamics, with religion and ethnicity contributing to a lesser extent. These findings point to the need for addressing structural political and social issues as key to fostering greater tolerance.



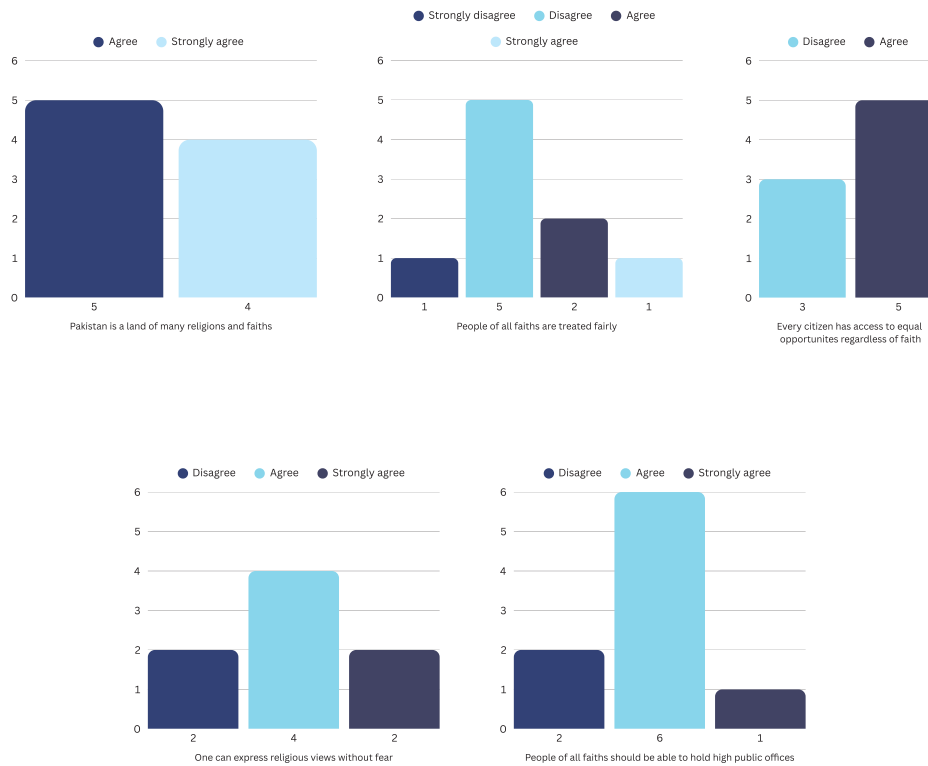
The data shows that over half of the participants, 18 (54.5%), cited home as their primary source of religious knowledge, while 14 (42.4%) rely on religious books, and only 1(3%) mentioned other sources. This suggests that family and household environments play the most significant role in shaping religious understanding, followed by self-study through books, with minimal influence from alternative sources.



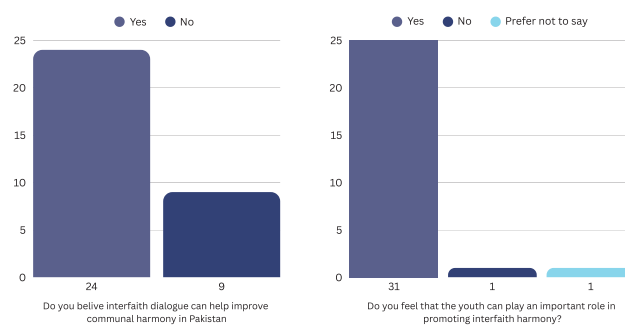
The data shows that 14 (42.4%) of respondents reported having experienced bias due to their religious beliefs, while a majority of 19 (57.6%) said they had not. Despite this, 21 (63.6%) of participants said they feel comfortable sharing their religious beliefs with others, though 5 (15.2%) did not feel comfortable, and 7 (21.2%) preferred not to answer. Additionally, 21 (63.6%) reported having discussed religious topics with someone from a different faith, indicating a notable level of interfaith engagement. Furthermore, 23 (69.7%) said they have experience working or interacting with people from different backgrounds, suggesting an overall openness among youth in Balochistan to engage across religious and social divides.



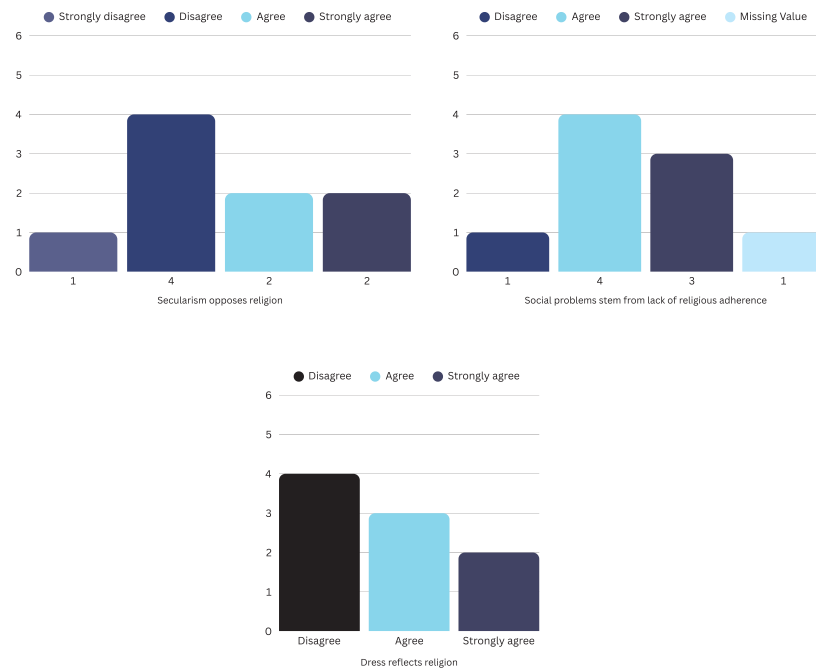
The data shows only 10 (30.3%) of respondents said they had visited a place of worship belonging to a different religion, while a significant majority of 23 (69.7%) had not, reflecting limited direct interfaith exposure. When asked whether their own community is considerate toward other communities, 57.6% (19) believed it is, while 39.4% (13) disagreed, showing mixed perceptions of communal respect. Encouragingly, 81.8% (27) agreed that gaining knowledge about other communities helps build mutual understanding, and 72.7% (24) believed that people from different communities can peacefully coexist, indicating a strong openness among youth toward intercommunal harmony despite their limited interfaith experiences.



The data reflects a clear recognition of Pakistan's religious diversity, with 100% agreeing it is a land of many faiths. However, perceptions of fairness and equality are mixed: 66.7% disagree that people of all faiths are treated fairly, and the same proportion doubts equal opportunities for all, revealing concerns about systemic discrimination. Similarly, 55.6% feel unsafe expressing religious beliefs openly, indicating latent fear and intolerance. On a positive note, 77.8% support people of all faiths holding high public office, suggesting an aspiration for inclusivity despite current challenges.

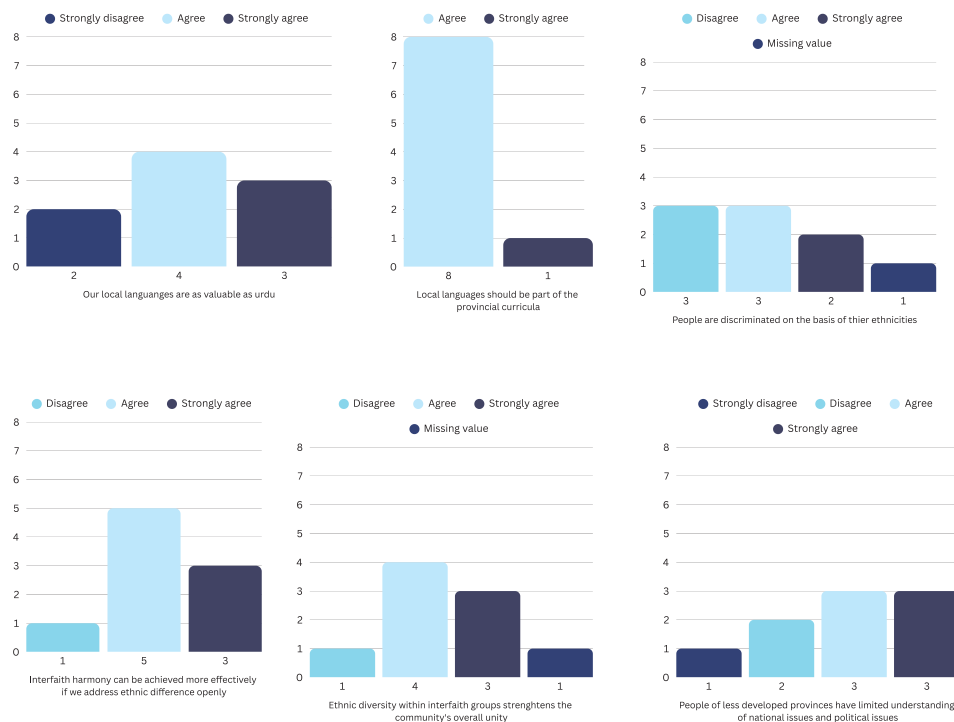


A majority of respondents 24 (72.7%) believe that interfaith dialogue can help improve communal harmony in Pakistan, while 9 (27.3%) disagreed, showing broad but not unanimous support for dialogue. Notably, an overwhelming 31 (93.9%) agreed that youth can play an important role in promoting interfaith harmony, with only 1(3%) disagreeing. This indicates strong confidence in the potential of youth to foster positive intercommunal relations and a generally favorable view of dialogue as a tool for harmony.



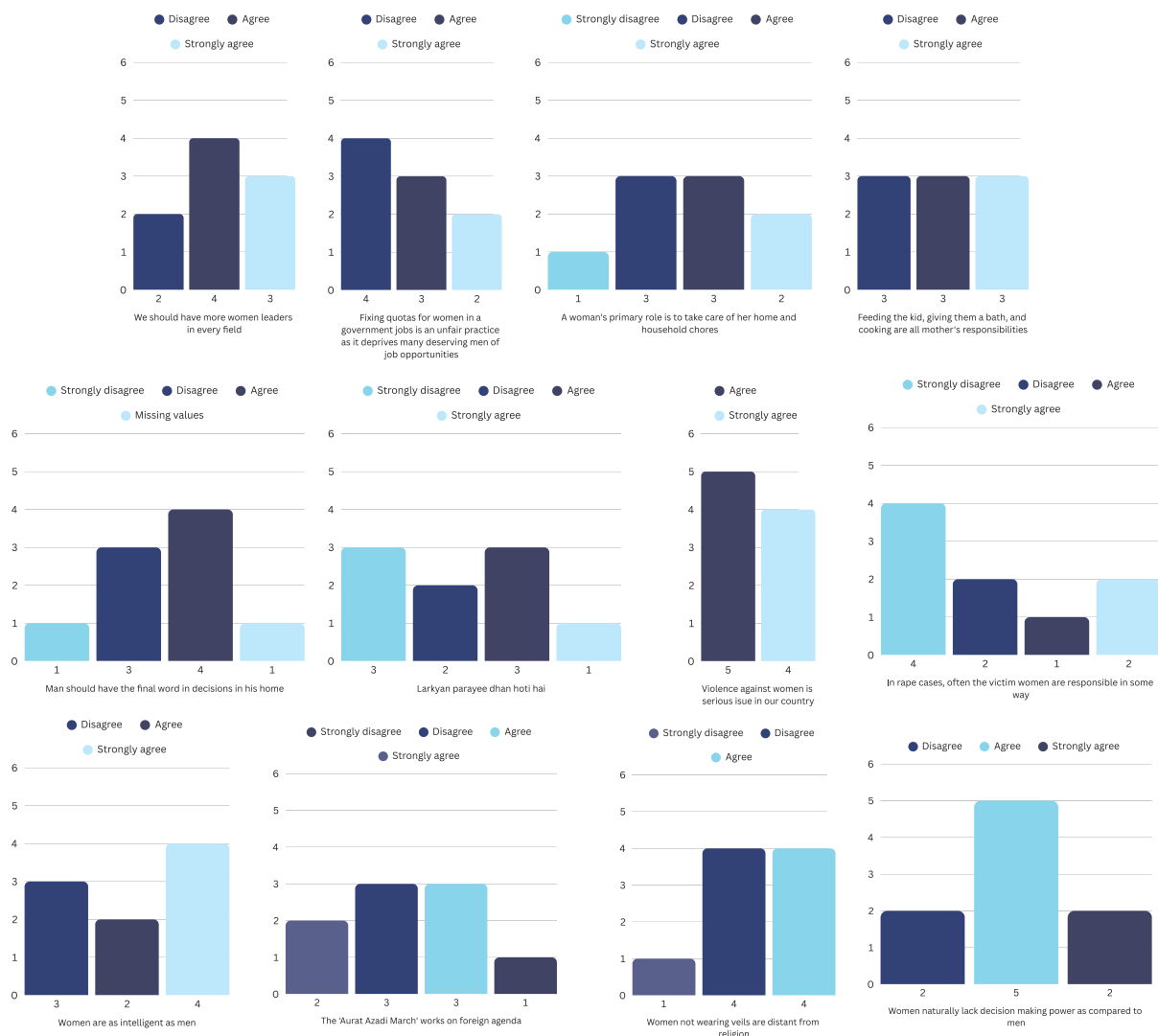
The data shows a strong religious lens shaping respondents' views. 7(87.5%) believe social problems arise from weak religious adherence, underscoring faith as a perceived moral foundation. Opinions on secularism are divided. 5(55.5%) disagree and 4(44.4%) agree that secularism opposes religion, suggesting confusion between secularism and irreligion. Views on dress as a religious marker are also split 5(55.5%) agree and 4(44.4%) reflecting a tension between traditional and modern notions of identity. Overall, the findings reveal deep religious influence alongside ambiguity about secular and cultural concepts.

4.3 Ethnic



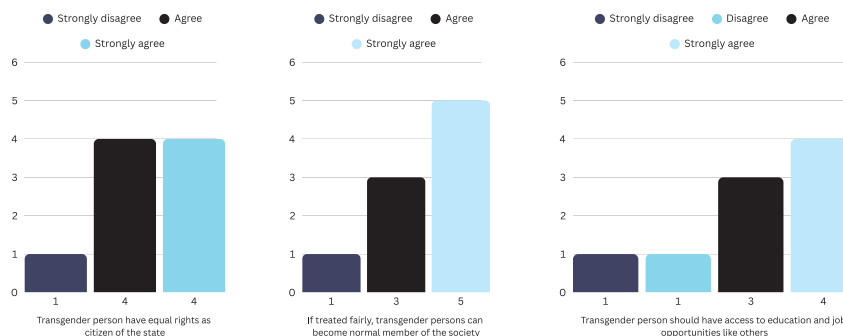
The data reflects strong recognition of the cultural value of local languages, with 4(44.4%) agreeing and 3(33.3%) strongly agreeing they are as valuable as Urdu, and unanimous support (100%) for including them in provincial curricula. Perceptions of ethnic discrimination are mixed. 5(62.5%) agree or strongly agree it exists, while 3(37.5%) disagree. Most respondents believe addressing ethnic differences can improve interfaith harmony 8(88.9%) agree/strongly agree and see ethnic diversity as strengthening unity 7(87.5% agree/strongly agree). Opinions are divided on whether people in less developed provinces lack political awareness, with 6(66.6%) agreeing or strongly agreeing, while 3(33.3%) disagree. Overall, participants view ethnic inclusion as essential to social cohesion and harmony.

4.4 Gender & Role of Women



The findings reflect a complex and contradictory outlook on gender roles. While 7(77.7%) support having more women leaders and 6(66.6%) believe women are as intelligent as men, a significant majority still agree that women naturally lack decision-making power 7(77.8%) and see their primary role as domestic 5(55.5%), revealing persistent patriarchal attitudes. Views on veiling and feminist activism are sharply divided. 4(44.4%) believe unveiled women are less religious, and 4(44.4%) consider the Aurat Azadi March a foreign agenda, indicating ideological polarization. Notably, 100% agree that violence against women is a serious issue, showing a shared concern for women's safety despite divergent views on their social and political roles. This suggests that while there is recognition of women's rights and potential, deep-seated cultural and religious biases continue to shape perceptions and hinder full gender equality.

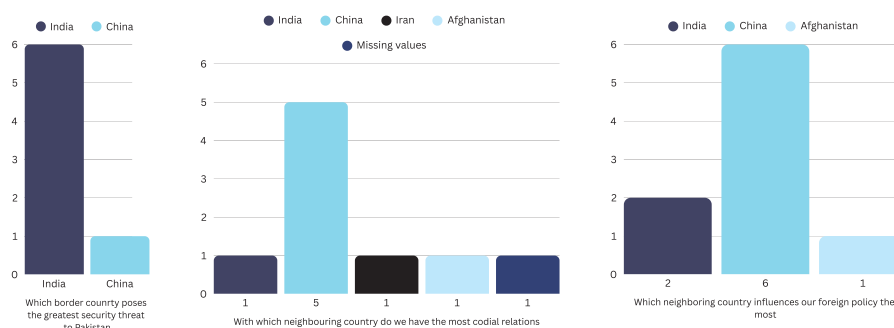
4.5 Transgender Rights



The data indicates cautious but positive attitudes toward transgender inclusion. A majority 8(88.8%) agree or strongly agree that transgender persons have equal rights as citizens and can become normal members of society if treated fairly, reflecting growing acceptance. Similarly, 7(77.7%) support their access to education and employment opportunities, though a small minority 2(22.2%) still disagree. These responses suggest progress toward recognizing transgender rights, yet lingering stigma remains evident in the dissenting opinions.

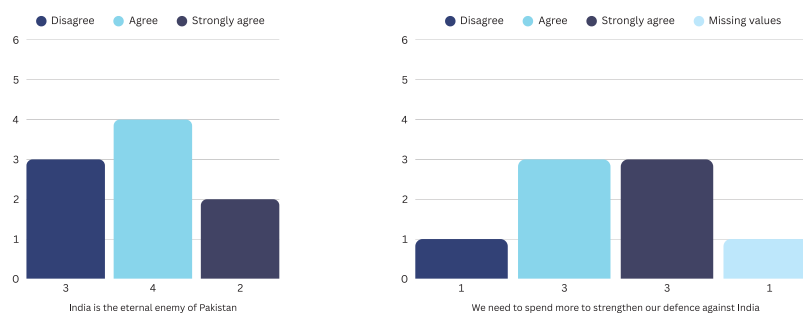
4.6 Cross Country Relations

The data reflects nuanced public perceptions among youth in Balochistan regarding Pakistan's geopolitical environment, bilateral relations, and external security concerns. Several key trends emerge:

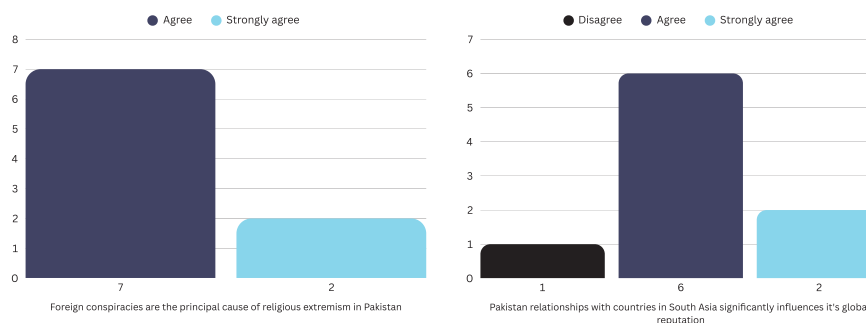


The findings show that 6(75%) see India as Pakistan's main security threat, reflecting the entrenched historical and strategic rivalry. In contrast, only one (12.5%) each identify China or Afghanistan as major threats, suggesting a strong internalization of the Pakistan-China partnership narrative and possible underestimation of challenges emanating from Afghanistan. This indicates that public threat perceptions remain shaped more by longstanding state narratives than by evolving regional realities.

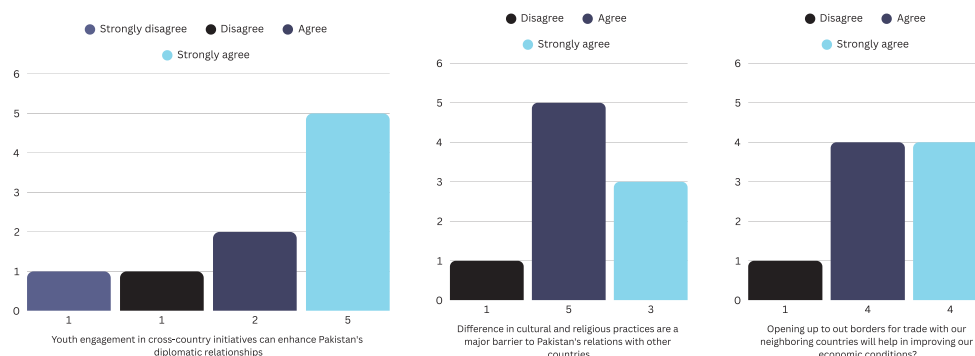
On cordiality, 5(62.5%) see China as the most friendly neighbor, reinforcing its positive image built through CPEC and media narratives, while Iran, Afghanistan, and India lag at one (12.5%) each, with India seen largely through a hostile lens. Regarding foreign policy influence, 6(66.7%) recognize China's strong role, with 2(22.2%) citing India likely due to conflict-driven policy imperatives and 1(11.1%) Afghanistan, suggesting that youth link Pakistan's diplomacy primarily to its strategic partnerships and rivalries. This highlights the need for broader awareness of nuanced regional relationships beyond state-promoted narratives.



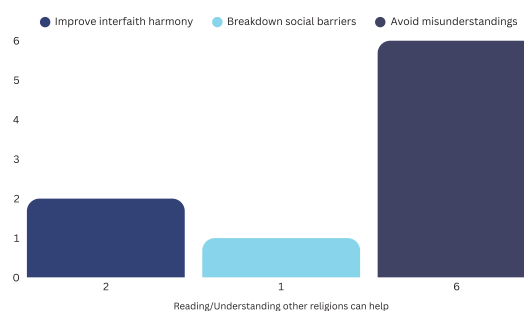
The findings reveal a deeply ingrained view of India as an enduring adversary, with 6(66.6%) agreeing Pakistan's rivalry with India is permanent, reflecting decades of conflict and the unresolved Kashmir dispute. However, the 3(33.3%) who disagree highlight an opening for alternative, peace-oriented narratives and youth-led reconciliation efforts. Similarly, 6(75%) support increased defense spending against India, underscoring a civilian alignment with a militarized security paradigm. This shows strong strategic realism but also suggests limited public focus on non-military priorities like development, social cohesion, and climate resilience areas that could benefit from greater advocacy and awareness.



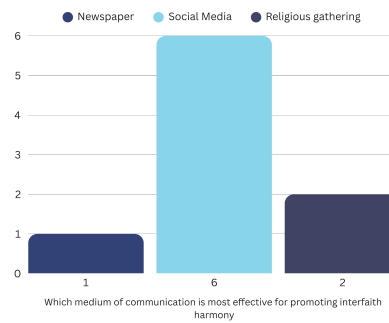
The findings highlight a clear adherence to dominant national narratives among youth. A unanimous 100% attribution of religious extremism to foreign conspiracies reflects a concerning externalization of blame, potentially impeding recognition of internal sociopolitical, sectarian, and institutional drivers of radicalization, an obstacle to meaningful domestic reform. At the same time, 8(88.9%) acknowledge that Pakistan's regional relations shape its global standing, showing awareness of the link between diplomacy and reputation. Together, these insights suggest a mix of strategic realism and a need for critical engagement.



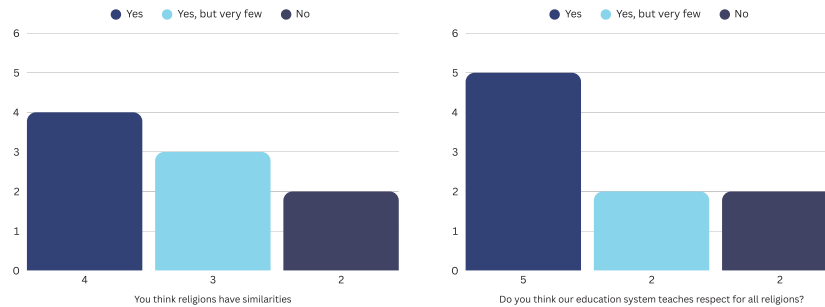
The findings show youth see themselves as key to diplomacy, with 7(77.8%) believing their engagement can improve Pakistan's ties. While 8(88.9%) support regional trade for economic growth, the same proportion view cultural and religious differences as barriers, reflecting limited exposure to pluralism. This highlights both their optimism and the need for greater regional understanding.



The finding that (66.7%) believe reading about other religions should be avoided reflects entrenched sectarian attitudes and reluctance toward interfaith understanding. This points to a deep-rooted intolerance and highlights the need to reform education and public discourse to promote empathy, pluralism, and coexistence in a diverse society like Balochistan.



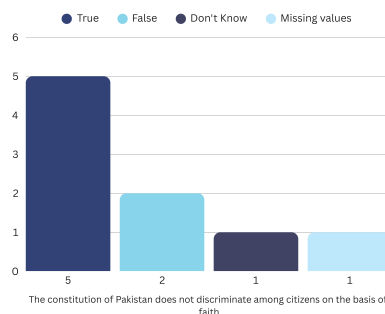
(66.7%) identified social media as the most effective tool for promoting interfaith harmony, surpassing religious and print forums. This reflects the platform’s strong influence among youth, but also signals the need to ensure its use fosters constructive, respectful dialogue rather than deepening divides.



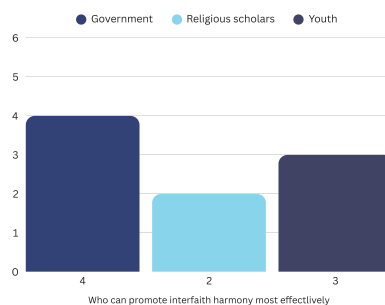
(77.7%) believe religions share similarities, despite earlier hesitation to engage with other faiths. This suggests a latent openness and recognition of common values, which can be leveraged through interfaith dialogue and education to foster greater understanding and harmony.

(77.8%) believe education promotes respect for **all** religions, at least partially, though some disagree. This points to inconsistent delivery of inclusive values, underscoring the need to strengthen curricula with clearer emphasis on pluralism, ethics, and coexistence.

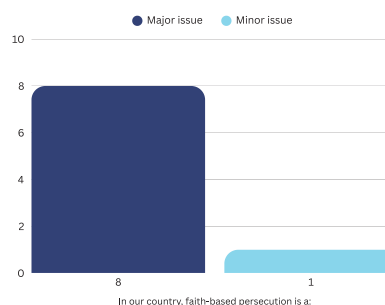
4.7 Constitutional Citizenship & Rule of Law



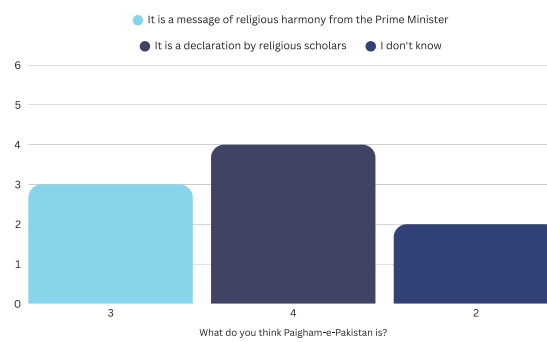
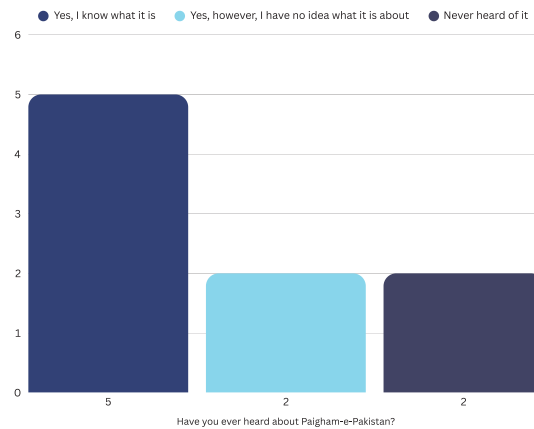
5(55.6%) believe the constitution ensures equality, while 44.4% disagree or are unsure. This mixed perception highlights gaps in constitutional literacy and awareness of minority rights, indicating the need for targeted civic education to build confidence in legal protections.



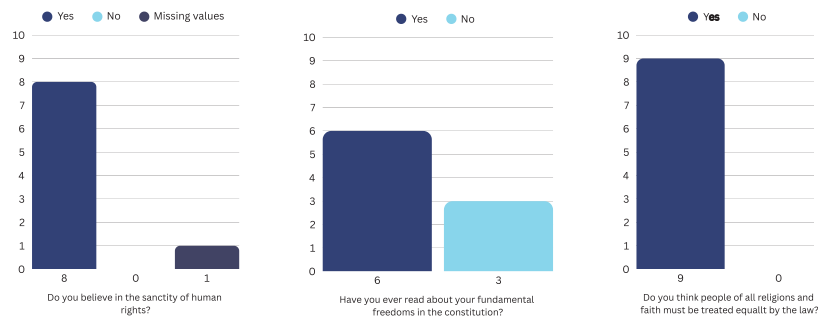
(44.4%) see the government as chiefly responsible for interfaith harmony, followed by youth 3(33.3%) and religious scholars 2(22.2%). This reflects confidence in state-led solutions, growing acknowledgment of youth as change agents, and comparatively lower trust in traditional religious authority, hinting at shifting generational attitudes.



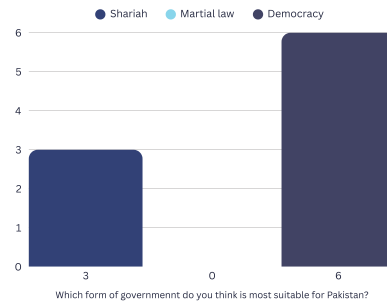
(88.9%) agree that faith-based persecution is a major issue, showing strong awareness of religious intolerance. This consensus underscores the need for urgent policy and legal measures to protect minorities and uphold constitutional rights.



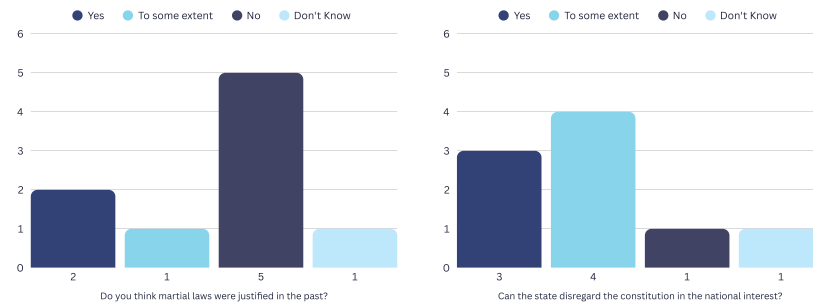
Over half 5(55.6%) claim awareness of Paigham-e-Pakistan, yet 4(44.4%) lack clarity or hold misconceptions mistaking it for a prime ministerial message 3(33.3%) or admitting ignorance 2(22.2%). This reflects poor outreach and highlights the need for better public education on its purpose and origins.



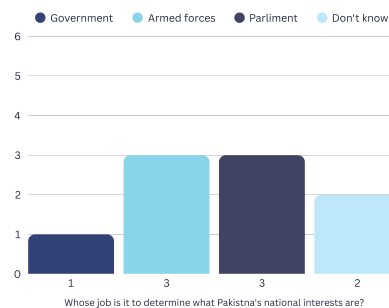
All respondents affirm the sanctity of human rights and equal treatment of all faiths under the law, showing strong aspirational support for pluralism. However, 3(33.3%) admit they have not read about their constitutional freedoms, revealing a gap between values and formal knowledgeunderscoring the need for legal literacy and rights education.



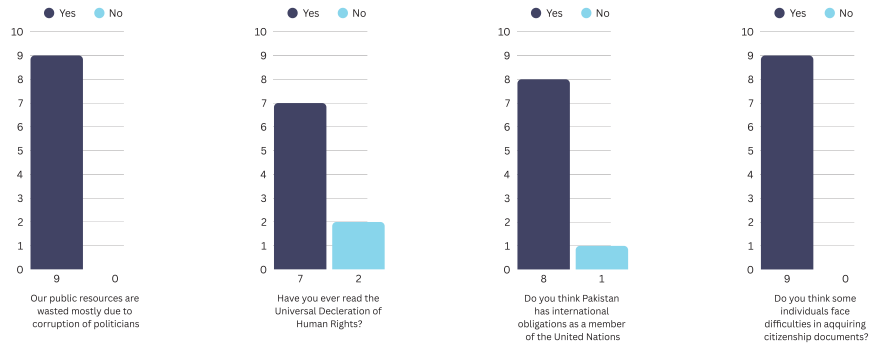
With (66.7%) favoring democracy and 3(33.3%) preferring Shariah Law, opinions reflect a split between secular constitutionalism and religious governance. This highlights the need to strengthen civic education on democratic principles and pluralism to bridge ideological divides.



While (55.6%) reject martial laws, 7(77.8%) still justify overriding the constitution in the name of national interest. This contradiction reflects an authoritarian tilt and weak understanding of constitutional supremacy, underscoring the need for civic education to strengthen democratic norms and accountability.

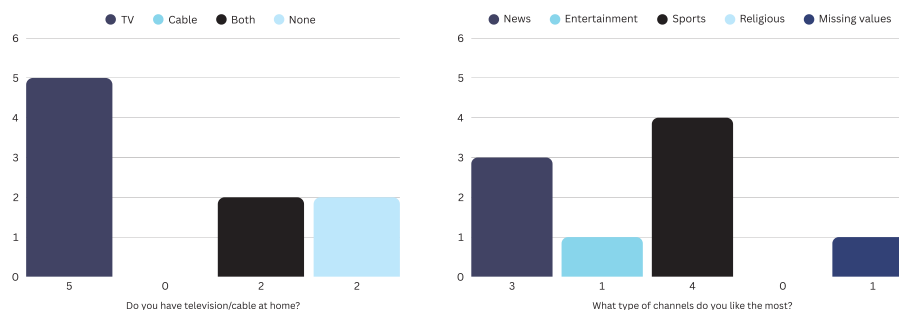


Youth are equally divided (33.3%) each between armed forces and parliament as definers of national interest, one said it was government, with 2(22.2%) unsure. This reflects persistent civil-military imbalance in perceptions and highlights a lack of clarity on democratic roles and institutional mandates.

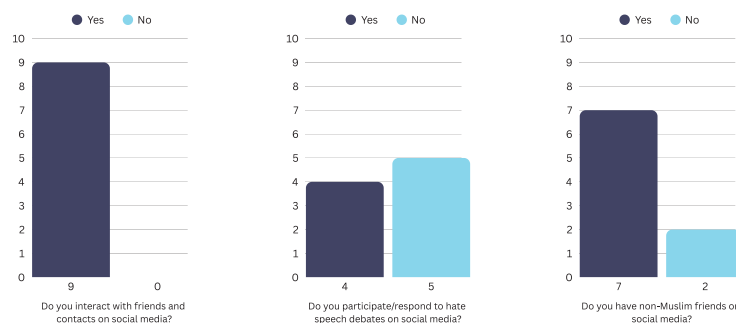


There is unanimous disillusionment with politicians' corruption (100% agree), seen as a major cause of wasted public resources and inefficiency, highlighting demands for transparent governance. Encouragingly, most youth are aware of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (77.8%) and Pakistan's UN obligations (88.9%), showing a globally informed mindset despite regional constraints. Yet, universal acknowledgment of difficulties in obtaining citizenship documents (100%) exposes systemic bureaucratic barriers, particularly affecting marginalized communities, and underscores the need for administrative reforms to enable equitable civic inclusion.

4.8 Media



While most respondents (77.8%) have access to TV or cable, (22.2%) lack any access, highlighting regional media penetration gaps. Viewing preferences lean heavily toward sports 4(44.4%) and news 3(33.3%), showing interest in national affairs and identity, whereas low interest in entertainment may reflect cultural norms or lack of relatable content.



All 9 respondents (100%) reported actively interacting with friends and contacts on social media, showing its central role in their social lives. However, only 4 (44.4%) engage in hate speech debates online, while 5 (55.6%) avoid such discussions, suggesting reluctance to confront controversial issues or a preference to avoid conflict. Notably, 7 (77.8%) have non-Muslim friends on social media, reflecting openness to interfaith connections in the digital space, while 2 (22.2%) do not.



Most respondents reported using professional websites 4(44.4%), followed by news 2(22.2%), religious 1(11.1%), gaming 1(11.1%), and other categories1 (11.1%), showing a clear preference for career-related online content. While 4 (44.4%) have personally reported faith-based violence on social media, a larger proportion 8(88.9%) have witnessed others doing so, indicating greater passive than active engagement. Similarly, 8 (88.9%) see social media as an effective tool for highlighting religious violence, yet 7 (77.8%) also acknowledge it as a platform for promoting extremism, reflecting its double-edged nature. Finally, all respondents 9(100%) agreed that western media runs malicious campaigns to defame Pakistan, underscoring widespread mistrust of international narratives.

5. Comparative analysis of pre and post workshop

The comparative analysis of pre- and post-workshop survey data reveals meaningful progress in participants' attitudes and understanding of interfaith harmony. The workshop improved boosted willingness to engage in interfaith initiatives, and heightened motivation to educate others about harmony. Confidence in the role of media and the constitution improved modestly, while skepticism around constitutional guarantees and over-reliance on social media persist as challenges. Participants overwhelmingly endorsed the workshop as impactful and worth recommending.

		Frequency		Percentage	
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Gender	Male	21	17	636%	567%
	Female	12	13	364%	433%
	Total	33	30	100	100
Age	15–20	14	11	424%	379%
	21–25	15	15	455%	517%
	26–30	2	1	61%	34%
	35 & above	2	2	61%	69%
	Missing values	0	1	-	61%
Backgr ound	Rural	10	13	688%	567%
	Urban	22	17	313%	433%
	Missing values	1	0		
Provinc e	Balochistan	33	29	100%	967%
	Sindh	0	1	—	33%

The workshop engaged a total of 33 participants during day 1, comprising 21 males (63.6%) and 12 females (36.4%). Participants were predominantly within the youth demographic, with 14 individuals (42.4%) aged 15–20, 15 (45.5%) aged 21–25, 2 (6.1%) aged 26–30, and 2 (6.1%) aged 35 and above. Of these, 10 participants (31.3%) belonged to rural areas and 22 (68.8%) to urban areas, with one response unreported. All participants on Day 1 were from Balochistan.

On Day 2 of the workshop, the number of participants stood at 30, including 17 males (56.7%) and 13 females (43.3%). By age, 11 participants (37.9%) were in the 15–20 age group, 15 (51.7%) in the 21–25 group, 1 (3.4%) in the 26–30 group, and 2 (6.9%) aged 35 and above, with one who abstained from mentioning his age. The group included 13 participants (43.3%) from rural areas and 17 (56.7%) from urban areas. Provincially, 29 participants (96.7%) were from Balochistan, with one participant (3.3%) representing Sindh.

5.1 Perception of Intolerance and Interfaith Harmony

A large majority of respondents 27 (81.8%) felt that intolerance is prevalent in society, citing political 14 (42.4%), social 10 (30.3%), and religious 6 (18.2%) reasons. Most believed that knowledge about other communities 27 (81.8%) and interfaith dialogue 24 (72.7%) can improve harmony, and a significant number 24 (72.7%) agreed people from different communities can peacefully coexist. Almost all 31 (93.9%) saw youth as key to promoting interfaith harmony, reflecting optimism about generational change.

5.2 Media’s Role in Interfaith Awareness

Before the workshop, 23 (69.7%) felt the media could play a bigger role in highlighting interfaith cooperation, which rose to 25 (83.3%) after the workshop, showing increased confidence in media’s potential. Post-workshop, 28 (93.3%) also said they would recommend such awareness efforts to others. The data indicates a perceived gap in media narratives and growing expectations of positive engagement.

5.3 Social Media Misinformation and Awareness

Most participants 28 (84.8%) reported checking the authenticity of information pre-workshop, slightly dropping to 24 (80.0%) post-workshop, though awareness of its importance was reaffirmed. Despite widespread reliance on social media for information 22 (73.3%) post-workshop, concerns remain about its role in spreading unchecked or divisive content. The findings underscore the need for digital literacy alongside advocacy.

5.4 Willingness to Engage in Interfaith Activities

Before the workshop, only 7 (21.2%) had ever participated in interfaith activities. However, post-workshop, 26 (86.7%) expressed willingness to work on projects with people of other faiths, and 30 (100.0%) felt motivated to educate their communities about interfaith harmony. This demonstrates a significant positive shift in attitudes and readiness to take action.

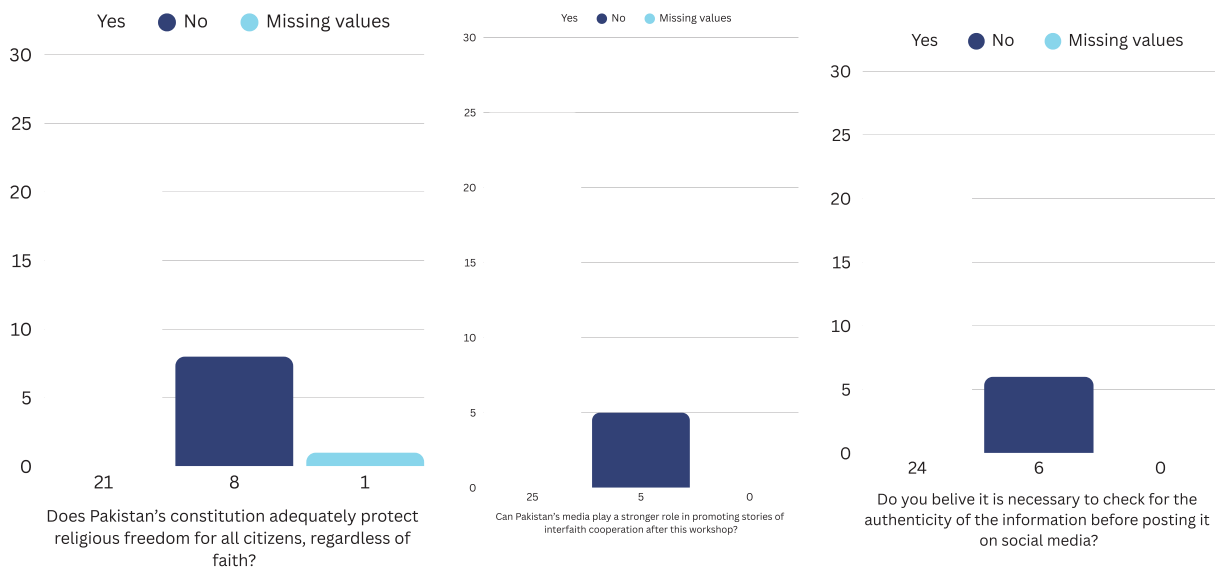
5.5 Trust in Media for Reporting Faith-Based Violence

When asked which media they trust most for reporting faith-based violence, a strong majority preferred social media 22 (73.3%), while fewer trusted electronic 4 (13.3%) or print media 4 (13.3%). This reflects both the accessibility of digital platforms and skepticism of traditional media’s impartiality.

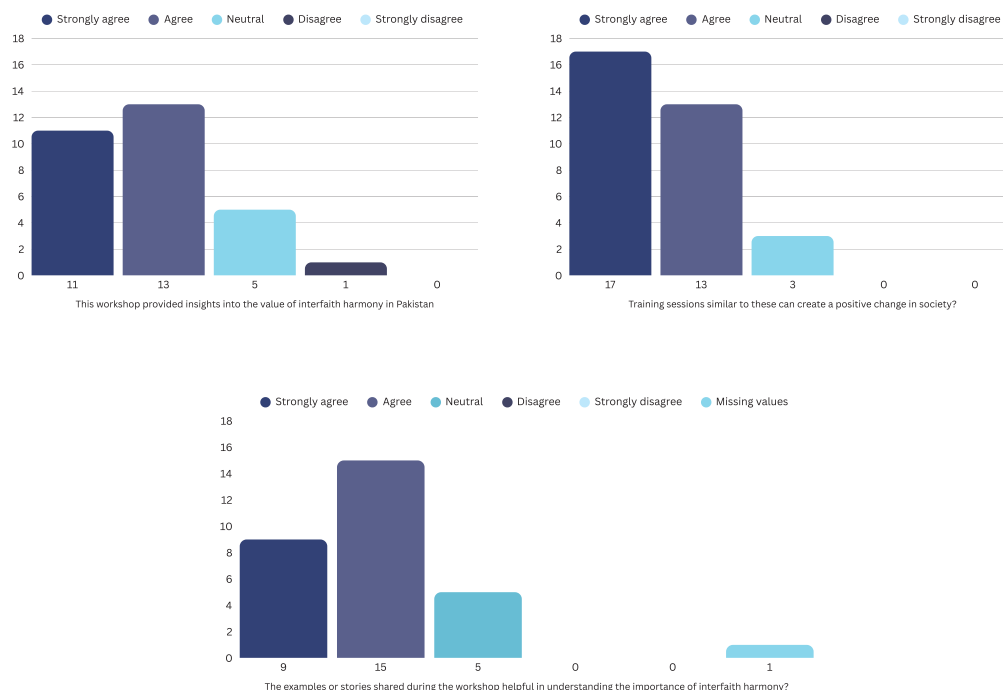
5.6 Awareness of Legal Safeguards for Religious Freedom

Awareness of legislation promoting interfaith harmony remained low, with only 5 (15.2%) aware pre-workshop. However, post-workshop, 21 (70.0%) believed the Constitution provides adequate protection for religious freedom. This suggests that educational interventions improve understanding of legal rights, but gaps in awareness persist.

5.7 Workshop Feedback and Learning Impact

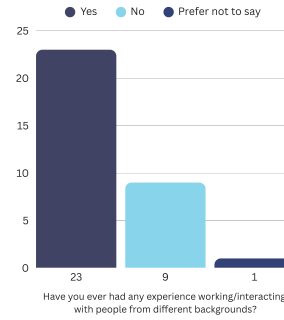
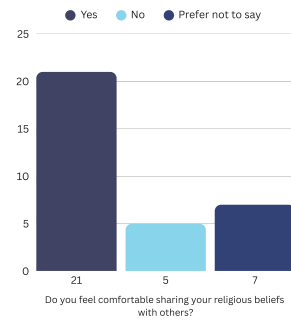
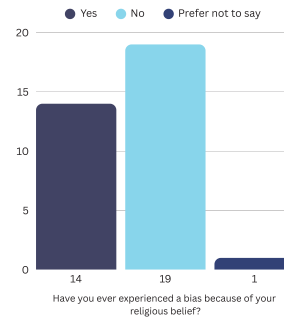
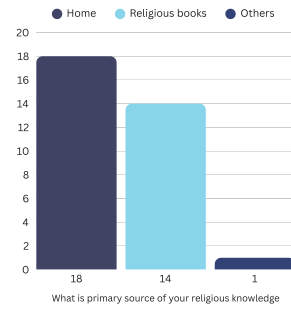
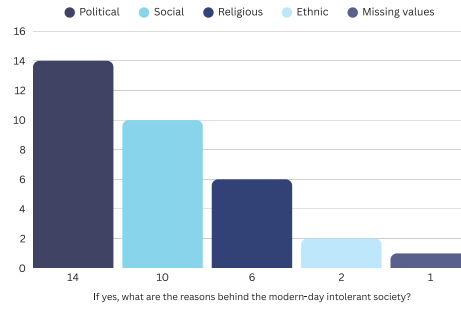
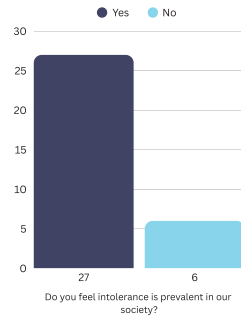


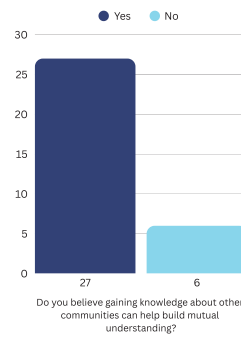
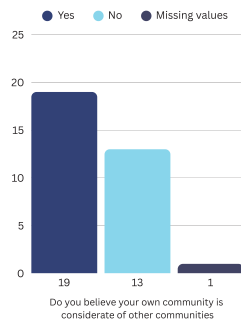
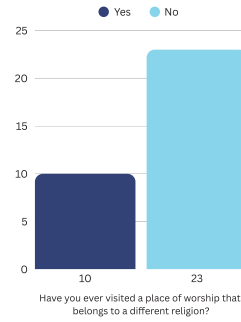
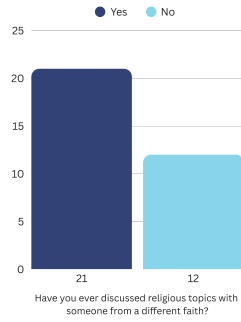
After the training, 72.4% (21) of participants felt that Pakistan's constitution provides adequate protection for religious freedom, while 27.6% (8) disagreed, showing a generally positive but not unanimous perception. Regarding the role of media, 83.3% (25) believed it can highlight more stories of interfaith cooperation, reflecting strong confidence in media's potential as a tool for harmony. Additionally, 80% (24) agreed on the necessity of verifying information before sharing it on social media, while 20% (6) did not, underscoring the need for continued awareness on responsible online behavior.



A large majority of participants acknowledged the workshop's value in promoting interfaith harmony, with 11 (36.7%) strongly agreeing and 13(43.3%) agreeing, while only 1(3.3%) disagreed and 5(16.7%) remained neutral. Similarly, when asked if such training sessions can bring positive change in society, 17(56.7%) strongly agreed and 13(33.3%) agreed, showing strong endorsement of such initiatives whereas 3 chose to remain neutral. Regarding the examples and stories shared during the workshop, 9(31%) strongly agreed and 15(51.7%) agreed that they were helpful in understanding interfaith harmony, though about 5(17%) remained neutral. This indicates that the workshop was well-received and seen as impactful by most participants, particularly in demonstrating the practical relevance of interfaith harmony.

Annexure of Graphs for Pre and Post workshop survey





6. ANNEXURES

Annexure 1

List of Resource Persons

Sr#	Resource Person	Designation
01	Ali Baba Taj	Educationist Urdu, Persian, and Hazaragi poet.
02	Allama Akbar Hussain Zahidi	Religious Scholar.
03	Dr. Aurangzaib Khan Nasar	Head of Dept. Social Sciences, BUITEMS.
04	Dr. Mir Sadaat Baloch	Pro Vice Chancellor University of Makran, Balochistan.
05	Imran Mukhtar	Senior Journalist & Media Coordinator PIPS.
06	Jalila Haider	Human Rights Attorney & Political Activist.
07	Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi	Deputy General Secretary, Jamaat-e-Islami.
08	Muhammad Amir Rana	President, PIPS.
09	Muhammad Murtaza Ali	Project Manager, PIPS.
10	Saleem Shahid	Senior Journalist.
11	Shahzada Zulfiqar	Senior Journalist.
12	Yar Jan Badini	Editor-in-Chief, Balochistan Today.

Annexure 2

Agenda



Two-day National Workshop on **Building Bridges: Fostering Tolerance & Inclusivity Among Youth**

Dates: April 21-22, 2025
Venue: Press Club, Quetta
09:00 AM – 04:30 PM

DAY – I Inaugural Session

09:00 - 09:45 AM	Registration & Introduction تعارف اور گپ شپ
09:45 - 10:45 AM	Why this workshop? Muhammad Murtaza The Project Manager, Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) will explain the purpose of the workshop.
SESSION-II	
10:45 - 11:30 AM	Constitution, Parliament and Citizenship Resource person: Imran Mukhtar Senior Journalist and PIPS media advisor
SESSION-III	
11:30 - 01:00 PM	ماہر سنی، اہل تشیع، اہل سکھوں کے گفت و شنید A panel discussion between Allama Akbar Hussain Zahedi, Religious Scholar, Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi, Deputy General Secretary, Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, Shahzada Zulfiqar, Senior Journalist moderated by Muhammad Amir Rana
01:00 - 02:00 PM	Lunch Break کھانا کھانا
SESSION-IV	
02:00 - 03:00 PM	Combatting Fake News & Fostering Safe Spaces on social media Resource persons: Shahzada Zulfiqar, Senior Journalist and Jalila Haider, Human Rights Attorney and Political Activist
SESSION-V	
03:00 - 04:30 PM	Diversity, common sense and future planning An interactive session with Muhammad Amir Rana President PIPS

DAY II

SESSION-VI	
09:00-10:00 AM	امین، درد، شہد اور ہم آہنگی کی ترویج: مسیحا مسیحی، مسیحی مسیحی، مسیحی مسیحی کا کردار Resource Person: Ali Baba Taj, Urdu, Persian and Hazaragi poet and Dr Aurangzaib Khan Nasar, Head of Department Social Sciences, BUTTEMS
SESSION-VII	
10:00 - 11:00 AM	پاکستان کا آئین اور قومی شخصیت A panel discussion with Dr. Mir Sadaat Baloch, Pro Vice Chancellor, University of Makran, Panjgaur, Shahzada Zulfiqar, Senior Journalist, Saleem Shahid, Senior Journalist and Yar Jan Badini, Editor in chief, Balochistan Today
11:00 - 01:00 PM	آگے کیا کرنا ہے؟ Observations and final thoughts Resource Person: Muhammad Amir Rana President, PIPS
Chai, Tasweerian aur dubara milnay ky Waday	
01:00 - 02:00 PM	Lunch Break کھانا کھانا

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Pak Institute for Peace Studies

Project Director: Muhammad Amir Rana
Project Concept: Safdar Sial
Report Author: Hina Khaliq
Data Analyst: Hina Khaliq
Report Designers: Ali Arsalan and Esham Farooq

About PIPS

Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) is an Islamabad-based research and advocacy organization. The Institute offers a range of consultancy services through a combination of independent research and analysis, innovative academic programs, and hands-on training and support that serve the following basic themes: Conflict analysis and peacebuilding, dialogue, prevent/counter violent extremism (P/CVE), internal and regional security; and media for peace and democracy.

PIPS conducts structured dialogues, focused group discussions, and national and international seminars to understand the issues listed earlier and also strengthen partnerships. The outcomes of PIPS research and planned events have extensively been reported in the mainstream media which adds to its credibility as an active and well networked civil society organization. PIPS policy reports and recommendations on security and CVE have frequently been cited in various works and included in state policy debates and documents.

Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) conducted a research study in 2024-25 under the title “Building Bridges, Fostering Tolerance and Inclusivity among Youth”. The program was particularly designed to engage Pakistan's youth from diverse backgrounds. The participants belonging to Madrassas, universities, media and social activists were engaged to improve in them, support for freedom of faith, and religious tolerance and harmony. It builds upon the philosophical approach that youth is part of a solution to challenges thrown by violent extremism and communal and sectarian discord.



PAK INSTITUTE FOR PEACE STUDIES (PIPS)
PO Box No: 2110, Islamabad, Pakistan
Fax: +92-51-8359474
Tel: +92-51-8359475
Email: pips@pakpips.com
www.pakpips.com