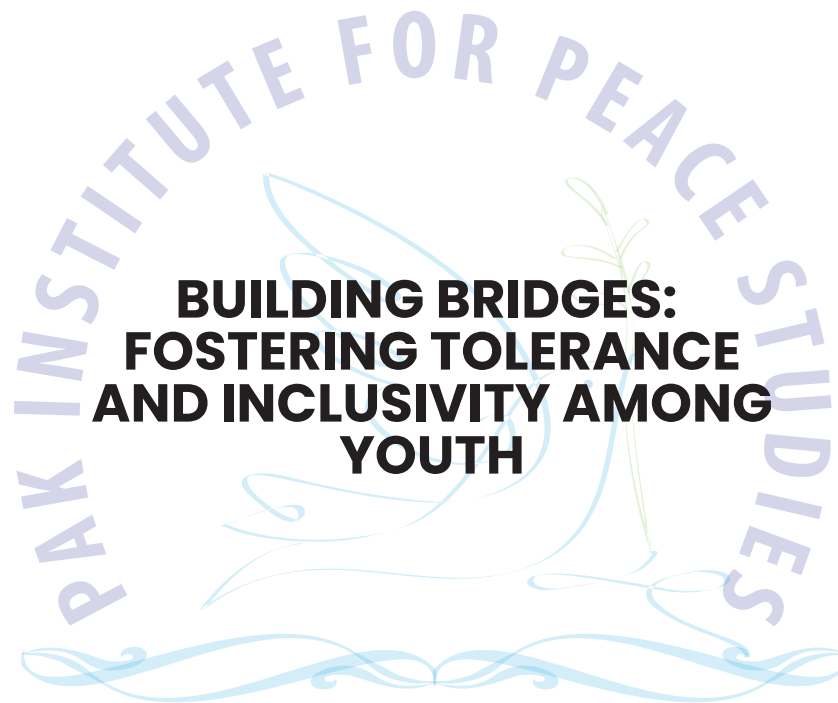




BUILDING BRIDGES: FOSTERING TOLERANCE AND INCLUSIVITY AMONG YOUTH

NATIONAL REPORT

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**BUILDING BRIDGES:
FOSTERING TOLERANCE
AND INCLUSIVITY AMONG
YOUTH**

KNOWLEDGE FOR PEACE

NATIONAL REPORT

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Acknowledgement

The Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) extends its heartfelt gratitude to all those who supported and facilitated the activities carried out during the year. Their contributions were invaluable in enabling us to pursue our efforts to bridge divides among individuals and groups, an essential foundation for building a cohesive and resilient society. We are especially grateful to the Embassy of the Netherlands for its generous support, which provided us with the resources to conduct countrywide workshops. This support allowed us to meaningfully engage with youth across different regions, and to assess their perspectives on interfaith dialogue and freedom of religious belief.

We are also deeply grateful to the resource persons who shared their invaluable insights with the youth on this important subject. Their contributions helped the young participants reflect critically, address the ambiguities in their minds, and strengthen their understanding of inclusivity and tolerance values that are essential for Pakistan's future, where youth serve as the true agents of change.

Muhammad Amir Rana

Why this study?

The study was undertaken at a crucial time when youth radicalization is increasingly shaping the social fabric of Pakistan. Recognizing the importance of youth as both vulnerable actors and potential agents of change, the study sought to engage directly with young people to better understand their thinking patterns, perceptions, and experiences. In addition to this, it also aimed to explore the challenges within Pakistan's existing education system, which plays a significant role in shaping young minds and, in some cases, reinforcing polarization.

To achieve these objectives, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed. Data was collected through surveys, structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, direct observations, and an extensive review of existing literature. This mixed-methods approach enabled a comprehensive analysis of emerging trends and patterns, providing valuable insights into the factors driving radicalization among youth in Pakistan.

Aims and Objectives

The primary purpose of the study is to analyze the radicalization of youth in Pakistan. As the adopted methods provide insights on areas that need attention of the stakeholders, political representatives, policy makers, academics, and civil society to work on such norms and values that mitigate the rise of radicalization.

For political leaders, the study offers a retrospective view of the localities most influenced by radicalization, allowing them to better understand ground realities. For policymakers, it highlights the loopholes and inefficiencies in existing frameworks that require urgent attention through more effective policy guidelines and recommendations. For academics, the study opens new avenues of research by identifying critical themes and gaps that demand deeper analysis, thereby contributing scholarly insights into the factors driving radicalization and intolerance, along with proposing evidence-based solutions. Last but not least, for civil society and partner organizations, the findings underscore the importance of safeguarding freedom of religious belief and fostering a more inclusive environment where people of different faiths can coexist and thrive.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study expands to understanding youth perspectives on inclusivity and tolerance across Pakistan. It was conducted in all four provinces as well as the Islamabad Capital Territory, engaging students from both the host cities of the workshops and their surrounding areas. This created a dynamic demographic profile that reflected the diverse populace of each province. The primary focus was to explore the factors shaping the perceptions of young people regarding interfaith harmony and religious tolerance. A total of 391 students participated in the workshops, representing both religious seminaries and mainstream educational institutions, with the majority falling in the age bracket of 15–29 years. Out of these, 308 participants completed the pre-survey and 284 completed the post-survey, while in-depth qualitative interviews and focused discussions were conducted with a selected group of participants to enrich the findings.

Executive Summary

Youth radicalization in Pakistan is one of the most pressing challenges confronting the state and society today. With nearly two-thirds of the country's population under the age of 30, the path that young people take will decisively shape the nation's stability, security, and development. Radicalization, while not always violent, often manifests as intolerance, sectarian polarization, and exclusionary identities that erode social cohesion and undermine democratic institutions. Persistent socio-economic inequalities, high unemployment, and limited upward mobility have left large segments of youth disillusioned and vulnerable to extremist influences. Political instability and corruption have weakened trust in governance, while the manipulation of religion in politics has entrenched sectarian and ideological divides.

Pakistan's fragmented education system, public, private, and madrasa streams, reinforces polarization and, in some cases, nurtures radical narratives. Regional instability, unresolved disputes with neighbors, and the influence of global ideological currents have further complicated the challenge. The growing role of digital media has intensified these trends by amplifying hate speech, misinformation, and extremist propaganda, linking local grievances with international discourses. Against this backdrop, this report examines the perceptions and experiences of Pakistani youth to understand the drivers of radicalization and identify pathways for resilience.

The findings draw on surveys and workshops conducted across Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and Islamabad, engaging youth from diverse educational, social, and religious backgrounds. This mixed-method approach combined quantitative data on youth perceptions with qualitative insights from structured dialogues, providing a comprehensive picture of how young Pakistanis view issues of identity, tolerance, politics, and interfaith relations.

Key Findings

- **Perceptions of Inequality:** 72.6% of youth believe people of all faiths are not treated equally, with minority communities reporting persistent insecurity.
- **Educational Gaps:** 42.9% said the education system fails or only partially teaches respect for religions; nearly 60% were unaware of Paigham-e-Pakistan.
- **Civic Knowledge:** While 75.9% reported reading about constitutional rights, nearly one-quarter had not. Conflicting views persist between support for democracy and Shariah law.
- **Political Mistrust:** 64% identified mistrust of political leadership as the main obstacle in India-Pakistan dialogue; workshops revealed disillusionment with corruption and weak governance.

Positive Potential: Over 90% of youth affirmed their role in fostering interfaith harmony, and 93% supported youth-led regional engagement, underscoring their readiness to contribute positively.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, the report proposes targeted measures to address gaps between youth aspirations and institutional responses:

1. Law Enforcement & Legal Reform: Strengthen institutional capacity to protect minority communities, acknowledge the presence of extremism, and adopt a holistic legal approach to curb hate crimes.
2. Education Reform: Revise curricula to promote tolerance, integrate technical education, and expand awareness of initiatives such as Paigham-e-Pakistan.
3. Civic Engagement: Reinforce civic responsibilities alongside religious obligations through awareness campaigns and youth-centered programs.
4. Political Responsibility: Promote cross-party consensus on extremism, depoliticize religion, and ensure inclusivity of youth and minorities in policymaking.
5. Countering Extremist Narratives: Develop coordinated strategies to challenge misinformation, hate speech, and sectarian propaganda, while empowering youth-led counter-narratives.
6. Dialogue & Interfaith Harmony: Institutionalize platforms for dialogue at district and national levels, drawing on successful international models like Egypt's Family House.

The evidence reveals a critical gap: while Pakistan's youth show resilience and a strong desire to promote inclusivity, state institutions, education systems, and political processes are not adequately aligned to support this potential. Bridging this gap requires sustained investment in governance, education, and dialogue. If harnessed effectively, Pakistan's youth can become the strongest bulwark against extremism and the driving force of a tolerant, pluralistic, and prosperous society.

Introduction

Youth radicalization in Pakistan is a complex, multi-layered phenomenon shaped by global, regional, national, and local dynamics. It is generally understood as the process in which young adults, particularly those between the ages of 15 and 29, adopt an exclusive religious identity over their national one, often aligning with militant, political, or missionary organizations. This shift can escalate from radical beliefs to violent actions, with serious consequences for social cohesion and national stability.

Youth radicalization is a profound challenge in Pakistan, a confluence of multiple factors that contribute to intolerance and ultimately violence within society. This phenomenon is particularly prevalent among youth aged 15–29, who often adopt an exclusive Islamic identity over the national one. They frequently align with reactive movements that encompass political, religious, and militant organizations. While radical behavior itself is not always harmful and can even bring positive change, it transforms into violent extremism when it employs indiscriminate means of expression.

Several interlinked drivers contribute to this challenge. Internal and home-grown factors remain the most critical. Poverty, unemployment, and socio-economic disparities foster alienation and frustration, creating insecurity and fragmentation in society. The failing economy, combined with limited opportunities for upward mobility, intensifies these grievances. Growing horizontal inequality significantly elevates the risk of violent contestation. Political instability, weak governance, and corruption further aggravate perceptions of injustice and exclusion, while the manipulation of religion for political gain has entrenched sectarian and ideological divides. Perceptions of injustice, human rights violations, socio-political exclusion, widespread corruption, and mistreatment of groups are powerful push factors that make youth vulnerable to radical influences.

Pakistan's fragmented education system is also a major concern. Three parallel streams, public, private, and madrassa, have reinforced societal polarization. Madrassas, while encouraged for primary education, often remain unregulated and can serve as breeding grounds for sectarianism and radicalization. Higher education institutions are not immune either; students are exposed to extremist and hate material, including pamphlets and speeches, which are further amplified by social media. Ethnic rivalries and religious extremism within universities, along with student political groups tied to political parties, foster power competition and sometimes violent confrontations. As a result, radicalization is no longer confined to madrassas alone but has penetrated mainstream educational spaces as well. Beyond education, deep-rooted religious disharmony, class disparities, and Pakistan's multi-linguistic, multi-ethnic social structure exacerbate polarization.

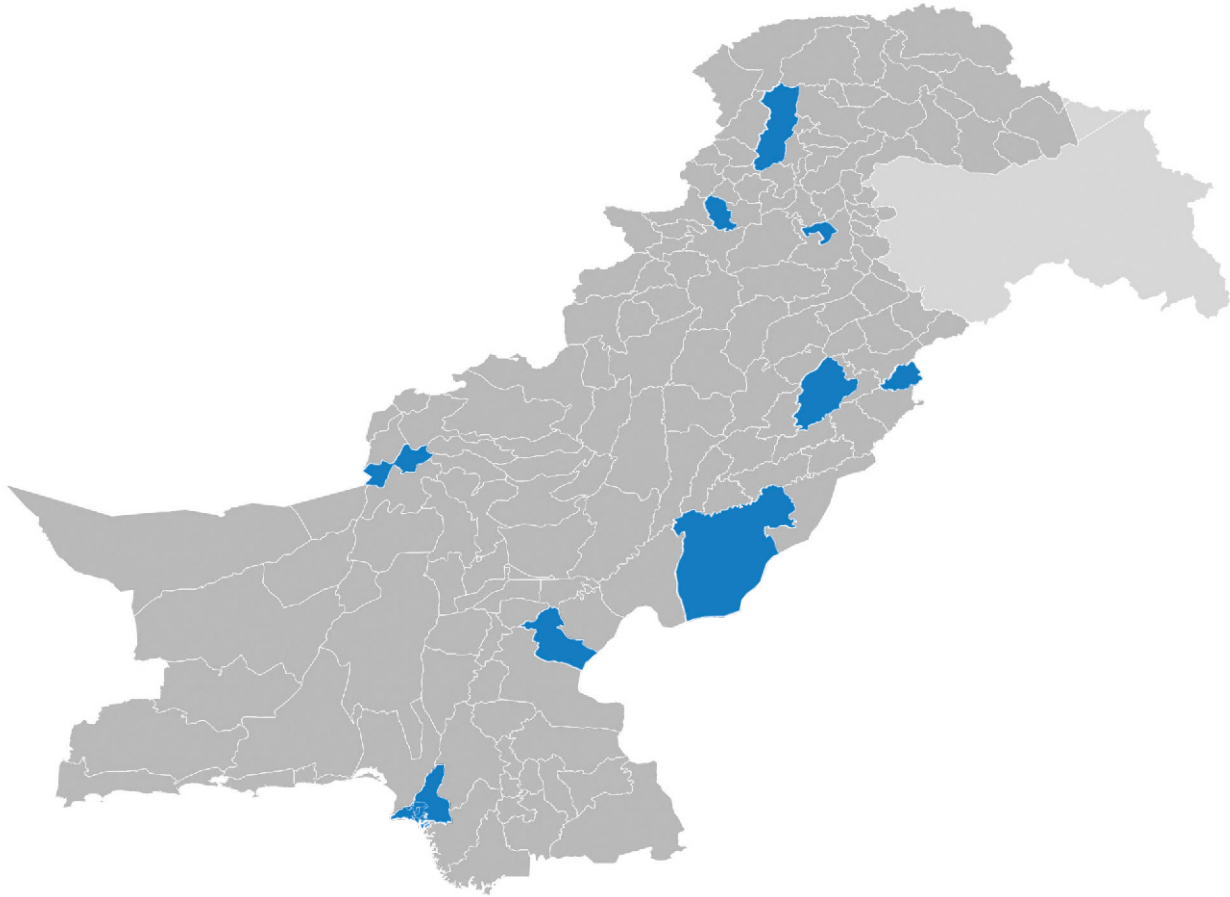
Sectarian divides, particularly between Sunni and Shia communities, are common and often exploited. Minority groups such as Christians and Ahmadis bear the brunt of radicalization in one form or another, facing discrimination and targeted violence.

At the regional and global levels, competing influences from powers such as the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Iran have shaped sectarian and ideological trends in Pakistan. Unresolved disputes with neighboring countries, especially India (Kashmir) and Afghanistan, combined with complex relations with Iran, have provided fertile ground for extremism. The Afghan conflict and the post-9/11 War on Terror left deep scars on Pakistan's society, while the influx of Afghan refugees further aggravated socio-political challenges. Globalization and digital communication have added a new dimension, enabling the rapid spread of radical ideologies and connecting local grievances with international extremist discourses.

Together, these dynamics create an “enabling environment” in which radicalization thrives, operating through a spectrum of actors from missionary organizations to militant groups. The impact on society has been profound: Pakistan has lost tens of thousands of lives and billions in economic damage, while its social fabric has been polarized by sectarian, ideological, and ethnic fault lines. The issue of youth radicalization is deeply embedded in Pakistan's socio-political fabric, leading to significant societal impacts, including economic and human costs.

The state's weak writ and the absence of a coherent counter-radicalization policy have further compounded the problem. Addressing youth radicalization requires a holistic and multi-dimensional approach that goes beyond security measures to tackle root causes. This includes promoting alternate narratives, reforms in education, socio-economic development, stronger governance and rule of law, addressing youth needs, building multi-stakeholder partnerships, and implementing robust strategies for rehabilitation and reintegration. Only through such comprehensive measures can Pakistan hope to counter the appeal of radical ideologies and foster a more peaceful, pluralistic society.

In this context, the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) has worked to counter the wave of extremism among youth through workshops across the country. PIPS has sensitized youth, engaged with policymakers, and identified loopholes in the existing system. This initiative has created space for dialogue by engaging students from diverse social and educational backgrounds to discuss tolerance and inclusivity. The workshops, conducted across Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan, and Islamabad, were attended by youth audiences from varied segments of society, reflecting Pakistan's diversity and the shared need for dialogue and peacebuilding.



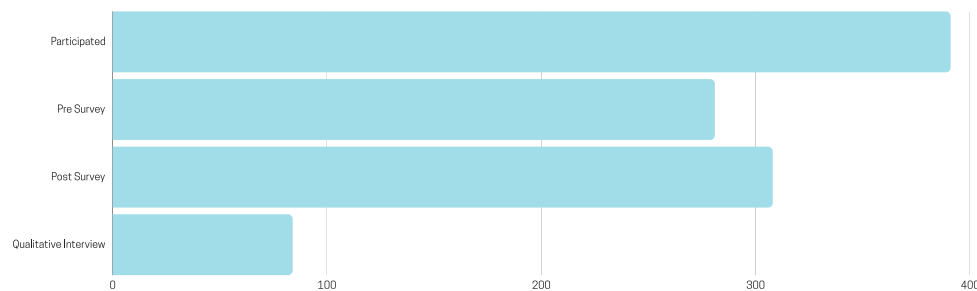
Survey and workshop locations across Pakistan, highlighting key cities including Quetta, Karachi, Sukkur, Bahawalpur, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Peshawar, Swat, Lahore, and Faisalabad, where youth engagement and interfaith dialogue sessions were conducted.”

Research Methodology

The study employed a mixed approach by adopting both quantitative and qualitative methods. The method was selected to understand the thinking patterns of youth regarding tolerance and inclusivity, and how they shape the behavior reflected in society. The primary questions to be investigated covered topics such as general perceptions on religion, gender roles, and the impact of regional actors on thinking patterns. To assess cognitive skills and reflective thinking, they were engaged through guided questions such as: What do tolerance and inclusiveness mean? Why do they feel tolerance is necessary in Pakistan, particularly in the context of religious diversity? Do they think that discrimination exists in Pakistan when it comes to non-majority groups?

The target population was between 15-29 years, with a few exceptions of participants over 30 years. The data reflects the high number of young people participating in the activities, which aligns with the scope of our research throughout Pakistan.

A total of 391 students participated in the workshops. Of these, 308 filled the pre-survey questionnaire, while 281 completed the post-survey questionnaire. This difference in numbers was mainly due to participant availability and time constraints during the workshops. The respondents included students from both regular education institutions and religious seminaries, mostly falling within the age bracket of 15–29 years



Although the study covered a substantial number of youth participants, there are certain limitations. The difference between the total attendance (391) and the number of survey respondents (308 pre-survey and 281 post-survey) indicates partial response gaps, which may affect the completeness of data. Moreover, since the workshops were conducted in selected urban centers, the findings may not fully capture rural perspectives or the views of youth outside the immediate workshop catchment areas.

Ethics

Our research involved adult human subjects, and as such it was ensured that ethical considerations were adhered to during data collection. The research involved investigating human thinking behaviors and experiences. Therefore, participation in the study was voluntary, informed, and fully safe for the subjects. No physical harm was done during the study, and there was no indication or sign of psychological harm to any subject either.

Survey

Surveys make it possible to collect a substantial volume of information that can be systematically analyzed for frequencies, averages, and recurring trends, offering a clear and accessible understanding of the issue under study. In this research, survey questionnaires were distributed among 308 participants, out of which 281 responded for both pre and post-surveys. The qualitative interviews were conducted with 84 participants.

Structured interviews

Structured interviews were selected as the primary tool for systematic data collection. Participants were engaged with a fixed sequence of closed-ended questions that focused on themes related to social harmony and diversity. To enrich the responses and gain deeper insights into individual perspectives and lived experiences, a few open-ended questions were incorporated alongside. This format provided consistency, enabling comparisons across respondents from varied provinces, genders, and social settings. Moreover, it simplified the identification of recurring trends. Since the study involved youth from diverse educational, religious, and regional backgrounds, minimizing researcher bias was a key concern. The structured format proved valuable in this regard, as every participant was presented with the same set of questions.

Descriptive Statistics: Frequencies and Missing Data Analysis

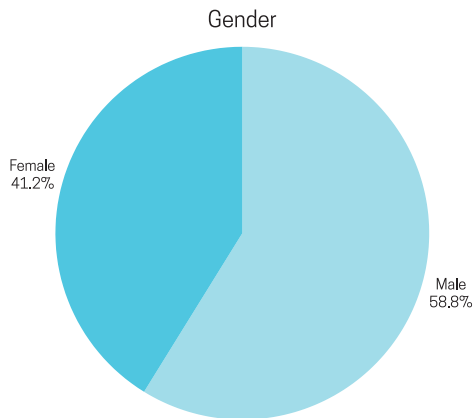
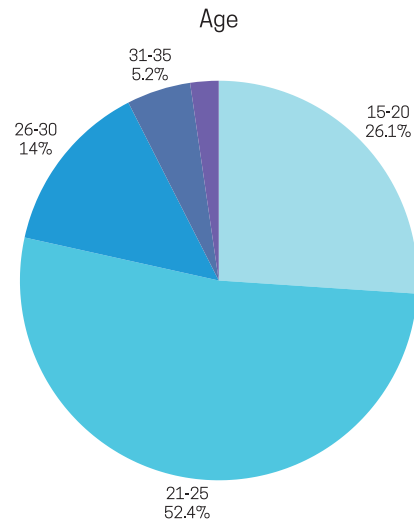
The survey data were examined to assess the distribution of responses and the completeness of the dataset. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables to provide an overview of participant characteristics and responses. The analysis showed that the majority of items had minimal missing data, typically below 5%, indicating high response completeness.

Limitations

The survey data often encounter several common issues. Respondents may provide answers they perceive as socially acceptable rather than truthful, a phenomenon known as social desirability bias. Additionally, they may decline to answer certain sensitive questions, leading to gaps in data. This nonresponse bias can result in skewed findings, as those who choose not to respond may systematically withhold specific viewpoints.

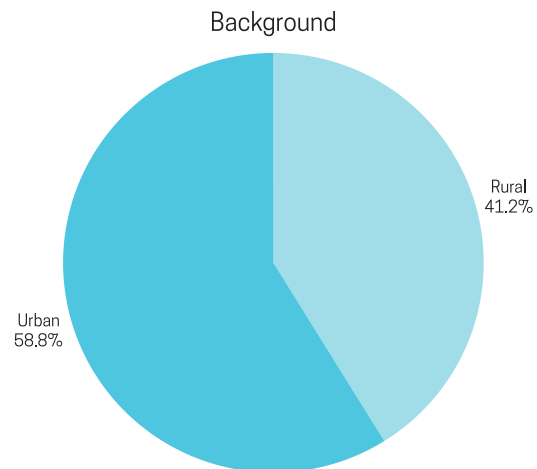
Demography

The survey sample was predominantly composed of young respondents, with the majority (52.4%) falling in the 21–25 age group. Participants aged 15–20 accounted for 26.1 percent, while those between 26–30 made up 14 percent. Older age groups, 31–35 and 36 and above, were smaller, comprising 5.2 percent and 2.3 percent respectively, reflecting a youthful demographic overall. Only a negligible portion (0.3%) of data was missing.



The survey respondents were slightly skewed toward males, who constituted 58.8 percent of the sample, while females represented 41.2 percent. Overall, the data reflects a fairly balanced gender distribution, with only a minimal portion (0.6%) of responses missing.

The majority of survey participants came from urban areas, accounting for 58.8 percent of the valid responses, while 41.2 percent were from rural backgrounds. A small portion of the data, 4.5 percent, was missing, resulting in a total of 308 respondents.



Workshop Themes

5.1 Relationship between Constitution, Citizenship and Parliament

Youth radicalization in Pakistan is closely tied to questions of identity, governance, education, and the way individuals perceive truth and justice. The discussions emphasized that young people must cultivate critical faculties such as rationality and empathy to resist extremist narratives. Common sense provides stability in everyday life, yet when it becomes limited by cultural bias, it can normalize exclusion and stereotypes that extremist groups are quick to exploit. Critical thinking, on the other hand, enables young people to question rigid patterns, challenge assumptions, and build empathy skills that help them detect propaganda and resist the black-and-white worldview promoted by radical actors. Rationality and a scientific approach based on evidence and inquiry further strengthen resilience by separating universal truths from subjective interpretations, whereas extremist movements thrive on blurring this line and presenting their own narrow beliefs as absolute truths. In this way, worldviews that are unexamined or rigidly shaped by exclusionary ideologies can become powerful drivers of radicalization.



At the same time, speakers stressed the importance of self-reflection, broadening perspectives, and engaging with diverse cultures as safeguards against extremist thinking. Historical examples of repression, such as the persecution of women in medieval Europe, reveal how intolerance and rigid dogma can legitimize violence, parallels that remain relevant today. Language and discourse were also highlighted as central to shaping youth attitudes. Extremist groups excel at creating emotionally charged narratives and cultivating “hero cultures” that glorify violence. If constructive figures and ideas are not promoted in society, this void is easily filled by radical actors. The education system further compounds this vulnerability by placing excessive pressure on grades while neglecting practical skills, creativity, and critical analysis. Such disillusionment among youth is readily exploited by extremist recruiters who promise recognition, purpose, and belonging. In contrast, education that values knowledge, adaptability, and emotional intelligence can build resilience, enabling youth to regulate emotions, empathize with others, and resist manipulative rhetoric.

Governance and citizenship also play a central role. Parliament and the constitution form the framework through which citizens are granted rights and protection. When democracy is inclusive, with decentralization and fair representation of provinces and minorities, it strengthens the social contract and reduces the sense of exclusion that fuels radicalization. The 18th Amendment, which expanded provincial autonomy, was noted as a key reform in this regard, providing communities with a greater sense of ownership. Conversely, when democratic institutions are weak, authoritarian tendencies prevail, and rights are denied, youth become disillusioned with the system. Extremist movements then step in, presenting themselves as authentic defenders of justice and representation. The example of Burma illustrates how weak institutions, corruption, and military dominance can drive prolonged cycles of conflict and ethnic violence. For Pakistan, the lesson is clear: democratic governance, protection of rights, and an effective separation of powers are essential not only for political stability but also for preventing radicalization.

Ultimately, the prevention of youth radicalization depends on building an environment where young people feel represented, valued, and capable of critical thought. This requires strengthening democratic institutions, ensuring equal citizenship, reforming education to focus on skills and reasoning, and nurturing emotional intelligence. Only then can the appeal of simplistic extremist narratives be weakened, and youth be empowered to contribute positively to society.

5.2 Culture, Diversity, and Social Cohesion

Culture, diversity, and social cohesion lie at the heart of both stability and vulnerability in modern societies. The interplay between religion, culture, ethnicity, and language shapes collective identity, but when these identities are suppressed or politicized, they often generate feelings of exclusion and marginalization. Historical experiences of colonial exploitation, linguistic imposition, and discriminatory state policies demonstrate how the denial of equal rights and recognition can fracture societies, particularly alienating the youth. In such fractured spaces, radical ideologies find fertile ground by offering alternative narratives of belonging, dignity, and authenticity. Thus, culture and diversity, if embraced through tolerance and inclusivity, can become a source of resilience, but if denied, they risk fueling resentment and radicalization among younger generations.

The struggle for freedom, democracy, and equality has been a long historical journey shaped by resistance to oppression, colonial exploitation, and authoritarianism. These values, while universal, are not absolute; they carry responsibilities for both the state and its citizens in ensuring justice and protection against discrimination. The politicization of multiple human identities, religious, ethnic, linguistic, or national, has often turned them into instruments of exclusion and conflict, making youth particularly vulnerable to radical appeals that promise dignity and belonging. Yet, history demonstrates that culture, religion, and language are dynamic constantly evolving rather than fixed entities. Extremist narratives deny this fluidity by imposing rigid absolutes, thereby fueling intolerance and violence. By reconceptualizing them as evolutionary

nature of identities and the hard-earned universality of rights, societies can equip their youth to resist exclusionary ideologies and foster inclusive, progressive social orders. Building on this, the role of culture and language becomes crucial, as they are the primary carriers of identity and belonging. In Pakistan's case, the decline of indigenous languages and the imposition of Urdu and English reflect how linguistic control can act as a mechanism of exclusion, much like colonial dominance or state discrimination. The suppression of ethnic and linguistic diversity not only erodes cultural richness but also alienates youth from their roots, producing feelings of loss, resentment, and disconnection. This alienation is easily exploited by radical groups, who transform cultural grievances into calls for resistance and alternative belonging. Hence, debates about language and culture are not merely symbolic but deeply political, tied to the state's legitimacy and its capacity to recognize pluralism. Where diversity is overlooked, particularly in multi-ethnic societies like Pakistan, the result is not cohesion but fragmentation, with radicalization emerging as an unintended yet dangerous outcome.



While Islamic traditions provide historical precedents for tolerance, humility, and respect for diversity, these values have been overshadowed by the failures of states to institutionalize inclusivity and ensure equitable opportunities. In contexts where cultural pluralism is denied and basic human needs remain unmet, youth experience both material deprivation and existential alienation. This alienation is compounded by societal pressures that reward conformity to narrow religious or cultural identities while silencing alternative voices. For many young people, radical ideologies offer not only survival and dignity but also a sense of justice, authenticity, and resistance against what they perceive as imposed or unfair systems.

Thus, the failure to institutionalize inclusivity and genuine pluralism does not just weaken social harmony; it directly accelerates pathways to youth radicalization. Conversely, fostering recognition, pluralism, and dialogue not only strengthens unity but also shields youth from extremist recruitment by giving them legitimate, peaceful avenues for identity, belonging, and empowerment

The discussions highlight that tolerance and inclusivity are not abstract ideals but survival needs for plural societies like Pakistan. Muhammad Murtaza's framing of tolerance as respect and acceptance, not just endurance, shows how peaceful coexistence depends on genuine recognition of differences. When inclusivity fails, entire segments of society feel excluded from political, social, and cultural life.

For youth, this exclusion is particularly destabilizing. As Dr. Syed Jaffar noted, ethnic and sectarian identities are deeply rooted in history and cannot be erased by state rhetoric. When governments or institutions suppress these identities in the name of uniformity, young people see their cultural and religious heritage delegitimized. This fuels resentment and fractures social cohesion, creating conditions where extremist groups can step in with promises of dignity, empowerment, and recognition.

The everyday dimension highlighted by Jalila Haider is critical: if respect, empathy, and kindness are absent in daily interactions, youth experience a dissonance between official narratives of "unity" and lived realities of exclusion. This dissonance deepens alienation and pushes them to seek belonging elsewhere, often in radical spaces that appear more responsive to their grievances.

Similarly, Prof. Dr. Zia's observation that societies are weakest when diversity is threatened reveals the structural vulnerability: suppressed diversity undermines national cohesion and leaves youth searching for purpose in rigid, absolutist ideologies. Extremist groups exploit this gap by presenting themselves as the only force offering recognition and a shared mission.



5.3 State, Society, and Rights in Contemporary Pakistan

The historical evolution of human rights began with the French Revolution and was later shaped by the post-World War II Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which emphasized dignity, equality, and fairness for all. Human rights are categorized into political, social, religious, and communal rights, which should apply to all people regardless of identity.

In the Pakistani context, speakers emphasized that minorities face systemic discrimination, forced conversions, and exclusion from opportunities. Despite their contributions to society and the economy, minorities are often relegated to low-status jobs and denied political equality. Cases like that of Rinkle Kumari reveal the lack of justice and weak state response, reflecting broader failures in the rule of law.

The state was criticized for failing to protect minorities, enforce justice, and create inclusive policies. Genuine equality requires not only legal recognition but also social acceptance and fair opportunities in education and employment. The attitude of both the majority and the state must change to ensure minorities are treated as equal citizens and protected under the constitution.



The story of Paigham-e-Pakistan cannot be understood without looking at how radicalization took root in Pakistan's social and political landscape. The Afghan Jihad of the 1980s is often remembered as the turning point when the language of armed struggle was glorified and widely spread. What was initially projected as a noble cause eventually slipped into dangerous territory, with extremist groups beginning to question the very legitimacy of the Pakistani state itself. This period, combined with Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization policies and the ripple effect of the Iranian Revolution, left a deep imprint on society. It created an environment where religion became politicized and violent ideologies were given space to grow.

It is against this backdrop that religious leaders and policymakers began to realize the need for a strong, unified counter-narrative. The Paigham-e-Pakistan declaration, launched in 2018 and endorsed by over 1,800 scholars from different sects and madrassah boards, marked an important step in that direction. By rejecting terrorism and the misuse of religion for political ends, and by stressing that only qualified scholars could issue religious opinions, the declaration sought to reclaim religion from extremists. It echoed similar efforts made elsewhere in the Muslim world, like the Amman Message in 2004 and the Makkah Charter in 2019, both of which highlighted unity, tolerance, and coexistence.

Yet, as many scholars and analysts pointed out, words on paper are not enough. Extremist groups know exactly how to capture the imagination of young people by appealing to their sense of injustice, their frustration with corruption, or their desire to bring about change. In moments of anger or hopelessness, young people often find themselves pulled towards simple answers and “revolutionary” promises. This is why the message of Paigham-e-Pakistan needs to reach beyond conferences and official ceremonies; it needs to resonate with students, activists, and ordinary young citizens in a language they understand and trust.

One way to make this possible is by revitalizing student unions and giving young people safe platforms to discuss politics, culture, and social issues. As some experts noted, unions are not just political training grounds — they are also spaces for dialogue and exchange, where diversity can be celebrated rather than exploited. For youth who might otherwise fall prey to extremist recruiters, such platforms can provide healthier ways to channel their passion, curiosity, and energy.



The larger challenge, however, lies in how Pakistan as a state navigates the relationship between religion and politics. Other Muslim-majority countries like Indonesia, UAE and Saudi Arabia have tried different approaches to balance religious identity with modern governance. For Pakistan, finding this balance remains crucial to break the cycle of politicized religion that has historically made space for extremism. In the end, Paigham-e-Pakistan represents a rare moment of consensus in a divided society. It shows that scholars from across traditions can stand together to reject violence in the name of faith. But its true value will be measured not by the number of signatures it gathered, but by how deeply it connects with Pakistan’s youth. If young people can be convinced that their voices matter, that they have meaningful roles to play in shaping the country, then radical ideologies will have less room to grow.

5.4 Youth, Fake News, and the Politics of Change in Pakistan

Faith-based violence in Pakistan includes desecration of worship places, forced conversions, sectarian attacks, persecution of minorities, misuse of blasphemy laws, and mob lynching of blasphemy-accused individuals. As Mr. Asif Khursheed explained, recent incidents show how misinformation and social media can intensify these conflicts. In 2022, false rumors of forced conversions of Sikhs in Nankana Sahib sparked international outrage before being exposed as a family dispute. Similarly, doctored videos in 2021 alleging desecration of the Quran or the false accusation of blasphemy against a mentally ill man in Dadu triggered mob violence, showing how quickly narratives can inflame religious sentiments. The 2019 killing of Professor Khalid Hameed by his student further reflects how distorted narratives can radicalize individuals into violence. These examples highlight both the dangers of propaganda and the urgent need for counter-narratives that reinforce tolerance and social cohesion.

Placing these developments in a broader context, Pakistan's trajectory must also be understood within the rapidly changing world order. As Former Ambassador Mansoor Ahmed Khan outlined, global power has historically shifted from European empires to Cold War blocs and is now dominated by the United States, though increasingly challenged by China. In this evolving landscape, Pakistan's structural weaknesses technology lag, poor governance, fragile economy, and political instability, limit its ability to benefit from global transformations. Unlike countries such as South Korea and Vietnam that capitalized on strategic alignments, Pakistan struggles with rural-urban divides, elite capture, and a lack of inclusive growth. These weaknesses, compounded by weak border security and social instability in peripheral regions, leave Pakistan vulnerable both domestically and internationally.

Miss Hina Khaliq Taj, Research Officer at the Pak Institute for Peace Studies, extended this discussion by focusing on Gender Equality: myths, values, and practices. She explained that despite constitutional provisions, Pakistan continues to face severe gender imbalances. In 2024, Pakistan ranked 145th out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index. Female political participation remained at only twenty percent, while women who make up nearly half the population faced wide disparities in education, health, and economic opportunities.



**According to the
Global Gender Gap
index , Pakistan
ranked 145th out
of 146.**



Fifty-seven percent of women were reported to be anemic, and Pakistan recorded the highest rate of breast cancer in Asia. In 2023, female labor force participation stood at twenty-five percent compared to eighty-one percent for men. Ownership disparities were also stark: thirty-one percent of men owned houses, while only two percent of women did. Alongside these economic and health inequalities, 5,112 cases of gender violence, 799 abductions, and 533 rapes were reported nationwide in 2024.

Adding another dimension, the role of misinformation and fake news emerged as a central concern. Journalist and columnist Wasutullah Khan explained how rumors, though often baseless, can spread rapidly and become accepted as truth. He illustrated this through the case of Akhlaq Ahmad in Dadri, India, who was lynched after false rumors accused him of slaughtering a cow and storing its meat. This example shows how misinformation can blend with existing prejudices to fuel deadly violence. Similarly, he noted that fake news often mixes rumor with fact, making it appear more credible, while also being more dangerous.

Senior journalist Shahzada Zulfiqar warned that fake news not only reinforces biases but also deepens political and sectarian divides. He highlighted how misinformation and disinformation are actively weaponized by political parties for propaganda, using religion, scandals, and emotional narratives to manipulate public opinion. Such dynamics not only corrode democratic discourse but also create fertile ground for radicalization by promoting suspicion, anger, and polarization.

Human rights attorney and activist Jalila Haider linked this media environment to broader social trends, observing that excessive reliance on gadgets among youth, coupled with declining physical and recreational spaces, has left them increasingly dependent on online platforms. This dependency exposes them to extremist narratives and fosters frustration and apathy. She stressed the urgent need for parental engagement, value-based education, and safe recreational opportunities as counterbalances to the digital space.

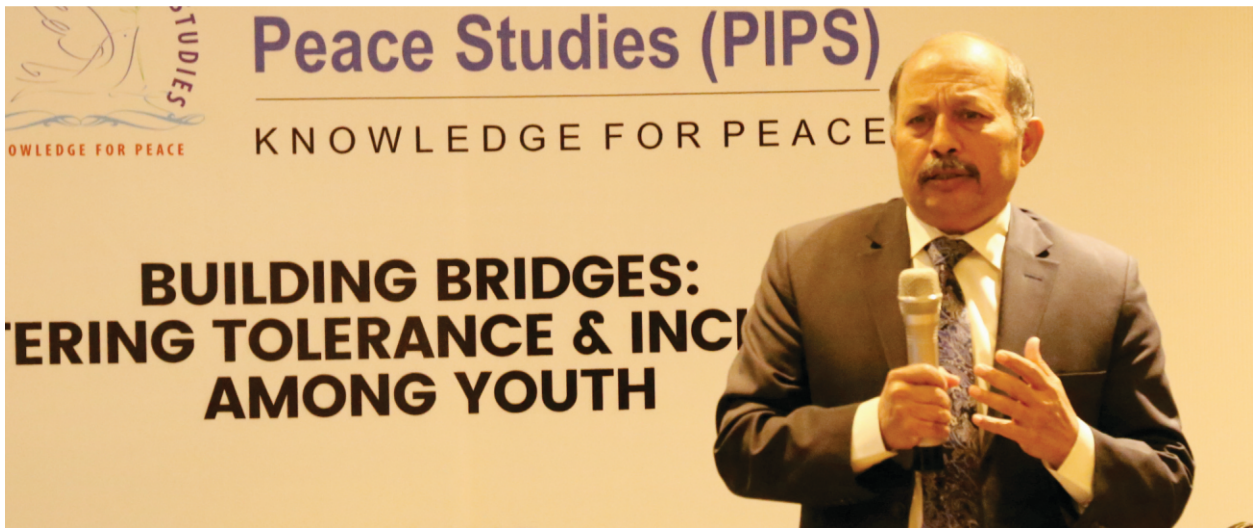
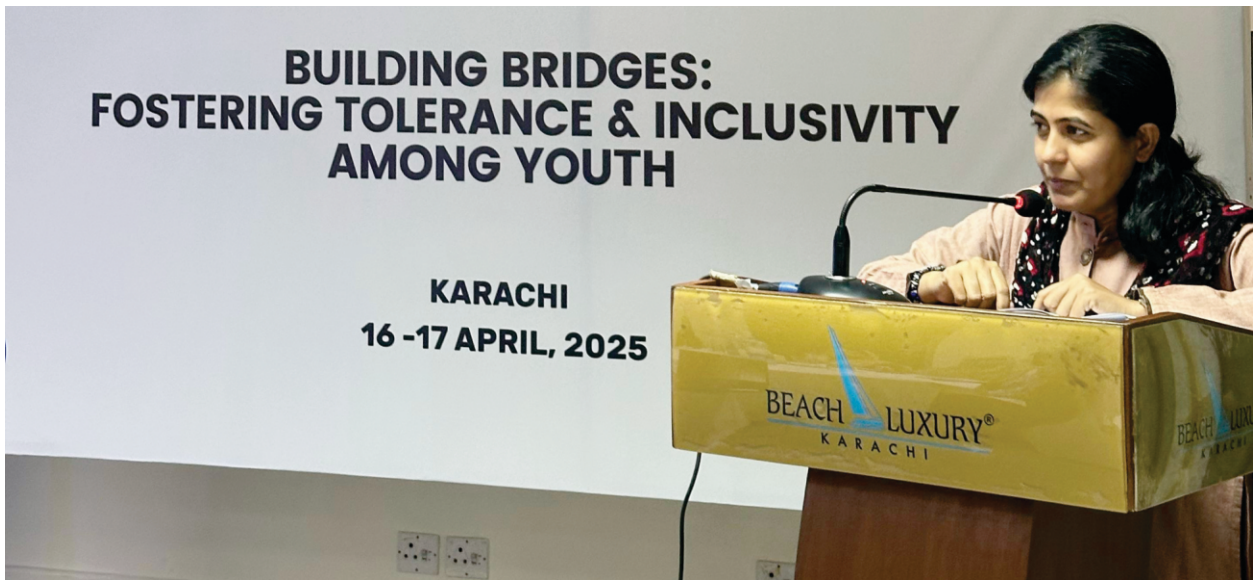


The formative years of youth represent a critical stage where ideas, loyalties, and ambitions take shape. This period provides both opportunities for constructive growth and risks of exploitation by radical or extremist forces. Just as individuals are encouraged to create a “syllabus of life” through education, reading, and reflection, the lack of guidance, exposure to misinformation, or disillusionment can distort this learning process. As history shows, student movements, whether in France in 1968 or during the creation of Pakistan, demonstrated the capacity of youth to mobilize and shape societies. Their quest for knowledge, critical inquiry, and community engagement reflected the positive potential of youth activism. However, when these same energies are misdirected, manipulated, or left unguided, they can turn toward radicalization.

The formative years of youth represent a critical stage where ideas, loyalties, and ambitions take shape. This period provides both opportunities for constructive growth and risks of exploitation by radical or extremist forces. Just as individuals are encouraged to create a “syllabus of life” through education, reading, and reflection, the lack of guidance, exposure to misinformation, or disillusionment can distort this learning process. As history shows, student movements, whether in France in 1968 or during the creation of Pakistan, demonstrated the capacity of youth to mobilize and shape societies. Their quest for knowledge, critical inquiry, and community engagement reflected the positive potential of youth activism. However, when these same energies are misdirected, manipulated, or left unguided, they can turn toward radicalization.

Taken together, these perspectives highlight how youth radicalization is not simply the product of ideological indoctrination but emerges from a complex interplay of misinformation, political manipulation, lack of positive outlets, and absence of critical education. Where student movements in history once thrived on knowledge and intellectual debate, today’s youth face the challenge of navigating an information environment saturated with distortion and propaganda. Countering this requires promoting media literacy, fostering constructive civic spaces, and enabling youth to harness their energy for social change rather than radical pathways







Key Findings and Analysis

The survey study was conducted after a comprehensive study of the prevailing social patterns and attitudes of the populace. However, survey data often encounter several common issues. Respondents may provide answers they perceive as socially acceptable rather than truthful, a phenomenon known as social desirability bias. Additionally, they may decline to answer certain sensitive questions, leading to gaps in data. This nonresponse bias can result in skewed findings, as those who choose not to respond may systematically withhold specific viewpoints.

The survey study was conducted across major urban centers of Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and Punjab, aiming to identify the existing social patterns within society. Since society is composed of multiple building blocks, with youth being the core foundation, it ultimately determines the future course of the nation, not just individual communities. The thinking patterns assessed through this survey provide an optimistic view of young minds. There is widespread acceptance of equal rights for all individuals living in the country. However, the openness of respondents varies from province to province, reflecting the dominant social behaviors adopted in each area.

Urban centers across these provinces reflect mixed approaches. Cities such as Lahore and Rawalpindi in Punjab, Karachi and Hyderabad in Sindh, Peshawar in KP, and Quetta in Balochistan show a willingness among youth to engage in dialogue and accept change, despite the historical or regional challenges. In South Punjab, the roots of extremism and conservative thought persist due to the past influence of religious practices, organizations, and parties. Sindh remains vibrant and dynamic, shaped by its rich cultural and historical heritage, which promotes inclusivity and openness.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly in Swat, deradicalization initiatives have left a noticeable impact on youth and society, fostering tolerance and engagement with diverse communities. In Balochistan, while security concerns shape perceptions of religion, urban populations still display cautious openness and dialogue.

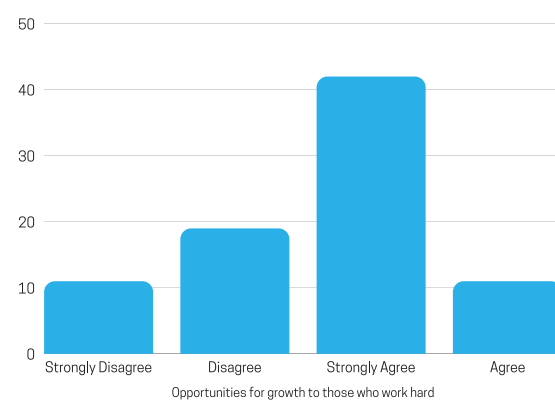
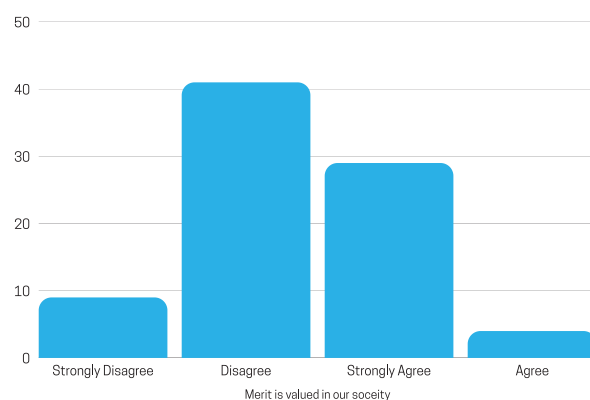
This emerging trend can be attributed in part to the growing presence of social media. Social media consumption is now shaping the population's worldview, which in turn deconstructs and reconstructs the social fabric of society. This shift offers a positive outlook for coexistence, as Pakistan is a country rich in diversity. Diversity, in turn, necessitates tolerance within society, which is essential for flourishing in the modern world.

6.1 Education

Education and awareness must be the most important parts of our lives. Education should not be limited to some course books and cramming. Education should involve learning skills, reading books, and interacting with the people around us. The more we have exposure to the world, the more we understand things. Mr. Amir Rana urged the youth to contribute to the knowledge economy of the world. He stated that this is a technology-driven age. We must focus on research and technological transformations. Building on this perspective, the subsequent analysis highlights how education and awareness intersect with interfaith understanding, social attitudes, and regional differences, shaping a more informed and cohesive society.

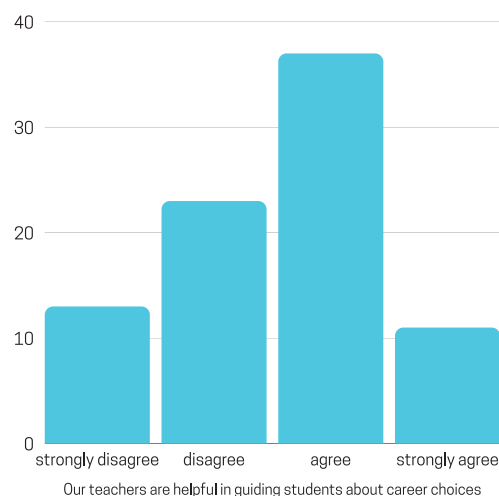
On the question of whether merit is valued in our society, the responses revealed a sharp divide. Nearly half of the participants disagreed, indicating that they do not see merit as a guiding principle in opportunities and outcomes. A further 10.8 percent strongly disagreed, showing an even deeper skepticism about the role of merit in society. On the other hand, 34.9 percent strongly agreed that merit is valued, while only 4.8 percent agreed, reflecting that a smaller segment holds a more positive outlook. These results suggest that although more than one-third of the respondents expressed strong faith in meritocracy, the majority around 60 percent, remained doubtful or outright rejected its presence. This highlights the prevailing perception of inequality and favoritism in the social and institutional structures of Pakistan. The notion that hard work leads to growth opportunities is closely tied to the principle of fairness in society. When young people believe their efforts will be rewarded, it encourages them to invest in education, skills, and personal development, ultimately strengthening the social fabric.

In response to the statement, “Our society gives opportunities for growth to those who work hard,” the majority of participants expressed optimism. Half of the respondents (50.6 percent) strongly agreed, while another 13.3 percent agreed. This means that nearly two-thirds (around 64 percent) believed that hard work is indeed recognized and rewarded in society. On the other hand, a notable portion of respondents held the opposite view, 22.9 percent disagreed and 13.3 percent strongly disagreed, signaling that over one-third of the sample did not perceive equal opportunities arising from effort alone.



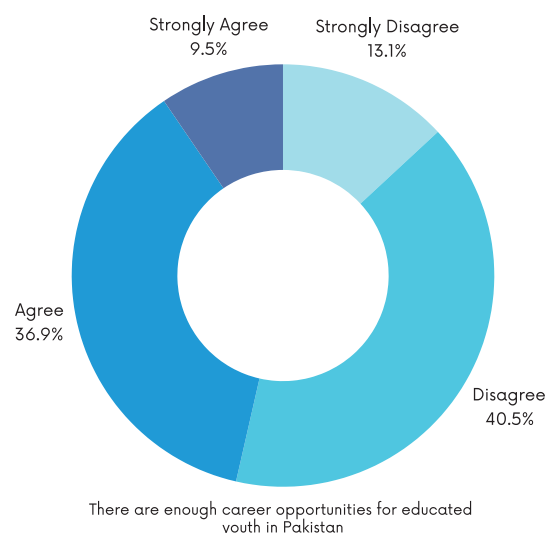
This mix of optimism and skepticism highlights a dual reality: while many youth still believe in the value of hard work, a considerable number feel constrained by systemic barriers such as nepotism, lack of resources, and unequal access to opportunities. Career guidance is an essential element in shaping the future of young people, and teachers often serve as the first mentors who can influence students' choices. Their support not only helps students understand available opportunities but also allows them to align personal interests with professional pathways.

In response to the statement, “Our teachers are helpful in guiding students about career choices,” the survey results present a divided picture. Out of 84 respondents, nearly half (44 percent) agreed, while an additional 13.1 percent strongly agreed, suggesting that a majority (57.1 percent) felt their teachers were supportive in career guidance. However, a considerable proportion reported dissatisfaction: 27.4 percent disagreed and 15.5 percent strongly disagreed, meaning that 42.9 percent did not perceive adequate guidance from teachers.



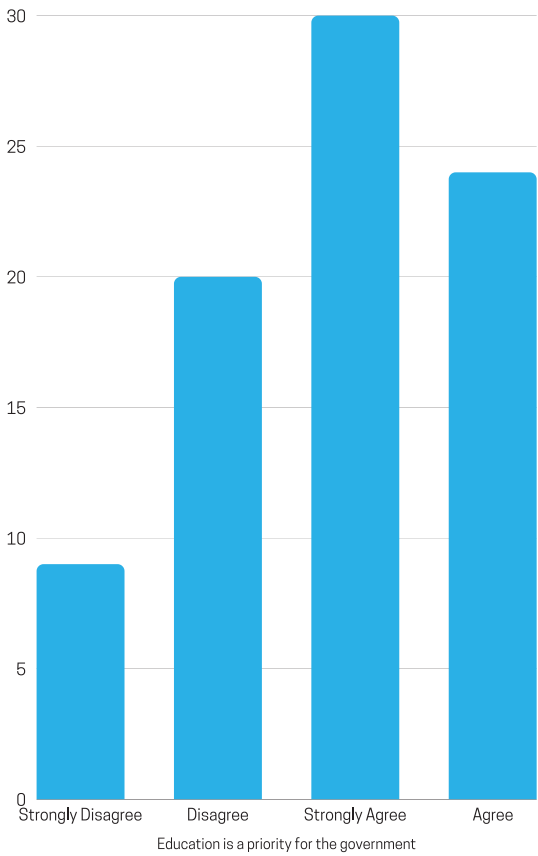
This split in opinion reflects both the presence of dedicated teachers who take on the responsibility of mentoring students, as well as the gaps in institutional mechanisms for career counseling in many educational settings. It underlines the need to strengthen structured guidance systems, so that students from all backgrounds receive equal support in navigating their career choices.

The availability of career opportunities is one of the most critical concerns for educated youth in Pakistan. Employment prospects not only determine individual success but also influence social stability, economic growth, and young people's confidence in the system. Out of 84 respondents, 53.6 percent disagreed with the statement, including 40.5 percent who simply disagreed and 13.1 percent who strongly disagreed. On the other hand, 36.9 percent agreed and 9.5 percent strongly agreed, bringing the total share of those with a positive outlook to 46.4 percent.



This near-even divide highlights the structural imbalance in Pakistan’s job market. While almost half of the respondents recognize some availability of opportunities, a larger share remain unconvinced, pointing toward widespread frustration among educated youth who struggle to find suitable employment. The results underscore the urgency for comprehensive reforms in education-to-employment pathways, greater investment in job creation, and stronger linkages between skills training and market demand. Education is often described as the backbone of national development, shaping human capital and driving social mobility. The extent to which governments prioritize education is therefore a key determinant of progress and public trust in state institutions.

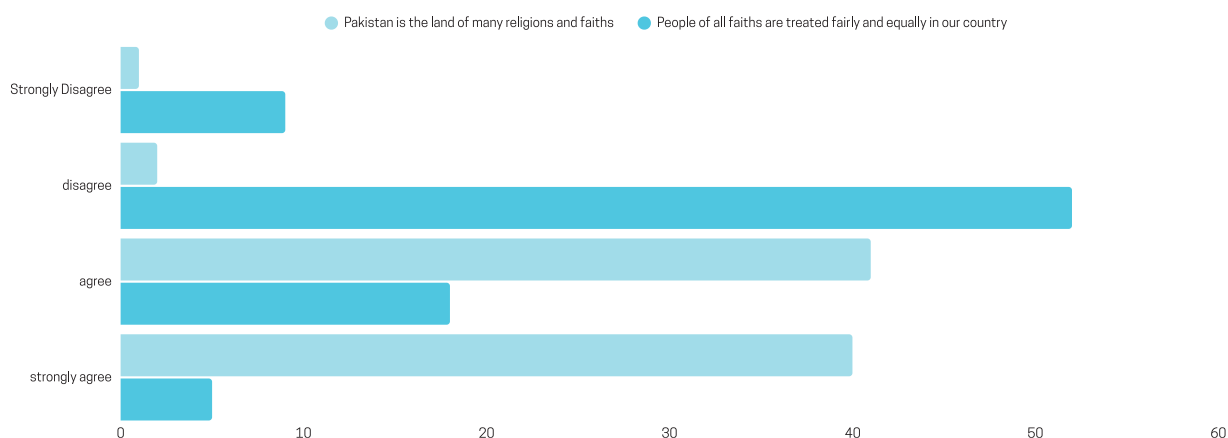
When respondents were asked whether “Education is a priority for the government,” the overall perception leaned positively, though with a meaningful share of skepticism. Out of 84 respondents, a combined majority of 64.6 percent agreed, with 28.9 percent agreeing and 36.1 percent strongly agreeing. In contrast, 34.9 percent expressed doubt, 23.8 percent disagreed and 10.7 percent strongly disagreed with the statement. This shows that while a majority recognize education as a government priority, over one-third of participants remain unconvinced, reflecting possible dissatisfaction with the quality of policies, budget allocations, or implementation gaps in the education sector. The results suggest that although the state is seen to emphasize education in rhetoric and planning, the lived experiences of citizens reveal concerns about the adequacy and effectiveness of such efforts.



6.2 Religion

Pakistan’s social fabric is deeply tied to religion, yet its history and demography reflect the presence of multiple faith traditions. When asked whether “Pakistan is the land of many religions and faiths,” an overwhelming majority of respondents agreed. Out of 84 participants, 96.4 percent affirmed the statement, with 48.8 percent agreeing and 47.6 percent strongly agreeing. Only a very small fraction, 3.6 percent, disagreed or strongly disagreed. This near-consensus highlights that most respondents recognize

Such acknowledgment is significant, as it demonstrates an awareness of diversity and a broader acceptance of the fact that the Pakistani nation is not monolithic in religious composition. The minimal disagreement indicates that denial of religious plurality is rare within this sample, reflecting a generally inclusive perception of Pakistan's identity.



While most respondents recognized Pakistan as the land of many religions, their views about the fair treatment of different faith communities were much more critical. When asked whether “People of all faiths are treated fairly and equally in our country,” nearly three-fourths (72.6 percent) disagreed with the statement, including 61.9 percent who simply disagreed and 10.7 percent who strongly disagreed.

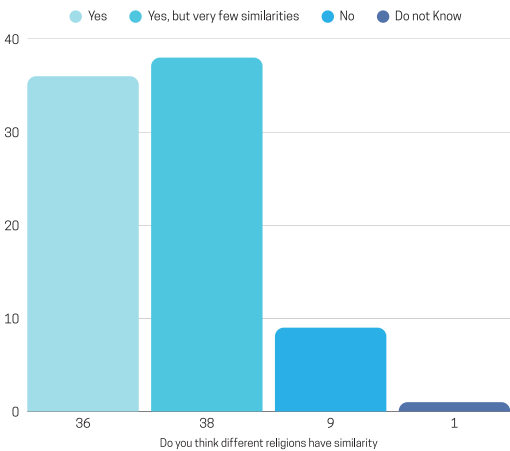
Only 27.4 percent agreed, with 21.4 percent agreeing and a very small proportion (6.0 percent) strongly agreeing. This sharp contrast reveals a gap between acknowledging Pakistan's religious diversity and ensuring equality in practice. While the majority accept that the country is home to many religions, they remain skeptical about whether the state and society provide equal treatment to all.

The findings highlight a prevailing sense of inequality, suggesting that respondents perceive discrimination and marginalization against certain religious groups. This perception could undermine social cohesion and signal the need for stronger measures to promote inclusivity and equal citizenship in Pakistan.

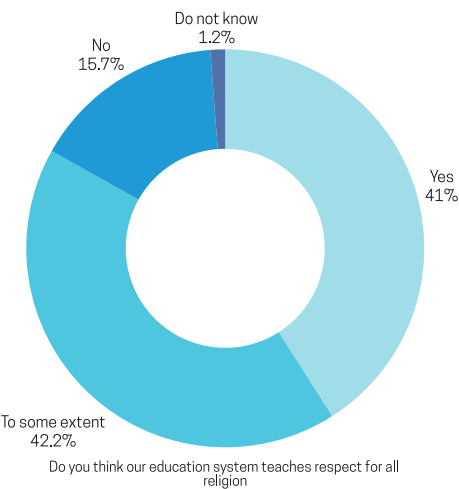
The responses to the question on whether different religions have similarities show that the majority of participants recognize some form of common ground among faiths. About 42.9 percent agreed that religions share similarities, while a slightly larger proportion, 45.2 percent, acknowledged similarities but believed they are very limited. Only 10.7 percent rejected the idea of any resemblance, and 1.2 percent were unsure.

These findings suggest that while most respondents acknowledge a degree of shared values across religions, many also perceive such similarities as minimal. This indicates both openness toward interfaith commonalities and a cautious recognition of religious differences, reflecting a nuanced understanding among the participants.

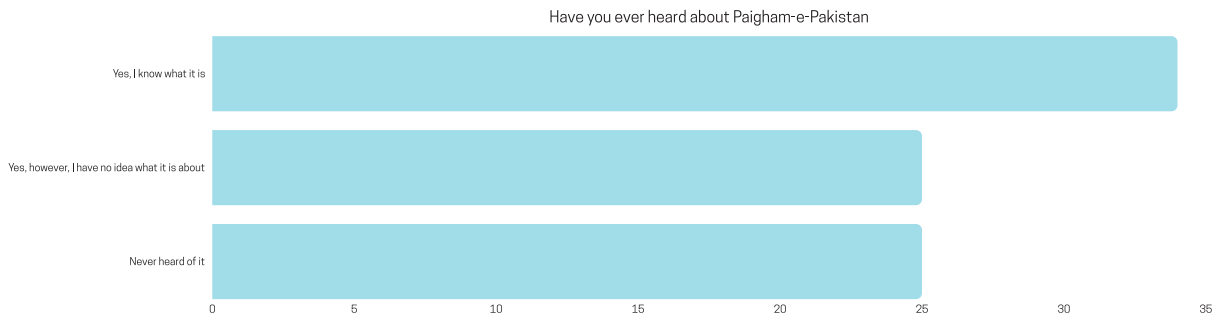
When asked if the education system teaches respect for all religions reveal a mixed picture. A considerable portion of respondents, 40.5 percent, believed that the system does instill religious respect, while an almost equal proportion, 41.7 percent, felt that it does so only to some extent. This highlights that while there is a recognition of certain efforts within the curriculum to promote tolerance, many see them as insufficient or incomplete.



Meanwhile, 15.5 percent of participants expressed the view that the education system fails to teach respect for different religions altogether, and a very small fraction, 1.2 percent, remained uncertain. Taken together, more than four-fifths of respondents acknowledged some level of religious respect being taught, but less than half considered it to be adequate, pointing to the need for greater emphasis on interfaith understanding and inclusivity in educational frameworks.



The findings on awareness of Paigham-e-Pakistan reveal a divided understanding among respondents. About 40.5 percent stated that they know what it is, while another 29.8 percent had heard of it but were unaware of its purpose or content. An equal proportion, 29.8 percent, reported never having heard of it at all. This distribution highlights that while a significant portion of youth are at least familiar with the name, nearly 60 percent either lack knowledge about its substance or are completely unaware of the initiative. This indicates a gap in outreach and dissemination, suggesting the need for stronger awareness campaigns to ensure that such national initiatives achieve their intended impact.

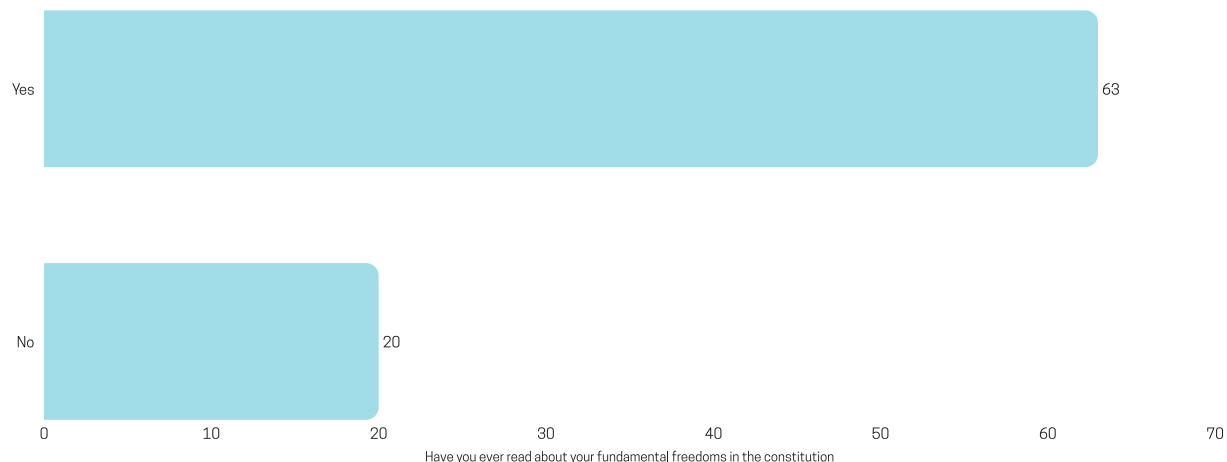


6.3 Constitution and Civic sense

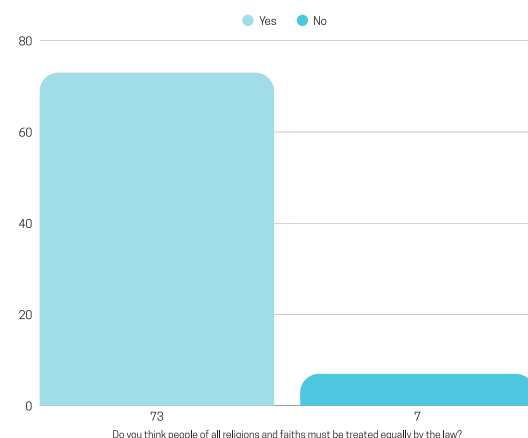
The responses regarding awareness of fundamental freedoms in the Constitution show that a large majority, 75.9 percent, have read about their constitutional rights, while 24.1 percent admitted they have not. This suggests that most respondents possess at least some knowledge of their basic rights, reflecting a degree of civic awareness. However, the fact that nearly one-fourth of participants remain uninformed points to an important gap in constitutional literacy.



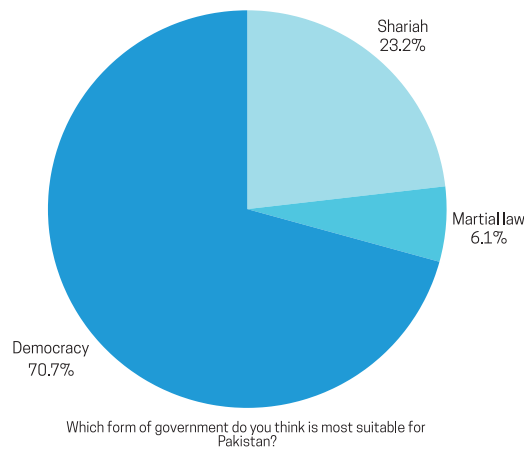
Strengthening civic education within schools, universities, and public awareness campaigns could help bridge this gap and ensure a wider understanding of fundamental freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution. The responses regarding awareness of fundamental freedoms in the Constitution show that a large majority, 75.9 percent, have read about their constitutional rights, while 24.1 percent admitted they have not. This suggests that most respondents possess at least some knowledge of their basic rights, reflecting a degree of civic awareness.



The results show that an overwhelming majority, 88 percent, believe that people of all religions and faiths must be treated equally by the law. Only 8.4 percent disagreed, while 3.6 percent remained uncertain. This indicates a strong societal consensus on the principle of legal equality across faiths, reflecting broad support for religious pluralism and constitutional guarantees of equal rights.

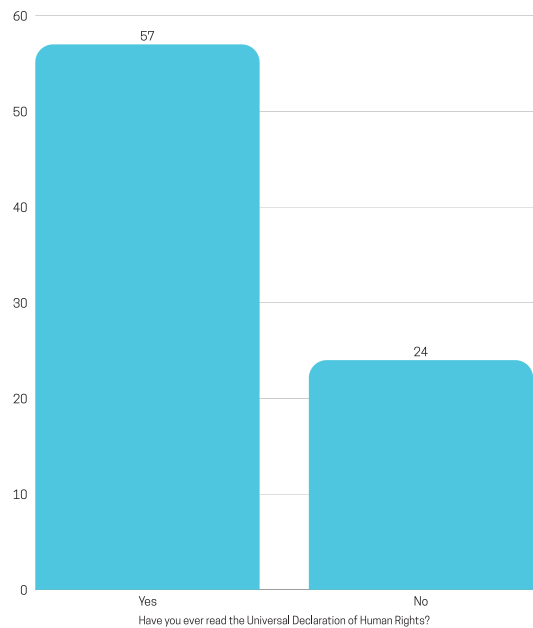


However, the small segment opposing or unsure highlights that challenges still exist in fully embedding the principle of equal treatment within social attitudes. Strengthening legal enforcement and awareness campaigns could help bridge this gap and reinforce inclusivity.



The findings reveal that a clear majority, 70.7 percent, consider democracy as the most suitable form of government for Pakistan. In contrast, 23.2 percent prefer a Shariah-based system, while only 6.1 percent support martial law. This distribution highlights a strong inclination towards democratic governance, reflecting public confidence in participatory politics and civilian rule. At the same time, the considerable support for Shariah suggests that religion continues to play an important role in shaping political preferences. The limited backing for martial law indicates that authoritarian alternatives are largely unpopular, though not absent. Overall, the results suggest that while democracy is the dominant aspiration, it is expected to coexist with religious considerations in the public imagination.

The results show that 70.4 percent of respondents have read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, indicating a significant level of awareness about international human rights standards among the participants. However, 29.6 percent reported that they have never read it, suggesting that nearly one-third of the sample lacks direct familiarity with this fundamental document. This finding points towards a generally encouraging trend of human rights awareness, while also highlighting the need for broader dissemination and education to ensure that all citizens.

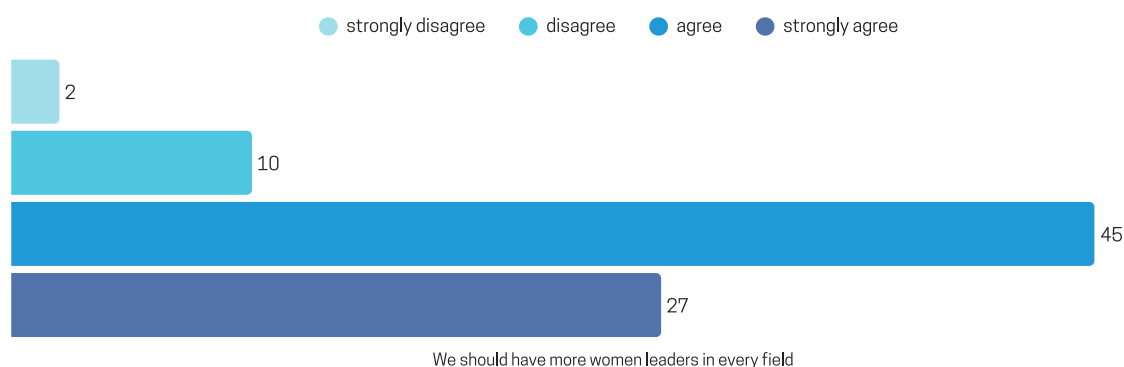


6.4 Gender

Pakistan is also a signatory of the human rights document that makes it obligatory for the state to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. There are many barriers in achieving gender equality in the country like Pakistan. The major challenges are cultural barriers, weak enforcement of law and limits to women's access to opportunities.



The legal framework should be strengthened. Awareness about the existing laws and regulations. The active participation of all genders must be promoted at all levels. On the question of whether “We should have more women leaders in every field,” the responses reflected strong support for women's leadership in Pakistan. A majority of respondents endorsed the idea, with 53.6 percent agreeing and another 32.1 percent strongly agreeing. This means more than four out of every five participants favored greater female representation in leadership roles.

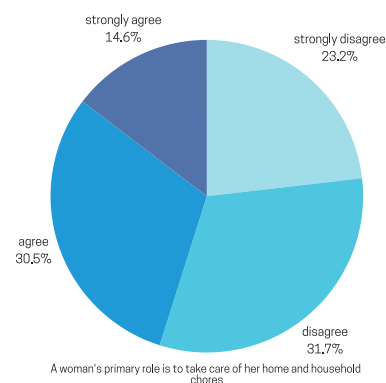


By contrast, only a small minority—2.4 percent strongly disagreeing and 11.9 percent disagreeing expressed resistance to the idea. This shows that negative perceptions about women in leadership persist but remain limited compared to the overall positive outlook. The findings suggest that there is a growing societal openness toward gender equality in leadership.

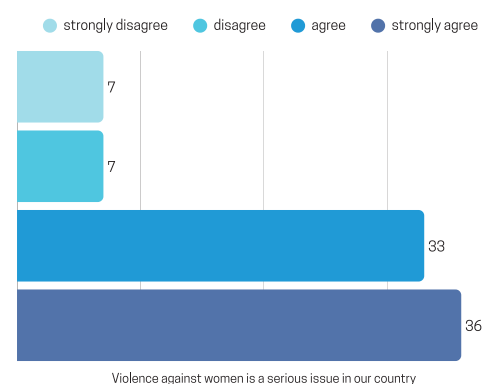
They reflect a recognition that women can contribute equally in politics, business, education, and other fields, and that their inclusion is important for progress. These attitudes could encourage greater policy focus on women's empowerment and leadership development programs across sectors.

In the statement “A woman's primary role is to take care of her home and household chores,” the responses showed a significant divide in social attitudes. A majority of respondents rejected this traditional view: 22.6 percent strongly disagreed and 31 percent disagreed, making up 53.6 percent who challenged the idea that women should be confined to household responsibilities. However, a sizeable proportion still supported the statement. Around 29.8 percent agreed and 14.3 percent strongly agreed, showing that nearly 45 percent of respondents continue to endorse traditional gender roles.

The findings reflect a transitional mindset in society—while progressive attitudes toward women’s roles are gaining ground, traditional expectations remain influential. This duality suggests that although many recognize women’s potential beyond domestic responsibilities, deeply embedded cultural norms still shape how gender roles are understood.

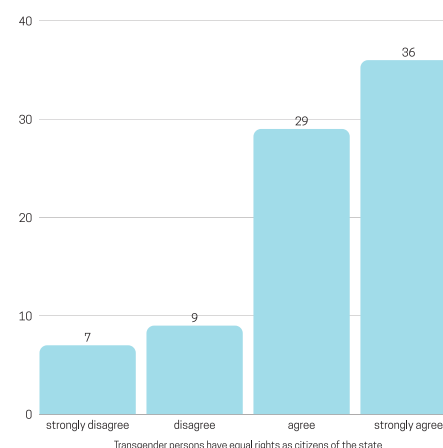


On the statement “Violence against women is a serious issue in our country,” an overwhelming majority of respondents acknowledged the gravity of the problem. About 39.3 percent agreed and 42.9 percent strongly agreed, meaning more than four out of five respondents (over 82 percent) recognized violence against women as a serious concern in Pakistan. Only a small fraction disagreed: 8.3 percent strongly disagreed and another 8.3 percent disagreed.



These findings underline a broad awareness among participants about gender-based violence, reflecting both its visibility in society and its persistence as a challenge. While cultural barriers and traditional attitudes remain, the high acknowledgment rate suggests that public discourse around women’s safety and rights is resonating widely.

On the statement “Transgender persons have equal rights as citizens of the state,” the responses reveal a strong recognition of inclusivity. A significant majority either agreed (34.5 percent) or strongly agreed (42.9 percent), meaning more than three-fourths of the respondents (about 80 percent) affirmed that transgender persons are entitled to equal citizenship rights.

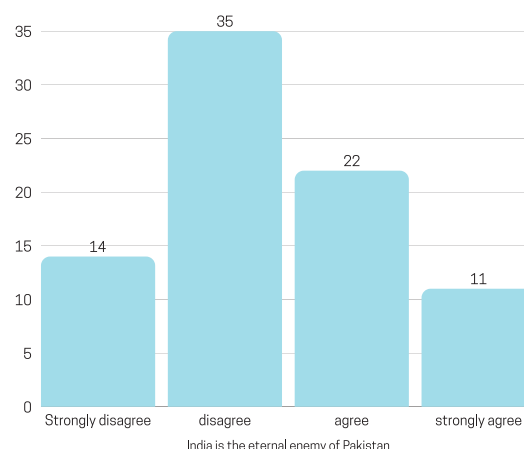


In contrast, a minority expressed dissent: 8.3 percent strongly disagreed and 10.7 percent disagreed, together making up about one-fifth of the sample. This indicates that while acceptance is growing, resistance to transgender rights persists among a segment of society. The overall trend highlights a positive outlook toward the constitutional and social inclusion of transgender citizens in Pakistan. It also suggests a generational or attitudinal shift, where awareness and advocacy for marginalized communities are gaining momentum, even though social stigma has not been entirely eliminated.

6.5 Cross Country Questions

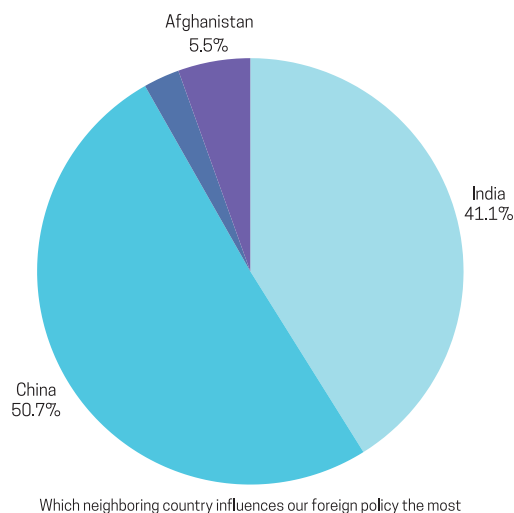
On the statement “India is the eternal enemy of Pakistan,” the responses reveal a divided yet largely non-adversarial perspective. A majority of the respondents either disagreed (41.7 percent) or strongly disagreed (16.7 percent), making up nearly 60 percent who rejected the notion of India being Pakistan’s “eternal” enemy.

On the other hand, 26.2 percent agreed and 13.1 percent strongly agreed, showing that about 40 percent still perceive India as a perpetual adversary.



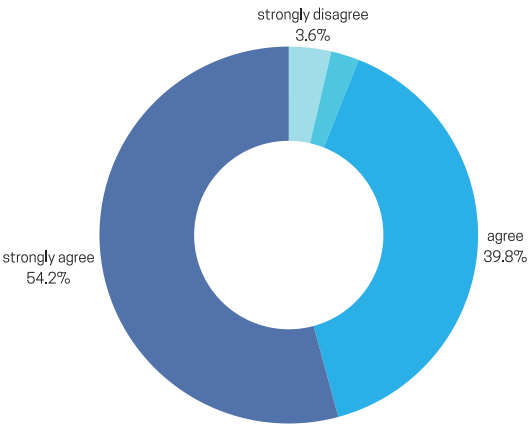
This indicates that while a significant segment of the population is moving away from rigid and permanent hostility narratives, a sizeable proportion continues to hold onto traditional security-centric views shaped by the history of conflict between the two states. Overall, the results suggest a generational and ideological divide: some respondents view relations with India through a fixed lens of enmity, while a larger portion appears open to rethinking bilateral relations beyond the framework of perpetual hostility.

On the question “Which neighboring country influences our foreign policy the most?” the results highlight two dominant actors: China (44 percent) and India (35.7 percent). China emerges as the most frequently cited influence, with half of the valid respondents (50.7 percent) recognizing its weight, reflecting the depth of Pakistan’s strategic economic, and defense ties with Beijing. India follows closely at 41.1 percent, indicating that historical rivalry and security concerns still heavily condition Pakistan’s external orientation.

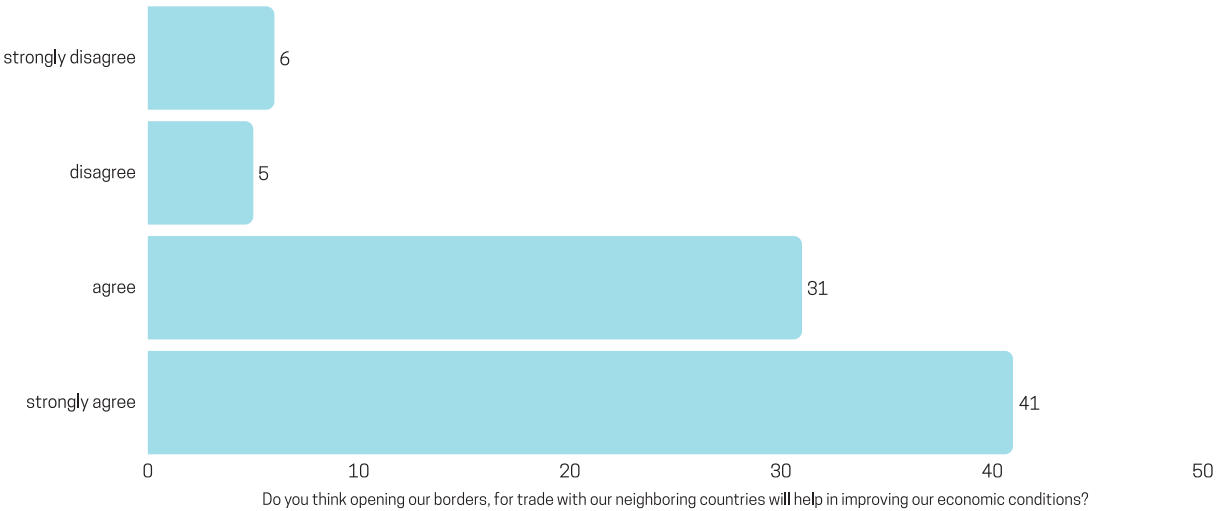


By contrast, Afghanistan (4.8 percent) and Iran (2.4 percent) received minimal mention, suggesting that while these neighbors are relevant in security and border management, they are not perceived as primary determinants of Pakistan’s foreign policy direction. The overall trend suggests that Pakistan’s foreign policy is seen as structured around a dual axis: balancing strategic partnership with China while managing conflictual relations with India.

On the question “Youth engagement in cross-country initiatives can enhance Pakistan's diplomatic relationships,” the responses are overwhelmingly positive. A majority of participants strongly agree (53.6 percent), while another 39.3 percent agree, meaning over 93 percent of respondents recognize the constructive role of youth in diplomacy.



Only a very small fraction, 3.6 percent, strongly disagree and 2.4 percent disagreeexpress skepticism. This near-consensus highlights a strong societal belief in the potential of youth as soft power actors who can foster dialogue, build cultural bridges, and improve Pakistan’s image abroad. The findings suggest that young people are widely viewed not just as beneficiaries of foreign policy but as active stakeholders capable of contributing to public diplomacy, peacebuilding, and people-to-people connections. On the question “Do you think opening our borders for trade with neighboring countries will help in improving our economic conditions?”, the majority of respondents expressed optimism. Nearly 49 percent strongly agree and 37 percent agree, bringing the combined support to over 86 percent.



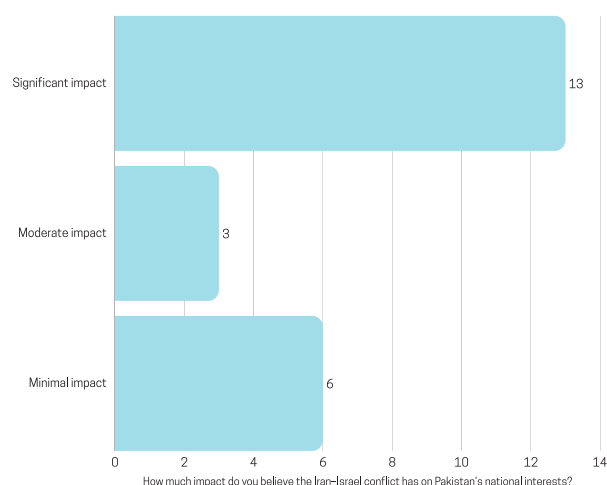
Only a small segment expressed opposition, with 7.1 percent strongly disagreeing and 6 percent disagreeing. This indicates that skepticism exists but is marginal compared to the strong consensus in favor of regional trade. Such findings also resonate with economic theories that emphasize trade liberalization and regional cooperation as drivers of development.

Collectively, these findings suggest a forward-looking and engagement-oriented mindset, where participants favor pragmatic regional collaboration, recognize the importance of youth participation, and are cautiously optimistic about balancing historical tensions with opportunities for diplomacy and economic growth.

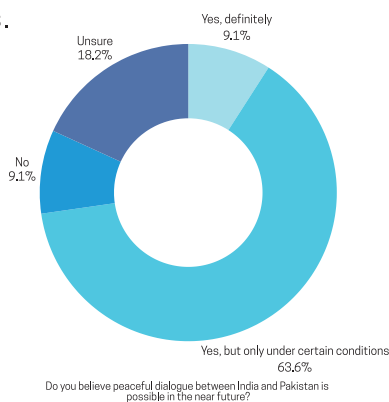
6.6 Regional Developments

Recent developments in South Asia, including ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan and Iran Israel conflict, have raised concerns about their implications for regional stability & Pakistan's national interests. Understanding

These conflicts is crucial, as they shape both public perception and the strategic environment in which Pakistan navigates its foreign policy and security priorities. Overall, the data demonstrates that a significant proportion of youth recognize the Iran-Israel conflict as geopolitically important for Pakistan, but there remains a noticeable diversity in opinion, reflecting varying levels of awareness and understanding of international relations and regional security dynamics.

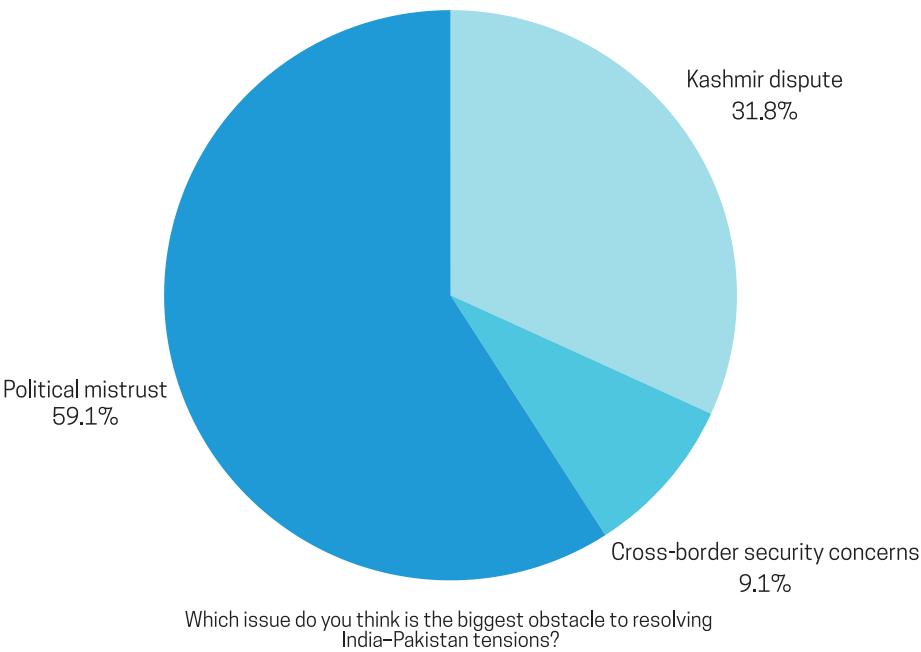


On question is whether optimism prevails among youth about India and Pakistan relations. The responses highlight that the majority of youth 64% believe that peaceful dialogue between India and Pakistan is possible, but only under certain conditions. This indicates a cautious optimism where youth recognize the potential for dialogue but see it as contingent on specific preconditions such as political will, mutual trust, or resolution of contentious issues.



The majority of respondents (64%) identify political mistrust as the primary obstacle to improving India Pakistan relations. This highlights a perception that deep-seated suspicion and lack of confidence between the political leadership and institutions of both countries hinder meaningful dialogue and conflict resolution.

The Kashmir dispute emerges as the second most cited issue, mentioned by respondents (32%), reflecting its continued centrality in bilateral tensions.



Comparative analysis

Respondents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa demonstrated a notable openness toward discussions on education and politics. Many had been exposed to religious extremism in some form, yet the de-radicalization initiatives in regions such as Swat have had a visible impact. Students were more receptive to change, showing a willingness to engage in dialogue, accept new perspectives, and reflect critically on religious and social issues.

In Punjab, students were largely open to engaging in conversations around politics and religion, with a few exceptions in South Punjab where religious conservatism was more pronounced. Overall, the province exhibited an active engagement with social and political discourse, balancing openness to dialogue with localized traditional views.

The Province Sindh displayed a high degree of diversity and inclusivity, shaped by the province's heterogeneous demographic composition. Despite challenges faced by some non-majority communities, including pressures related to religious conversion, there was a prevailing emphasis on education, interfaith harmony, and cultural acceptance. These values are deeply rooted in Sindhi society, creating an environment conducive to dialogue and social cohesion.

In Balochistan, religion was primarily approached through a security lens, with respondents perceiving religious beliefs as potential tools for political or security agendas rather than purely spiritual guidance. Although the Hazara community has experienced a notable decline in persecution, broader concerns centered on the security implications of religious identity. This highlights a cautious and protective approach to interfaith relations in the province.

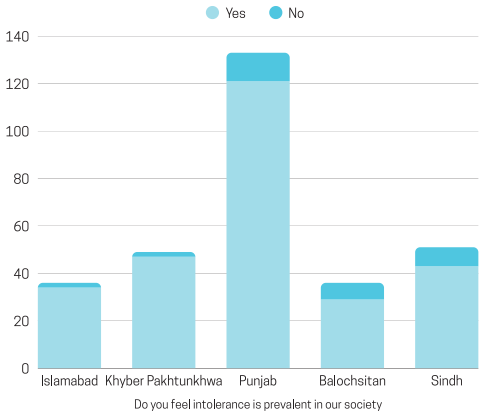
Overall, these provincial narratives illustrate how historical, cultural, and security contexts shape perceptions of religion, education, and politics across Pakistan. While some provinces show openness and inclusivity, others approach these issues with caution or localized conservatism, reflecting the diverse social fabric of the country.

7.1 Pre Workshop Survey

The findings reveal that intolerance is overwhelmingly recognized as a pressing issue across Pakistan, yet the intensity of this perception varies regionally. In Islamabad and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, near-unanimous majorities, over 94 percent, consider intolerance to be deeply rooted in society, highlighting a shared sense of urgency. Punjab reflects a similar but slightly more diverse pattern, where about nine out of ten respondents agree, but a small segment holds a different view.

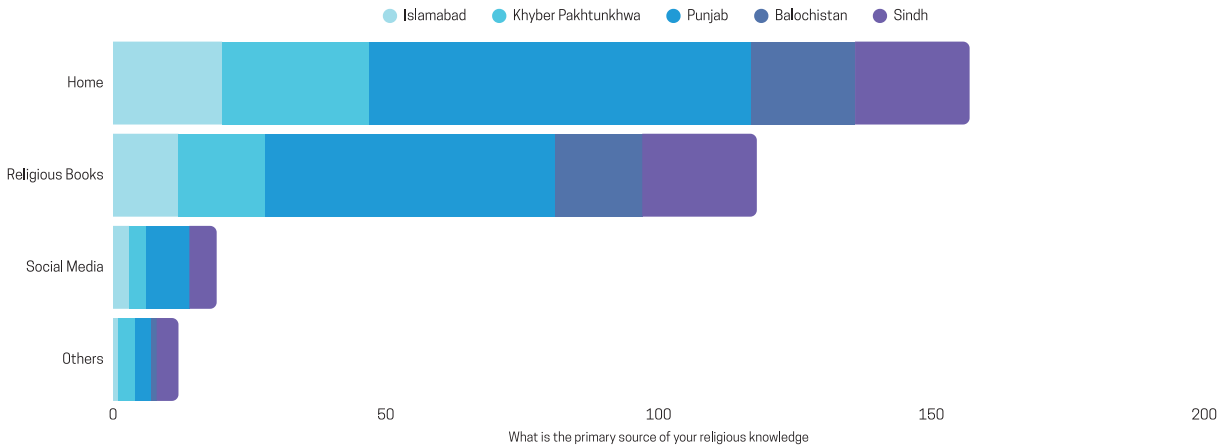
In contrast, Balochistan and Sindh present more fragmented perceptions: while a large majority in Balochistan still acknowledges intolerance, almost one-fifth deny its presence.

Sindh stands out with the lowest level of agreement, as only two-thirds recognize intolerance, and a significant portion refrains from responding altogether, suggesting hesitation, divided experiences, or social sensitivities in acknowledging the problem. Collectively, the data underscores a strong national consensus on intolerance as a societal challenge, yet the provincial differences indicate that the phenomenon is experienced and articulated in varied ways across the country.



7.1.1 Source of religious knowledge

Pakistan’s youth largely learn religion at home and through books, underscoring the continued centrality of family norms and textual study. Digital platforms are present but not primary except in Sindh, where a more plural mix (including higher social media and “other” sources) hints at greater exposure to varied channels. Balochistan’s absence of social media as a primary source reinforces a traditional transmission model.

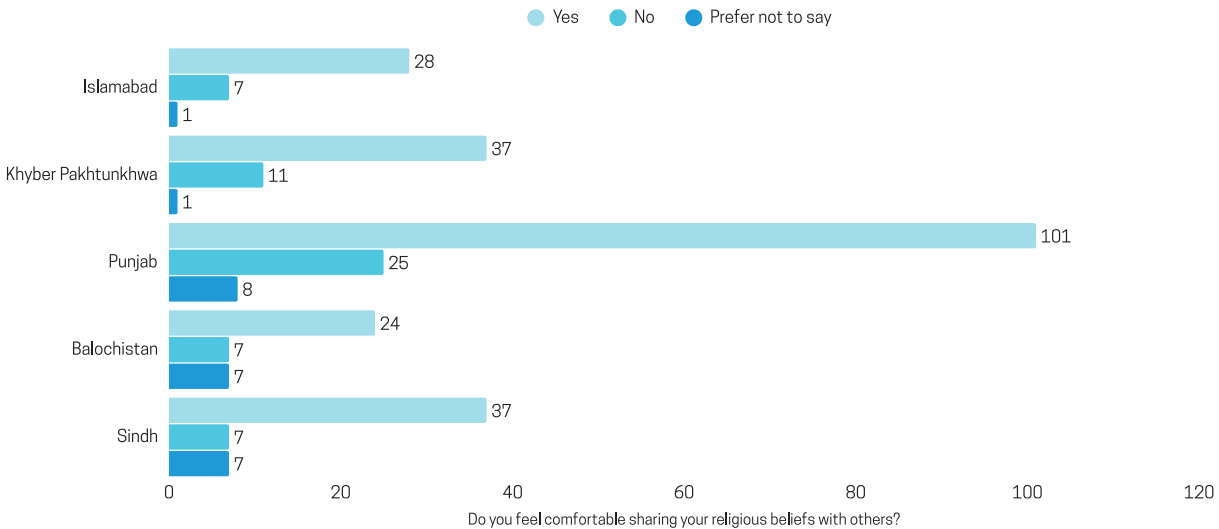


7.1.2 Comfort Levels in Sharing Religious Beliefs

When comparing responses across the provinces and Islamabad, clear regional differences emerge in how comfortable people feel sharing their religious beliefs. In Islamabad, a large majority (77.8 percent) reported comfort, with only 19.4 In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the overall trend was also positive, though slightly lower, with two-thirds (66.7 percent) feeling comfortable, 13.9 percent uncomfortable, and 19.4 percent preferring not to share. The proportion of those unwilling to disclose in KP was higher than in Punjab and Islamabad, suggesting a relatively more cautious environment.

In Balochistan, the picture was similar, with 66.7 percent expressing comfort, 13.9 percent discomfort, and 19.4 percent declining to answer. This mirrors KP’s pattern and points to a shared regional tendency toward greater caution in religious discussions compared to Punjab and Islamabad.

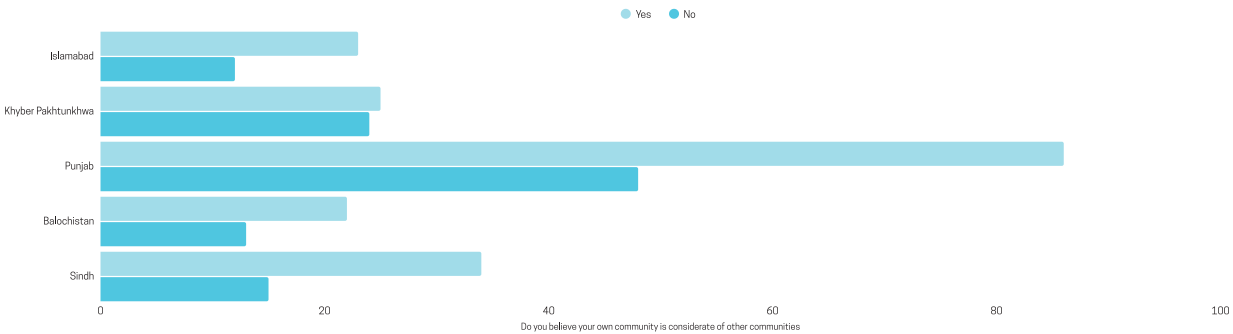
Sindh, however, presents a more distinct pattern. While 72.5 percent reported feeling comfortable, the share of those who either felt uncomfortable (13.7 percent) or preferred not to share (13.7 percent) was notably higher than in Punjab and Islamabad. This dual presence of hesitation and silence indicates a more divided or sensitive social climate regarding religious expression.



Overall, Punjab and Islamabad stand out for their relatively high comfort levels and low non-response rates, suggesting more open environments. KP and Balochistan reflect moderate comfort but much higher proportions of respondents withholding their views. Sindh occupies a middle ground: while a majority feels comfortable, a substantial segment avoids disclosure, highlighting regional nuances in the freedom and caution surrounding religious conversations

7.1.3 Community Attitudes Toward Other Communities

Nationally, the results point to a general belief that communities are considerate of others, with Punjab and Balochistan showing the strongest agreement. Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, however, reflected greater ambivalence: Sindh due to missing responses, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to its nearly even split between agreement

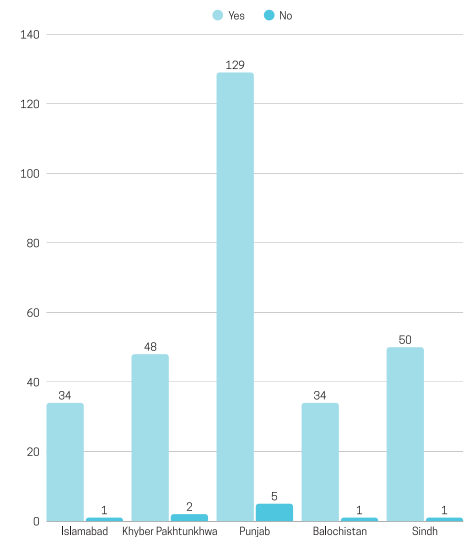


and disagreement. Islamabad fell in between, with a moderate majority leaning positive. This suggests that while optimism about inter-community consideration exists across Pakistan, regional variations highlight the need to understand local dynamics shaping these perceptions.

7.1.4 Perceived Role of Youth in Fostering Interfaith Harmony

Across all surveyed regions, the youth are overwhelmingly perceived as capable of promoting interfaith harmony. In Islamabad, 94.4% of respondents affirmed the youth’s important role, with only 2.8% dissenting. Similarly, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 96% of participants agreed, indicating a strong belief in the youth’s potential to foster religious tolerance.

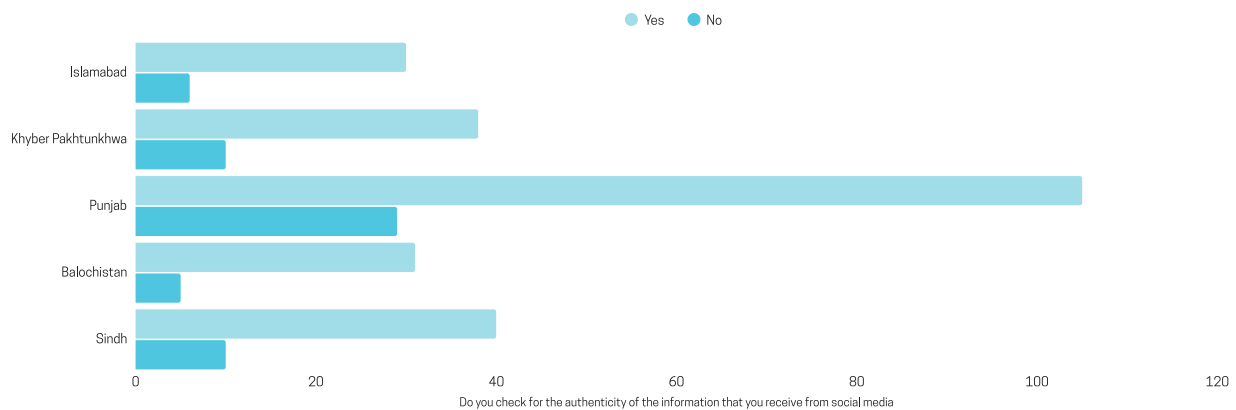
Punjab reflects a comparable trend, with 96.3% of respondents supporting this view. In Balochistan, although slightly lower, 76.9% of participants still recognized the youth as pivotal in promoting interfaith understanding, with 2% expressing disagreement. Overall, these results suggest a nationwide consensus that young people are key agents for encouraging interfaith dialogue, with minor regional variations in perception, particularly in Balochistan, which shows a comparatively smaller proportion of affirmative responses.



The participants were well informed and cognitively more rational as when asked if they verify the authenticity of the information circulating or received through, the responses indicate that a majority of respondents across all regions verify the authenticity of information they receive from social media, though the proportions vary slightly.

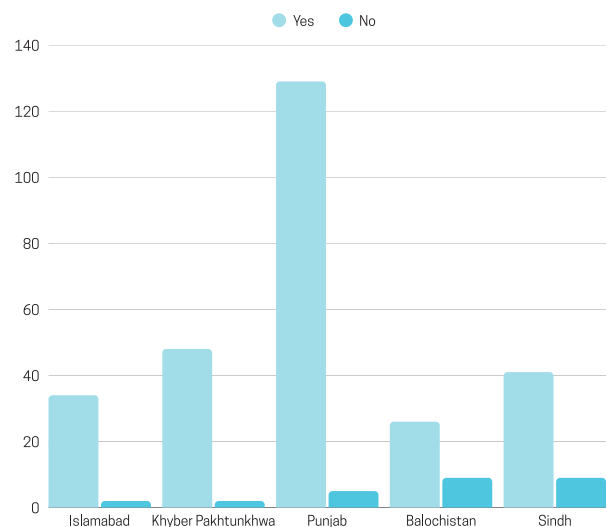
In KP, 83.3% of respondents check for authenticity, while 16.7% do not. Punjab shows a slightly lower proportion, with 78.4% verifying information and 21.6% not. Balochistan exhibits the highest vigilance, with 86.1% of respondents confirming that they check information, leaving 13.9% who do not. In Sindh, 80% of participants reported verifying social media content, whereas 20% do not, with a notable 23.1% missing responses.

Overall, while the youth in all four provinces demonstrate a general awareness of information authenticity, Balochistan leads slightly, and Punjab shows comparatively lower engagement in verification practices.



7.1.5 Significance of Interfaith Dialogue

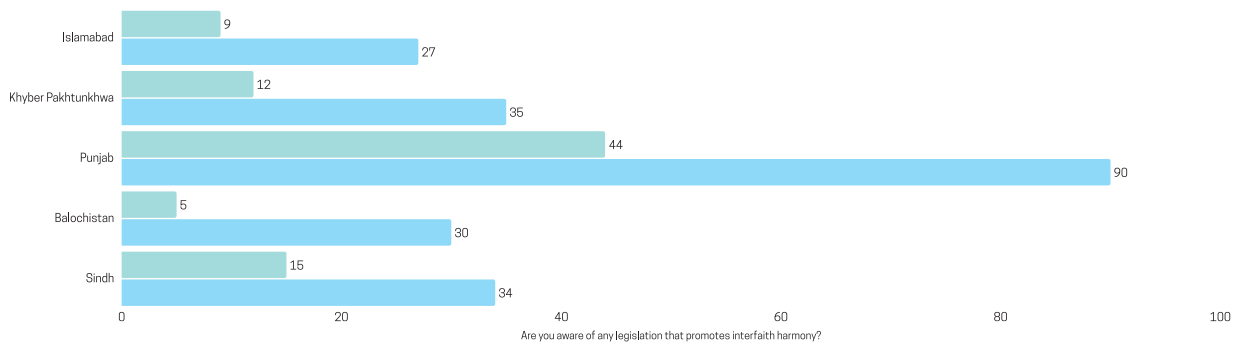
In Islamabad, a vast majority of 94.4 percent of respondents agreed that interfaith dialogue can help improve communal harmony, reflecting a strong positive perception. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa showed slightly lower support, with 82.0 percent of respondents in favor, though a significant 23.1 percent of the sample did not respond, suggesting some hesitancy or lack of engagement. Punjab recorded similarly high approval, with 96.3 percent agreeing that interfaith dialogue is beneficial, indicating strong consensus.



In Balochistan, while 74.3 percent supported the idea, a considerable 25.7 percent either disagreed or did not respond, showing comparatively less confidence in the effectiveness of interfaith dialogue. Overall, respondents from Islamabad and Punjab demonstrated the strongest belief in the positive role of interfaith dialogue, followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, where support was still majority but less overwhelming, reflecting regional differences in perceptions of communal engagement.

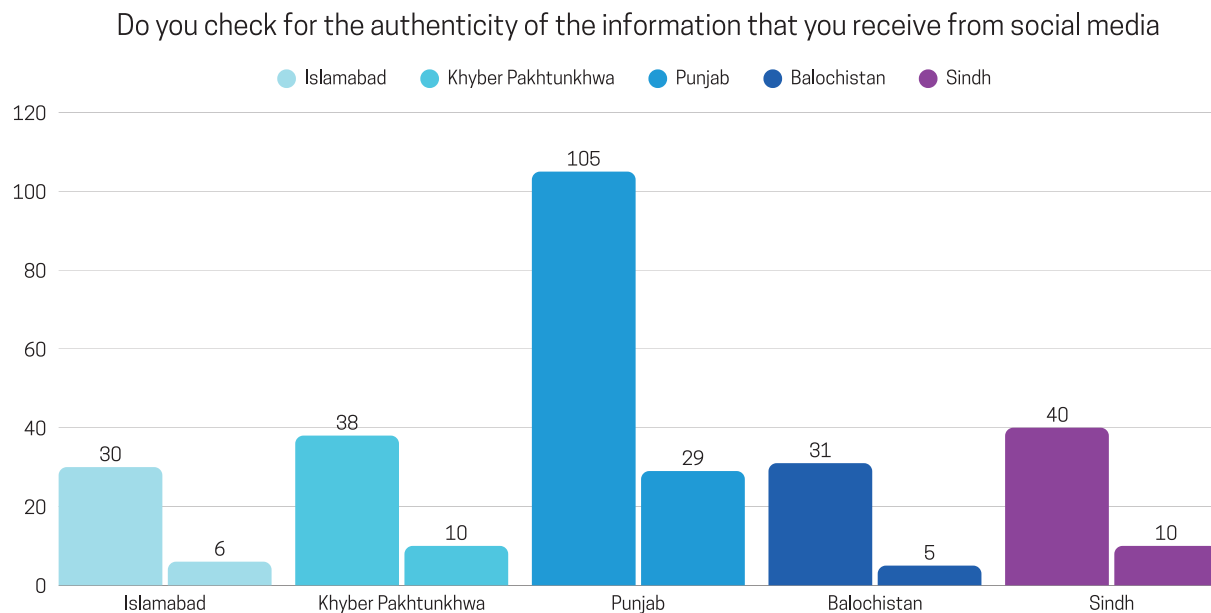
7.1.6 Knowledge of Legal Frameworks

When asked about whether the respondents “Are you aware of any legislation that promotes interfaith harmony?” results indicate that awareness of legislation promoting interfaith harmony is generally low across regions. In Islamabad, only 9 respondents (25%) reported being aware of such laws, while the majority (75%) were not. Similarly, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 12 respondents (24%) acknowledged awareness of relevant legislation, whereas 35 respondents (70%) were unaware. This reflects a widespread gap in public knowledge regarding legal frameworks designed to support interfaith harmony, highlighting the need for targeted awareness campaigns and educational initiatives to increase understanding of these legislative measures.



7.1.7 Information on Social Media

The survey results indicate that a majority of respondents across all regions verify the authenticity of information they receive from social media, though the proportions vary slightly. In KP, 83.3% of respondents check for authenticity, while 16.7% do not. Punjab shows a slightly lower proportion, with 78.4% verifying information, in contrast to 21.6% . Balochistan exhibits the highest 86.1% of respondents confirming that they check information, leaving 13.9% who do not. In Sindh, 80% of participants reported verifying social media content, whereas 20% do not, with a notable 23.1% missing responses. Overall, the data suggest that Pakistani youth are highly aware of their potential role in promoting interfaith harmony and generally value dialogue as a means to reduce communal tensions. Yet, gaps in legislative awareness and variations in social media verification highlight areas for policy focus, civic education, and awareness campaigns to strengthen informed participation and foster a more cohesive social environment across provinces.

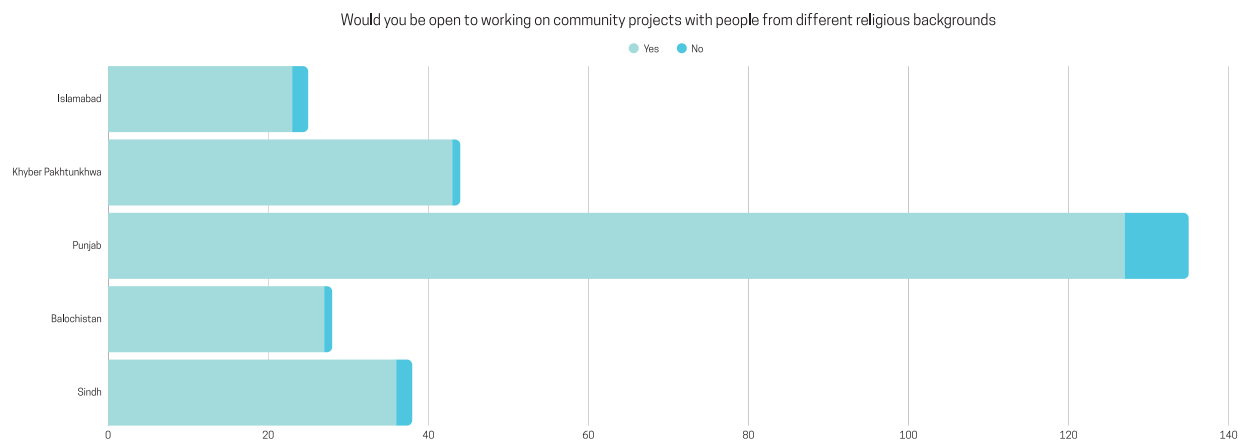


7.2 Post Workshop Views

Overall, the post-workshop survey demonstrates that participants across KP, Punjab, Balochistan, Sindh, and Islamabad largely recognized and appreciated the insights provided on interfaith harmony, with Punjab and Balochistan showing the strongest levels of agreement. Moreover, the post-workshop data from Islamabad, KP, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan show that the majority of participants strongly agree or agree that such training sessions can create a positive change in society.

7.2.1 Willingness to Engage in Interfaith Community Projects

Overall, across all five regions, the vast majority of participants (ranging from 86.2% to 97.7% among valid responses) support interfaith collaboration, demonstrating the effectiveness of the workshops in promoting inclusivity and community cohesion. The data also highlights potential areas for focused engagement in Balochistan and Islamabad, where reluctance is comparatively higher, and in Sindh, where missing data points indicate the need for improved response collection. These insights underscore the overall positive trend toward interfaith engagement in Pakistan, while also pointing to region-specific variations that may inform future workshop strategies.

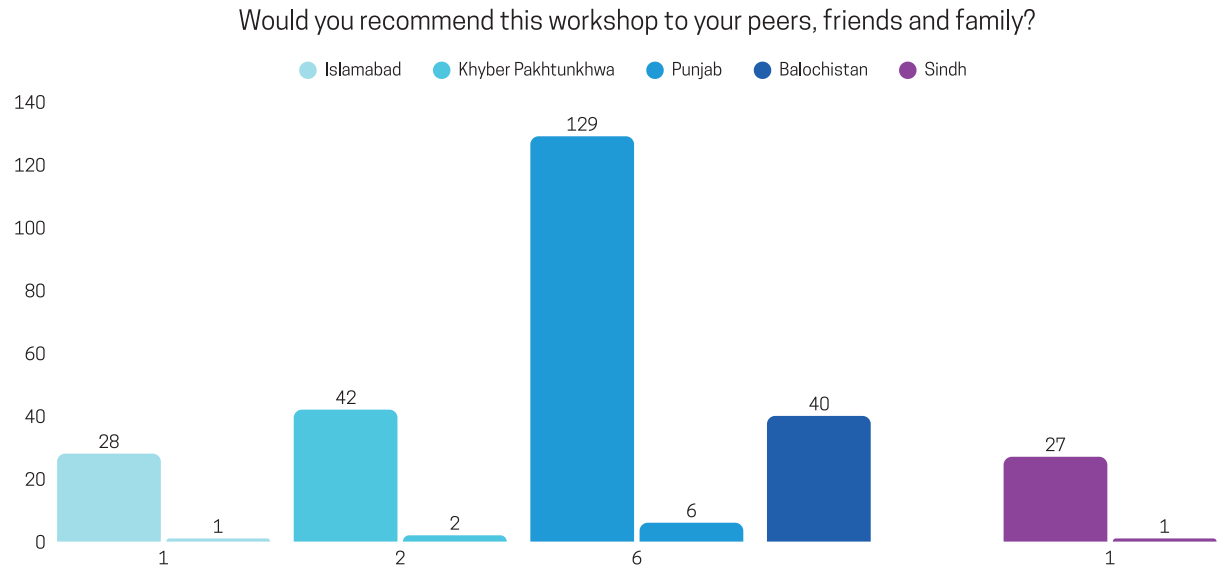


The post-workshop survey indicates that participants across all regions generally feel highly motivated to educate others in their communities about interfaith harmony, though some regional differences and data limitations exist.

Overall, the data suggest that the workshops were effective in fostering a sense of responsibility and empowerment among participants to promote interfaith harmony in their communities. Regions with smaller sample sizes, like Balochistan and Islamabad, show complete or near-complete motivation, while larger provinces like Punjab and KP have minor proportions of participants who were less motivated (6.7% in Punjab, 2.3% in KP). Sindh’s high proportion of missing responses (43.7%) indicates the need for improved follow-up to ensure the findings reflect the wider participant population.

In conclusion, across all regions, the workshops successfully motivated the vast majority of participants to become advocates of interfaith harmony, highlighting both the positive impact of the training and the potential for targeted reinforcement in areas with missing or less enthusiastic responses.

The post-workshop data indicate that participants across Pakistan generally have very high levels of satisfaction, as reflected in their willingness to recommend the workshop to peers, friends, and family. Islamabad shows near-unanimous support, with 100% of valid respondents willing to recommend the workshop and only a single missing response (3.4%).



Recommendations

Pakistan's youth, forming the backbone of the nation, face growing challenges due to rising extremism, intolerance, and a lack of inclusive opportunities. Radicalization, often fueled by social divides, weak institutional responses, and limited educational reforms, poses a grave risk to national cohesion. Addressing this requires a comprehensive, multi-dimensional approach strengthening law enforcement, reforming education, encouraging civic responsibility, and fostering interfaith harmony. The following recommendations outline key steps to prevent radicalization, ensure minority protection, and build a tolerant, inclusive, and resilient society.

1. Law Enforcement and Legal Framework

- Finding: 72.6% of youth believe people of all faiths are not treated equally, with minorities highlighting insecurity.
- Gap: Weak writ of the state and uneven protection.

Recommendations:

1. Strengthen law enforcement capacity and adopt a holistic legal approach to prevent crimes against minority communities and curb rising extremism.
2. Acknowledge and address the presence of religious extremism in the country.

2. Education Reform and Youth Empowerment

- Finding: 42.9% said the education system fails or only partially teaches respect for religions; nearly 60% were unaware of Paigam-e-Pakistan.
- Gap: Weak curriculum on tolerance and poor outreach of deradicalization initiatives.

Recommendations:

1. Reform the education system to include technical education and implement effective youth policies, while fully integrating initiatives like Paigam-e-Pakistan.
2. Reform and deconstruct the national curriculum to cultivate a more tolerant, informed, and unified generation.

3. Civic and Social Responsibility

- Finding: 75.9% reported reading about constitutional rights, but 24.1% had not; views on democracy vs. Shariah law remain divided.
- Gap: Uneven civic literacy and confusion between civic and religious roles.

Recommendations:

1. Reinforce civic responsibilities alongside religious obligations to restore balanced social behavior.
2. Promote rationality and inclusive policies that address ethnic, religious, and political diversity to strengthen national unity.

4. Political Reforms and Leadership Responsibility

- Finding: 64% of youth identified political mistrust as the main obstacle to dialogue with India; workshops revealed disillusionment with corruption.
- Gap: Weak institutions and politicization of religion.

Recommendations:

1. Promote cross-party consensus on countering extremism and depoliticize the use of religion in politics.
2. Strengthen democratic institutions to ensure that extremist elements do not exploit political or electoral processes.
3. Ensure political inclusivity by giving representation to marginalized groups, including minorities and youth, in policy and decision-making forums.
4. Develop a bipartisan national action plan focused on deradicalization, ensuring continuity beyond political transitions.
5. Discourage hate-based politics by enforcing accountability for political actors who exploit sectarian or ethnic divisions for electoral gain.

5. Countering Extremist Narratives

- Finding: Over 90% affirmed their role in fostering interfaith harmony, yet hate speech and fake news remain pervasive.
- Gap: Lack of strategies to counter extremist narratives.

Recommendations:

1. Promote constructive listening and address internal societal challenges to effectively reduce intolerance and extremism.
2. Encourage a broader, inclusive understanding of violence that avoids stereotyping specific religious or ethnic groups.
3. Reform religious discourse and develop a coordinated national strategy that incorporates modern interpretive factors to address evolving social challenges.

6. Dialogue, Engagement, and Interfaith Harmony

- Finding: 93% supported youth-led regional engagement; workshops showed dialogue reduces intolerance.
- Gap: Few platforms exist for sustained interfaith or cross-community dialogue.

Recommendations:

1. Implement a holistic, bottom-up approach including district-level engagement and dialogue to counter madrassa-driven extremism and sectarianism.
2. Adopt models like Egypt's Family House to promote interfaith harmony and ensure the protection of minority rights.
3. Facilitate dialogue among all stakeholders to address intolerance and its societal impacts.
4. Foster an open and tolerant environment through critical reflection, dialogue, and minimizing the exploitation of religion for political purposes.

Annexures

Annexure 1

List of the resource persons

Sr. No	Name	Designation/Organization
1	Ali Baba Taj	Educationist Urdu, Persian, and Hazaragi poet
2	Ali Raza Lashari	Assistant Professor at Shah Abdul Latif University (SALU)
3	Allama Akbar Hussain Zahedi	Religious Scholar
4	Amb. (r) Mansoor Ahmed Khan	Director BNU Center for Policy Research and Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Afghanistan, UN and Austria
5	Asif Khursheed	Social media expert and development professional
6	Aurangzaib Khan	Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Head of Department Social Sciences, BUITEMC
7	Anjum James Paul	Associate, Professor, Political Science, Govt. Post Graduate College Samundri
8	Dileep Doshi	Human Rights Activist, Advocate, High Court Islamabad
9	Dr. Abdul Quddus Suhaib	Professor, Islamic Research Centre IRC, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan
10	Dr. Altaf Hussain Langrial	Head if Department, Islamic Research Centre IRC, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan
11	Dr. Irfan Ashraf	Assistant Professor, University of Peshawar
12	Dr. Khalid Masud	Former Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology and Member of Shariat Appellate Bench of Supreme Court of Pakistan.

13	Dr. Mir Sadaat Baloch	Pro Vice Chancellor University of Makran, Panjgur
14	Dr. Rasheed Ahmed	Director, Shaikh Zayed Islamic Centre University of Peshawar
15	Farnood Alam	Columnist and Journalist
16	Ghazi Salahuddin	Scholar, author, and journalist
17	Gul Nokhaiz	Author, Journalist and Columnist
18	Hasnain Jamal	Author, Motivational Speaker, and blogger
19	Khursheed Nadeem	Chairman National Rahmatul-lil-aalameen wa Khatamun Nabiyyin Authroity
20	Jalila Haider	Human Rights Attorney and Political Activist
21	Jami Chandio	Executive Director, Center for Peace and Civil Society, Writer and Scholar.
22	Habib Akram	TV anchor, Writer and political analyst
23	Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi	Deputy General Secretary, Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan
24	Maulana Ammar Nasir Khan	Head of Department and Assistant Professor, School of Arts and Social Sciences, GIFT University

25	Maulana Raghīb Naeemi	Chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology
26	Mufti Zahid	Vice President, Jamia Islamia Imdadia,
27	Mujtaba Rathore	Executive Director, Islamic Research Institute of Social Sciences
28	Prof. Dr. Qibla Ayaz	Former, Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology
29	Professor Dr. Zia ur Rehman	Chairman Department of Quranic Studies, Islamia University of Bahawalpur
30	Riffatullah Orazkai	Senior Journalist
31	Saleem Shahid	Senior Journalist
32	Shahid Riaz Gondal	Ex-Advisor to Chief Minister Punjab on Energy
33	Shahzada Zulfiqar	Senior Journalist
34	Syed Jaffar Ahmed	Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Sohail University, and Director of Institute of Historical and Social Research, Karachi.
35	Veengas	Journalist, editor and founder of The Rise News
36	Wajahat Masud	Journalist, columnist and political analyst.

37	Wusatullah Khan	journalist, columnist and host.
38	Yar Jan Badani	Editor in chief, Balochistan Today
39	Zeeba Hashmi	Researcher and Evaluation Expert
40	Zia ul Haq Naqshbandi	Columnist and Religious Analyst
41	Zubari Torwali	Social Activist, Cultural Researcher and Writer
42	Muhammad Amir Rana	President, Pak Institute for Peace Studies. Columnist and Senior Security Analyst.
43	Imran Mukhtar	Senior Journalist and Media Coordinator, Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS).
44	Muhammad Murtaza	Project Manager, Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS).
45	Hina Khaliq Taj	Research Officer, Pak Institute for Peace Studies.
46	Esham Farooq	Research Officer, Pak Institute for Peace Studies.

Annexure 2
Survey Questionnaire Pre Survey
BUILDING BRIDGES: FOSTERING TOLERANCE
AND INCLUSIVITY AMONG YOUTH
Questionnaire



Gender: Age: Institute:
Background: a) Rural b) Urban Province:

Note:

The surveyor shall apprise the respondent of the aims and objectives of the study
The respondent should answer questions voluntarily without any pressure or temptation
The respondent shall be given adequate time for answering each question
The respondent is not bound to answer each and every question

Personal Religious Background & Beliefs

Do you feel intolerance is prevalent in our society?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, what are the reasons behind the modern-day intolerant society? (You can select more than one option)

- ☐ Political
- ☐ Economic
- ☐ Social
- ☐ Religious
- ☐ Ethnic

What is the primary source of your religious knowledge?

- ☐ Home
- ☐ Religious Books
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Other(s)

Have you ever experienced a bias because of your religious beliefs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you feel comfortable sharing your religious beliefs with others?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Have you ever discussed religious topics with someone from a different faith?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you had any experience working / interacting with people from different backgrounds?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you ever visited a place of worship that belongs to a different religion?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Understanding & Interaction with Other Religions

Do you believe your own community is considerate of other communities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you believe gaining knowledge about other communities can help build mutual understanding?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you think people from different communities can peacefully coexist?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Interfaith Dialogue & Activities

Do you believe interfaith dialogue can help improve communal harmony in Pakistan?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you feel that the youth can play an important role in promoting interfaith harmony?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Means of Media (Electronic, Social & Print)

What social media platform do you normally use?

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ WhatsApp
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ X (twitter)
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ Other(s)

What do you use social media for?

- ☐ Information
- ☐ Entertainment
- ☐ Networking
- ☐ Other(s)

How often have you come across news about attacks on worship places or sectarian violence on social media?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Most of the time

Do you think the media in Pakistan can play a role in highlighting more stories of interfaith cooperation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you check for the authenticity of the information that you receive from social media?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are you aware of any legislation that promotes interfaith harmony? If yes, quote.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Have you previously participated in any event or formal discussion that promotes interfaith harmony? If yes, kindly write down the title of the event

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

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

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Data Analyst: Muhammad Murtaza

Report Designers: Muhammad Murtaza

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.



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