

## From Madrassah to Elite Schools; The Political Economy of Pluralistic Educational Systems in Pakistan

**Authors :** Ahmad Zia

**Abstract :** This study problematizes the notion that the pluralistic educational system in Pakistan fosters equality. Instead, it argues that this system not only reflects but also sustains existing class divisions, with implications for the future economic and social mobility of children. The primary goal of this study is to explore unequal access to educational opportunities in Pakistan. By examining the intersection between education and socioeconomic status, it attempts to explore the implications of key disparities in different tiers of education systems in Pakistan like between madrassahs, public schools and private schools, with an emphasis on how these institutions contribute to the maintenance of class hierarchies. This is a primary data based case study and the most recent data has been directly gathered. Qualitative methods have been used to collect data from the units of data collection (UDCs). It has used Bourdieu's theory as a leading framework. Its application in the context of country like Pakistan is very productive. It chooses the thematic analysis method to analyse the data. This process helped me to identify relevant main themes and subthemes emerging from my data, which could comprise my analysis. Findings reveal that the educational landscape in Pakistan is deeply divided having far-reaching implications for social mobility and access to opportunities. This study found profound disparities among various educational institutions with respect to widening socioeconomic divides. Every kind of educational institution operates in a distinct socio-cultural and economic environment. Therefore, access to quality education is highly stratified and remains a privilege for only those who can afford it. This widens the socioeconomic gap that already exists. There has not been an extensive investigation of the relationship between pluralistic educations with class stratification in the literature so far. This study adds to a multifaceted understanding of educational disparities in Pakistan by analysing the intersections between socioeconomic divisions and educational access. It offers valuable theoretical and practical insights into the subject. This study provides theoretical concepts and empirical data to enhance scholars' understanding of socioeconomic inequality, specifically in relation to education systems.

**Keywords :** social inequality, pluralism, class divide, capitalism, globalisation, elitism, education

**Conference Title :** ICTES 2025 : International Conference on Teaching and Education Sciences

**Conference Location :** New York, United States

**Conference Dates :** May 24-25, 2025