

## **Rethinking Education for Pluralism: Representation of Religious Minorities in Public and Madrassah Education**

Education plays a vital role in the development of any society. Schools strongly influence an individual's process of socialization, their perceptions, attitudes, and eventually their behaviour is moulded through education. Pakistan's education sector faces a number of challenges, to name a few, they include; poor resource allocation, insufficient number of schools, lack of basic facilities in schools (number of rooms, furniture, availability of teachers etc.), low enrollment and high drop-out rates, poor administration and so on. However, the most important of all the challenges in the education sector, often overlooked by researchers and policy makers, are the issues related to the content (curricula textbooks) as well as teaching methods (pedagogy) adopted by public schools and the madrassah system in Pakistan.

The curriculum adapted by Pakistan's education system is highly biased in many ways especially towards the religious minorities. This ultimately leads to a discriminatory behaviour of the masses towards the minorities. This bias primarily stems from the prejudiced representation of religious minorities. This panel aims to explore how education systems in Pakistan, both public schools and madrassah systems, treat religious diversity in the country. This panel will also examine specific cases where these biases have led to discriminatory behaviour against religious minorities.

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