



CENTRE for AEROSPACE & SECURITY STUDIES

# **Beyond Academics: Cultivating Character through Education in Pakistan**

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Research Assistant, National Security

***Working Paper***

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## Abstract

*Personality development is a crucial factor that shapes an individual's life and has far-reaching implications for the collective well-being, security, and future of a nation. Education and schooling have the potential to significantly influence personality development, yet the existing literature on this topic is outdated and calls for updated insights and data. This Working Paper investigates the interplay between education and personality development, focusing on the role of educational institutions and teachers in shaping the personalities of primary school students in Pakistan. The study utilises a combination of primary and secondary data, including open-ended interviews with teachers and analysis of secondary literature. The paper concludes by providing recommendations to policymakers, emphasising the need for a renewed emphasis on incorporating personality development and character building in school curricula and improving teacher training programmes to lay a solid foundation for individual development and national security.*

**Keywords:** Self-Education, Teachers, Personality Development, Confucianist Approach, Character Formation, Academic Institutions.

## Introduction

Personality is often regarded as the pinnacle of an individual's identity, shaping their personal and professional life and leaving a lasting impression on the world.<sup>1</sup> Its refinement holds significant potential to positively impact various aspects of life. The importance of personality development extends beyond the individual level, influencing the collective well-being of citizens and the future of a nation. Countries with well-groomed individuals tend to secure a better future, while those lagging in this aspect face significant challenges.

While personality is often seen as an inherent factor, external influences can also play a substantial role in shaping it.<sup>2</sup> Education and schooling, among various factors, possess the potential to exert a notable influence on personality development.<sup>3</sup> The interplay between education and personality development deserves thorough study, emphasis, and promotion on a larger scale. Existing studies on the subject tend to be dated, necessitating the contribution of more recent data, knowledge, and insights to enrich the existing literature and explore the current potential of educational institutions.

This *Working Paper* aims to investigate the role of education in personality development, shedding light on how educational institutions and teachers, can contribute to the shaping of citizens' personalities (especially those at the primary school level) and the various patterns that impact young students. Specifically, the study examines these aspects within the context of Pakistan. The paper concludes by offering recommendations to policymakers advocating for a revitalised focus on supporting personality development and character building in schools to secure a better future for the nation as a whole.

To conduct this research, both primary and secondary data tools were utilised. Open-ended interviews were conducted with teachers primarily teaching junior classes in

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<sup>1</sup> De Gruijter, "The Influence of Personality on Career Success: An Empirical Study," (MA diss., Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam, 2014), <https://thesis.eur.nl/pub/16158>.

<sup>2</sup> Amandeep Singh, "Psychological Factors affecting Personality Development," *International Journal of Physical Education, Sports and Health* 1, no. 3 (2015): 78-80, <https://www.kheljournal.com/archives/2015/vol1issue3/PartB/6-5-40-727.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Sarah Dahmann and Silke Anger, "The Impact of Education on Personality: Evidence from a German High School Reform," (paper, Institute of Labour Studies, 2014), <https://docs.iza.org/dp8139.pdf>.

private and public schools located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Convenience sampling was employed to select the respondents. Additionally, data was collected from secondary sources such as books, journals, reports, newspapers, and websites.

It is important to note that this paper focuses solely on the initial classes/primary level, with no coverage of middle school and high school. Furthermore, the research primarily discusses two factors: self-education and the role of teachers.

### **Personality Development**

According to the five-factor model of personality, an individual's personality is characterised by five traits:

1. Openness to experience: This trait reflects intellectual curiosity and creativity.
2. Conscientiousness: It pertains to being organised and self-disciplined.
3. Extraversion: This trait denotes the ability to be social and experience positive emotions.
4. Agreeableness: It relates to the tendency to be altruistic and cooperative.
5. Neuroticism: This trait involves the ability to experience negative emotions.<sup>4</sup>

Personality, in essence, encompasses an individual's qualities, beliefs, traits, attitudes, and characteristics, that define their identity. It also reveals their strengths, weaknesses, and the various levels of thinking, feeling, and behaving.<sup>5</sup>

When the concept of 'personality development' is discussed, one refers to the process and activities that refine one's identity, enhance self-awareness, develop talents, and unlock hidden potential. It also encompasses shaping an environment where individuals foster a positive attitude towards themselves, their peers, and their surroundings, ultimately improving their quality of life. Personality development is a complex and multi-level phenomenon, involving both psychological and physical domains.

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<sup>4</sup> Yannick Stephana, Angelina Sutin, Brice Canadac, Maxime Deshayes et al., "Five-Factor Model Personality Traits and Grip Strength: Meta-Analysis of Seven Studies," *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 160, no.1 (2022):110961-110973, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S002239992200246X>.

<sup>5</sup> American Psychological Association, "Handbook on Personality," 2014, Accessed December 4, 2022.



Within the context of educational institutions such as schools, personality development encompasses a range of methods, techniques, tools, and assessment systems that are designed to facilitate and support the growth of individuals. The ultimate objective of personality development is to nurture and cultivate the inherent potential of individuals, enabling them to evolve into improved versions of themselves and empowering them to pursue the roles and responsibilities they aspire to fulfill.

In more contemporary (often private schools), various strategies and approaches are employed to foster personality development. These include providing opportunities for self-reflection, promoting self-awareness, encouraging personal goal-setting, fostering positive relationships and social skills, cultivating critical thinking abilities, and nurturing emotional intelligence. Through these concerted efforts, educational institutions strive to create a holistic learning environment that goes beyond academic knowledge, ensuring that students develop the necessary skills, attitudes, and behaviours to succeed in their personal and professional lives.

Moreover, personality development initiatives within schools should aim to instill values such as integrity, empathy, resilience, and ethical conduct, fostering a strong moral compass in individuals. By integrating character education programmes, mentoring activities, and extracurricular engagements, educational institutions can and should create a nurturing ecosystem that supports the multifaceted growth of students. The question is, is that happening in Pakistani schools?

## **Education and Personality Development**

Capturing the full significance of education in literature is a challenging task. Education stands as an unparalleled avenue for acquiring knowledge. While education is commonly associated with the formal learning obtained from educational institutions, its scope extends far beyond that. In reality, education is a lifelong process that commences at birth and persists until the end of life.<sup>6</sup> The upcoming section of this paper examines education through the lens of personality development.

The term 'education' derives from its two Latin roots: 'Educare,' meaning 'to train' or 'to mold,' and 'Educere,' meaning 'to lead.'<sup>7</sup> It should not be confined solely to the

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<sup>6</sup> Sandy Jackson and Pierre Tap, "Education and Personal Development," *European Journal of Psychology of Education* 13, no.4 (1999): 435-445.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew Gioia, "Educare, Educere, Explorare," *Self-Directed*, February 28, 2019, <https://www.self-directed.org/tp/educare-educere-explorare/>.

transmission of knowledge from teacher to student but rather understood within the broader context of upbringing and personal development. Personality development in relation to educational institutions does not solely pertain to a predetermined set of factors aimed at enhancing knowledge or achieving good grades. Instead, it operates on the premise that the education system can play a significant role in shaping the personalities of students.

Personality development is influenced not only by formal academic studies but also by parallel learning experiences that occur both intentionally and unintentionally, shaping how students perceive and interact with their environment. While the home environment undeniably plays a crucial role in this development, educational institutions hold significant importance as well. Educational institutions serve as the primary socialisation space for children beyond their homes, where they spend a substantial amount of time interacting with peers and acquiring new knowledge.<sup>8</sup>

As children grow, they are exposed to new environments, form new relationships, and engage in various channels of communication. These factors further contribute to the intricate process of personality development. Consequently, there exists substantial potential within educational processes and institutions to mold the personalities of young minds, given their influential role in providing learning opportunities and facilitating social interactions.

Through the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) conducted with teachers teaching junior classes in private and public schools located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, during this study, it was found that there was consensus on a number of postulates which generally exist regarding the impacts of education on personality development, such as:

- Education can make one more disciplined, which is a central and an imperative element of a good personality.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Abdul Rahim Chandio and Manzoor Ali, "The Role of Socialization in Child's Personality Development," *The Catalyst: Research Journal of Modern Sciences* 1, no.1 (2019):1-35, <https://sujo.usindh.edu.pk/index.php/catalyst/article/view/239>.

<sup>9</sup> "Importance of Education in Personality Development," *Targeted Study*, September 18, 2018, <https://targetstudy.com/articles/importance-of-education-in-personality-development.html>.

- It has the capacity to expand the cognitive capabilities of the human mind, fostering active participation in meaningful discussions, fostering the emergence of innovative ideas, and honing valuable skills.<sup>10</sup>
- Education opens up immense opportunities for individuals to discover the world and develop fresh perspectives that shape their outlook on life.<sup>11</sup>
- It also serves as a platform where students can acquire moral and ethical principles, providing them with a framework to discern between right and wrong and make informed decisions.

The respondents unanimously agreed that prioritising personality development within education can transform the system from a primarily knowledge-focused process into one that cultivates well-rounded citizens. It is essential to ensure that the education process itself is of such quality that students actively contribute to their own personal growth and development.

As mentioned previously, education and personality development share an intricate connection, influenced by numerous factors and an extensive range of characteristics. While there is a wide array of elements to consider when examining the role of education in personality development, this paper focuses on two specific aspects: the concept of self-education and the influential role of teachers.

### **Self-Education**

The concept of 'self-education' revolves around the acquisition of knowledge about oneself through individual effort. It centers on the pursuit of clearly defined goals, personal ideals, subjective meanings, self-assessment of personal development, self-accountability, and self-management. It encompasses the process of internalising societal ideals into personal values and beliefs.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Martin Lovden, Laura Fratiglioni, Maria Glymour, Ulman Lindenberger et al., "Education and Cognitive Functioning Across the Life Span," *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 21, no.1 (2020): 6-41, <https://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/default+domain/10.1177%2F1529100620920576-FREE/pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Mohammad Chowdhury, "Emphasizing Morals, Values, Ethics, and Character Education in Science Education and Science Teaching," *The Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Science* 4, no.2 (2016):1-16, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1095995.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Nodira Mahmudova, "Ensuring Learning Independence through Self-Awareness in Primary School Students," *International Journal of Development and Public Policy* 1, no.8 (2022): 2792-3991, <https://openaccessjournals.eu/index.php/ijdpp/article/view/896>.

Self-education is influenced by a multitude of objective and subjective factors, such as societal expectations, aspirations for personal growth, inherent qualities, and understanding of the world. These factors play a pivotal role in establishing the prerequisites for self-education and profoundly shape personal attitudes, traits, needs, ideals, and beliefs. Consequently, self-education has a direct correlation with personality development.

Educational institutions do not have exclusive control over the self-education process; instead, it often develops independently of these institutions.<sup>13</sup> However, educational institutes can adopt significant methodologies and practices from formal education that can support and enhance self-education.<sup>14</sup> These institutions have a role to play in familiarising students with the necessary skills and knowledge that can facilitate lifelong self-education.

Creating an environment conducive to self-education goes beyond the imposition of a specific curriculum within a formal setting.<sup>15</sup> Instead, it entails providing an environment that encourages students' cognitive and decision-making processes. Interaction and exposure are crucial for students to assess themselves and invest effort in self-improvement. Achieving this requires a collective effort from teachers, school management, and school leadership to foster an environment that nurtures self-education.

In schools, the facilitation of self-education can be structured into three stages, each playing a vital role in the process. The first stage entails fostering a dialogue between students and teachers to emphasise the significance and necessity of self-education. Teachers must effectively project the positive aspects of this phenomenon within the classroom. Subsequently, group discussions can be conducted to encourage students to articulate their goals, identify personal ideals, and evaluate their strengths and

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<sup>13</sup> Stefinee Pinnegar and Tom Russell, "Introduction: Self-Study and Living Educational Theory," *Teacher Education Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (1995): 5-9, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23475828>.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>15</sup> Oprea Ionuț Mihai, "Self-Education and Lifelong Learning," *International E-Journal of Advances in Social Sciences* 8, no.19 (2021): 142-145, <http://ijasos.ocerintjournals.org/en/download/article-file/1568201>.

weaknesses. At this stage, mentoring becomes equally crucial in providing guidance and support.<sup>16</sup>

To enhance students' understanding of the importance and effectiveness of self-education, guest lectures could be organised, featuring individuals with whom the students could connect, whether it be the school principal, a motivational speaker, or a celebrity. These interactions can leave a lasting impact on the students, reinforcing their commitment to self-education. The subsequent stage involves setting specific goals and acquiring the necessary means to achieve them. Supporting tools and habits, such as maintaining a diary or using a calendar to track progress, can be introduced to facilitate the self-education process.<sup>17</sup>

The process of self-education reaches its pinnacle when students have gained familiarity with their goals, motivations, and methods of self-education. A shared realisation among students that self-education is essential, coupled with the active involvement of educational institutions in organising and supporting it, leads to a more effective process of personality development.

While every level of learning holds importance, the initial classes bear a distinct significance. A child's early experiences often have a profound impact on the formation of their later personalities. During this phase, the child observes and internalises societal guidelines, which subsequently shape their behaviour and serve as external regulators in their lives.<sup>18</sup>

Apart from the importance of starting early, to promote self-education, it is crucial for educational institutions to focus on students' attitudes and motivations, their perception of conflict and stress management, as well as their views on leadership qualities, character building, and teamwork. Equally important is the emphasis on time management, self-discipline, and the ability to discern between right and wrong, good

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<sup>16</sup> Oimur School, "Self-education and Self-development Methods," <https://oimurschool.ru/en/zdorove/metody-samovospitaniya-i-samorazvitiya-metody-samovospitaniya-bibliograficheskoe/>, Accessed November 15, 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Mahmudova, "Ensuring Learning Independence through Self-Awareness in Primary School Students," 8.

and bad.<sup>19</sup> Once the direction is clear, a shift from guided self-education to independent self-education can occur.

However, simply aspiring to improve without practical hands-on experience does not yield the desired results. Self-education remains a mere desire without targeted activities. It is essential to find effective means and methods to implement the process of self-education. The question arises: How can the various concepts of self-education be ingrained in the minds of students? Merely providing guidelines without actual implementation remains futile, as pointed out by a majority of the study's informants. To achieve the desired outcomes, games, activities, and tasks tailored to the students' educational level should be implemented, focusing on the aforementioned aspects. Proper time division between the curriculum and focused activities is necessary to give adequate attention and emphasis to different facets of self-education.

In traditional educational approaches, control primarily rests with the teacher and the institution. Consequently, upon completion of the educational cycle, students often lack the readiness to engage in self-education independently. This weakens self-education, depriving individuals of the opportunity to become self-taught and attain significant material and intellectual benefits. Individuality is diminished, and society becomes shaped by immediate needs and limited functioning within a broad framework.<sup>20</sup>

### **Impact of Teachers**

The second factor to be discussed in relation to education and personality development is the role of teachers in nurturing and shaping individuals' personalities. It is often said that a teacher's influence extends beyond the present and has a lasting impact on students' lives.<sup>21</sup> In every culture, the esteemed role of a teacher is recognised and valued. Teachers are central figures in the educational process and

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<sup>19</sup> Mahmudova, "Ensuring Learning Independence through Self-Awareness in Primary School Students," 4.

<sup>20</sup> Karla Melinda Barth and Nicoleta Ramona Ciobanu, "Mass Media Influence upon Personality Development of Children," *Education and Applied Didactics* 1, no.1 (2017): 7-25, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348778219\\_Mass\\_media\\_influence\\_upon\\_personality\\_development\\_of\\_children](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348778219_Mass_media_influence_upon_personality_development_of_children).

<sup>21</sup> Merril Walter, "A Teacher Affects Eternity; He Can Never Tell Where His Influence Stops: A Reassessment of the Contributions of Barney Brooks, A Consummate Educator," *Annals of Surgery* 2, no. 3 (2021): 1-6, [https://journals.lww.com/aosopen/Fulltext/2021/09000/A\\_Teacher\\_Affects\\_Eternity\\_\\_He\\_Can\\_Never\\_Tell.7.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/aosopen/Fulltext/2021/09000/A_Teacher_Affects_Eternity__He_Can_Never_Tell.7.aspx).

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serve as significant channels of learning for students.<sup>22</sup> Due to their central role, teachers have the capacity to exert a significant impact on the personality development of students.<sup>23</sup> This stems from the understanding that teachers not only impart knowledge but also provide motivation, empathy, and emotional support to their students.<sup>24</sup> With their considerable influence, teachers who prioritise personality development can contribute to improved student achievements.<sup>25</sup>

Research conducted with nursery students as subjects has shown that teachers can play a transformative role in transmitting different sets of behaviours to their students. Whether through structured or unstructured teaching methods, students react in diverse ways to their teachers.<sup>26</sup> The interactions between teachers and students throughout the academic year significantly impact the lives of students. A teacher's attitude has a significant impact on students' personalities and responses as they observe and learn ethics, morals, and values from their educators.

According to Hansen, moral values can be effectively conveyed through the actions of a teacher. The manner in which a teacher conducts a class, emphasises content, and employs teaching methodologies significantly influences the process of personality development.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, the teacher's own personality serves as an important factor in this regard. Numerous studies reveal that teachers can have a significantly positive impact on the personalities of the students if they themselves exhibit positive personality traits or possess strong personal qualities.<sup>28</sup> A 2011 survey revealed that a significant

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<sup>22</sup> Rabije Murati, "The Role of the Teacher in the Educational Process," *The Online Journal of New Horizons in Education* 5, no. 2 (2015): 75-78, <https://www.tojned.net/journals/tojned/articles/v05i02/v05i02-09.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> Amber Sayani, "My Philosophy of Teaching and Learning," *Open Access Library Journal* 2, no. 12 (2015): 1-9, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285547233\\_My\\_Philosophy\\_of\\_Teaching\\_and\\_Learning](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285547233_My_Philosophy_of_Teaching_and_Learning).

<sup>24</sup> Lukman Marsigit, Edi Istiyono, Badrun Kartowagiran, Heri Retnawati et al., "Effective Teachers' Personality in Strengthening Character Education," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)* 10, no. 2, (2021): 512-521, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1299226.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> Olumide Adewale, "Teaching Personality as a Necessary Construct for the Effectiveness of Teaching and Learning in Schools: An Implication for Teacher Development in the Era of Globalization," *Journal of Education and Human Development* 2, no. 2, (2013): 15-23.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Spaulding, "Personality and Social Development: Peer and School Influences," *Review of Educational Research* 34, no. 5 (1964): 588-598, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1169668>.

<sup>27</sup> David T. Hansen, "Teaching as a Moral Activity," in *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, ed. Richardson, (Washington: American Educational Research Association), V.

<sup>28</sup> Marsigit et al., "Effective Teachers' Personality," 513.

majority of participants, approximately 88.3%, acknowledged the positive impact of individual factors on personality development. These factors encompassed qualities such as understanding, compassion, tolerance, helpfulness, encouragement, effective communication, and motivation. Conversely, approximately 80.5% of participants recognised the detrimental effects of factors like rigidity, vengefulness, intolerance, inconsistency, and short temper on one's personality.

The role of teachers extends far beyond the confines of the classroom, particularly in the digital age where they have a unique opportunity to shape the environment in which the future generation grows and enlightens. Creating an environment that supports the learning of various aspects of personality development and instilling in students the values and responsibilities required for active participation in society becomes crucial.

Teachers wield a significant influence over students' attitudes and behaviour through their conduct and teaching methodologies.<sup>29</sup> While the imparting of knowledge is undoubtedly important, teachers can also utilise their authority and position to positively influence students and serve as role models.

Notably, countries such as China, Japan, and Thailand demonstrate a remarkable emphasis on teacher training programmes, drawing inspiration from Confucianism.<sup>30</sup> Confucianism places great importance on the role of teachers as moral exemplars and guides. According to Confucian teachings, teachers are expected to embody virtuous qualities such as benevolence, righteousness, and propriety. They are seen as influential figures who not only transmit knowledge but also shape the character and moral compass of their students.

In this context, teacher training programmes influenced by Confucianism focus on instilling these values in teachers themselves. Through rigorous training, teachers are equipped with the necessary tools to cultivate moral and ethical virtues in their students. By embodying these qualities themselves, teachers serve as role models

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<sup>29</sup> Murati, "The Role of the Teacher in the Educational Process," 78.

<sup>30</sup> Faruk Levent and İsmail Karsantik, "Teacher Training Policies in Japan in the Context of Ethical Values," *Turkish Journal of Business Ethics* 11, no.1 (2018): 7-19, <https://isahlakidergisi.com/content/6-sayilar/21-11-cilt-1-sayi/m00106/levent.pdf>.



and sources of inspiration, encouraging students to internalise and practice these values in their own lives.

The impact of Confucian-inspired teacher training programmes can be observed in the positive outcomes seen in these societies.<sup>31</sup> As discussed earlier, the influence of teachers extends beyond the transmission of knowledge to shaping the holistic development of students, including their character, attitudes, and behaviour. By integrating Confucian teachings into teacher training, educational systems in these countries recognise the significance of nurturing not only intellectual growth but also the moral and ethical development of students. This deep connection between Confucianism, teachers, and the impact on student personalities highlights the role of teachers as agents of positive change in society, influencing the moral fabric and values of future generations.

### **Challenges in Addressing Personality Development within Pakistan's Education System**

Another important area of investigation during the primary interviews was the identify the challenges that hampered inculcating personality development and self-education ideologies within Pakistan's educational framework.

In culturally heterogeneous societies like Pakistan, where different families uphold distinct sets of values, personality development becomes even more challenging.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, this also underscores the urgency of timely investment in this area. Respondents in this study acknowledged that educational institutions have the potential to serve as platforms for constructive student self-education. However, they highlighted the prevalence of students from diverse backgrounds and socioeconomic classes, some of whom lack conducive social environments for personality development. The concept of self-education is often unfamiliar and given little importance, particularly in rural areas where education is perceived as a luxury rather than a fundamental right.

Respondents unanimously agreed on the need for responsible, creative, and well-groomed citizens through effective self-education. However, the absence of clear

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<sup>31</sup> Levent and Karsantik, "Teacher Training Policies."

<sup>32</sup> Natasa Pantic and Theo Wubbels, "The Role of Teachers in Inculcating Moral Values: Operationalisation of Concepts," *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 33, no. 1 (2012): 55-69.

direction and integration of self-education into the yearly school curriculum hindered its implementation. While private schools provide certain guidelines for teachers to incorporate positive aspects of personality development, the study found that self-education was not treated as an integral part of the academic year. This, coupled with the limited access of lower and lower-middle-class segments to private schooling, implies that only a certain stratum of society can benefit from these opportunities. Public schools, on the other hand, lack a specific focus on self-education.

Analysis of the KIIs further revealed that neither public nor private schools adequately consider or include self-education methodologies in the curriculum for preschool children. Consequently, students failed to learn or apply self-education principles, missing out on the potential benefits of a platform designed for this purpose.

Regarding the role of teachers, respondents identified the heavy content load of the curriculum for junior classes, leaving little time for teaching self-education techniques. Self-education was often left for students to grasp independently, while the absence of a proper framework and guidelines restricted teachers' involvement in personality development. Notably, teacher training programmes, although occurring more frequently in private schools, were seldom conducted in public schools, resulting in a lack of awareness about personality development and the necessary methodologies among public school teachers.

The respondents also admitted that the content of primary school textbooks did contain substantial material relevant to personality development, particularly in subjects like religious studies, where incidents, anecdotes, and guidelines were present to familiarise students with their duties and roles as responsible citizens. However, these materials remain confined to textbooks and are not consistently put into practice. Additionally, structural factors within the education system, limited role of teachers, inadequate integration into teaching methods, and insufficient teacher training contribute to the failure of these materials to shape young minds effectively. Addressing these challenges is essential to improve the impact of primary school textbooks on personality development in Pakistan.

Respondents also agreed that meaningful and relevant education was not adequately promoted within the state. They stressed that there was a need to create an environment that empowered educational institutions, especially at the early stages, to strengthen young minds. Revamping the existing syllabus and teaching methodologies was also imperative to address these challenges effectively.

Transforming the educational process to align with personality development faces numerous challenges as discussed above but another area of concern were the complexities introduced by the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment, which had decentralised education to the provincial level.<sup>33</sup>

Nonetheless, given the urgency and significance of the issue, immediate attention is required to synchronise efforts and overcome these challenges. The above findings show that there is no doubt that Pakistan's education system requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses diverse strategies, curriculum revisions, teacher training programmes, and a concerted effort from all stakeholders.

### **Policy Recommendations**

Promoting personality development is crucial for fostering societal harmony and collective flourishing. It is imperative to integrate this aspect into the educational framework of Pakistani schools. Consequently, a targeted approach is urgently needed to address this matter. Significant opportunities exist for implementing measures in Pakistan that can enable education to play a central role in shaping students into better citizens and ensuring a brighter future for the nation. Thus, education should be leveraged as a powerful tool for individual and societal improvement.<sup>34</sup>

With education now being a provincial matter, there is lesser obligation to strictly adhere to the guidelines set by the Ministry of Education. However, this necessitates a high-level meeting to establish consensus on making 'Personality Development' a key component of educational institutions throughout Pakistan. Achieving synchronisation, among the provinces, regarding the curriculum's focus on this aspect is crucial. This can only be accomplished with proactive leadership from the top, who

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<sup>33</sup> Faisal Bari, "On different trajectories," *Dawn*, September 16, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1710376>.

<sup>34</sup> James Arthur, Jon Davison & Malcom Lewis, *Professional values and practice: Achieving the standards for OTS*, (London: Routledge), 12.

should take an active role in driving this agenda. The process must be owned by the state in order to yield significant results. A particular emphasis should be placed on self-education and the pivotal role of teachers in facilitating personality development:

### **Self-Education**

The following measures can be implemented to enhance self-education:

- It is imperative to transition from a rigid and narrow approach to education towards a more flexible and meaningful framework.
- Integrate self-education as a core concept in the curriculum of junior classes, introducing students to its significance and providing them with the necessary tools and methodologies for effective self-directed learning.
- The curriculum should go beyond theoretical knowledge and include practical application of these concepts through engaging activities and interactive games. This approach will provide students with hands-on experiences that reinforce the importance of self-education and its practical relevance in their lives.
- Prioritise and encourage the implementation of group learning strategies in educational settings to foster autonomy and self-education. These strategies promote individual learning, enhance group cohesiveness, and improve teamwork, leading to stronger integration within student groups.
- Incorporate dedicated grooming classes into the school curriculum, offering 2-3 sessions per week, to teach students ethics, interpersonal skills and basic etiquette. These classes will provide students with valuable social skills and foster a culture of respect and considerate behaviour within the school community.
- Emphasise a strong sense of duty towards the state and each other among students. This can be achieved through civic education, community service projects, and fostering a culture of social responsibility. By instilling a heightened sense of duty, students can become active contributors to their community and nation.
- Self-education is a gradual process. Allocate sufficient curriculum time to prioritise the acquisition of essential life skills, enabling effective self-education.
- Make civic education a mandatory component of the primary school curriculum.
- Promote outdoor education and encourage the use of games that foster brainstorming, inclusivity, teamwork and cooperation.

## **Role of Teachers**

The following steps may be implemented to enhance the role of teachers in promoting effective personality development and self-education in schools:

- Promote a student-oriented learning approach over teacher-centred methods to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Prioritise active participation, collaborative discussions, and hands-on activities to foster critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and self-directed learning, facilitating holistic personality development.
- Implement an inquiry-based approach in the teaching process.
- Promote a culture of individual growth and discourage student comparisons. Foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment that values each student's unique abilities and strengths.
- Stress personal development and a positive mindset, avoiding unnecessary competition among students.
- Emphasise the importance of time management and self-discipline through consistent reinforcement.
- Promote core values of honesty, truthfulness, tolerance, equality, respect, and responsibility in classroom settings through deliberate emphasis and reinforcement.
- Encourage students to explore diverse career paths and appreciate the unique contributions each profession can make to society.
- Conduct workshops and training for teachers on effective methodologies for nurturing student personalities and professional ethical standards.
- Implement accountability mechanisms for teachers to address the alarming rigidity often observed in them, especially in rural areas.
- School leadership should carefully assess the skills and attitudes of teachers when assigning them to junior classes.
- Teacher evaluation in junior classes should be conducted by school management for insight into their performance.

The recommendations presented here, although ambitious, may encounter challenges due to the complex realities within Pakistan's educational system, including disparities in resources between rural and urban areas. Moreover, obstacles such as financial constraints, cultural barriers, and gender-based inequalities often impede access to education for many children, exacerbating the difficulties in implementing these measures. While the journey towards achieving effective personality development in schools may be long and require sustained efforts, it is essential to initiate action and

aspire for progress. Starting from a foundation of aspirations can pave the way for tangible outcomes in the future.

Prioritising personality development in schools is of paramount importance as it not only addresses societal challenges but also has implications for national security. Neglecting the development of individuals' personalities has resulted in a regression in this crucial aspect. By investing in initiatives that promote character building, the state can counteract this decline and prevent potential risks to national security.

### **Conclusion**

The true asset of any state is, its citizens, and their personalities play a critical role in a nation's development and national security. Internal challenges and social problems can pose significant threats to a nation's stability and security. It is, therefore, imperative for Pakistan to prioritise personality development as a means to address these existing issues that are weakening the country from within.

Education and personality development are two interconnected elements of utmost importance. Both should be given equal attention, as they have the potential to yield long-term benefits simultaneously. Educational institutions should serve as platforms for fostering personality development, enhancing academic and social performance, and ultimately strengthening national security. To embark on this journey, particular emphasis should be placed on promoting self-education and empowering teachers to play a pivotal role in guiding students' personal growth. However, it is essential to recognise that achieving tangible outcomes in these areas requires time, commitment, and persistent efforts. By initiating this process and addressing the unequal distribution of resources and barriers to education, the state can lay a strong foundation for future progress. Through integrating personality development into the core of the educational system, educators can not only enhance individual capabilities but also bolster the overall security and resilience of the nation.

In short, if due importance is given to character building, Pakistan can fortify its national security and effectively address the challenges that hinder its progress. By nurturing the potential of its citizens, the country can forge a path towards a brighter and more secure future.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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