

# Dismal State of Social Sciences in Pakistan

*This paper attempts to explain and understand the dismal condition of the social sciences and social science research in Pakistan. It establishes some encompassing parameters which help explain why things are the way they are. These include attempts to place the role of Pakistan's state and its bureaucracy in a certain context, and also delineates on the collapse of institutions in Pakistan leading the way for individuals, rather than institutions, to undertake and produce research. The dominance and presence of international donors and their roles with regard to social science research are also discussed at length. There is no 'community of scholars' in Pakistan, nor any social science professional association to speak of. The paper argues that with current trends in the academic community, the future for social science and social science research in Pakistan looks even more bleak.*

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## I Introduction

If one were to pose the following question to a variety of Pakistani social scientists: "Has any Pakistani social scientist, in any of their fields in the last three decades, developed, reconstructed, reformulated, expanded upon, disputed or rejected, any theory or theoretical formulation, qua theory, or even in the specific context of Pakistan?" the answer would probably be a simple 'no'. Or perhaps, one, or two, or at best three, names would be mentioned by some of them, almost always with many qualifications, from amongst the many thousands of social scientists produced by Pakistan across the diverse disciplines. What would be contested though is whether indeed, any of these handful have actually contributed anything original in order to be considered different from the other social scientists, or whether they too have merely restated a problem.

Whether it is in the discipline of history, politics, sociology, anthropology, or even economics, by far the most dominant of the social sciences in Pakistan, it would be difficult to find social scientists who have made a marked impression even regionally, leave alone globally, on the expansion in ideas, theory and knowledge related to their disciplines. At best, a few may have made some impressive empirical contributions, but little else. Pakistani social scientists continue to apply theoretical arguments and constructs to Pakistani conditions, without questioning, debating or commenting upon the theory itself. If there

is any agreement and consensus amongst Pakistani social scientists, it is that the social sciences in Pakistan are in a dismal state and, that things, if they possibly can, are getting far worse. What is it about the Pakistan social science 'condition' which accounts for this situation?

This question, perhaps to start with, needs to be answered with recourse to some strands from what one can call a 'political economy' approach, or from what would broadly describe a 'sociology of knowledge' construct. In order to address this question, we would need to identify some characteristics of Pakistan's society, state and economy, which would have an impact on the production and nature of social science. Based on our reading of Pakistani society and on discussions with a large number of social scientists over many years and also specifically for this paper,<sup>1</sup> we identify such characteristics of Pakistani society which, in order to keep the scale and scope of this paper within manageable limits, are not explained in sufficient degree and hence are liable to question, debate and contestation. Nevertheless, we feel that these assumptions or claims emerge from some sort of consensus amongst social scientists in Pakistan, and are largely legitimate and valid. Before we lay out the general premises which form the main theme and direction of this paper, some general comments about the social sciences need to be made.

For the purposes of this paper, in the context of Pakistan, the broad generic term 'the social sciences' specifically include the disciplines of Political Science, History, Sociology, Economics, Anthropology,

International Relations, Demography, Pakistan Studies, and what are known as (the different) Area Studies. In terms of number, prominence, power, privilege, influence and visibility, economics dominates all the social sciences collectively, by a large multiple.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, there is far greater published research on the state of economics in Pakistan, on the teaching of economics, on institutions where research on economics takes place, and on economists. In this paper too, this dominance of economics is reflected in many places.<sup>3</sup>

## Establishing Broad Parameters<sup>4</sup>

As a first premise one can probably state that given the nature of the Pakistani state, where institutions have been subverted and side-stepped, and where there is a strong tendency for authoritarianism, the groups who hold power over the state thrive on the state's power to offer patronage and largesse. State patronage, which ignores and overrides institutions, norms and even legality, and is in a position to distribute privileges, will probably give rise to a sycophantic culture, where individuals and groups, even those belonging to some section of the intelligentsia, will appease the representatives of the state in order to benefit from its largesse. It is improbable that dissenting individuals, creative or otherwise, and those who do not 'toe the line', will benefit from the structures and institutions of the state. This situation is also likely to breed conformity and conservatism, with intellectuals and their pursuits compromised in their quest

for power, recognition and acceptance. Perhaps the poor quality of output of social scientists, particularly in terms of intellectual pursuit (as opposed to problem-solving) can be explained by this need for social scientists to find acceptance by the institutions and representatives of the state.

If the state dominates, and if the bureaucracy plays a key role in influencing and running society and, importantly, where alternative organic institutions (such as mass based political parties) do not exist, the road to power and influence must travel through the bureaucratic/state route. This seems to be specifically so for economists who are required in the Planning Commission, ministry of finance and other government departments to provide advice and formulate policy. Over the years, they have become influential and powerful members of the state, and still are able to remain economists, unlike say, anthropologists or historians, who if they joined the civil service, would cease to remain rooted in their academic disciplines since their particular expertise would no longer be required for the purposes of 'problem solving'. Not so for economists.

If the acquisition of power, and influence, and perhaps even prestige, is an important goal for an economist, then the career path for such economists will have to be through government. No academic economist wields power or much influence in Pakistan. As Naseem demonstrates in his historical evaluation of the economics profession in Pakistan: "for a variety of reasons, the economics profession has been dominated by practitioners, initially bureaucrats, rather than by those who have academic and research interests",<sup>5</sup> and that "government economists and bureaucrats have generally enjoyed a much higher pecking-order than their academic or research counterparts in the Pakistani economists' establishment".<sup>6</sup> One must also add that, given the acknowledgement that the institutions of the state in Pakistan are highly corrupt, government sector jobs, while providing power and prestige, also provide opportunities for untold wealth. In a society which values wealth for itself and as a means to other goals, this gives added impetus.

While the route through the structures of the state has been the traditional route to power for economists, over the last decade or so, the route has shifted to the international financial institutions, in particular to the World Bank and the IMF.<sup>7</sup> Numerous high profile cases in the last decade suggest that a stint in either of these two international institutions can, before

or after completion of service, lead to a prominent – ministerial – position in government in Pakistan. The status of even junior staff members of the lending agencies stands far higher than that of the generalist civil servants, and particularly with regard to that of the domestic expert. For those economists seeking either power or recognition, the signals and route are well defined. For these reasons, perhaps, there has been "very little space for the contribution to the country's economic development by economists outside of government [and the IFIs], especially those in the universities and research institutes".<sup>8</sup>

If the acquisition of power, privilege and wealth through the added structure of state patronage is the first premise which may help explain the state of social science and particularly of economics in Pakistan, the next premise is felt to be social values, incentives and clear alternatives which dissuade budding academics and social scientists to seriously take up social science as a profession. Teaching is no longer considered to be a 'noble' profession as it was in the past, in sections of society which are rapidly upwardly mobile and where economic gain and the acquisition of wealth now determine the new set of personal and social values.<sup>9</sup> Members from the elite and from the upwardly mobile classes who could play an important role in the establishment of social science as a profession, are not likely to turn to academics as there are few social and material returns from investing in such professions, especially given an environment where business administration and computer and technology related fields offer far more lucrative opportunities. Perhaps this is why there is only one private sector university which has only recently begun to offer undergraduate degrees in the social sciences, while there are literally hundreds of colleges, universities and institutes in the private sector which offer degrees in management, information technology, and medicine.

Added to the above observation about incentives, opportunities and priorities, and with comments made about state patronage and the bureaucracy, there is another aspect which has been expressed by social scientists in writing and as part of this study. There seems to be an obsession with 'policy relevant' research in Pakistan. Particularly for economists, and not them alone, there is the need to determine what role they can play in the 'development of the country' and how they can contribute to the 'country's development'.<sup>10</sup> One explanation by other social scientists for

the dominance of economists is precisely this, that economics and economists play policy relevant roles, unlike political scientists, anthropologists, historians, etc, and that is why economics dominates the social sciences in Pakistan. In the context of Pakistan there seems to be no research in the social sciences which expands the spectrum of knowledge and ideas, and Pakistani social scientists are primarily in the 'business of giving advice'.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, there is no such thing as policy irrelevant research in the social sciences in Pakistan.<sup>12</sup>

One general explanation given by some social scientists for the poor status of social science in Pakistan is the lack of a culture promoting free floating discussion and debate.<sup>13</sup> Many social scientists would argue that Pakistan is an intolerant society made up of individuals who are not willing to be criticised, and hence, there is no tradition of an exchange of ideas. Some link this to the absence of democracy, even in its symbolic, electioneering form. The lack of democracy is a favourite whipping horse for many social scientists, and while this could be a cause for many of the problems faced by Pakistan, including the lack of a vibrant social science culture, it is an insufficient explanation as it does not explain how in numerous other countries, authoritarianism and a lack of democracy produce a thriving opposition to government supported by an active social science community. Significantly, Pakistan lacks both.

A convincing argument, on which most academics concur, which explains the dismal state of the social sciences in Pakistan, is related to the marked and highly visible decline of all sorts of institutions, particularly those in the public sector. This 'crisis of governance' in World Bank parlance, is manifest in the visible demise of public sector educational and research institutions in Pakistan. This theme reappears on many occasions in this paper with regard to specific institutions and disciplines. A major conclusion from discussions held with social scientists is that most of the social science research in the public sector in Pakistan is done by individuals who happen to be based there, and not by the institution, as such.<sup>14</sup> If these handful of individuals who are active in research are placed somewhere else, they would continue doing research regardless of where they happen to be; their former institution, on the other hand, would probably have no research output to speak of. Institutions in the public sector no longer provide a base for social scientists to

congregate as they once did three decades ago; there is no academic or intellectual community. Having said this, however, there is an important caveat which needs to be added: while individuals are becoming very important, in some cases even bigger than the institution itself, the individual must be based at an institution. There is no credible category of the free-floating 'independent' research scholar.<sup>15</sup> (This theme of the individual/institutional also appears with regard to other questions, such as links with south Asia, discussed elsewhere in the text). Interestingly, some private sector and donor funded research institutions, and some non-governmental organisations, may have emerged in recent years to replace the public sector institutions as homes for research and may in fact, have been able to 'institutionalise' their research.

To summarise then, there are a number of encompassing premises or parameters through which one should examine the state of the social sciences in Pakistan. These are: the patronage role of the state; the prominence of the bureaucracy and its power and privilege; social and cultural values which encourage the acquisition of power, privilege and wealth; an intolerant culture where dissent and debate are discouraged; and, the lack of any effective, working, institutions to speak of, and hence, outcome and output is based on individual effort and endeavour.

## II Five Phases of Social Science Research

In order to extract some general premises on which much of our discussion and themes are based in the substantive part of this paper, we have above, made recourse to issues related to the state, to society, institutions, structure and culture. Now, in this present section, where we need to examine some general and historical trends in the social sciences, we will need to identify key aspects of Pakistan's history which will help us in locating and determining these trends.

It is not possible to examine the nature of social science in any country without understanding and studying broad trends in the political economy and the history of that society, even in the case of countries which have followed a somewhat steady trajectory or evolutionary path. However, in the case of Pakistan, it is not possible to talk about the social sciences at all, or much else for that matter, without identifying important developments in

the past, many of which have been turbulent and disruptive of steady, evolutionary, trends.

There have been a number of phases in Pakistan's history, each with its unique and distinctive features having an impact on the evolution of the social sciences. For our purposes, perhaps the first phase 1947-58, can be called a phase of the continuation of many of the traditions from the times of pre-independence India, particularly with regard to education and the social sciences. The next phase from 1958-71 can be considered to be one where the military-bureaucratic nexus set the rules for much of the administrative structure of modern Pakistan, where the huge presence and influence of the US was most visible in military, economic, administrative, and even academic terms. These two phases also constitute the 25 years of United Pakistan, a factor having a significant impact on the social sciences in the country. The third phase is the first democratic era in the new Pakistan, from 1971-77, an era which was far freer and liberal, and perhaps creative, than any we may have known. It was not just the ideology and ethos of the Z A Bhutto regime which through its policies left a critical mark on the academic environment in Pakistan, but also, that this was the formative phase of the new Pakistan.

The 1977-88 era marks yet another structural shift in the political economy and evolution of Pakistan with its imprint of the 'Ideology of Pakistan', and the state/public assertion and use of Islam. Without a doubt, this ideological expression had not left a hugely significant impact on its own times, but perhaps, redefined Pakistan once again. Present day Pakistan is the legacy of the Zia era, despite having attempted to break free from this past. The period between 1988-99 or even to the present, could be treated as yet another significant period in Pakistan's evolution, and as we show in subsequent sections, due more to global and regional changes rather than to national ones, having an impact on the social sciences and on research in all disciplines.<sup>16</sup>

In the first two phases following Pakistan's creation, research output in the social sciences was constrained by the dearth of institutions, such as universities, and was largely restricted to the universities of the Punjab, Dhaka, and to Karachi, Pakistan's first capital. It was also limited to the fields of demography, politics, history and of course, economics. The composition of research scholars of that era was primarily Urdu speaking migrants (the latter

day *muhajirs*) who migrated from India to independent Pakistan, and Bengalis. Pakistan's social and economic formation was largely weakly-developed capitalism, with the urban population a mere 18 per cent of the population and literacy only 15 per cent. In the discipline of history, the focus of research was on Muslim United India and the Freedom Movement in a nationalistic Islamic guise, on the Muslim League, and on the period from the early 20th Century up to the Partition of India. This trend in history continued well into the 1960s and even later. What was significant in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s was the influence of economic planning and of the Planning Commission, and of administrative and managerial concepts related to political science and political administration, a la Barrington Moore and Samuel Huntington and their ilk.

The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) set up in Karachi in 1957 with the help of the Ford Foundation began conducting research on economics and in demography and since it was, along with the Planning Commission, the main source of employment for 'professional' economists, attracted the best economists at that time from both east and west Pakistan. Their focus of research was very significantly focused towards solving young Pakistan's numerous economic problems and the Institute played an active role in giving 'policy relevant' advice. An interesting differentiation between economists drawn to academics and those drawn to the policy relevant, problem-solving bureaucracy, has been pointed out by Naseem: "a much higher proportion of good students from east Pakistan were inclined towards academic and research careers than those in west Pakistan, who preferred administrative and civil service and military careers".<sup>17</sup> The consequence of this difference, according to Naseem, was expressed when east Pakistan became Bangladesh when it was quickly able to set up the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, unlike Pakistan, where the "economics profession paid the price for the neglect of research and academic activities as a result of its overemphasis of any zeal for policy-making and planning functions".<sup>18</sup>

Pakistan's first 20 years, particularly the second 10 years, were very heavily influenced by western, and particularly, American contacts.<sup>19</sup> The Pakistani intelligentsia was very closely linked with the west, and the bureaucracy had close links with Britain and the US. Not only was the curriculum of university courses in politi-

cal science and in economics drawn almost exclusively from primarily US and from some British texts and sources, but many of the well known western political scientists of that era, came and worked, taught, and wrote in and on Pakistan. Samuel Huntington, Gunnar Myrdal, Gustav Papanek, and Ralph Briabanti, to name but a very few, all had had stints in Pakistan, either as advisors, or doing research and/or teaching, although as one observer has written about economists, "their main interest was of gaining experience in a developing country which would help them rise on the economic ladder at home".<sup>20</sup> In fact, it is difficult to think of any analysis in the form of a book produced by any Pakistani economist until well into the 1960s; all the research in that era was undertaken by British and American economists. Interestingly, as Inayatullah points out, unlike the 1950s and 1960s when a "large number of social scientists were imported as teachers, advisers and consultants, in [the] 1980s there are very few foreign social scientists working in Pakistan".<sup>21</sup>

The Ayub Khan government's heavy dependence on the US, in terms of advice and economic and military aid, with additional assistance for education and institutional development from the Ford Foundation, and USAID, and with the presence of the Harvard Advisory Group, meant that not only were American policies and theories taught, but not surprisingly, many Pakistani scholars also developed their empirical work strongly located in the Anglo-US academic tradition in the political and economic sciences. Mainly American, and some other western political scientists, anthropologists and management advisors were sitting at the heart of academic and administrative Pakistan, documenting and supporting Pakistan's modernising economic and political agenda.

Towards the end of the 1960s as it became clear that east Pakistan was being discriminated against, in the eastern province, and eventually amongst well established mainstream social scientists, studies and research began to emerge which showed the extent and nature of this discrimination. Social science research took on a noticeably political colour, perhaps for the first time, a trend which was to continue till about 1977. The political revolution which took place from the late 1960s onwards in what was left of United Pakistan had a democratic and leftist colour, which was reflected in the type of research being undertaken. Studies were published which showed the extent of income and regional

inequality, some on the rising expression of different forms of nationalism, on the state, and many other subjects. This was a highly political and politicised era which had also enlarged its composition to include a newly emergent middle class, which was vocal and had played a key role in the movement to bring democracy to Pakistan. New colleges and universities were opened in the public sector to cater to this group which allowed these social groups to acquire education for the first time, and the policy of nationalisation of education also contributed in allowing middle and lower middle income students to go to school. This was an active period of research in the social sciences, when research was far freer and open, secular, political, interventionist and activist.<sup>22</sup> With the end of the Bhutto regime, a new Islamic ideology began to dominate every single aspect of Pakistan's existence, and social science was, perhaps, at the forefront of this reaction.

As Islam and Islamic ideology became the hallmark of the Zia regime, we began to see deep structural influences of this ideology on different aspects of society. Research under the banner of Islam began to thrive and there were considerable attempts to recast Pakistan's identity. There was a conscious move on part of the military government of General Zia to dislodge Pakistan from its south Asian roots and to re-orient Pakistan into a Muslim, middle and central Asian nexus. A new sense of identity and identification was invented with Islam playing the pivotal, cementing, medium.

Given the basic premise of the role of the state and its power and hegemony over patronage, as discussed above, aspirants to power and higher office in universities and in research institutions, began to toe the line and became part of the Islamic 'resurgence'. Economics became 'Islamic economics', anthropology, Islamic anthropology, research in history started focusing far more on the Islamic dimension, and the only sort of history which began to be promoted was that related to the Pakistan Movement and the Muslim Freedom struggle in United India. Also, with attempts to reinvent Pakistan's 'ideology' in Islamic terms, much of the research in political science and other social science disciplines could not have but been influenced by these important macro trends. The establishment of the International Islamic University in Islamabad in 1980 is part of this trend.

A key phenomenon which emerged most forcefully in the 1980s, though not related

to the government's policy of Islamisation, which was to have major repercussions on the nature of social transformation in Pakistan, was what is called the Gulf Boom. Large amounts of remittances from Pakistani workers in the Gulf states made their way back to Pakistan and much of this money helped create new and wealthy social groups in dispersed regions across the country. One of the many manifestations of this newly rich class was the demand for better education, at all levels. The response by the state was not an attempt to improve the quality of public sector education, which was in decline, but to allow a private sector parallel system, particularly at the higher levels, to emerge.

Pakistan in the post-Zia period is still much affected by the major changes brought about by the military government between 1977 and 1988 and change since then has been noticeable but slow. Probably the greatest single change that has come about since the end of the 1980s, which has had an impact on society and the social sciences in Pakistan, is that of globalisation in its different forms and manifestations. Moreover, not surprisingly, the post-Soviet world has also had an impact on research in Politics, History and the Social Sciences. Yet another important phenomenon in the context of Pakistan is the highly visible presence of donors and of nongovernmental organisations, many of which were involved in research themselves or funded research institutions and projects.

Pakistan's economy since the end of the 1980s, became dependent upon and dominated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund who imposed their advisors and programmes on Pakistan. Pakistan's economic policies became the IMF's structural adjustment programmes, where cuts in the budget and support for the private sector, played a key role. This then had an impact on education. However, significantly, research in economics was affected considerably by the World Bank/IMF economic programme. While government economists and the various government institutions and departments churned out data and reports justifying the economic policies which all governments were following since 1988, there was some revival of political academics amongst some economists, with some researchers arguing against the imposition of structural adjustment showing its deleterious consequences. There was never really an exchange of ideas or debate between the government and nongovernmental economists, but those who carried out research

to show the negative consequences of these policies were increasingly listened to by the public at large.

With the end of the cold war and with the demise of the Soviet Union, disciplines like political science and international relations, changed considerably, also on account of the changing Pakistan-US relationship. In the cold war era, much of the research in these disciplines was concerned with US-Soviet relations and their impact on the region and on Afghanistan and Pakistan. Later there was a shift towards nuclear issues and a continuing interest on India-Pakistan relations with Kashmir being the pivotal issue. However, although Kashmir and India have defined Pakistan's domestic political economy and along with Afghanistan, Pakistan's foreign policy, research on the Kashmir/India issue, both in terms of quality and quantity, does not reflect the centrality of its presence.

With a considerable and sharply growing donor influence in Pakistan since the 1990s, much of the research agenda is now determined, if not dominated, by donors, NGOs and by international themes and issues, not all of which are relevant to Pakistan. Not just economists, but political scientists, sociologists and others, have increasingly been working on themes propagated by the International Financial Institutions and other donors, themes such as governance, decentralisation, local government reform, and the like. Foreign NGOs and other donors fund projects with a specific angle and projects which are far more applied and problem-solving oriented, than those which have academic or intellectual ambitions. This means that academics are drawn further away from academic and intellectual pursuits, and join bureaucrats and donors to 'solve Pakistan's problems'. Another very important aspect of the role and presence of donors in Pakistan is that they have the money to pay for whatever research they want done. Funds are short in the public sector and with far greater opportunities emerging outside academia, many researchers are able to stay on in the public sector by supplementing their incomes through consulting for donors and other NGOs, although very often this does take them away from 'academic' research.

We conclude this brief history of the social sciences in Pakistan with a number of points which relate to our paper. The first relates to Pakistan's academic diaspora. Amongst the points of unanimous agreement amongst social scientists in Pakistan, one which must surely be

ranked near the top is the consensus that of the Pakistani academics who have made a name for themselves; all, without exception, have made that name while living and working abroad. In the last 30 years certainly, no Pakistani social scientist based in Pakistan has made much of an intellectual contribution to their discipline.<sup>23</sup> This is not a recent revelation, for Inayatullah in the 1980s writes, that "the best work by Pakistani scholars has been produced by those living in the west".<sup>24</sup> a view shared by Qureshi: "those living and working abroad have been more prolific and more articulate because they have better facilities and congenial environments".<sup>25</sup> While the structural reasons given here 'better facilities and congenial environments' may be contested, what is not, is the supremacy of the diaspora in the Pakistani social science hierarchy.

An issue which emerges continuously throughout this paper, concerns the lopsided regional coverage given to the social sciences. The main centres for the production of social science research and teaching are, Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore. With Islamabad housing two large universities – the Quaid Azam University and the International Islamic University – and with government and donors located here, there are a number of active NGOs which undertake 'research', and there are research institutions supported by government and donors. Islamabad, hence, not surprisingly, is a 'natural' centre for social science production/output. Karachi, also, has the advantage of being the old capital and the largest city and has a large population of students, institutions and social scientists. Lahore has a long tradition of social science and intellectual output, and has some of the oldest educational institutions in south Asia. Also, since it is the second largest city in Pakistan, with an extensive hinterland, it has access to numerous students and scholars from around the province. The case of Baluchistan and the NWFP is different in terms of structure and institutions and one can see that in the case of institutions, authors or scholars, almost none from the NWFP or Baluchistan feature in the main arguments regarding social science research/institutions in Pakistan. This is simply because they do not have a presence. In the review of journals or books undertaken,<sup>26</sup> very few authors from these two provinces appears; the same can be said about the papers presented at the Pakistan Society for Development Economists discussed in a section below. There are no journals or donor-funded research institutions, as in

Karachi and Islamabad, nor many government or non-government centres or institutions which feature in almost any of my lists. Clearly, both Baluchistan and the NWFP do not register on the Pakistani social science map. Perhaps the only exception is one centre at Peshawar University which has students, some faculty and also publishes papers and a journal. In terms of south Asian connections, both provinces are, literally, far removed, and hence, have few connections if any at all, with south Asia.

It is important to state that what constitutes social science in this study, is exclusively Social Science in English; Urdu and other languages have been excluded. This is likely to be a contentious issue for some readers, but most social scientists interviewed for this study support the general premise that 'social science' in Pakistan is only undertaken in English. Almost all university-level education – professional or general – takes place in English. English, hence, is required to teach, read and understand the social sciences, despite the fact that very few Pakistanis actually read or write English. This also means that we have a very narrow and pointed pyramidal education structure which accounts for so few tertiary-level students.

This does exclude much of the work done in Urdu, Sindhi, Baluchi or Brahevi, but many academics would exclude these works for numerous reasons, primarily for it not being 'academic' or researched, enough.<sup>27</sup> Punjabi and Baluchi do not have active and effective scripts in use, while the script for Pushto is limited largely to a public or newspaper-reading level. Sindhi does have a vibrant and historic script which seems to have slowed in its development as a script over the last few decades. While there is a large Sindhi literature, it seems to be limited to contemporary politics, literature, poetry and to information/news. Sindhi does not have a dynamic social science literature and at best some translations of articles from the English language are available. The case of Urdu is similar, though not as bad. Urdu has also not developed a modern social science lingua/discourse, although is widely used and read mainly in the form of newspapers, magazines and information, as well as for primary and secondary level education texts. It does not have a social science culture especially at higher levels of abstraction. However, a number of attempts to translate English language texts in History, Politics and International Relations (and some in Economics) into Urdu does take place frequently, and it

seems, is effective. However, while there is a very large reading public in Urdu, a large number of books are about politics, biographies, and histories. Perhaps what constitutes 'social science' in Urdu is rather different and very general, compared to even the not-so-good output produced in English. Clearly, this is an unresolved, debatable and even controversial, issue.

### III Institutions of Social Science Research

This section briefly mentions a number of organisations and institutions which have something to do with data and social science output and with research in the social sciences.

The government has scores of departments which collect and disseminate large amounts of data, information and statistics related to some aspect of what one can very broadly call 'the social sciences'. No researcher, particularly in the area of development or economics, can ignore the output of organisations and departments such as the: Agriculture Census Organisation; the different Bureau(s) of Statistics, at each of the four provinces, Sindh, Punjab, NWFP and Baluchistan; the Central Board of Revenue; the large number of publications of the finance division, one of the main sources of information for all economic related data with its annual Pakistan Economic Survey, which is the bible for anyone wanting to work on the economy or on development issues in terms of data and information provided. The Federal Bureau of Statistics, also one of the major sources of data and information on almost all aspects of the economy and society. The State Bank of Pakistan like the ministry of finance and the finance division, produces its Annual Report which also has a large amount of essential data and increasingly, interesting analysis on the state of Pakistan's economy. While very much part of government, the State Bank likes to consider itself to be independent, and does often comment upon, if not directly critique, the ministry of finance's position.

Apart from government organisations and departments, there are university social science departments and centres that also do significant research. However, it is important at this point to assert one of our basic premises elaborated in an earlier section, that perhaps, it is not the department/institution which does research, but a few individuals who happen to be working there. This is the case with autonomous

institutions as well. A professor who was interviewed for this study said that the three senior most professors in the department who were all set to retire together in a few years had, between them, 140 publications; the rest of the faculty of eight, had seven papers between them, some of which were co-authored by these professors.

The main autonomous research institutes, funded by government and non-government sources, include the following: at Karachi University, the Applied Economics Research Centre which is funded by the University Grants Commission; the Institute for Educational Development, of the Aga Khan University also does research on gender and on education and the Social Policy and Development Centre, Karachi, a donor-funded (Canadian International Development Agency – CIDA) organisation does research in a number of areas related to the social sectors. In Islamabad, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics is funded by government and does research in economics and demography. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute is funded by CIDA as well, and the Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Centre, is a private not-for-profit organisation funded by UNDP. The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, is a German organisation which commissions research on issues of Governance and Decentralisation. The Institute of Strategic Studies is a non-profit supposedly autonomous research centre working on international and regional issues funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the Institute of Regional Studies produces work on numerous issues related to a vast region, from central and middle eastern Asia, to south-east Asia. In Peshawar, the Pakistan Academy for Rural Development, and the Institute of Development Studies, NWFP, are government funded research institutes, both way past their prime, very much like the once formidable Punjab Economic Research Institute, at Lahore, and the Sindh Development Centre, Jamshoro University, Sindh.

While not research 'institutes' as such, given the overpowering presence and dominance of donors in Pakistan, and particularly of the international financial institutions, one cannot but mention some of their Islamabad offices. These regional/national offices of these donors produce a large array of reports and studies, some by their own staff and others which are commissioned out and undertaken by consultants. No researcher can ignore the research/studies which come out of these organisations. They include, the World

Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Labour Organisation, United Nations Development Programme, and United Nations Children's Fund.

While there are many thousands of NGOs operating in Pakistan, perhaps very few do what one would call 'research', and social science research would be done by fewer still. Some NGOs would probably report their activities and perhaps write something about their project area, but this would probably be information/documentation rather than researched output. Also, the scope of the information or research would be highly focused and very narrow. There is also a problem of the dissemination of the research. Many non-governmental organisations guard their work and are not very open about what they publish and about their activities and prefer to work in a low-key manner. The distinction between information and research is related to the *purpose* of the output which will have an impact on the quality of the output/research. If reports are meant either for internal circulation or for donors and for funding, the product will be focused towards the specific requirements of the client. If research or output is to be widely disseminated, then it is probable that the issues, theme and characteristics of the study/research will be broader and could be included in the category of social science 'research'. One agrees with Haque and Khan who argue that, "the NGOs working in the economic and social sectors have been able to attract many economists to work for them. Almost all this work has no serious academic or research content – in fact, it is anti-intellectual since it wants immediate answers to self serving propositions or questions ...".<sup>28</sup>

Because there are no forums where such reports are reviewed – whether for their methodology, content, style, or scope – the output is likely to be very highly varied. Some NGOs do hire well-educated, though untrained, (usually young, foreign qualified) social scientists who usually work on their own under little academic/research supervision. Because of these factors, it is very difficult to generalise about the output of NGOs. Having said that, one cannot also deny the fact that there are some organisations which are producing research of better quality and also have the desire and confidence to widely disseminate their output. Not surprisingly, however, most of the research output of these organisations is related to their line of work and expertise, and is often project-specific. Most NGOs simply provide information/documentation related to their own projects

although some claim that 'they do research' and have researched publications and monographs which support this claim; yet much of this output is out-sourced and undertaken by researchers working elsewhere who are paid an honorarium to contribute something to the research output of that particular NGO.

During the course of this study, all the academics interviewed were asked to name 10 of the major or main research institutions in the country. Not a single scholar could come up with even 10 names. No one came up with more than five names, and four institutes were more or less on everyone's list, with maybe one or two added on by one or two of the scholars; some names they themselves rejected since they did not inspire any confidence. There could be no better telling commentary on the state of social sciences and on social science research in Pakistan.

### Number of Social Scientists

If we estimate the number of 'active' researchers, from each of the disciplines, based on our own knowledge about publications and the state of social sciences, and add to that comments and opinions from those academics interviewed, the following picture emerges. The economists interviewed felt that there were between 250-300 economists in Pakistan related in some way to economics, either teaching or doing research in universities, at some kind of research institute, or with donors and NGOs. Of these, they felt, that at best 50, would be considered active social scientists/economists involved in research, the standards and quality of whom would be very variable and perhaps for some, even 'suspect'. For history, there were said to be at most 70 historians of which seven were said to be active, most of whom were either retired or working outside any institution. About 80 political scientists are said to exist of which perhaps eight are active. In international relations too, there are said to be 70 to 80 social scientists of whom perhaps 15 are doing active research. In all other disciplines in the social sciences, the ratio is not more than 10 per cent of the total mass of available social scientists.

It is not easy to estimate the number of social scientists working with NGOs in Pakistan. If one was to make a guesstimate about the size of this community, then perhaps the number would be no more than one hundred, although many of the qualifications mentioned above about the 'research' of NGOs, would apply even more

strongly here. While there are say, well qualified Masters-level political scientists or anthropologists working in NGOs, they are not really working as 'social scientists' and may be doing no research. Besides, what goes by the name of 'research' in NGOs is highly questionable.

## IV Social Science Output: Books and Journals

### Books

The main publishers of social science books in Pakistan in English, are Oxford University Press and Vanguard Books. There are a few other publishers, such as Sang-e-Meel and Ferozsons who publish social science books in English, but this forms a small percentage of their output as they publish far more books in Urdu on general themes as well. City Press is a recently formed independent publishing house which has published a few books in English. The standard of publication for books varies as much as it does for journals and it is difficult to draw any conclusions based on titles.<sup>29</sup>

Vanguard Books have reprinted a number of books by British colonialists under the Exploring Central Asia and Great Explorations series, which make up a large share of all their books published since 1995. Sang-e-Meel, have also published 33 District Gazetteers from the British times at the turn of the 19/20th centuries, 21 of which are published after 1995. In addition they have reprinted 35 books by Britishers of the Raj, on history, exploration and on their impressions and interpretations of British India. Seen from Vanguard's and Sang-e-Meel's publication record, British India seems to be a favourite topic for publication, but one wonders who the clientele for these books is: it certainly isn't history departments in Pakistan.

Oxford University Press has concentrated increasingly on biographies and similar reminiscences and on non-academic books by retired bureaucrats, generals and politicians. City Press has concentrated on the urban environment, and on books largely by one author. Not surprisingly, being a multinational publishing house and given very little competition, OUP dominates the publishing business in Pakistan in every sense of the word. This also allows it to attract far more serious scholars from Pakistan and abroad, and allows far greater collaboration between scholars from different countries. How-

ever, given this dominance, one feels that this collaboration is far less than what can be accomplished.

### Journals

The main theme of this paper has been that social science in general, and social science research in particular, in Pakistan, is dying a visible death. Perhaps much of the evidence and information presented in various sections of this paper supports this claim which is unanimously agreed to by almost every single serious social scientist in Pakistan. This judgment is made even stronger when we consider the state and frequency of academic journals in Pakistan.

This list of 22 'journals' is perhaps the complete list of journals published in Pakistan in the social sciences. It is clear, that of our seven disciplines chosen for analysis, there are no journals dedicated to political science, anthropology, demography, history (other than Islamic/Muslim history) or sociology. Most journals are multidisciplinary, rather than specialist journals. Also, most importantly, only three of these 22 are refereed journals. The quality (if that is the right word) of many of the papers published in Pakistani 'journals' suggests, that these papers are not even internally screened by the editorial committee of the publication.

It is quite possible that the table above gives the impression that there is a vibrant exchange of ideas and the dissemination of knowledge and research through these journals, but the reality could not be farther from the truth. The last two columns of the table reveal that while some journals have been around for two or three decades even, they are now running well behind schedule and many have even ceased publication. As an example, if we take two of the three main (only) economic journals Pakistan Economic and Social Review, and the Pakistan Journal of Applied Economics, both are two and three years behind schedule, respectively. Clearly, in a country where economics dominates in the social sciences, this pattern suggests a growing and sharp crisis in the field of economics specifically, and in the social sciences, more generally.

Journals are less an avenue to deliberate upon academic issues related to enhancing knowledge related to a particular discipline, but have become sources for academics and scholars located at the host institution (of the Journal) to further their careers. This we observe in the case of the PSDE and the Pakistan Development

Review, but is not uncommon elsewhere. Two examples emphasise this trend adequately. The *Journal of Research: Humanities*, from the Bahauddin Zakariya University in Multan, produced one volume each in 1999 and 2000, comprising of a single issue both times, each with about 140 pages in all. Of the 20 papers in these two issues/volumes, 17 were from the humanities and other social sciences departments of the same university. Karachi University, one of the two largest universities in Pakistan, earlier this year produced its *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*. What is important to note, is that it took five years for it to do so and the inaugural issues is the single 150 page joint Volume 1 and 2 1996-2000! Moreover, of the 20 contributions (many of them joint papers) as many as 19 are from Karachi University itself. These are just two of numerous examples which abound in Pakistan which confirm the view that what is produced in the name of social science in Pakistan, is rather suspect. Next we present some details about the contents of five of Pakistan's main journals.

### What Are the Journals Publishing?

The *Pakistan Development Review* (PDR) is without much doubt, considered to be Pakistan's leading journal in any discipline. It has an international board of referees which includes Nobel Laureates in Economics, as well as well known economists. While one does not know for sure what role these big names play on the Board and whether they are at all active, articles submitted to the PDR are, nevertheless, reviewed by leading social scientists in their fields. This is unlike the case of most other journals in Pakistan. Moreover, PDR is not simply restricted to economists, as demographers and other social scientists also occasionally contribute, although economists do heavily dominate. The focus of the journal is, almost exclusively on Pakistan, where more general or theoretical articles seldom appear. For any social scientist, particularly an economist, they can only ignore the journal at their own peril.

For our purposes, examining the last five years of the journal, we can see that since its Spring 1995 issue, the *Pakistan Development Review* has published regularly till its latest issue of Summer 2001, and is on schedule. The PDR is a quarterly journal, although one issue, the most voluminous of the four, is dedicated to the Conference Proceedings of the Pakistan

**Table 1: Pakistani Books in the Social Sciences 1995-2001**

Area	No	Details
<b>(A) Vanguard Publishers</b>		
Pak History	10	3 by a single Pakistani Historian, 3 retired judges, 1 UK Historian
Central Asia/British India	38	A series of books in Vanguard's Exploring Central and Asia and Great Explorations categories, written by Britishers in the late 19th-early 20th Century
S A Politics mainly nuclear	7	1 US academic/policy analyst, 1 US academic, 1 Indian academic, 1 US Pak academic, 2 SA seminars
Economics/Development	14	4 Conference Proceedings by SDPI, 2 conferences by SPDC, 6 Pak academics (1 edited, 4 collections, 1 joint Pak academics), 1 World Bank Pak
Misc	11	2 on Afghanistan (1 edited Pak, US academics, jrnlists, 1 US academic), 3 Criminology (retired judges, police) 3 Sociology/Linguistics by same author
<b>(B) Oxford University Press</b>		
Pak politics	10	6 retd mly/bureaucrats, 1 journalist, 1 Pak academic, 1 US development worker
C Asia, Afghan, Iran	8	2 Pak diplomats, 2 European jrnlists, 1 UK academic, 1 US academic, 1 Iranian academic, 1 Turkish diplomat
Foreign Policy	3	2 Pak diplomats, 1 US diplomat
Econ/Dev	19	4 Pak academics, 2 Pak academics abroad, 4 dev workers, 3 Pak World Bank/donor, 4 edited (2 Pak numerous academics, 1 Pak on education, 1 S Asian collaboration, 1 Bangladesh/UK/US papers)
Pak Army	3	2 retd mly, 1 US academic
SA History	9	Pak diplomat, Indian diplomat, Indian journalist, Pak academic abroad, UK Historian, 1 joint Pak/UK academics,
Pak History	24	9 Paki academics in Pak (five PhD dissertations), 5 foreign non-SAsian academics, 1 Indian academic, 3 Pak academics abroad, 1 Pak politician, 2 Pak bureaucrats, 1 edited by Pak academic with Pak/US contributions.
Law/Constitut	4	All Pak lawyers
Media	2	1 by two UK BBC reporters, 1 Pak diplomat
Pak Compendiums	5	All have dozens of Pak and foreign academics, jrnlist, diplomats, bureaucrats, contributing. 4 edited by Pak (only one academic), 1UK jrnlist
Islam	6	2 US/UK academics, 1 Pak academic abroad, 1 Pak academic, 1 B'gladesh academic
Misc	7	2 by same Pak academics on Linguistic, 1 on Pak cinema by a Pak film maker, 1 anthropology UK academic, 1 UK/US/Pak 'scholars' on anthropology
<b>(C) City Press</b>		
Urban Dev/ Housing	15	All Pakistani writers; 8 by one author, 2 by two others, 2 collaborated books with Pak and UK academics as conference proceedings,
His of Tech in Pak	1	Retired bureaucrat/dev worker
South Asian hist/cul	1	Retired bureaucrat/dev worker (as above); on the pre-partition Muslim mindset
<b>(D) Sang-e-Meel</b>		
'History' 1	35	Reprints of writings from the British Raj, by British Colonialists
Gazetteers	21	District Gazetteers from the British Raj at the turn of the 19/20th century of regions that became Pakistan and some of which are in present day Indian Punjab
History, Pak	23	7 books by one Pak academic historian/anthropologist on C Asia, Afghanistan, and other subj; 5 books by one author on architectural history of sites and cities in Pak; others on Pak, SA, British history, all single authored, many authors have two books
Politics Pak	7	2 by three authors each, including two of a Pak historian reprinted from the west
Defence/Mly st	3	2 by a Pak based academic, the other also Pak based academic
<b>(E) Ten OUP Edited Volumes Analysed Further for Contributors</b>		
Subject	Contributors	
Foreign Policy	29 articles, all single-authored. 11 Pak academics, 6 researchers, 5 jrnlists/writers, 1 each US, Russian, academic	
Pak Nuclear Policy	5 articles, 2 by editors (Pak academic in US, US academic), 2 Pak physicists, 1 Pak jrnlist	
S Asia and the west Asia	16 articles, conference proceedings, all but one single-authored; 8 academics from M East, 2 Pak, 1 India; 1 Pak researcher, 1 Bangladesh researcher, 1 Indian and Pak jrnlists	
Contemporary Pak politics	Fourth volume of Pak Briefing Series prepared with American Inst of Pak Studies; 9 articles, 6 US academics, 1 joint Pak academics, 1 Pak academic in US, 1 US diplomat, 1 Pak bureaucrat	
Partition	13 conference papers, 6 Pak academic abroad, 4 Indian academic, 2 UK academic, 14 single-authored papers, 3 Pak lawyers, 1 retd General, 1 retd bureaucrat, 3 US academics, 3 Pak academics abroad, 1 US 1 Pak diplomats	
Pak at 50 many disciplines	34 newspaper articles; mainly Indian and Pakistani journalists, some other south Asian, a handful of Pak, Indian academics.	
Pak Education	11 articles, 3 World Bank/UN, 2 Pak consultants, 5 Pak academics (inc physics, chemistry)	
Development	7 papers, 5 co-authored (all five Pak), 4 Pak academics, 1 Pak activist, 1 European academic	
Pak Economy at 50	13 papers, 4 co-authored; all 14 Pak contributors; 5 IMF/World Bank/UN, 1 Pak academic abroad, 3 Pak business schools, 5 research institutes.	

Society of Development Economists each year – due to the nature of the Conference Proceedings, these issues of PDR are discussed separately.

Since Spring 1995 (excluding the Conference Proceedings), 72 papers have been published of which 22 (30 percent) were published by staff and faculty at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE). Most journals in Pakistan have this ‘in-house’ aspect to them and provide space to their own faculty. Some institutions have made this into an art form where almost all articles are by faculty of the same department or institution. Nevertheless, PDR does also have a truly international flavour, unlike any other journal in the social sciences in Pakistan and this helps maintain its reputation as Pakistan’s best social science journal. Of the 72 articles, as many as 17 were from scholars and professors from abroad, from the developed world. The third highest category was from technocrats, or public servants interested in doing research, primarily in economics – six papers in all. There were four papers each from autonomous government and independent research organisations; from international organisations like the World Bank, IMF and ILO; and four from the International Irrigation Management Institute. In terms of teaching institutions, there were 3 papers each from the economics department of the Quaid e Azam University, and from the International Institute of Islamic Economics of the International Islamic University, both organisations, interestingly are located in Islamabad, where PIDE and the journal are also located. There were two articles each from the Agricultural University of Faisalabad and from the Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan. In the 72 papers, there were only two from south Asia, both from India.

*Pakistan Horizon* is published by the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs (PIIA) from Karachi. It is a non-refereed publication and contains research articles as well as speeches and presentations made at PIIA and elsewhere. Since 1995, 91 articles have been published in *Pakistan Horizon*, of which in fact, the huge majority – 30 – are addresses and speeches by ambassadors and mostly foreign dignitaries at the PIIA, and include four texts of lectures from Pakistani politicians. The next category is that of research staff at PIIA itself with 18 papers, but a good sign is that there are also 18 papers by Pakistani social scientists at universities and colleges. The large majority of this category are teachers dealing with International

Relations and/or Political Science, with particular reference to south Asia. However, one must emphasise that most are mid-level teachers, and there are very few well known scholars in their various disciplines contributing to the Journal. There are four papers each by Saudi Arabian scholars, four by other scholars working in and on the west Asia, as well as by scholars based in the US and the UK, and from Nigeria. Also, there are four papers from India, and four more from the rest of south Asia.

*Pakistan Perspectives* which started out only in 1995 from the Pakistan Study Centre, University of Karachi, is also a non-refereed bi-annual publication which differs from other journals. Firstly, it is a truly multidimensional social science journal covering topics on Pakistan which range from Art to Economics to Literature. Secondly, a major proportion of the contributions are from what in Pakistan are called ‘independent’ researchers, a growing and increasingly influential category of social scientists not directly associated with any organisation, yet actively involved in social science research. Of the 79 articles published since 1995, 21 are by this category, and 12 by faculty at the Pakistan Study Centre itself. However, as many as

14 articles are by faculty at the Karachi University in the departments of international relations, political science and business studies. Given the severe dearth of journals in Pakistan and particularly at Karachi University, *Pakistan Perspectives*, in many ways, acts as the in-house journal for the University. It also has contributions from judges, civil servants, human rights activists, ambassadors, journalists (13 papers), four papers by Pakistani social scientists working abroad, as well as by three natural scientists writing on larger social and political issues. There are also five papers by researchers in other private and autonomous research organisations. One factor which cannot be ignored from the contribution in the Journal, is the fact that there are at least four individuals who have contributed three or four articles each, in the nine issues so far published.

The *Pakistan Economic and Social Review*, housed in the economics department of the University of the Punjab, is two years behind schedule and has published 54 articles since 1995. Unlike most other journals mentioned above, the journal has almost no contributors from its own department – only two papers out of 54. This is due not to the wide appeal of the journal, but rather, reflects upon the

**Table 2: Academic Journals in Pakistan**

Title	Publisher	Freq	Year Started	Latest Issue
Economic Review	EIP Publications, Karachi	M	1976	Jun 2001
Industrial Relations Journal	Employers Fed of Pak, Karachi	Q	1984	2001(4)
Islamic Studies	Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad	Q	1961	2001 (1)
J of Development Studies	Institute of Development Studies, U of Peshawar	Q	1964	1992-93 (1)
J of European Studies	Area Study Centre, U of Karachi	Q	1985	Jul 2000-Jan 2001
J of the Institute of Bankers	Institute of Bankers, Karachi	Q		2001 (1)
Kashmir Economic Review	Dept of Econ, U of Azad Jammu and Kashmir	Q	1984	1998 (1/2)
Lahore J of Economics	Lahore School of Economics	B	1996	2001 (1)
Monthly Economic Letters	National Bank of Pakistan, Karachi	M	1974	2001
Pakistan Administration	Pakistan Administrative Staff College, Lahore	B	1963	1996 (2)
Pakistan Development Review	Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad	Q	1961	2001 (1/2)
Pakistan Economic and Social Review	Department of Economics, U of the Punjab	Q	1963	1999 (1/2)
Pakistan J of Agri Econ	Agriculture Price Commission, Islamabad	A	1997	2000
Pak J of Applied Econ	Applied Economics research Centre, U of Karachi	B	1982	1998 (1/2)
Pakistan Perspectives	Pakistan Study Centre, U of Karachi	B	1996	2001 (1)
South Asian Studies	Centre for SA Studies, U of Punjab	B	1984	1997 (2)
Pakistan Horizon	Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, Karachi	Q		2001 (1)
Regional Studies	Ins of Regional Studies	Q		2000-01
J of Pakistan Historical Society				
Journal of Research (Humanities)	Bahauddin Zakariya University	A	1999	

dismal research competence of the faculty at the department. Of the 54 papers published, the highest number (10) are by faculty at the economics department of the Quaid e Azam University, Islamabad, and it seems that this journal acts as an in-house journal for research coming out of here rather than from the Economics Department of the University of the Punjab. There are nine papers from the smaller, less prominent teaching and research departments at four local colleges and universities; eight papers by Pakistani researchers abroad, nine from researchers at Pakistani research institutions, three from the International Islamic University, Islamabad, four from technocrats in the public sector, and three from the Punjab Economic Research Institute in Lahore. Given its rather poor scholarly standard, unlike the Pakistan Development Review, there are only three papers by foreign scholars, one each from Nigeria, the US and Turkey; there are no south Asian contributions.

The *Pakistan Journal of Applied Economics* started out as a rival to the *Pakistan Development Review*, and is located at the Applied Economics Research Centre (AERC), University of Karachi, which sees itself as a sort of rival to the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, where the more illustrious PDR is housed. However, the *Pakistan Journal of Applied Economics* is a pale shadow of its earlier self as is also, the Applied Economics Research Centre. The Journal is running three years behind schedule and the 1998 issue was published in 2001. Moreover, in the four volumes since 1995, there should have been eight issues, but only five have been produced, clubbing as many as three volumes due to a paucity of contributions, two of which are based on conference papers held at the AERC. Of the two volumes which constitute two different sets of Conference Proceedings, of the 18 papers presented, six are by university professors from Britain and Europe, there are three papers from other international scholars from the developed countries, five papers by AERC faculty, two from PIDE, and one each from a business institute and from a former public servant. In the three regular issues since 1995, there are 13 papers, two of which are contributed by professors at the Quaid e Azam University Economics Department, four by foreign contributors, two of whom are in Malaysia, three in-house from the AERC, and one each from an autonomous nongovernmental research institute, the State Bank of Pakistan, a private university, and the

International Islamic University in Islamabad.

## V Change and Transition

In order to understand what has been going on in institutions of research in the social sciences over the last 20 years, we compare two institutions, the Applied Economics Research Centre (AERC) at the University of Karachi, a government-funded institution, and the Sustainable Development and Policy Institute (SDPI) in Islamabad, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, before we look at more general trends.

In the mid- and late-1980s, when AERC was at its peak, it had at one time 11 foreign qualified PhDs working there contributing critically to AERC's teaching and research programme. According to recent information provided by the AERC, there were five PhDs working till recently. However, as part of this study, visits to the AERC revealed that there was only *one* PhD who was the director and a research professor, while three others had, within the last four months left the AERC and joined other institutions. These PhDs were still 'technically' on the AERC staff roster as they had taken 'foreign service leave', but for all practical purposes, were on their way out. This demise of the AERC and the exodus of all competent and senior economists is indeed symptomatic of the general trend in the social sciences in Pakistan. Another factor not related solely to the AERC was that from the AERC (and other public sector institutions like PIDE) some mid-level academics (five or six) went abroad for their PhDs, often on scholarships, but did not return and became permanent residents of the host country, almost always the US.

Of the 11 PhDs who were at the AERC in the late 1980s and early 1990s, three joined the World Bank, one the Asian Development Bank, and one the United Nations; six of the 11 went abroad, only one to a university (in the US) while one went to teach at a college in the Middle East. Of the five who stayed in Pakistan, one joined the World Bank in Islamabad, one joined a private sector teaching organisation, one an NGO, another became a consultant, and the one who stayed on at the AERC, became its Director. From 11 PhDs actively involved in research at the AERC, and hence, in Pakistan, in the 1980s and early 1990s, there are now only two left who are active researchers – the one left at the AERC and the one at a local

NGO. This loss is not restricted to the AERC which may show an exaggerated form of it, but is also evident at the other leading economics research institute, PIDE. Many of the faculty at PIDE too, have followed the same path as their colleagues at AERC, with many leaving the country, joining international organisations (in Pakistan and abroad), and with only a couple staying on in Pakistan working for other non-governmental research organisations.<sup>30</sup> It is also interesting to point out, that the Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) in Karachi (not to be confused with the similar-sounding SDPI in Islamabad), generously funded by donors, was set-up by three senior faculty members at the AERC including the then Director while they were working at the AERC. Subsequently, three more middle-level faculty members left to join SPDC, while others ended up moonlighting there.

SDPI, on the other hand, has been around for less than a decade and has gradually built its reputation as a model for other research organisations in the country. It has not had the problem of the attrition of staff as the public sector has and has attracted many scholars some of whom worked in the public sector previously. Perhaps, the greatest asset of SDPI is its flexibility, in terms of management, attitude, disciplines and 'space' created and allowed to research scholars. Another great asset of SDPI as well as of SPDC, both funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), is that they can pay handsomely. The pay scales at both places are four to five times what the public sector pays and clearly, a huge reason for the exodus from the public sector to these new breed of institutions. The limited salary in the public sector is also a cause for the exodus of Pakistani academics to foreign organisations and other countries. Also, if we look at some of our encompassing premises delineated above, one can get a better understanding for the reasons of this exodus. Of the 11 PhDs at the AERC in the 1980s and early 1990s, two became ministers in various governments in Pakistan, the two senior-most economists at PIDE joined government, one as its Chief Economist, and the other as the main Advisor to the ministry of finance.

One issue which we can try and address, is that of institutional continuity and sustenance. Questions such as the following can be raised: to what extent have the institutions successfully adapted to changing conditions of support and demand for research? How have they negotiated the transition from the first generation of

founders to the succeeding generations? What is the institutional culture like? Clearly, SDPI compared to AERC, seems to be doing a better job at doing far more multidisciplinary research and in its ability to continue to attract exceptional talent. AERC is, instead, moribund and does not seem to have managed change well at all, although it is partially a victim of self-neglect as well as due to the changing macro environment, particularly as a consequence of the decline of the public sector and its universities.

If one looks at the change in research projects over time, our broad trends in an earlier section would be very suggestive of the nature of research in economics and the rest of the social sciences. In economics, research has shifted in line with the government's priorities and analysing the impact of its policies. For example, there was a great deal of research on plans and on planning, in general, in the 1960s, followed by an emphasis on agriculture in the 1970s and especially on the consequences of the green revolution. Many theses and papers were also written on the industrial sector and on inequality. The Islamic economics school of thought flourished in the 1980s, while in line with Pakistan's subservience to agenda set by donors, the 1990s onwards have seen research largely, on global issues, such as the environment, and other governance related themes. Public finance, poverty and public debt have also been popular themes, as has the structural adjustment programme. These changes are reflected in the publications record of scholars at various institutions. Moreover, as donor money began to determine research, individual initiative gave way to expediency and to the need to supplement one's income. Research now, does not take place unless someone funds a 'project'.

A huge percentage of academics in the past in almost all disciplines, were mainly foreign trained, as grants and scholarships from USAID, the Ford Foundation and other sources allowed many academics to go abroad to study. Now, with grants fewer than in the past and with more potential recipients chasing them, it is becoming difficult to go abroad for a few years to study. Many students go for a year or so, to do another Masters degree after having done their Masters locally, but when they return, they are also liable to drop out of academics/research and do other things altogether. Compared to the past, it seems that there are far more Pakistani trained social scientists working in the country than ever before. This is not surprising just

given the arithmetic, with more institutions producing more students and with more opportunities opening up. However, this is mainly the case in subjects such as international relations, political science, history and Pakistan Studies, but not so in Economics. Surprisingly, Karachi University which has been around for 50 years and has 8,000 students enrolled, has produced only one PhD in Economics in all these years. Despite the high ambitions which are mentioned in the brochure of the AERC, since 1986 it has awarded degrees at the MPhil level to only a handful of students. The International Islamic University has produced some PhDs in Economics as have the Punjab and Quaid e Azam universities. Even the Lahore University of Management Studies which has mainly been a Business School, has only just recently started an undergraduate programme in economics, and is now thinking about a Masters level programme.

Karachi University reveals an interesting situation which differs significantly from the Pakistani stereotype, that as much as 70 per cent of the student population is female. In fact, there are a number of departments in the social sciences and in humanities, where there are no male students. Interestingly, a similar position emerges at the Government College, Lahore, where 90 per cent of students in Economics are girls.<sup>31</sup> While this huge proportion may not be reflected in other universities, particularly Baluchistan and Peshawar, there is no denying the fact that compared to say two decades ago, girls and women have begun to be highly visible at all levels of society. The NGO sector is probably dominated by professional women from all backgrounds, including the social sciences, and there are at least 30 per cent, if not more, women faculty members in all subjects. There has been a remarkable transformation in Pakistani society as a consequence of the revolution which has taken place in the lives of women and girls.

Unlike perhaps other south Asian countries, there does not seem to be a large class divide between faculty and students, particularly in the social science disciplines. This would have been the case, if the members of the elite in Pakistan studied social science at public sector institutions especially at the tertiary level, as it is in such institutions where the faculty is largely 'middle class'. Yet, because the elite, as has been argued in the paper, strive to go abroad to study (and may not end up doing any social science as such), this apparent gap does not exist between them and the

faculty. Some members of the elite, (the few that exist in the profession in the first place) do, however, increasingly teach in private universities and work in the NGO and donor sector. Yet, because the students/younger peers at these institutions also belong to the elite or more westernised/anglicised social groups, the social, class and cultural divide is, perhaps, limited between the two. In public sector institutions, both the faculty and students would tend to belong to what could be best described as broadly, the middle or lower-middle class.

## VI Profile of Social Scientists

Although there is little doubt that here has been a huge quantitative expansion in the number of teaching departments and students in the social sciences in Pakistan in the last few decades, there is also little doubt that the quality of education across the board, has deteriorated very sharply. A couple of decades ago, the quality at the graduate and masters level from a Pakistani university was thought to be of a decent standard, but no longer. All academics interviewed for this study were agreed on this, but more surprisingly, every single one felt that in the public sector at least, the quality of postgraduate training is going to fall further in the years to come.

The reasons for the previous and future fall in quality are easy to understand. Cuts in resources to state sector institutions of learning, particularly to those subjects which are in the Arts and Humanities faculties, have been marked in recent years as the state has had to cut its budget deficit and spending. Since the 1980s, there has also been an explosion in the growth of private sector universities and colleges which have poached off the public sector. The case of the Social Policy and Development Centre was cited above, where senior faculty of the Applied Economics Research Centre of the University of Karachi built a donor-funded institute paying lucrative salaries, and eventually attracted many of the faculty as well as the administrative staff, from this public centre institution to work at the SPDC. Another factor which has resulted in the quality falling, has been the fact that so many of the academics, particularly in the field of economics, left for abroad. There is a consensus amongst academics that there is visible decay in the quality of teaching and faculty at Pakistani public sector institutions. Many social scientists feel that the present mid-career generation of

Pakistani social scientists, those in their mid-40s to mid-50s, is the last of a dying generation.

Some interesting trends from Table 3 are indicative of the dismal state of the social sciences in Pakistan. For example, Karachi University which with the University of the Punjab is the biggest university in Pakistan, and has over 300 students enrolled

in the economics department, does not have a teacher with a degree higher than a foreign Masters'. Perhaps this partially explains the fact that the Karachi University has been able to produce only one PhD in economics in 50 years. Equally interesting is that fact that the Lahore University of Management Sciences, a private university, which has yet to start a post-

graduate degree in the social sciences, has 30 foreign PhDs already teaching there.

## VII Professional Associations

There are at best, only two or three professional organisations which are active in Pakistan. In this section we analyse

**Table 3: Faculty Foreign (F)/Local (L) Degrees, MPhil and PhD**

	Economics	Sociology	History	Anthropology	Political Science	IR	Pak Studies	Different Area Studies
1 AJK	n/a							
2 Bahauddin Zakaria	6 F PhD, 2 L Mphil, 3 L MA		4 F PhD 2 L PhD 1 F, L, MPhil 1 L MA		2 F PhD 1 F MPhil 5 L MA			
3 Baluchistan	1 F PhD 3 F MS 6 L MS	1 F PhD 1 L PhD 1 L MPhil 5 L MA	1 F PhD 2 L MPhil 3 L MA		1 L PhD 1 F MA 4 L MA	1 F PhD 6 L MA	1 L PhD 4 L MA	
4 Karachi	5 F MA 10 L MA	1 L PhD 10 L MA	4 F PhD 1 F MA 15 L MA		6 L PhD 2 F MA 8 L MA	2 L PhD 2 F MA 5 L MA	3 F PhD 1 L PhD 3 L MA	
5 LUMS	30 F PhD 2 L MA							
6 Peshawar	2 F PhD 1 L PhD 1 F MA 3 L MA	1 F MA 4 L MA	1 L PhD 1 F MA 2 L MA		6 L MA	1 F MPhil 1 L MPhil 4 L MA		
7 Punjab	3 F PhD 1 L PhD 2 F MA 4 L MA		1 F PhD 6 L MA		3 F PhD 2 L PhD 4 L MA		1 F PhD 2 L MA	
8 QAU	4 F PhD 2 F MA 4 L MA		3 F PhD 1 L PhD 1 F Phil 4 L MPhil 3 L MA	1 F PhD 1 F MS 5 L MA		4 F PhD 1 L PhD 1 F MPhil 1 L MPhil 1 F MA 5 F MA 3 F PhD 7 L MA	2 F PhD 3 L PhD 7 MA	
9 Sindh	17 L MA 1 L MPhil 2 F MA 3 F PhD 2 F MSc 5 L MSc	1 F MA 7 L MA	3 L PhD 1 L MPhil 6 L MA		1 F PhD 12 L MA	7 L MA		
SDSC	8 F PhD 1 L PhD 2 L MPhil 12 L MA							
10 II of I Econ	1 F PhD 1 F MA 1 L MPhil 4 L MA		1 F PhD 2 L PhD 5 L MA		2 F PhD 2 L PhD 4 L MA			
11 Islamia Univ Bhpur	2 F PhD 3 L MPhil 10 L MA					1 F PhD 10 L MA		
12 SAL	3 L PhD 5 MA		8 L MA	1 PhD 11 MA				
13 GC Lahore								
14 Area SC Africa, NS Am								6 F PhD 1 L PhD 3 L MPhil 1 F MS 3 F PhD 2 L PhD 8 2 F PhD 1 L PhD 4 L MA
15 C Asia								
16 U Sind								
17 SA Pun								
18 PIDE*	10 F PhD 32 others	Demog: 2 F PhD	6 others	1 F PhD 2 others				
19 AERC	4 F PhD 4 F MS 7 L MS							

Source: These figures are taken from the University Grants Commission, *Handbook on Universities in Pakistan 2001*, UGC, Islamabad, 2001, and the University Grants Commission, *Handbook on Universities in Pakistan 1998*, UGC, Islamabad, 1999, except (\*) which is from PIDE's web site. See text in a different sections below for more recent statistics from some institutions related to changes over time.

the role of that of the most prominent one.

The Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE) is an autonomous body based at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad. The Society is supposed to "provide a forum and a platform to academics and policy-makers for an exchange of ideas on the pressing economic and social problems facing Pakistan". Since its inception in 1982, the Society has arranged 16 Annual General Meetings and Conferences which have been attended by researchers and policy-makers from Pakistan and abroad. When the Society was formed in 1983, it had 252 members which increased to 571 in 1994 (the last year for which figures are available) of which 403 were paying members and the rest ex-officio.

PSDE has a number of Distinguished Lectures at each of its Annual Conferences. It is worth examining the selection of speakers at these conferences over the five conferences from 1995-99. The most prestigious, Quaide Azam Lecture, has been given by either World Bank serving or retired officials and/or American academics. In these five years, only one Pakistani has given the Quaid e Azam Lecture and he worked for the World Bank in Washington. In 1999 and 1998, the same American Professor gave the Iqbal Lecture, while in 1996 and 1995, this was given by an American and British academic, respectively. The Mahbub ul Haq Memorial Lecture has been given both times by retired or serving Pakistani officials at the World Bank. The World Bank Pakistani who gave the Mahbub ul Haq Memorial Lecture in 1998, also gave one of the Distinguished Lectures in 1999 and in 1997.

Of the 31 lectures given as part of Distinguished Lecture series, 11 were given by academics from the US and the UK (many of whom gave these lectures more than once), 9.5 were either retired or serving Pakistanis at the World Bank and the IMF, 2 each were World Bank retired or serving employees from the US, Egypt and Bangladesh. There was one academic each from France and Australia, and one paper each was presented by a member of the International Food Policy Research Institute in the US, a German from OECD, and a US Consultant. Of the 32 papers presented at the five PSDE conferences between 1995-99, only two papers have been presented by Pakistani academics both of whom live and teach abroad. In the 16 conferences held by PSDE, in the Distinguished Lecture series, only three Pakistani academics all of whom live abroad, have been invited to lecture, two of whom

have done so more than twice. There has not been a single paper presented in the Distinguished Lecture series by a Pakistani academic who lives and works in Pakistan. Perhaps there is no stronger comment on the state of the entire range of Pakistan's social sciences, and not just economics, than this observation.

Table 5 only reiterates the criticism that the PSDE is simply a mouthpiece for PIDE (and now increasingly, it seems for expatriate Pakistanis at the World Bank and IMF), rather than a broad-based forum for intellectual discourse. Moreover, many economists feel that the quality of the papers at the PSDE Conferences not only varies widely, but is not very good. The PSDE is seen as an opportunity for PIDE faculty to add to their publications list.<sup>32</sup>

The absence of academics and researchers from universities and other institutes is noticeable at these conferences, which despite all reservations, is the only forum for economists to present their work. There has not been a single presentation at these conferences in recent years (perhaps ever) from teachers at Karachi University, one of the two largest in Pakistan. At the other end of the spectrum, it is worth pointing out that not a single professor (none of the 30 foreign PhDs) at the Lahore University of Management Sciences, has presented a paper at the PSDE conferences. Perhaps for these reasons, PSDE is considered to be "a poor substitute as a forum for free and open debates on economic issues and for organising activities which would invigorate the profession".<sup>34</sup> Haque and Khan also add their strong criticism at the PSDE and say, that these 'meetings are perhaps more distinguished by the prominent Pakistani economists that were often excluded from participation'.<sup>35</sup>

## VIII Scholarly Collaboration

One of the symptoms of the crisis of Pakistani social science is that there is too little collaboration between scholars at the same institution, and between institutions, although interestingly, there are some exceptions to both these norms, coming

primarily from the non-public sector and donors.

Collaboration between senior and junior scholars/academics at the same institution is very infrequent as reflected by published output. However, this is not always the case, and in many instances, senior faculty make use of junior faculty mainly as data collectors or its more glorified version, as research assistant. This is particularly so in the field of economics a fact which is well reflected at the Pakistan Society for Development Economists' conferences and in its proceedings. Also, given the fact that the donor-funded projects which are given to institutions of economics research are usually very large and require a number of members of that institution to collaborate, there is substantial division of labour (perhaps a better term than 'collaboration') in those projects, which may or may not find an outlet as a publication. In some research institutes, SDPI in Islamabad, in particular, a conscious effort is actually made by senior faculty to work with junior staff and this is amply reflected in their published output. Another important case where one sees substantial collaboration, is in the department of international relations at Karachi University, where the large number of books edited and published by the department, usually as conference proceedings, clearly show the large contribution made by junior faculty.

In this regard, Nadeem ul Haque and Mahmood Hasan Khan having spoken to a number of young economists found that there was 'no professional contact' between the younger economists and their senior colleagues. These young professionals said that they hardly met these older economists, and if they did, they were patronised and derided for being more interested in theory (ivory tower economics) than in doing 'real work'. The senior economists, according to the young professionals, 'claimed hierarchical privilege and felt very uncomfortable with an equal debate of issues'.<sup>36</sup> According to Haque and Khan, "the culture of Pakistan too does not help here, for age can often interpret a genuine difference of opinion as rudeness. This claim has prevented dialogue".<sup>37</sup>

**Table 4: PSDE Distinguished Lecture Presentations**

	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995
Quaid e Azam	WB/US	Prof/US	Prof/US	WB/Pak	Prof/US
Iqbal	Prof / US	Prof/US	Prof/Pak	Prof/US	Prof/US
M ul Haq	WB/Pak	WB/Pak			
DL 1	WB/Pak	IMF/Pak	WB/Pak	Prof/Aus	OECD/German
DL 2	IMF/Pak	Prof/French	Prof/US	IFPRI/US	IMF + Prof both Pak
DL 3	Prof/US	WB/US	Prof/Pak	IMF/Pak	Egypt/WB
DL 4	WB/Pak		Prof/US		Prof/US
DL 5	WB/BD				Consultant/US

They argue that 'younger economists denied that they had received any mentoring from their more senior professionals. In fact, many of them found the first crop to be unapproachable'.<sup>38</sup>

Collaborations between institutions is also limited, especially between public sector institutions. For example, the economics department at Quaid e Azam University in Islamabad, is housed next to the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, just as the economics department at Karachi University is housed a short walk from the Applied Economics Research Centre. Yet, there is no interaction or collaboration in any meaningful sense between the two sets of institutions. Instead, the research centres see themselves as far superior and more able than the lowly teaching departments, from where, incidentally, both the research centres draw their student/research body. Moreover, it is not just at the same university, but between PIDE and AERC too, there is no collaboration. This attempt to control the turf, limits the interaction between institutions, as do personal rivalries and 'personality clashes'.<sup>39</sup> As Haque and Khan argue, "all of the research centres and institutes, including PIDE and AERC, have largely excluded from their programmes and studies the involvement of faculty from departments of economics in universities in Karachi, Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar and Hyderabad. There is almost no formal joint study and research programme at any of these places. On the contrary, there is unhealthy competition for scarce resources and skills and even mutual resentment and hostility".<sup>40</sup> In other disciplines, if we return to one of our Encompassing Parameters, that of the individual being the institution or greater than the institution, then we do have numerous examples of individuals collaborating with other institutions, but this is rather top-heavy and very individual-specific. Institutions do not collaborate.

With the advent of NGOs and donors, however, there is some change in this attitude which often calls for collaboration between institutions. Many organisations are specialised, and hence, unable to carry out much multidisciplinary work and, therefore, turn to others to prepare joint proposals and work together on projects. One does not see intra-institutionally published papers though, and much of this collaboration is limited to funded projects. Another new development is organisations out-sourcing studies or hiring time from academics and researchers to collaborate on projects. This too is not reflected in

joint academic publications. Many international organisations, based in Pakistan and abroad, also locate their projects in Pakistani centres (the 'local' partner) and hence one can call this 'international' collaboration, but this too depends on the project and the funds. Some such projects have given rise to academic publications which have had Pakistani and foreign scholars collaborating. Another form of 'collaboration' although that is a misnomer in this context, is to hold international conferences where foreign scholars read papers which are then published in the conference proceedings

## IX South Asian Connections

If we understand the political economy and history of Pakistan, we will perhaps, better understand Pakistan's south Asian connections. There are far too few 'connections' in academia between Pakistan and the other nations in south Asia. This is most marked in the case of economics the leading discipline in Pakistan in the social sciences, where there is virtually no exchange of ideas, collaboration of any sort, and perhaps even awareness and interest, of each other's economy. At least in Pakistan, there has been no paper in recent memory published in any academic journal which examines the economy or the reforms under way in any of the south Asian countries. A huge majority of the work by Pakistani economists is on Pakistan's economy, and not on theory, or on applying theory to other countries as a comparison.

Most other disciplines in our survey have been highly conspicuous by their absence, disciplines like anthropology, sociology, demography and even history, have hardly

registered any significant comment or analysis because of their paucity in the contribution to the social sciences, and hence have little to offer in terms of south Asian connections and collaboration. In the case of international relations and political science, however, there has been research in Pakistan on south Asia, in particular on India. Collaboration has also taken place with political scientists, regional study experts, and experts in international relations visiting each others' countries. However, it is important to reemphasise the view that these connections are highly personal and individual rather than having any structural and institutional links. As one of our academic respondents pointed out, that it is always the same handful of Pakistani academics and researchers who go to India; there is no variety in this list and most are repeat visitors. One reason for this is that government in Pakistan is not open to links with India, and in fact discourages them by imposing severe restrictions on any independent endeavour and exchange.<sup>41</sup>

One factor which has caused a boom in south Asian connections and collaboration, is due to the NGO movement, particularly that related to the peace movement and the nuclear issue. There have been literally hundreds of such meetings where activists, many of whom are well known social scientists in India and Pakistan, have visited each others' countries. While there has been some researched output related to these meetings and this activism, it has been severely limited. Another area of collaboration between India and Pakistan has been on account of the women's movement in Pakistan particularly, but across south Asia, more generally. This activism has, however, produced some published researched output.

**Table 5: Papers Presented at the PSDE Conferences by Author Affiliation**

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Total	45	38	23	43	39
PIDE	16	11	8	13	15
Int Islamic U	6				1
US/UK/EU academics	2	3	3	2	
Pak academics abroad	3	4	4	2	1
South Asian		1			
AERC	4		1		
National Ins of Pop Stds	3	1		2	1
Government and state sector	2	6	1	8	6
Private Unv	2			1	2
Independent/Private sector	3			2	
Other Foreigner	1				
World Bank/IMF/ Donors		3	5	8	5
Autonomous Research Inst		3	1		2
QAU	1	2		2	2
Other Public sector univs	2	4		3	4

*Note:* This table only shows the number of papers eventually published in the Pakistan Development Review, which tend to be fewer than the number of papers actually presented at the Conference itself. It is worth noting that these papers are 'not even internally screened much less refereed'.<sup>33</sup>

Although it is impossible to give any idea of the number of academic visitors from other south Asian countries, one can certainly say that there is currently far greater exchange between India and Pakistan, than perhaps ever before in the past. NGOs lead this exchange movement, but area/regional study centres are probably next in line. This is despite the fact that travel restrictions between the two countries are of insurmountable proportions. It must be emphasised that there is an officially sanctioned suspicion and resentment of Indian social scientists in Pakistan, hence it is not surprising that (government) university departments and centres are unable to attract Indian, or even other south Asian, scholars. The main forms of collaboration, almost exclusively, are workshops and conferences.

## X Relevance

This section tries to address the question of the 'relevance' of social science research in Pakistan. Is it possible to get a sense of how the relevance of social science research was defined two or three decades ago and how it is being redefined now? If we look at one or two of our encompassing parameters listed earlier, this question would be well answered. In some ways, as we have tried to argue in a number of places in this paper, relevance is actually the problem. In trying to be relevant in a problem-solving 'useful' way, Pakistani social scientists, particularly economists, have become clerks or at best bureaucrats, trying to find ways of how to improve things. Knowledge is defined as something concrete, something which must have a practical use. Abstract thinking is discouraged and academics are told to 'get out of their ivory towers'. In a sense, for all the reasons described earlier in this paper, 'relevance' has limited the growth of the social science discipline and social science research, as a medium for the search for knowledge. It is merely a search for solutions, often without even understanding the problems and/or their links with the wider whole.

On the other hand, some academics have complained that their disciplines are not considered 'relevant' by the authorities/government, and no one 'listens to them', and hence, political science and history, for example, are not considered 'relevant' enough to attract students to these disciplines. Unless these subjects are made as 'relevant' as economics, in an advise-giving manner, few students will be attracted to

these disciplines. Clearly, academics are not supposed to do policy-irrelevant research.

Given this need to find acceptance by authority as we argue in our Encompassing Principles, much research is limited by its 'relevance'. For example, in History, almost all the historians and students pursuing higher degrees, do so on the Pakistan Movement and there is great emphasis to justify the two-nation theory. As a consequence, there is no historian in Pakistan who works on the theory of history, for example, or on social and cultural history, and neither on the British period, or on the Mughals. All the work is related to Jinnah, the Muslim League and perhaps some to Muslims in India prior to partition. The colonial period has been ignored, and there is no regional/provincial history, either.<sup>42</sup> Some historians feel that history has always been subordinate to political science and we have numerous dilettantes and untrained non-historians trying to do the work of the historian.<sup>43</sup>

When Islamic ideology dominated in terms of state ideology, many social scientists rediscovered Islam and its relationship and relevance to Pakistani society, and started doing research with an Islamic angle, primarily because this was considered a useful means to be accepted by Authority and was a means to legitimise one's self. This was particularly so in the period during Zia ul Haq's reign, and has now acquired its own historical and institutional dynamics. Even anthropology was recast in a central Asian context in order to draw links with Pakistan's Muslim heritage in that region negating or minimising the south Asian links. For these reasons, some scholars have found that the 'relevance and use of social sciences produced in Pakistan is low. The social science knowledge produced is primarily for the use of state agencies and only marginally for creating social awareness of social problems ...'<sup>44</sup> Oddly enough, despite this anti-knowledge relevance, Pakistan's best known sociologist has argued that in order to promote 'socio-economic development', "like senior economists, why can't we have senior sociologists in the Planning Commission to begin with?"<sup>45</sup>

In some cases, research is relevant, because donors fund it and they have far more pressing, applied, and related needs to address specific problems. For example, the huge bandwagon on poverty research in Pakistan is led by the World Bank in association with local institutes, and the interest on poverty is due to its very noticeable growth. Much of the research in the social sectors five to 10 years ago,

was also funded by donors prior to their launching a huge social sector development programme. The current buzzword is the World Bank and other donors' notion of governance and all it entails.

Writing mainly about economists since they are in the greatest demand by donors, Haque and Khan identify a bigger problem which affects social science in general. Addressing the consulting scourge, they write that careers in the consultancy industry have 'affected the economics profession in a disastrous way in Pakistan' a phenomenon associated with the rise of foreign aid and donor funding. They write that, "given the largely unfavourable environment for academic research in economics and the lucrative monetary gain and social status from consulting services, the industry has drawn the energy and time of almost every academic economist in the country. In fact, most of the so-called research agenda and output in almost all of the academia and institutes is driven by the demands for studies and reports by donor agencies and government departments or organisations."<sup>46</sup>

The relevance of the social sciences can be gauged by the government's recent attitude as reported in a national newspaper. On August 23, 2001, *Dawn* quoting informed sources reported that "the NWFP government has decided to abolish the Humanities subjects from the college curriculum" as "the students could not benefit from these 'worthless' subjects in their practical life". The Report added that "the government particularly its finance ministry, thinks that economics, political science, philosophy, literature, sociology, history, Islamiyat and other several disciplines dealing with human thoughts are useless".

A follow-up article quoted the director of colleges, NWFP, that five newly opened girls colleges will not have Humanities and Social Sciences. It also quoted the director planning and development, directorate of colleges, that the reason for the move is the opposition of the NWFP finance department to the launching of humanities subjects in these newly-established institutions due to a shortage of resources. This article also quotes an NWFP minister who said that "the government wants to introduce subjects in colleges according to the market demands... Education should have some purpose and one of it should be to help people in getting employment... Our education should be responsive to the needs of the society so that our graduates do not sit idle after completing their schooling and get employed" (*The News on Sunday*,

Karachi, September 2, 2001). Clearly, the social sciences are being forced to respond to the market making them less oriented to knowledge and hence, more 'relevant'.

## XI Accountability

Based on our interviews and other sources, one can try and assess some of the following issues: the mechanisms of self-regulation, such as peer reviews, review committees, accreditation procedures, etc; to what extent are they seen as effective? mechanisms of regulation by others, such as government bodies or funding agencies; the autonomy of institutions and the autonomy of scholars; working conditions including security of tenure, fixed scales of pay, contract employment, sharing of consultancy remuneration between the scholar and the institution; how do these affect the productivity and the autonomy of scholars?

In most academic and research institutions worldwide, publications play an important role in the accountability of the professional, and determine credibility and tenure/promotion. Given the state of journals in Pakistan, this is not likely to have a significant impact on the quality of research. If non-refereed in-house journals are going to be used for promotion/tenure, then clearly this will give rise to a closed club, where those who control/manage the 'journal' will determine who publishes. Also, in many of the non-refereed journals, articles are solicited from friends or 'noted' scholars who have pretty much a free hand in what they want to say. In some cases, especially having been invited to write, quality is severely compromised. There are these double standards at work here: everyone knows that a particular journal is of poor quality, yet in order to be promoted, one needs a number of publications and we find dozens of cases where supposedly respected and established researchers publish in poor quality un-refereed journals, mainly trying to add to their list of publications.

This phenomenon is even more evident when we consider book publishing. While most publishers do not have their manuscripts reviewed, nevertheless, because they have to sell/market the book, they must meet certain standards. This is not the case with in-house journals. Perhaps this explains the fact, that given the few hundred social scientists that we have in Pakistan, a mere handful have written academic books. As a passing example, of the 11 PhDs in Economics at the Applied Eco-

nomics Research Centre, not a single one wrote a book, when they were there, or later (other than a couple of edited books based on Conference Proceedings). At the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, considered to be the 'premier' institution for economics research, the situation is no better. In the other social sciences, there are again, a small handful of academics who are conspicuous for their books and published work, because they are far too few and tend to write far more frequently.

Since academics in the social sciences publish so infrequently, they rise the professional ladder through the number of years served in government. Although, technically, all are required to publish, they manage to get by by publishing in lesser known journals or with another collaborator. Peer reviews are usually done locally and it is not uncommon to receive requests to 'clear' a candidate. In a society whose rules are determined by patronage, agreeing to or denying such requests has serious consequences. Moreover, many academics interviewed are disgusted by what goes by in the name of 'research', and feel that there are major flaws in refereeing with no laid down procedures or rules, and hence standards are very varied and arbitrary.

Some scholars feel that research (in economics in their example, but this is generalisable) suffers on the account of the following constraints: "the major factors affecting the volume and quality of academic research in economics include: the internal management structure, work environment, and the reward system in academia and research institutes. Reflecting the pathology of the larger feudal-bureaucratic social order in Pakistan, the senior management generally follows the national model of centralised power without consultation and participation. A high proportion of the junior research and teaching staff finds itself in a patron-client relationship, in which the patron has considerable power to punish and reward. This personalised nature of power breeds mediocrity since salary, scholarship, and promotion are rarely based on merit and personal achievement. Some of the senior research staff and faculty have achieved their positions through this system and suffer from a sense of insecurity."<sup>47</sup> One cannot but agree with this impression, and indeed, it reflects the very sad state of accountability in public sector institutions in Pakistan.

Haque and Khan continue and say that, "the internal management structures are by

and large non-participatory, based on hierarchy by seniority. The reward system follows the national model of patronage".<sup>48</sup> Naseem adds that "there has also been little tradition to encourage freedom of expression and debate in a genuine fashion, either in-house or outside. In the absence of peer interaction and review, regardless of one's position in the hierarchy, it is no wonder what the quality of research output is. Individual consultation with and supervision by senior staff members is hardly a substitute for open interaction with peers. The highly centralised and bureaucratised (some would say feudal) work culture .. stifles initiative and participation among research staff."<sup>49</sup> Inayatullah adds a broader perspective to this condition when he argues that, "working within the framework of government-controlled and government-funded academic institutions, some of the Pakistani social scientists opt for the convenient and possibly twisted meaning of value neutrality and adopt the perspective and preferences of those who ever happen to be in power regardless of the nature of the rule they impose on the society and degree of their political legitimacy."<sup>50</sup> Drawing from our encompassing parameters again, it seems that state patronage gives rise to a thriving culture of sycophancy and toadyism, and that Pakistanis, given the nature of the state, are probably better at this than most.

Some academics have argued that Pakistan's authoritarian history has affected the nature and quality of research and accountability in our academies. Inayatullah, for example argues, that Pakistan's bureaucratic and military 'highly authoritarian' state, placed 'narrow limits on freedom of enquiry, expression and dissent', and that with reference to the 1960s, he quotes Ralph Briabanti approvingly; "the conduct of scholarship and the limits on scholarship are determined by government, not by the scholar".<sup>51</sup> Such factors did compromise the nature of social science at public universities and institutes for many years and may have laid the foundations for the rot to set in. However, such constraints do not exist in Pakistan today, and there is far greater freedom of expression than in the past.

While one can generalise greatly from these comments, there are only a very few institutes in the donor/private sector, which are free from these petty biases and structures for, after all, many of the new institutes have been set up by individuals with many years of having worked in the public sector themselves having known no other model. Clearly, how an institution is run

and the norms and signals given and the institute's culture, are very much determined by who leads that institution, and how it is managed and governed by that one individual. Some academics feel that the culture in universities is to prevent others from doing work, and with so many political appointees and retired bureaucrats and military personnel serving as vice-chancellors and heads of centres and institutes, 'accountability' tends to be based on non-academic criteria and largely related to patronage. The imprint of one's personal style has made and destroyed numerous institutions in Pakistan. A simple change in leadership can transform an institution, for far better or for far worse, quite dramatically.

## XII Finances

It has not been possible to get hard data and facts about macro-level funding of social science research from national bodies such as the University Grants Commission and other sources.<sup>52</sup> Except for limited evidence a breakdown of institutional funding by source has been minimal, as has a breakdown of funding by categories of expenditure such as faculty salaries, administrative overheads, actual research expenses, infrastructure, etc. We would have liked to know how much funding goes to social science research compared to the natural sciences and technological research. Unfortunately, we have only the concerns and sentiments and opinions of many academics, some in written form, others conveyed to us during the interviews for this study. Nevertheless, these leads are useful for understanding the magnitude of the problem and to understand its seriousness.

Writing about economic research, but also addressing a larger problem in the social sciences, Haque and Khan write that, "there is little funding for economic research in the country, reflecting the general lack of investment in education and research in Pakistan. An academic has no way of finding funds for what he/she or his/her peer group might consider interesting or necessary for research. The only funding available is that which donors consider necessary for their operations."<sup>53</sup> However, this is not a situation which finds favour with most academics and such research is considered 'spurious'. Naseem write that "while regular funding of academic and research institutions are stagnating or declining, consultancy has emerged as a major growth

industry in the economics profession and upset both research priorities and incentive structures to undertake serious economic research in Pakistan."<sup>54</sup>

The biggest threat to social science funding in Pakistan today seems to come from the lobby which is obsessed with information technology and which wants to take Pakistan 'into the 21st century'. Given severely limited resources on account of Pakistan's structural adjustment programme and the state's fiscal crisis, this obsession becomes a serious issue. The government, for example, has launched a Teachers' and Researchers' Overseas Scholarship Scheme at a cost of Rs 826 million to train 100 outstanding teachers and researchers who will do their doctorates at the world's top universities. Unfortunately, all these scholarships will be in 'selected areas of science and technology' only (*Dawn*, Karachi, March 11, 2001).

In response to this, some professors in the social sciences raised this issue and stated that the "neglect of the social sciences in public sector universities... is a matter of great concern. Funds, facilities, stipends, honorarium, etc, provided to science students and teachers are not extended to PhD students and their supervisors in the faculty of Arts... It is a matter of common knowledge that professors of faculty of Arts are rarely considered for national awards despite their academic excellence. These awards indiscriminately go to the Science faculty" (Letters to the Editor, *Dawn*, Karachi, May 2, 2001).

As far as incentives go, the Ministry of Science and Technology had increased the allowance for in-service Ph.D. degree holders from Rs 1,500 to Rs 5,000. But, unfortunately, it has restricted this to the disciplines of natural sciences only. In addition, recently the University Grants Commission on behalf of the ministry, has also announced a PhD scholarship scheme. But again, the scheme is restricted to Engineering, Agriculture, and Animal Husbandry. In fact the advertisement declares that "Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences are not included in the scheme".

During the course of interviews for this study, all of the academics interviewed without exception said that the biggest problem that they and their departments/centres face is due to financial cuts. Some said that while their department or centre was receiving limited funds, others which were someone's favourite were receiving far more funds than required and even then were not producing any quality research.

While government funds have been reduced, donor funded 'projects' have

found their way to public sector institutions and universities and institutes. These, as we have demonstrated, have their own connotations, but seem to be the only source of funds available to the public sector. In Pakistan, while the NGO sector presence is very prominent in social science research, specific information is very difficult to obtain, for NGOs do not disclose how much they spend on such research. Anecdotes and personal experiences suggest that the amount of money channelled through the NGOs for 'research' is substantial and many NGOs and donors pay high consultancy rates for quality researchers. Yet, the scale is unknown.

## XIII Conclusions

It is surprisingly easy to find agreement amongst social scientists in Pakistan regarding the state of their collective disciplines. Almost all agree that the state of the social sciences in Pakistan is in a depressingly decrepit state. They all agree that not much research of any quality takes place in Pakistan, and the little that is undertaken by Pakistani social scientists, is by those who live and work in the west. Moreover, they may cite the cases of a few of their colleagues who have produced good quality research in Pakistan while being based here, but will add that this is largely individual endeavour, and that the contribution by the institution where they are located is incidental.

While there is wide agreement for the way things are, there is also considerable consensus on the reasons. Many would argue that patronage at the private and at the state level has distorted the environment under which research in the social sciences takes place, developing a conformist, if not sycophantic, toadyist, mindset. Others feel that there is a bias against a culture of dissent, debate and discovery, brought upon, perhaps due to state authoritarianism and due to the over-developed nature of the bureaucratic arm of the state. Other, more simpler reasons include the fact that the incentive and salary structure in public sector institutions is dwarfed by the visible freedom and economic incentives in the vibrant private donor and NGO supported sectors. Clearly, all these reasons are relevant.

There are still other more interesting factors which are all inter-related and have had a bearing on the noticeable deterioration of the social sciences in Pakistan. For some of the reasons mentioned above, many of the best Pakistani social scientists

have left for other countries causing a haemorrhaging brain drain. There is hence, no community of academics or scholars left to interact with, to share ideas with, few journals and almost no professional associations. Moreover, many Pakistani social scientists feel that those western social scientists who work on Pakistan are second rate scholars at third rate universities, a fact which does not help the Pakistani social science cause either.

Identifying a number of broad encompassing parameters, this paper has presented a large amount of data and evidence which only underscores the dismal truth about the dismal state of the social sciences in Pakistan. Sadly, all indications suggest that things are likely to get far, far, worse. **FWW**

## Notes

[This paper is a shorter version of a much longer piece undertaken for the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in New York. Excellent comments of Itty Abraham have helped in improving an earlier draft.]

- 1 Fourteen of Pakistan's better known and most prolific social scientists (of those based in Pakistan) were interviewed for the SSRC study.
- 2 Inayatullah, (writing in the mid-1980s) argues, that of the total number of social scientists working in the country, 30 per cent were economists, 19 per cent political scientists, and 11 per cent historians. Since he includes far more disciplines in the social sciences than we do, this proportion is likely to be much higher, and also, as we show in this paper, far higher in 2001 than 1983. See, Inayatullah, 'Social Sciences in Pakistan: An Evaluation', in Hashmi, S H (ed), *The State of Social Sciences in Pakistan*, Council of Social Sciences, Pakistan, Islamabad, 2001. [This is a reprint of Conference Proceedings first published in 1989].
- 3 See for example, Naseem, SM, 'Economists and Pakistan's Economic Development: Is there a Connection?', *Pakistan Development Review*, 37.4, 1998; S M Naseem, et al, 'Conditions of Teaching and Research in Economics: Some Preliminary Findings', *Pakistan Development Review*, 37.4, 1998; N Haque and M H Khan, 'The Economics Profession in Pakistan: A Historical Analysis', *Pakistan Development Review*, 37.4, 1998; E A G Robinson, 'The Problems of Teaching Economics in Pakistan', *Pakistan Institute of Development Economics*, monograph, May 1967, Karachi.
- 4 For some preliminary ideas on this theme, see S A Zaidi, 'The Intellectual Crisis', *Economic and Political Weekly*, September 26, 1998.
- 5 Naseem, op cit, 1998, p 405.
- 6 Ibid, p 424.
- 7 Zaidi, S A, op cit, 1998.
- 8 Naseem, op cit, 1998, p 426.
- 9 The papers by Naseem, op cit, 1998, and Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, give ample emphasis to this theme.
- 10 Although very well meaning, even Naseem suffers from this problem. See for example Naseem, op cit, 1998. However, he is not the only one: most of the authors in S H Hashmi, op cit, 2001 have exactly the same sentiments.
- 11 Zaidi, S A, 'The Business of Giving Advice:

- Pakistan Economy and Society', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 35, No 19, 2000.
- 12 This does not seem to be a uniquely Pakistani disease: see M Weiner, 'Social Science Research and Public Policy in India', *Economics and Political Weekly*, Vol 14, Nos 37 and 38, 1979.
  - 13 See for example the numerous papers in S H Hashmi, op cit, 2001.
  - 14 This point was emphasised in exactly so many words, without any prodding, by every single academic interviewed for this study.
  - 15 This point is based on personal experience after many years of doing 'independent' (non-institutionally located) research, which was brought home time and again during the course of this study. I visited one university department, one autonomous institute, and various departments of the University Grants Commission, amongst many other departments/centres. At these three places, I was not given any material regarding their activities (material which was available in published form publicly, such as flyers, Annual Reports, etc.) because I did not represent an institution. I was told, in so many words, that no one does or can do research 'on their own', as I said I did, and hence they were highly suspicious of me and my activities and felt that I could not be trusted with publicly available published material. As my legitimacy was questioned, I was told to apply through an institution if I wanted the material, although I was told some of it was confidential. See footnote 52 below.
  - 16 For a social and economic history of Pakistan see, S Akbar Zaidi, *Issues in Pakistan's Economy*, OUP, 1999.
  - 17 Naseem, op cit, 1998, p 408.
  - 18 Ibid, p 414.
  - 19 For a very interesting contrast with India, see T V Sathyamurthy, 'Development Research and the Social Sciences in India Since Independence', *DERAP Publications* No 171, Norway, January 1984. Sathyamurthy writes that 'there are indeed very few instances of research institutes in the social sciences in India that were started with foreign resources' (p 52), which is in complete contrast with the Pakistani situation.
  - 20 Naseem, op cit, 1998, p 413.
  - 21 Inayatullah, op cit, 2001, p 32.
  - 22 It is important to point out that not everyone agrees with this position and there are many academics who think that this was a period of severe civilian authoritarianism.
  - 23 See Zaidi, op cit, 1998, on this.
  - 24 Inayatullah, op cit, 2001, p 44.
  - 25 Qureshi, M N, 'Whither History? The State of the Discipline in Pakistan' in Hashmi, op cit, 2001, p 119.
  - 26 In the larger SSRC Report, not in this shortened version.
  - 27 However, as this paper argues, this criticism applies to much of what goes under the guise of academic social science in English in Pakistan, as well.
  - 28 Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, p 447.
  - 29 In book reviews and review articles, much criticism is made of the large publishing houses for not giving enough attention to the quality of texts, both in terms of content/subject and in terms of style/presentation. See for example, Zaidi, op cit, 1998, for one of many such critiques.
  - 30 See for example, Naseem et al, op cit, 1998, for more on the exodus from PIDE.
  - 31 Naseem et al, op cit, 1998, p 459.
  - 32 Both Naseem op cit, 1998, and Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, feel very strongly about this and have criticised PSDE for not becoming

- a far more representative and effective organisation.
- 33 Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, p 444.
  - 34 Naseem, op cit, 1998, p 423.
  - 35 Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, p 443.
  - 36 Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, p 448.
  - 37 Ibid, p 448.
  - 38 Ibid, p 448.
  - 39 Naseem, et al, op cit, 1998, p 469.
  - 40 Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, p 442.
  - 41 It is worth our while to reproduce in full, a Secret University Grants Commission Circular, No D 1783/2001-IC.V, Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Education, Islamabad, dated October 12, 2001. The subject of the circular is, 'Pakistani Students in Correspondence with Indians for Academic Assistance': "(1) I am directed to say that one of the security agencies has observed a growing tendency among the staff members/students of various professional institutions of India and Pakistan to communicate in different fields of mutual interest; (2) For instance, Imtiaz Ahmed Pannu, a student of Department of Crop Physiology, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad has established illegal links with Indian experts/organisations; (3) It is requested that all the public/private sector universities/educational institutions affiliated, registered or recognised by the University Grants Commission/government may kindly be advised to instruct their staff members/students to follow the government directions and immediately dispense with all illegal links with foreign experts/educational institutions; (4) It may also be ensured that material to be exchanged be first got cleared from the ministry and no links with any foreign experts/educational institutions should be established without prior approval of UGC/government of Pakistan."
  - 42 Chris Bayly make an excellent point regarding the profession of History in Pakistan, which is worth quoting at length. He says, "The creation of a separate history for Muslims resulted in the virtual abandonment of historical writing in the future Pakistan. If Islam, rather than the historical experience of Muslim people living amongst their Hindu neighbours, was to be the touchstone of national memory, then history was itself a valueless category. In Pakistan, modern history has largely been dropped in favour of the vacuous 'Pakistan Studies.'" C A Bayly, 'Modern Indian Historiography' in Michael Bentley, *Companion to Historiography*, Routledge, London, 1997, p 683.
  - 43 A Pakistani historian tried to organise a south Asian forum of historians in which five Pakistanis were invited. Two of these five happen to be political scientists and one is a sociologist.
  - 44 Inayatullah, op cit, 1998, p 52.
  - 45 Hafeez, S, 'Development of Sociology as a Discipline in Pakistan' in S H Hashmi, op cit, 2001, p 145.
  - 46 Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, p 447.
  - 47 Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, p 445.
  - 48 Ibid, p 446.
  - 49 Naseem, op cit, 1998, p 425.
  - 50 Inayatullah, op cit, 2001, p 19.
  - 51 Ibid, p 42.
  - 52 Three visits were made to the University Grants Commission in Karachi and Islamabad, but I was told all such information was 'confidential' although it is not, and could not be given to anyone, especially me, since I did not represent an institution. See footnote 14, above.
  - 53 Haque and Khan, op cit, 1998, pp 446-47.
  - 54 Naseem, op cit, 1998, p 428.