

## Investigating the Inclusion of Human Rights Education in Pakistani Elite Schools: A Qualitative Content Analysis of History Textbooks

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*Pakistani educational system is broadly divided into public and private sectors. Due to specific financial and administrative issues, the public sector has failed to produce social capital that could serve as an advocate of human rights. However, elite schools in the private sector are better equipped to educate their students on human rights. Through qualitative content analysis, the present study explores the status of human rights in history textbooks taught in elite schools from grade 6 to O-levels and the International Baccalaureate (I.B.) Middle Years Programme (MYP). It was observed that the human rights issues in Pakistan remained part of the null curriculum in the books published for Pakistani students. In the I.B. books, human rights issues were discussed at the global level, leaving elite students ignorant and oblivious to the state of human rights in Pakistan. It is suggested that human rights should be transformed from abstract and generalized statements to absolute and concrete reality, first stemming from local society and then advancing to a global community.*

## 1. Introduction

Pakistan's constant and alarming decline in human rights indexes raises specific concerns regarding the drafting, implementing, and maintaining of human rights policies. Being an elitist state, where only a precious chosen few can clout all societal and administrative segments of society (Mills, 2000; Rauf et al., 2021), Pakistan cannot afford to ignore the role of its aristocracy in shaping the current situation of Human Rights in Pakistan, which serves as a typical example of elite culture, consists of political, military, landlord, bureaucratic, religious, and industrial elites (Ahmed, 2017; Shoukat & Gomez, 2018). The power elite consists of a few people who also hold power in government. It should be noted that this power is accompanied by the ability to distribute wealth. In addition to being extremely powerful, the power elite cues the rest of us about what we value as a society. The ability of the power elite to shape, dominate, and control what goes on in government and public lands is a function of that extraordinary power. The power elite also have all the tools they need to influence everything and use them to maintain their unique position (Khan et al., 2018).

Separate educational institutions effectively function in the state to craft these elites' minds. These elite private schools are different from public schools in many ways. The social governance issues in the government schools are that they do not have proper infrastructure, the classrooms are inadequate, and the student-teacher ratio is exceptionally high (Saleem et al., 2020). A lot of these students who go to public schools also come from low socio-economic backgrounds. Therefore, most of them value education they do not even understand. Moreover, public schools primarily focus on literacy and numeracy skills, which are low order thinking skills (Jamil et al., 2021). Therefore, students from these public schools are good at following instructions and routine tasks but not very good at thinking critically, thus stopping the potentially more active participation in society.

The clients of the elite private schools in Pakistan who can pay a comparatively very handsome fee to the school that has excellent pedagogical facilities, excellent infrastructure, and foreign-trained faculty are also more than able to provide prospective students at these schools a much broader understanding of their civil, political, and socio-economic rights (Rauf, Muhammad, & Saeed, 2021; Rauf, Muhammad, & Saleem, 2021). Broader exposure, training, and other social and educational facilities help to set a better stage for these privileged students to raise their voices for Human Rights, perform duties, and act as informed and responsible citizens. These students of the elite class are more likely to take up leadership roles, and their orientation toward civic rights may have a deep-rooted effect on society (Bertolin et al., 2022). This scenario raises interest in exploring the modus operandi of educational institutions that shape the minds and intellects of the elites, particularly concerning Human Rights Education (HRE).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Human Rights Education in Pakistan

The national educational policy of Pakistan, which caters to both the public and private sectors, fully acknowledges the role of Human Rights and universal brotherhood. However, research studies conducted in the public sector claimed that Human Rights Education in Pakistan remained confined under religious content, and the stated goals were never achieved (Durrani, 2008; Muhammad & Brett, 2015b).

The 2017 National Education Policy of Pakistan emphasizes peace, tolerance, respect for human rights, universal brotherhood, and understanding, among other human values. Furthermore, the policy dictates that supplementary reading materials will be developed around income-generating skills, life skills, civic education, gender equality, human rights, peace education, and social harmony (MOFET, 2017). However, like previous educational policies, the targets of this policy were also not realized. The incompetency of government officials and lack of harmony between “desirability, affordability, and feasibility” made it unsuccessful. Akram and Yang (2021) also concluded that these educational policies were replicas of previous policies because they also failed to curb cultural and social rights violations.

Many other scholars have raised concerns regarding HRE in Pakistan. “Action Plan for the Improvement of Human Rights in Pakistan” reflects the efforts of the Pakistani government to improve the status of human rights education, but a lot more effort is needed to put it into practice (Ministry of Human Rights, 2016). Sadruddin (2017) stated that firstly, most human rights education has yet to be initiated throughout Pakistan; secondly, concepts of human rights education are part subjects of religious studies or social studies only, and the content is dominated by hardline holy preaching that enforces a separating line between suitable and unsuitable human rights values for society. Tehseem et al. (2020) stated that HRE in Pakistan was politicized more, implemented less, and failed to bring significant results in human rights education pedagogies. Pirzado (2019) shared his concern that the objectives of human rights education were never met due to the lack of government support, weak management, scarcity of resources, and unclear goals. He noted that the content has a limited scope compared to traditional approaches, making it less significant to the present needs of human rights education in Pakistan.

Kadiwal and Durrani (2018) reported that educational content encourages school textbooks to promote violence and inequality instead of peace, praising militarization and war in public. Moreover, the curriculum in Pakistan encourages gender-biasedness that fosters violence in society. Mumtaz (2019) also found that content analysis of Pakistan’s social studies/general knowledge curriculum designed for the primary level contains components of peace education. However, they are predominately elaborated within the paradigm of Islam, whereas relevant information regarding other religions and cultures is absent (Mumtaz, 2019). Ahmad (2004) asserted that although the textbooks focused on the Islamic values of piety, submission, and obedience because there was no stress on fostering critical thinking and respect for cultural

diversity and equality of citizens, students failed to grasp the concept of human rights and civic participation.

Another view regarding human rights education was put forward by Khoja-Moolji (2014), who pointed out that education is more inclined toward producing neoliberal citizens. He suggested that besides the idea of human rights endorsed internationally, there are many other normative and ethical guidelines for performance within a given realm of living. By acknowledging new ideas, we can reconceptualize HRE in Pakistan and make the discourse more practical and participatory for students.

The unsatisfactory condition of HRE in the public sector is evident from previous studies. Elite private schools of Pakistan concerning HRE have not been explored. Meanwhile, by the rule of the game, the students at private elite schools in Pakistan have more exposure and resources to bring about change in society. Considering the situation, this study was set to explore the notions/concepts of human rights presented in the selected textbooks of elite schools in Pakistan.

### **3. Methods**

HRE is a subjective and evolving concept depending on different countries' socio-economic and cultural settings. Therefore, an interpretive approach was deemed suitable for this study as it accommodates dynamic and socially constructed realities. Under the umbrella of qualitative research methodology, the question raised in this study was explored through qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic approach to analyzing the depth of the text concerning the research questions. It stands on the belief that texts are a plentiful data source with a remarkable ability to expose valuable knowledge about phenomena under analysis (Schreier et al., 2020). Through a systematic process, it reduces data and is flexible. Qualitative content analysis consists of classifying text of a coding frame (Schreier, 2012). The approach taken here was proposed by Elo and Kyngäs (2008).

For the present study, textbooks were considered the most suitable documents for content analysis because this multi-billion-dollar industry significantly leaped desired intentions to classroom instruction and eventually to the students' minds (Swanson, 2014). These effective weapons of soft power are used to break stereotypes or construct prototypes of society. The content of the textbooks is always ideologically charged and cannot be delimited to the explanation of linguistics or words independent of the purpose and function it obliges to society (Rogers, 2004; Smith & Sheyholislami, 2022). Moreover, research shows that schoolteachers and their instructional approaches are highly dependent on textbooks, and consequently, ninety percent of the classroom time is structured around textbooks; students also spend most of their homework time using textbooks (Bristol, 2005).

Textbooks of history subjects were selected because history textbooks are more likely to include issues of human rights (Skinner & Bromley, 2019), whereas history subjects largely contribute to citizenship education (Muetterties, 2022; Santisteban & Bravo, 2018). History textbooks for grades 6,7,8, O levels and I.B. were selected because students are likely to develop

their sense of civic responsibility in this age bracket (Schulz et al., 2016; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). Arshad et al. (2020) argued that citizenship education in schools for students of the secondary level is of great significance.

**Table No 1: List of Books Selected for Qualitative Content Analysis**

Serial	Name of Books	Key
1.	Understanding History for Class 6	UH6
2.	Understanding History for Class 7	UH7
3.	Understanding History for Class 8	UH8
4.	Oxford History for Pakistan 1	OHP
5.	History in Focus 1	HIF
6.	Pakistan History, Culture, and Government	PHCG
7.	The History and Culture of Pakistan	THCP
8.	Pakistan: a Historical and Contemporary Look	PHCL
9.	My World History	MWH
10.	Individual and Societies 1	I.S. 1
11.	Individual and Societies 2	I.S. 2
12.	Individual and Societies 3 (students)	I.S. 3
13.	History by Concepts (MYP) by concepts	HBC

Although elite schools have some common characteristics globally, there is no predefined or universal model of elite schools. They are expected to provide the form of ‘privileged output’ within their field. Elite schools are required to maintain their legitimacy. This can be done by adopting new power structures, excelling academically, or becoming more modern or expensive (Kenway, 2018). These educational institutions are established in posh areas reachable only to elite minorities. Their fees have increased much faster than inflation over time, causing the economic barrier for others (Courtois, 2017).

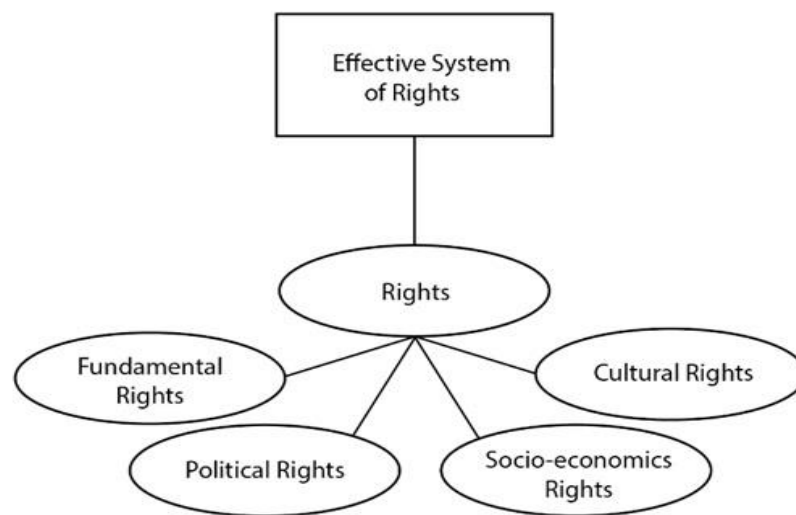
The scant literature on elite schools in Pakistan describes them as expensive, privately owned, and located in wealthy neighborhoods (Ramazan, 2015). This sector represents the interests of less than 1% of Pakistani families (Gardezi, 1991; Qadeer, 2006). More annual student fees are charged here than at public schools, and the medium of instruction is English, not Urdu or any other local language (Rahman, 2004).

Considering the above literature, the most common criteria for elite schools in Pakistan are the high fee structure and the use of English as a medium of instruction, which serves as the basis for our sample selection. The following table represents the selected books and their respective keys used in this research study.

This paper is extracted from a successfully completed doctoral project of the first author in which she comprehensively examined the above-mentioned books using the analytical framework developed by Gagnon and Pagé (1999) for citizenship analysis. In this paper, only the micro-components of effective system of rights—fundamental, political, socio-economic, and cultural rights—are reported. The framework proposes that the Constitution or the Human Rights

Commission acknowledges and protects fundamental rights. Fundamental rights are based on justice and equality. Social rights protect the basic needs of human beings and their welfare. Adequate standard of living, housing, right to education, work housing, and suitable to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress all come under social rights. Cultural rights are characterized by the protection of one's own identity and culture in a distinct culture. The right to vote and take part in political activities, political discussions, and policies are included in political rights (Gagnon & Pagé, 1999).

**Figure No 1: Effective system of rights and its micro-components adapted from Gagnon and Pagé (1999).**



## 4. Findings

### 4.1 Fundamental Rights

Fundamental rights represent rights that all individuals possess under their human nature. Along with fundamental human rights, this part of the findings also embodies the rights acknowledged by legal instruments, recognized, and protected by the society's Constitution, parliament, or governing bodies. The text imparted that the realization of these rights from early civilization to the present-day world has been at the whim of mighty hands. The text further conveyed that exploitation of the fundamental human rights of enslaved people, women, children, immigrants, or prisoners has been practiced throughout history, stating that a country or a region's historical and cultural context can often lead to an imbalance of rights. This imbalance comes from the unique social, political, and economic factors that have led to the societies people live in today (IS3, p. 61). Mostly, ordinary people were affected by the hereditary class structure, and enslaved people, women, and children had no rights at all.

Violation of human rights by kings, priests, and aristocrats for their pleasure or power was expected and was not considered something uncustomary. It was mentioned that, for instance, not

only did gladiators fight against each other, but they also fought against animals. In some cases, hunters caught wild and exotic animals and released them to be killed by gladiators. Certain gladiatorial games focused latterly on the mass execution of prisoners, such as the crucifying of Christian martyrs; hundreds of thousands of prisoners would be killed during a single reign (IB1, p. 91). It was also mentioned that “Christians and other prisoners were often thrown to starving lions. In a ‘good day’s sport,’ as many as 500 men might be killed” (OHP, p. 49).

The books portrayed religious leaders have committed many human rights violations. One example involved the Aztecs and their human sacrifice rituals. The Aztecs believed that their God, Huitzilopochtli, would turn to stone if they did not perform human sacrifices regularly. To prevent this from occurring, the Aztecs would execute thousands of people, remove their still-beating hearts, and offer them to Huitzilopochtli. While most of these victims were prisoners of war, many of them were also the children of their people. They would kill the children and offer their blood and tears to the rain god Tlaloc. These examples show that large-scale human rights abuses have been perpetrated by the faithful in the name of their gods (MWH, p. 593).

By providing historical accounts of the violation of fundamental rights by the ruling elites through entertainment or in the name of God, books normalize victimhood and insert the message that abuse of the fundamental rights of the masses has never been a point of concern for most leaders, or that the masses were used to it. Focusing on human rights violations in early civilization and ignoring the causes of recent conflicts and abuse of rights, the text may picture that fundamental rights are much better in today’s world, and lower segments of societies are not abused.

The book’s historical content reflected that enslaved people remained the chief victims of violating fundamental rights (OHP, p. 44; OHP, p. 32). The book stated that “slavery was justified by racist ideologies that developed throughout this period” (HBC, p. 64). Aligned with colonialism, capitalism also served as a justification for the violation of fundamental human rights and the slave trade for mighty heads. A book underscored that the slave trade made Britain very rich. It created jobs in shipbuilding and seafaring, boosted the demand for metals and textiles needed for the trade, and provided massive profits from the sale of enslaved Africans. The trade also helped fuel the Industrial Revolution, making consumer goods such as sugar, tobacco, and rum available to many people and raising the standard of living for many British people (HBC, p. 64).

Books also informed the students about the children who worked in factories and mills as “pauper apprentices” to boost European industrialization. The motivation to hire children was given as follows: The employment of children proved beneficial for mill owners due to the predicted offer either audience brought. First, mill owners could pay children less than they had to pay adults. Besides that, children were nimbler and could fit into small spaces under the machines which could not fit adults. So, children had to repair broken threads (fixers) or clean up loose

cotton (scavengers). Because of this, children proved to be cheap labor for mill owners (HBC, p. 9).

Other than power, religion, entertainment, and capitalism, the notion of nationalism played the most significant role in breeding the culture of human rights abuse and normalized violence. Such ideas were also supported by the intellectual movements of the time. A book narrated that social Darwinists believed that the government should heed the survival of the fittest. To this end, they opposed welfare and suggested that the degenerate—which included the mentally disabled, the physically disabled, and the victims of hereditary diseases—should not be allowed to reproduce. Some went even further, recommending the sterilization of these people to protect, through natural selection, the evolution of the strong. The Order of Social Darwinists said it would defy the natural order to assist the weak (HBC, p. 135).

The O-level books published for Pakistani students narrated the story of the violation of fundamental rights at the national level in Pakistan. The issue of exploitation of the fundamental rights of Kashmir started right with the Independence of Pakistan. “Indian soldiers arrived in Kashmir on 27 October along with the accession papers to be signed by Hari Singh. Although he signed it on that day, he backdated it to the day before the Indian invasion” (PHCG, p. 119). The issue remains unsolved and is waiting for a “United Nations supervised plebiscite” (PHCL, p. 202).

Pakistan not only faced the issue of violation of fundamental rights in Kashmir by India but also in the division of financial and military assets (THCP, p. 114), geographical boundaries, accession of princely states (THCP, p. 112), economic resources (THCP, p. 111), and canal water disputes (THCP, p. 115). The violation of fundamental rights in Pakistan was discussed only in the Indian context, giving the impression that it is only India due to which Pakistan has suffered from human rights abuse.

However, the situation of fundamental rights within the geographical boundaries of present-day Pakistan, about which the government is directly responsible, was not mentioned.

#### **4.2 Cultural and Religious Rights**

Culture and religion are embedded together. They have been two sides of the same coin throughout human evolution. The writers penned that exploitation to govern and dominate ordinary people and religious exploitation were average in early civilization. The historical narrative also delivers the message that with the elevation of the human age from early civilization to modern times, the slogans of nationalism and capitalism gained popularity. These deep-rooted slogans helped to breed the customs of violation of cultural and religious rights.

Further, the advancement in trade and technology gave birth to the concept of colonialism and imperialism, which was also used as a justification for the violation of cultural rights. Next came the term globalization, which in the 21st century is serving as a threat to the cultural and religious rights of the people. Findings also revealed that victorious nations have always tried to suppress the cultural and religious rights of the convicted.



In early civilization, religion played a significant role in establishing power structures and defining cultural attributes. Writers penned that priests and kings even presented themselves as God to the people or as the most favored person of God. Writers also portray a negative image of the religious leaders as they were mostly presented as violating religious rights. Hardly a few accounts of religious leaders were given, benefiting society. Forced conversion of religion was repeatedly reported in books. One of the I.B. books mentions prejudice and discrimination as one of the causes of the violation of cultural rights.

“Cultural rights issues can often involve prejudice and discrimination. Prejudice is dislike or hatred towards someone based on unfair opinions, such as racism. Discrimination is treating someone differently, usually in a negative manner based on unfair opinions; for example, racist laws in a country.” (IS2, p. 14)

Abuse of cultural rights occurred when this prejudice and discrimination helped nations develop the mindset that their culture and religion were more civilized and superior to others. The writer stated that “national pride fueled competition for control of foreign lands,” and justification for imperialism was given as “European belief that their own culture was superior. For centuries, Westerners viewed the world as divided between ‘civilized’ and ‘uncivilized’ peoples. They believed that imperialism would introduce the benefits of modern civilization to the world” (MWH, p. 907).

The I.B. books also narrated how the cultural rights of South Africans (HBC, p. 275) and Jews in Germany (HBC, pp. 292-296) were abused. The book—My World History—also recounts the fight between Protestants and Catholics and the violation of their cultural rights through the era (MWH, pp. 736-755), which ended with the statement of General Frangois on the violation of human rights that “it was our wars of religion that made us forget our religion” (MWH, p. 752).

One of the books, Individual and Societies, also mentions how globalization and transnational companies in the modern-day era have challenged cultural rights. It explains that a few languages, namely English, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and Arabic, have come to dominate international business and commerce due to globalization. As a result, languages spoken by smaller populations have been marginalized (IS2, p.47), and transnational companies “can serve the interests of richer countries over poorer countries” (IS2, p.53).

In the books published for Pakistani students, the arrival of the East India Company in the subcontinent and the war of independence were also narrated as a form of cultural and religious abuse. The books conveyed that cultural, religious, and social rights are often violated for economic gains. The culture and religion of the ruling elites are more incredible or matter more than those of the masses. To craft colonial minds, the cultural superiority of the colonial masters must be acknowledged. The accounts of cultural, religious, and economic abuse far outnumbered the stories of kings and rulers who appreciated religious and cultural diversity and allowed justice to prevail in their region.

### 4.3 Political Rights

Politics is a topic widely discussed in the analyzed books. The content delivered that as human history unfolded from early civilization to the modern world, the political system grew complex, and people became more aware of their political rights. However, abuse of political rights remained a common factor throughout the ages. The books mentioned how rulers attempted to limit their people's political participation.

Starting from early civilizations, curbing of political rights to maintain the status quo was shown: "The Shi Huangdi dynasty did not allow any discussion about the government and ordered the destruction of all books, including Confucius' books. Only books on farming, medicine, and fortune-telling were not destroyed" (UH6, p. 39). Even during the era of the Qin dynasty in China: "Any scholars and students who objected to this (ruler's policies) were buried alive in large groups" (OHP, p. 19). The "lower class of the Hindus were also not allowed to participate in politics" (UH6, p. 22). Also, in Athens and Rome, considered the most advanced civilizations of the time, "Women and slaves were not citizens and had no direct role in government" (MWH, p. 371). The book highlighted that the city of Athens was described as beautiful, cultured, and technically advanced; however, all these statements can entirely be correct when referring to the city of Athens but would not fully apply to all of its residents. First, at this time, women were greatly oppressed. This mainly affected the rich, who were confined to their homes. Enslaved people at this time also possibly had no right to anything since they were the property of their owners. Also, the wealthy foreign merchants who would have had limited rights was the fact that they were not citizens. 5th century Athens possibly had about 300,000 people living in it, but only about 50,000 were fully functioning citizens (OHP, p. 33). Moreover, in Rome, "common people faced harsh punishment for opposing the government like being made to fight wild animals in the Colosseum (also called 'coliseum')" (UH6, p. 56).

One of the books explains the kings' beliefs that serve as the reason for the exploitation of the political rights of the ordinary people. It states,

"Monarchs believed they had the right to make all the decisions and overrule the Church and parliaments because of the 'Divine Right of Kings,' which stated that God gave kings and queens their authority. In China, there was a similar idea, known as the 'Mandate of Heaven,' that emperors should rule as they pleased." (MWH, p. 258)

Many other events of violation of political rights by mighty hands from history were explained in the I.B. books. Violation of political rights through "unequal treaties" during the era of Emperor Meiji in Japan (HBC, p. 19), the story of "women suffrage" (HBC, p. 140), the Nazi-Soviet pact (HBC, p. 179), the policy of appeasement (HBC, p. 180), the struggle of Kenya (HBC, p. 244), struggle of black Americans (HBC, p. 255) and Africans, Apartheid laws (HBC, p. 268), gives the insight of how political rights have been abused.

There was no exception regarding the situation of political rights in the sub-continent. The events of Subsidiary Alliances (UH8, p. 4) and Doctrine of Lapse (PHCG, p. 33), in which Indians

were not allowed to rule their lands and must obey British laws, served as an example of a violation of human rights. Moreover, The Rowlett Act was a clear breach of the political rights of Indians. The government interfered in all aspects of the public's life. It limits every person's freedom of thought and actions, denying any of these by means it considers. The government allowed suspects' imprisonment without due process of law, no trial by jury, no appeals, and police access into prisons and jails. The government also imposed censorship of all mail in and out of prison, suspects being kept under house arrest, and suffrage of any citizen's meeting, assemblage, and observation of any public event (UH8, p. 46).

Much later, in 1928, the Nehru Report also exploited the political rights of Muslims by ignoring the need for "separate electorates to protect the rights of Muslims" (PHCG, p. 55). Following Nehru's report, the government introduced economic controls for the Second World War to be fought effectively, and labor was conscripted. Also, political rights were suppressed (HBC, p. 239).

Although the Second World War led to the independence of Pakistan and India, the situation regarding political rights remained the same. The books published for Pakistani students at the O level frequently mentioned how the political rights of ordinary people were curbed. The most prominent case was Bangladesh as "East Bengalis also complained that, although they were a majority in the Constituent Assembly, Governors-General and Prime Ministers were nearly always from West Pakistan" (THCP, p. 135), and "President Yahya Khan launched Operation Searchlight—his campaign to crush Bengali nationalism" (THCP, p. 138). Moreover, people from East Pakistan were always out of power and decision-making and also started as being poorer than the ones from West Pakistan (THCP, p. 128). Past exploits of political rights, including the introduction of "Basic Democrats" in the period of Ayub Khan, Zia ul-Haq's referendum in the name of Islam, and the mere passing reference that if winning parties in NWFP and Baluchistan supported the PPP in the National Assembly, they could run their provinces freely (THCP, p. 177) were mentioned just as a passing reference.

#### **4.4 Socio-Economic Rights**

Violation of socio-economic rights has been as old as human history itself. The content of the books delivered that although the provision of socio-economic rights was limited to only the upper crust of society, the lower segment hardly showed any grievances about this injustice. The books talked about early life in Rome, Greece, and Egypt as the most advanced societies in terms of civilizations, yet violation of socio-economic rights remained a common phenomenon even in these civilizations. Even in old age, taxes persisted as one of the most powerful tools for cutting down the living standards of the masses. The message was also pictured that countries with a little edge in technology tend to exploit others' economic rights. The history of curbing socio-economic rights to win wars and conflicts was also mentioned. The present status of socio-economic rights around the globe, how they are violated, or how socio-economic rights can be improved was not given due attention in any of the books.

Among the thirteen books, a glimpse of the recent socio-economic status of Pakistan was mentioned only in one book published for students of O levels. A short essay on the status of only health and education was written in the book by Farooq Naseem Bajwa. The message was delivered that Pakistan is not facing any issues or problems regarding socio-economic rights. All other books remained hushed regarding socio-economic standards in Pakistan.

Regarding the world outside Pakistan, the books mentioned that Rome and Athens were a hallmark of politics, literature, architecture, beauty, art, medicine, and science. They still have an important place in our lives today. Along with the achievements in various fields, the socio-economic status of familiar people in this civilization was also mentioned. The living condition of the masses in Athens was mentioned:

“Life was different for poor Romans. Most poor people lived in cramped apartments without running water in the city. Crime, disease, and fire were serious dangers. Apartment buildings were often badly built and sometimes collapsed. Common men and women worked at a company renting land from wealthy landlords. Others worked as day labourers in construction or at the city docks. Some ran stores, taverns, or restaurants.” (MWH, p. 377)

For comparison, the facilities of wealthy people were also mentioned:

“Richer people had one or two-story houses made of mudbrick or stone, generally near the river where the air was a little cooler. They had pretty walled gardens with water plants, birds, and ponds from which they drank water. The Egyptians were particularly fond of flowers, and they were everywhere in their paintings. Houses usually had a veranda where the family could sit in the shade and a flat roof where they could sleep to catch the breeze in the hottest weather.” (OHP, p. 24)

The history of exploitation of economic and social rights continued not only at the national level but also at the international level was narrated. The technologically advanced countries ensured they had the edge over international treaties and other terms of trade. One of the I.B. books gave an example of unequal treaties between America and Japan, which led to the violation of the socio-economic rights of the Japanese. The U.S. and other countries coerced the Japanese government into opening trade through the Treaty of Edo and similar agreements with other nations. The treaties were not equal. First, they granted “extraterritoriality,” meaning that if Americans broke the law in Japan, they would be tried under American laws. Secondly, Japan had no control over the tariffs and duties placed on goods brought into Japan. Finally, the USA benefited from any extra terms negotiated with other countries because of the most favored nation status. The unequal treaties momentarily impacted Japan (HBC, pp. 18-19).

The same story of exploitation of socio-economic rights was repeated when the British ruled India. The terms of trade were set to favor the more robust heads, while the socio-economic rights of the lower class were violated: “The poverty of so many Indians was easily blamed on the British, who exploited the Indians for their profits” (PHCG, p. 33). Furthermore, the book mentions that British policies of destroying the Indian textile industry to protect their textile manufacturers

led to huge resentment. Western missionaries felt offended when Indian people did not respond positively to their effort to promote Christianity and instead criticized Hindus, Muslims, and other forms of gods as being sinful and false. Especially the Muslims were angry when the teaching of Arabic and Persian was removed from school altogether. Indian rulers disliked the British as they were seizing their lands. Under the doctrine of Lapse, if a local wholesome Kingdom ever could not have existed without having any male offspring, then it has to be assumed directly under British control (PHCG, p. 33).

Students learned that making and implementing laws to violate human rights was a common practice even after early civilization. Violation of the socio-economic rights of black Americans remained one of the most discussed topics in I.B. books. Apartheid laws (HBC, p. 268) and Jim Crow laws were mentioned in detail. The original Constitution gave Black people citizenship and equal protection under the law. After the reconstruction era following the Civil War, many states started adopting laws that kept Black and white people separate. This is known as racial segregation. This was enforced by the jurisprudence of “separate but equal,” even though typically, the accommodations for black Americans were very inferior. The systemic violation of socio-economic rights was universal during this time (HBC, p. 253).

Regarding the present-day world, the I.B. books inform students that the availability of food and safe drinking water are fundamental social rights. However, it also mentions that these rights have been exploited to win conflicts; it narrates that limiting or cutting off a community’s water supply is a way to increase or win conflicts and has been done throughout history. In the past, when people left an area on purpose, they often poisoned a source of drinking water, which then, in turn, can cause sickness among those invading. When a community’s access to water is limited, it may cause a community’s health, financial and political stability, and development to suffer. Approximately one in ten people globally lack access to safe drinking water (IS3, p. 46).

The books remained silent about the most resources in rich countries and the exploitation of poor nations.

#### **4.5 Discussion**

The books published for Pakistani students remained confined to the narratives of human rights abuse from early civilization to 1947. However, after independence, by remaining silent about inequalities, diversity, and minorities, the books implicitly expressed human rights violations as a finished matter rather than an enduring struggle. The current situation of fundamental, social, cultural, economic, and political rights in Pakistan was muted. Sen (2020) asserts that it is unwise to expect a strong curriculum concerning Human Rights Education from an authority keen to present government actors and leading institutions for nation-building positively. In doing so, human rights issues are concealed, and conflicting voices are silenced. He continued that political impediments that risk Human Rights Education should be minimized. Hassan and Plaček (2021) conducted a study on human rights in developing countries, including Pakistan, and claimed that because of some “political osmosis,” the main agenda of HRE is left

behind.

Informing elite students about the status of fundamental, socio-economic, cultural, regional, and religious rights was not the priority of the books. The present study's findings are akin to previous studies' results (Jamal et al., 2022; Khokhar & Muhammad, 2020; Muhammad & Brett, 2015a; Mumtaz, 2019; Muneer, 2021; Pirzado, 2019). The "right to vote" and the "right to freedom of expression" were among the most cited rights. Rauf, Muhammad and Saleem (2021) also claimed that the elite students' knowledge regarding human rights was mainly limited to the right to freedom of expression. However, the books did not elaborate on the recently- emerged issues because of the "right to freedom of expression."

By remaining silent about the conditions of human rights in Pakistan, the books fail to inculcate an empathetic attitude in students. Rather than taking it as an already achieved milestone, it establishes a sense of apathy and indifferent attitude in students. Imposing a narrative of mythical unity or presenting the conflict as exceptional and disconnected from present realities, there is little chance to capitalize on the potential of students that may help to build a peaceful society (Bickmore & Fathallah, 2022).

Most of the textbooks published for Pakistani and I.B. students normalize the violence and glorify war narratives. Mighty heads remained responsible and even unaccountable for violations of human rights. The books informed that under the slogans of entertainment, capitalism, imperialism, nationalism, and even in some treaties, human rights violations have persisted throughout history. Skinner and Bromley (2019) referred to this normalization and unaccountability as a depoliticized account of human rights or silencing of the agency.

Glorification of wars and normalization of victimhood in textbooks far outnumbered the leaders and kings around the world that ensure the realization of human rights and encourage programs and measures to avoid abuse of rights. Akkari and Maleq (2020) assert that when higher authority integrates negative messages, these attitudes are internalized by students, which reduces their ability to see themselves as proponents of change in their societies and lives and results in their disengagement. Moreover, such text may contribute to developing cultures of destructive conflict, exacerbating inter-group distrust and legitimizing enmity (Bickmore et al., 2017).

Students establish the crucial links between historical events and the moral decisions they make in their own lives (Clay & Rubin, 2020). However, students were detached from the recent cultural and religious violation events in all the sampled books. The books ignored violations of fundamental rights in recent decades or historical links that lead to present-day violations. Students were kept apart from the recent conflicts that may have served to human rights violations (Vissing, 2020). For history education to promote H.R. and peacebuilding, it must connect students with the underlying causes of recent conflicts and, most importantly, how they continue and are reconfigured in their lived experiences.

Threats to cultural and linguistic rights were touched upon with sweeping speeches in one of the I.B. books as an offshoot of globalization, which largely favors developed countries. Power

structures and institutional mechanisms like law and order that develop and implement policies regarding Human Rights and work under sovereign government were not elaborated. Parish (2021) claimed that these books overlook the underlying structural reasons behind the violation of human rights, socio-economic inequality, and issues of minorities. It glosses over matters of Human Rights Education by linking inequality with poverty, poor economy, and lack of education. Andreotti (2014) identifies it as a “soft approach,” describes this orientation, and explains that it is characterized by a more open-ended and inclusive viewpoint than some of the other orientations. They note that the soft approach recognizes and values the critical engagement with and from the perspective of participants/students in the international volunteering. While Andreotti (2014) acknowledges the work that the soft approach can do she emphasizes that even in the role of fostering basic awareness and positive action it probably will not take you anywhere, and it is the critical approach that really encourages students in becoming global citizens who are not only aware of human rights but also much more engage and responsible.

## 5. Conclusion

Limited knowledge regarding human rights was given in the analyzed books. The formation of an attitude conducive to acting on the principles of human rights or capacity building of the students was not included in the books. The practical component of human rights remained absent as it does not inform students about how to struggle for their rights, protect others from abuse of rights, or how organizations designed to help can be contacted. Technically, it leaves nothing for students to act upon human rights practically. Salmon-Letelier and Russell (2022) also asserted that teaching “about” human rights is not enough; attributes of tolerance and patience should be focused upon to realize a just society. Notably, it provides students with possible solutions and alternatives to global challenges without problematizing the policies, beliefs, and politics involved. It is suggested that the concept of human rights should be transformed from abstract and generalized statements to absolute and concrete reality, first stemming from local society and then advancing to a global community.

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