

## Developing 21st Century Skills through CAIE Pakistan Studies PI History *A qualitative research analysis*

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### Abstract

*The subject of Pakistan History CAIE stream encompasses several aspects of 21st century skills. There are several challenges that are faced by teachers and students alike. This study determined what 21st century skills are and how they are developed through social sciences specially how the teaching pedagogies of CAIE Pakistan History develop 21st century skills in students or else what hinders them. The study found that there was a gap between the syllabus aims and objectives and the assessment objectives. Additionally, stakeholders like school management, parent body and the teachers and students themselves are also responsible for the various limitations and challenges in developing 21st century skills.*

**Keywords:** History, Pakistan studies, 21st Century skills, CAIE

### Introduction

Pakistan Studies is the core subject for Matriculation and Cambridge streams of learning, yet it has been often overlooked and under-appreciated by students and parents alike in terms of its importance and contribution to developing 21st Century skills. Thus, in the recent competitive environment, and the general perception against the subject, the question arises, how does Pakistan Studies develop 21st Century Skills in learners?

Rotherham and Willingham (2009) address the idea of 21st century skills or 21st CS as being innate skills that are inherent in human beings and not something new, that is the discovery of the century. In the context of Pakistan studies, Fatima et al (2021) discuss how the worldly challenges need to be met and education needs to prepare students for that. They look at Pakistan studies with HOTS or high order thinking skills in mind. Naseer et al. (2020) have evaluated Pakistan studies textbooks to review whether they effectively develop high order thinking skills. Whereas, Chandio et al. (2016) reviewed examination papers of the intermediate board of education Hyderabad and Sukkur.

This research will focus on the prospect of teaching Pakistan studies particularly Pakistan History and its role and contribution in the development of 21st century skills in learners. Previous researches in the area have a tight lined focus on methods and textbooks, hence there was a need to look at the subject in terms of its teaching and learning dynamics in conjunction with aims and objectives as set out by the curriculum outlines ultimately studying the assessments and hence presenting a holistic overview of how this combination of dynamics serve in developing 21st century skills.

Hence, this study will first explore what 21st Century Skills are. The study will then review aims and objectives of the curriculum for Pakistan Studies Paper 1 History and Culture of Pakistan in CAIE O level stream. The two will be cross referenced and then the study will explore interviews from students and teachers, hoping to highlight the effectiveness in achieving 21st century skills. In the end the assessment papers will be reviewed in the same context of 21st century skills and the achievement of aims and objectives.

### Statement of Problem

This research paper will focus on exploring the subject History and Culture of Pakistan which is Paper I of Pakistan Studies in CAIE stream and examine its contribution to developing 21st Century Skills.

Through literature review it can be said that a singular definition of 21st Century skills does not exist. However, the idea of 4Cs as explained by Kivunja (2014) is the most commonly used framework. Therefore this paper will use this 4Cs framework:

- Critical thinking and Problem solving
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Creativity

The following questions are the focus of the study:

- How far do curriculum objectives meet 21st century skills?

- How far are 21st century skills developed through teaching and learning in the classroom setting?
- How far does the annual examination assess 21st century skills?

### **Literature Review**

#### ***What are 21st Century Skills?***

Rotherham & Willingham (2009) suggest that though 21st Century Skills or 21st CS appear to be a revolutionary and new concept, they in fact, are not. They elaborate that human progress has always happened because of *critical thinking* and *problem solving skills*. To this end the answer was found in Care et al (2014) who suggest that educational institutions today scaffold students to prepare for experiences that are relevant and necessary in the 21st century. Care et al (2014) research about 152 countries and find that with slight variation in all countries the underlying skills remain the same; individuals who are literate and numerate with appropriate skills to adapt and work in collaborative, global and virtual environments. Some skills that Care et al. (2014) take as the basic 21st Century skills are as follows: *Problems solving skills, making evidence based decisions, collaboration, communication, creativity combined with values and ethics of society*.

Further on this note Walser (2008) had presented the idea that 21st CS are the skills that can't be replaced by technology. Soft skills such as *collaboration and creativity* in a complicated and evolving society. It is noted here that Rotherham & Willingham (2009) and Walser (2008) resonate the same idea that most of these skills like problem solving and critical thinking are not new and have always been part of human evolution and history. However, Walser (2008) elaborates that the usage of such skills has changed with the 21st century.

Pakistan's Federal Ministry of Education on their website highlights in their Vision statement (2020) that 21st century skills must be inculcated within the students. They do not define what the 21st century skills are except for a brief mention that skills like *analysis, critical thinking and creativity* are examples of such skills.

#### **What role does Bloom's Taxonomy and high order thinking skills play in determining 21st century skills?**

Nikolić and Dabić (2016) admit that Bloom's Taxonomy of learning objectives of 1964 is still the most profound and relevant work in pedagogies and understanding learning. Agarwal (2018) also comments on the immense importance of Bloom's Taxonomy and its relevance even in the present time decades after its first appearance. Both of these papers explain lower levels of Bloom's cognitive pyramid such as knowledge and understanding as LOTs or low order thinking skills and the peak of the pyramid such as analysis, evaluation and synthesis as HOTs or high order thinking skills. Qasrawi and BeniAbdelrahman (2020) identify HOTs in the light of Bloom's Taxonomy. They determine that creativity and collaboration are the focus of most contemporary teachers and they aim to develop analysis and evaluation skills to improve critical thinking. Hence they review English language textbooks in order to establish how 21st century skills like the 4 Cs relate to Bloom's Taxonomy.

#### **How do pedagogies enhance 21st century skills?**

Kivunja (2014) explains that all 21st century skills that are required for modern learners can be classified as starting with the letter 'C' and therefore can be called the 4C's or the framework for 21st century learning, these are as follows:

- Critical thinking and Problem solving
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Creativity .

He concludes in his research that pedagogy must directly teach each of these 4 skills, he insists that teachers don't assume that teaching of one will lead to the other. All of these must be part of the teaching and learning process through instruction and practice.

Further Tucker (2014) explains that there cannot exist a void between school and the real world. The pedagogies must connect the two. According to her, the Theory of Connectivism aptly encompasses that role since collaboration and communication are integral parts of 21st century classrooms. She believes that technology must be part of the global classroom and educators must use them as tools to enhance the learning experience.

Contrarily, Scott in her research for UNESCO (2015) emphasises 'evaluative skills' as the base for building new capabilities and clarifies that technology is not the only imperative in this new landscape of instruction. She highlighted that though there is a serious shift to designing curriculums that cater to 21st CS there is very little done to change the pedagogies. According to Scott for UNESCO (2015) 'lectures' or transmission models are still predominantly used across

the world. Her research concludes that Pedagogy 2.0. Learning becomes more than transmission. Project based, real world contexts that encourage collaborative creativity.

### **How are 21st century skills connected to Humanities or subjects such as History?**

Interestingly, all of these skills seem to be associated more with sciences rather than a subject like History. Reiter (2017) highlights the issue and explains that with the advent of STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) particularly the subjects of humanities are pushed aside with the misconception that they do not cater to 21st century skills. Reiter (2017) further in her research acknowledges the contribution of humanities to education. Here she puts particular emphasis on History, that learning from the past helps create global citizens today who have a developed and informed sense of critical justice.

Before that, Parker (2008) determined that the shift from the word humanities to social sciences was necessary. Elsewise the field is subjected to an unnecessary limitation of its scope. He established that social science subjects offer a chance to enhance communication skills through the written word. They develop critical thinking through interpretation, and inferences while stimulating problem solving through challenging narratives that require analysis and evaluation.

Sherlly et al (2018) in their research on problem solving pedagogies in teaching of History found that though using such methods engaged students in critical thinking, mostly teachers were unable to incorporate such methods into their lesson plans due to time constraints. They conclude that most teachers then resorted to lecture based teaching which also proves Scott (2015) study for UNESCO

### **How does Pakistan Studies incorporate 21st century skills?**

Thus now we must shift our focus to Fatima et al. (2021) who in their research observe the same phenomenon in the context of Pakistan. Fatima et al. (2021) believe the purpose of education today is to meet the challenges of the world in a few years' time. They look at Pakistan studies through the lens of High Order Thinking Skills and whether that purpose has been achieved through Secondary Schools in Pakistan. Their research is centred on document analysis of annual assessment papers of Pakistan studies from the Federal board in Islamabad from the past five years to see whether the assessment questions assess students' high order thinking skills effectively. For the said purpose Fatima et al (2021) use qualitative data analysis. They find that the paper focuses solely on basic levels of Bloom's cognitive domain and only tests remembering and understanding.

A little before that Naseer et al. (2020) also delved in researching textbooks from the Punjab Textbook Board and their content in terms of achieving high order thinking skills. They outline that pedagogical practices must be aligned with achieving high order thinking skills. They further explain that a quality textbook must then serve the purpose of the aforementioned goals. Naseer et al. (2020) also use data analysis methods of qualitative research. They eventually find that the textbooks from Punjab Textbook Board lean towards introducing low order thinking questions. They recommend that a blended approach is necessary for proper cognitive development hence low order thinking questions cant be eliminated but must be used in conjunction with high order thinking questions.

A few years ago, Malik (2012) explored the effectiveness of various methodologies in terms of teaching Pakistan Studies effectively. She reviewed several commonly used strategies like Lectures and discussions. For the said purpose Malik (2012) reviewed existing literature eventually conducting qualitative research through interviews which were then analysed through data analysis. She sampled only in the district of Mianwali in Punjab and her sample size was 20 schools. Her findings show that the majority of the teachers only used lecture methods and hardly any used teaching aids such as maps. This is later confirmed in Scott's 2015 report for UNESCO.

Additionally Chandio et al. (2016) used document analysis to evaluate how far objectives of Bloom's Taxonomy are incorporated in the assessment papers of the intermediate board of Hyderabad and Sukkur for the subject English. They particularly focus on HOTS and LOTs (high order thinking skills and low order thinking skills respectively). Though the method of their research was quantitative using an analysis of past examination papers of the last 5 years. They found that most of the assessment was focused on low order thinking skills. Some analysis was incorporated but HOTS were not tested at all.

## **Method**

### ***Research design***

Merriam (2009) recommends that qualitative research must be undertaken in order to understand when something interests the researcher. She elaborates that it can be classroom dynamics, pedagogies or student behaviour and so on. She further clarifies that researchers should select topics that truly spark their curiosity. Hence, qualitative research was chosen as the research method for the selected question of this study in trying to understand the development of 21st century skills in the Pakistan history syllabus of CAIE through the lens of all stakeholders; CAIE, teachers and students.

### ***Reviewing Literature***

Further on in her book Merriam (2009) elucidates that undertaking literature reviews are a good way of solidifying one's research. All research papers provide a basis for what has already been done and what future researchers can do in any given area. Randolph (2009) also emphasises the importance of literature review in order to ratify the researchers knowledge on existing research around the topic. Much like Merriam (2009), Randolph (2009) also impresses upon us the idea that it is important to know what has already been done and how it was done. Therefore literature reviews allow an author to carve out the niche area for their research.

### ***Participants***

According to Merriam (2009) it is essential in qualitative research to be mindful of the sample. She recommends that purposeful sampling or non-probabilistic sampling should be undertaken qualitative research as it allows the researcher to select a sample from which most can be learnt and discovered. Therefore for the purpose of this research typical purposive sampling was used. Focus groups were used for students, with the condition that all of them had recently completed the Pakistan Studies P1 History and Culture of Pakistan in the year 2021. Thus all the students were grade XI students who had passed out of grade X in November 2021. Additionally, the teachers who were interviewed were all presently teaching Pakistan History and had been teaching it for a minimum of 5 years. Furthermore, CAIE syllabus of Pakistan History as well as past papers from 2021-20 were used for document analysis.

### **Data collection tools**

#### ***Document Analysis***

For Merriam (2009) an indispensable instrument is document analysis. She notes that documents are for most part readily available for analysis whereas other methods such as interviewing individuals are oft full of deterrents and might be coloured by the individuals moods and memory. Documents on the other hand are solid evidence around the topic of research. They are cost effective and exact. Bowen (2009) is the most commonly cited in scholarly articles regarding document analysis. He defined that document analysis is used for recognising patterns and recurring themes. Thus, the CAIE syllabus and past papers from the year 2021 and 2020 were analysed by the researcher to examine whether it targets the development of 21st century skills or not. To analyse Bloom's taxonomic alignment of the syllabus Clark Atlanta University (2016) checklist of verbs was used.

#### ***Interviews***

This research study used interviews as instruments in data collection. Individual interviews from teachers were taken while students were interviewed in focus groups. According to Merriam (2009) interviews whether conducted individually or in groups help the researcher delve into the minds of others. Langford & MacDonagh (2002) determine that such a method is rather advantageous, it provides room for delving in depth into the understanding of the participants about the research topic. It provides room for exploration through probing. Langford & MacDonagh (2002) believe that a focus group has the benefit of showing synergy amongst the participants and how individuals experience something in group situations.

Additionally for the purpose of this study semi structured interviews were chosen as an instrument of data collection. Merriam (2009) believes that semi structured interviews can be productive as they are guided by some focal point question while allowing room for emergence of new ideas or views. She maintains that this allows for the uniqueness of every individual and their experience about the research topic.

#### ***Thematic analysis***

Cardno (2018) points out that studies undertaking interviews also use document analysis to triangulate their data. It is therefore a strong way to support the research. Bowen (2009) also clarifies thematic analysis of all data including transcribed interviews. He recommends that interviews should be read and reread until patterns begin to emerge and these codes transform into themes. Merriam (2009) suggests that during this process the researchers should refer to their questions again and again to track and align their analysis. She reminds the researchers that essentially one bit of data is being compared to another to come upon the truth. For the purpose of this study, the steps as designed by Merriam (2009) were used for thematic analysis of interviews.

### **Results**

For the purpose of this research, Merriam's (2009) guidelines on data analysis were followed after the data was collected, the researcher carefully coded and categorised data (interviews and documents) until three themes emerged. Additionally, Nvivo was used to support the researchers finding through graphs of commonly used words, word cloud and similarity

count among the various interviews. The presentation of results and discussions are also according to the recommendations of Merriam (2009). The following three themes emerged after data analysis:

### ***Inclusion of 21st Century skills***

The first theme to emerge was the inclusion of 21st century skills. All participants agreed that by far the most important skill being taught was critical thinking. Germaine et al. (2016) suggest that critical thinking entails reasoning effectively but it is never isolated, if critical thinking is being developed then as an effect the other 21st century skills are also being developed. Rotherham & Willingham (2009) agree that critical thinking cannot be taught alone without having touched upon other skills. Both these studies set the onus with the teachers during the learning process and pedagogies they used. This study found that the skill that is thought to be most developed through CAIE Pakistan History syllabus is critical thinking.

### ***Student's perspectives***

Most participants believed that critical thinking is developed through the subject. Though most of them thought that skills like creativity, collaboration and communication were not developed yet their responses to working in groups, presentations and other such activities were affirmative *'in the sense like discussions people can have different point of view you are collaborating that way.'* This confirmed Reiter's (2017) view that humanities subjects are often overlooked in terms of their contribution and skill development. There were a few who could clearly identify how these skills were utilised and incorporated by their teachers in the pedagogies *'we did get a lot of group work', 'Power points presentations', 'Creativity in the sense like picture sources. Everyone will look at something different and judge or analyse it differently'*. This confirms existing research of Kivunja (2014) and Tucker (2014) that such skills cannot be taught in isolation and are taught separately as well as in conjunction with each other.

### ***Teacher's perspectives***

Boadu (2015) speaks at length about the teacher's role in the teaching of history and how that alone is responsible for student engagement. Similarly most teachers in the study agreed that they were trying to develop all 4 Cs through their pedagogies. Interestingly they all agreed though the syllabus is limiting *'who's teaching it I think is more important than what is being taught'*. All the teachers shouldered the responsibility of engaging the students so as to develop 21st century skills. *'It's how the teacher takes it in the class.'* *'There is something in the teaching of it'*. The most common response among the teachers was that the CAIE curriculum itself is not as limiting, when paired with the teacher training offered by CAIE as well as schemes of work, school support hub and additional resources CAIE provides. They also agreed that though the final examination assesses only some of the skills; there is no restriction on developing these skills through their pedagogies. This confirmed UNESCO (2015) paper by Scott, where she explains that though curriculums and syllabi are designed with 21st century skills in mind, something is lost in the pedagogies.

### ***Documents***

The objectives of the syllabus document clearly agree with the teacher's perspective. Not only do the curriculum objective comprehensively touch upon all 6 levels of cognitive development of Bloom's taxonomy they also have clearly highlighted areas of development in the affective domain. As can be seen in the following Figure 1.

**Figure 1.**

*Bloom's Taxonomical skills as they appear in Learning objectives of the CAIE Pakistan Studies P1 History syllabus*

Document Analysis of the CAIE 2022 syllabus in light of Bloom's Taxonomy of 1965

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Knowledge	Understand	Interpret	Analyse		Evaluate
Recall	Selecting	Demonstrate	Analytical	Synthesise information	Evaluative ability
Select	Knowledge and understanding	Interpret	Analyse		Draw conclusions
	Knowledge and understanding	Apply skills			Acquire
	Understand	Interpret			Compare and contrast
	Develop an understanding				investigate
	Organise				Develop and stimulate
					Evaluate

However, the assessment objectives of the syllabus are limited to only 3 levels of cognitive development model of Bloom's. An analysis of the examination papers of June 2021 and 2020 as well as November 2021 and 2020 showed that only *knowledge, comprehension and evaluation* were being assessed as shown in Fig 2.

**Figure 2.**

*Table of Bloom's Taxonomical skills as they appear in Assessment objectives of the CAIE Pakistan Studies P1 History syllabus*

Past paper	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
2021 june	1a. What were the reasons... ? (recall)	1b. What can we learn from (inference) 1c. explain				1d. To what extent...

Hence *critical thinking, communication and creativity* to some extent were being tested but collaboration was not part of assessment objectives. As mentioned in one of the focus groups 'It's *designed for no collaboration*', *they are doing collaboration, obviously not in exam.*' This connects back to Rotherham & Willingham (2009) had concluded that a change in the assessments and testing style was required in order to actually inculcate 21st century skills.

• ***Design of the subject by CAIE***

Lucy et al (2020) explored the role of textbooks as the core contributor of the subject skill development. They believed that it was essential that it held up to the curriculum objectives. Bramley (2012) in his study of CAIE Chemistry assessment. Bramley explores the scripts of students in conjunction with the mark schemes and the potential role of well designed assessments and applying grade boundaries. Both these papers have one thing in common, the role that curriculum documents, and support material play in the pedagogies as well as the teaching and learning process.

***Student’s perspectives:***

In this study it was found that students believed that curriculum itself was restrictive and did not leave room for developing any skill beyond critical thinking. They were unaware of any additional resource material like learning guides which showed that they had not been exposed to them. The textbook was the most commonly used form of technology and the students believed it was very restrictive in content ‘*What the textbook told us*’. They also wished for a change in the syllabus as well as assessment to make it more relevant to them. ‘*Allow open ended responses*’, ‘*I wish they didn’t say like this happened this happened this happened a bunch of different sources and in the end you decide who did what to who*’. There were comparisons drawn to other subjects by students including Global Perspectives, Islamiat, World History and Sociology ‘*Yes but the same critical thinking can be done with other subjects*’, ‘*if Islamiat can be about the application of Islamic principles*’, ‘*such as global perspective, 50% of your grade is on a group project that you do*’

***Teacher’s perspectives:***

The teacher’s all agreed that the syllabus is not restrictive though they wished the pattern of exam questions would change. There was a clear division on how they valued the textbook, 50% of the teachers valued the textbook for its simplicity and a tool that could be used in conjunction with other resources by the CAIE like schemes of work and resources of their own. The other 50% considered the textbook an irrelevant tool that they did not prefer and used their own resources. ‘*I disagree with the textbook being an important resource*’. Naseer et al (2020) research is a parallel here where they found that textbooks in Punjab board only catered to developing low order thinking skills essentially recall.

They all agreed that they wished to see a change in the examination questions. ‘*we really look at what CIE can do is force like, unless it’s part of the paper, it’s not going to be taught*’, ‘*CIE can do is, you know, for students to think more critically about the information*’, ‘*shouldn’t stop them from asking questions that are going to be you know, that will have broader applications.*’ This was previously shown through Chandio et al (2016) that examination papers of Hyderabad and Sukkur board also targeted mainly LOTs. The teachers also drew parallels to other subjects. It was interesting to note that all the teachers also taught one other subject in conjunction with Pakistan History and they drew parallels to that subject. The different organisation and assessment objectives of these different subjects strengthened their belief that CAIE can and should change the design of the Pakistan history syllabus and assessment.

***Documents:***

Apart from the syllabus CAIE provides, teacher training, schemes of work, resource material, mark schemes, test making tools and textbooks. For the purpose of this study, the research was focused on the syllabus and the assessment papers. The assessment is found to be restrictive to 64% knowledge and 26% comprehension questions with only 10% of the paper actually testing evaluation. This is stated in their Pakistan History syllabus as can be seen below in figure 3. This corroborates the work of Fatima et al (2021) though their focus was Federal board examination papers but a similar strain of knowledge based questions was found by them which shows parallels here with the majority of the paper meeting AO1 which is based on the low order thinking skills of knowledge.

**Figure 3.**

**5.3 Relationship between assessment objectives and components**

Assessment objective	Paper 1	Paper 2	Weighting for qualification
<b>AO1</b> Recall, select, use and communicate knowledge and understanding	64%	50%	57%
<b>AO2</b> Demonstrate an understanding of the past through explanation, interpretation, analysis and evaluation	26%	–	13%
<b>AO3</b> Apply knowledge and understanding of physical and human environments and issues through explanation, analysis and evaluation	–	30%	15%
<b>AO4</b> Apply skills and interpret a variety of environmental and historical resources/sources	10%	20%	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Figure from CAIE Pakistan Studies P1 History syllabus highlighting assessment objectives*

### **Role of stakeholders**

Labanauskis and Ginevičius (2017) divide the stakeholders into those who are primary and directly affected and then secondary stakeholders. They find in their study that all stakeholders whether primary or secondary all play an important role in the teaching and learning process. It is exceptionally true for Pakistan History as it directly affects the students, teachers, school and CAIE but there are bigger stakeholders who are on the periphery of being primary and secondary such as the parents and the state itself. Additionally the data showed mention of tuition culture by all participants of the study. Making it a peripheral and directly influencing concern of their syllabus.

### **Students perspectives:**

Most students agreed that the subject of Pakistan History has far more implications than any other subject. They agreed that partly the culture of acing the subject at whatever cost is to blame '*Students are like so hell bent on getting that A or A\**'. This stems from all stakeholders students, teachers, schools and parents alike which has given rise to tuition culture. Additionally, all students felt that the subject is scrutinized by the society and the government to follow a singular narrative that is predominantly Islamic '*Teacher is also living in Pakistan, they can't state their own opinions*', '*Obviously couldn't express their own opinions*', '*She was a Christian but forced to side with us*'. It leaves no space for them to explore multiple perspectives. '*Syllabus outright sides with the Muslims*', '*Taught Indian views too like the Hindu perspective*', '*And I feel that we only learn history from one viewpoint of the Nigel Kelly book*'. They all agreed that they wanted to learn about multiple perspectives but the narrative they learnt was limiting. They relieved the teachers of this blame in most instances and thought this was a social dilemma '*inherent restriction which even they cannot avoid*'. Putnam et al (2018) found that there is a tendency to exaggerate the role of the state in the textbooks.

### **Teacher's perspectives:**

Teachers acknowledge the hindrances that they face on account of all other stakeholders. The teachers believed that students' only objective was to achieve a top level grade. This was supported by school leadership teams and parent bodies. This left them with no room to develop any skill other than the assessment objectives '*I was only given three periods and I was told I have to finish the syllabus it was very difficult for me*', '*the tuition mafia is basically how to write a question, what to write in a question, memorized by the students*'. Time constraints on part of the school administration in terms of time tabling further crippled teachers' potential plans '*it comes down to the teachers, timetabling and your calendar for instance*', '*we have a very limited time to teach so many things*'. This proves Sherlly et al (2018) findings that teachers due to time constraints end up using lectures. Thus most of them focused on finishing the syllabus and facilitating only those skills that will be assessed rather than meet all the objectives of the CAIE syllabus. This corroborates Malik's (2012) research and Scott's research for UNESCO (2015) that teachers are often falling back to lectures and are unable to incorporate student centered activities.

### **External stakeholders:**

It is important to acknowledge here that the government is the most important stakeholder due to the nature of the subject. '*History is essentially a political tool*' was something pointed out by interviewee 3 and by interviewee 1 '*this is the Army's narrative, government's narrative this is not my narrative*'. All teachers felt obliged to use the narrative within the text because of societal pressure. Pakistan History is not merely a subject and is also setting up the story of Pakistan for its citizens. Hence following the narrative in alignment with the government is essential. This phenomenon was studied by Putnam et al. (2018) in US where the role of states was exaggerated to make it seem as if their contribution was far greater than it actually was.

Additionally the school administration accommodates parent requests who are more concerned with teaching to the exam. One interviewee reported the following incident about using student centred learning, '*I think the teaching of it has been lost because culture will be like, we want the notes... There was a complaint against her that she is not teaching and making the kids do work that has not been taught*'. This approach by the parent body and school administration leads to exam focused teaching and hence gives rise to tuition culture. '*what tuition centres and what us teachers who are teaching catering to the exam*'.

Finally the most important stakeholder is CAIE. It was found that teachers and students alike found that CAIE has changed their assessment objectives for other subjects and should do the same for Pakistan History. '*CIE syllabus and the aims of the syllabus versus how its taught and how it's assessed*'



**Discussion:**

**How far do curriculum objectives meet 21st century skills?**

It was found through document analysis of the syllabus that the CAIE syllabus caters to all of the 4 Cs of the 21st century skills. It is made in light of Bloom's Taxonomy and thus the syllabus aims to cover all the 6 levels of the cognitive domain. Additionally it also targets development of affective domain and incorporates them in the syllabus aims. It also proves existing research of Parker (2008) that skills like communication are developed through writing skills and critical thinking through interpretive and analytical texts.

**How far are 21st century skills developed through teaching and learning in the classroom setting?**

The study found that the teachers try to incorporate all 4 Cs in their pedagogies and all students had experienced these during the school year. However, other factors such as time constraints, interference of parents, the race to top the exams and school leadership often interrupted the teacher's lesson plan and pedagogies (Sherly et al, 2018). Hence the teaching and learning process focused more on assessment objectives rather than syllabus objectives.

**How far does the annual examination assess 21st century skills?**

Document analysis showed that the examination papers itself were limited and the assessment objectives only catered to 3 of 6 cognitive levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. The data collected from students and teachers further supported this idea that critical thinking and communication are assessed the most. There is virtually no collaboration and very limited creativity.

**Conclusion:**

In the end the study found that there is scope for developing 21st century skills through the Pakistan History syllabus of CAIE and with experienced teachers being able to incorporate it into their pedagogies in spite of the hurdles of external factors and other stakeholders. However, CAIE needs to review the examination paper and include skills that align with the 21st century.

This study was limited to only Pakistan History whereas it is taught as paper 1 of Pakistan studies. There is room for further exploration of the topic as a whole subject. Additionally the researcher only analysed the syllabus document and assessment papers. A thorough review of other CAIE resource documents will shed further light on the subject's potential.

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