

Chapter

4

Population, Society and Culture of Pakistan.

Learning outcomes

In this chapter you will study:

- Discuss the growth and distribution of population in Pakistan .
- Analyse the rural-urban composition of population and the geographical distribution.
- Discuss the gender composition of population in Pakistan.
- Explain the basic features of Pakistani society and the major social problems faced by it.
- Discuss the educational and health condition: in Pakistan.
- Identify the major features of Pakistan's culture and commonality in regional cultures leading to National Integration and cohesion.
- Trace the origin and evolution of national and regional languages.
- Trace the role of minorities in Pakistan with specific reference to Quaid-i-Azam's speech of 11 August 1947, defining their status.

Pakistan's Population

In 1951 Pakistan had a population of 33 million. By 1998 the country's population had grown to 130.6 million and in 2010, it exceeded 170 million. It means that in 63 years the population has increased by five fold. If the growth rate continues at this rate then the population will reach 200 million by the year 2020.

The annual population growth rate in the country was around 3.1 percent in 1981 which is now decreased to around 1.9 percent. In spite of this trend, population is creating problems. Unemployment is on increase. Beside this, there is immense pressure on education, health, research, agriculture and civic amenities. A further and drastic decrease in population growth rate is necessary for controlling national population increase which is largely responsible for countering the effects of modernization.

The Ratio of the Urban and Rural Population of the Country:

Around 63.66 percent of the country's total population lives in rural areas. The remaining 36.33 percent lives in urban areas.

In 1947, only around 15.4 percent of the population lived in urban areas while the remaining 84.6 percent lived in rural areas.

This shows that migration from rural to urban areas is taking place on a large scale.



Urban planning and development requires huge investments. It is estimated that in almost 60 percent of houses there are no basic amenities like water supply, drainage, electricity and formal latrines.

The rapid urbanization of the country demands the expansion of these facilities. Otherwise slum areas are formed which itself is a problem.

Rural population is mostly engaged in agriculture which is about 51% of the working force. Because of no civic amenities in the rural areas, people migrate to the urban areas for these amenities and employment. Due to the pressure of increasing population on cities, the imbalance between population and resources is also increasing.

Distribution According to Age and Sex:

In 1950, according to population, Pakistan was the fourteenth largest country in the world, and in 2004, it was sixth.

The overall population of Pakistan consists of 49% male and 51% female.

The Distribution of Pakistan's Population According to Sex and Age			
Men's Population According to Age		Women's Population According to Age	
Age Group in Years	Percentage	Age Group in Years	Percentage
Up-to 14	43.1	Up-to 14	43.2
15-64	53.3	15-64	53.6
65 and above	3.6	65 and above	3.2

The Characteristics of Pakistani Society:

1: Religious harmony

An overwhelming majority of Pakistan's population (97 percent) is Muslim. Religion plays an important role in the individual and collective life of Pakistanis. Minorities are given their due rights. They are playing active role in the social life of Pakistan.

2: Family System:

Family is the basic unit of social organization. The family plays an important role in the socialization of children on one hand and solution of emotional and economical problems on the other. The family is patriarchal in nature. The head of the family exercises great authority.

3: A Common Language:

Urdu has the status of national language of Pakistan. A vast majority of the people can understand and speak this language. Besides, there are various regional languages spoken by different ethnic groups. Some of the other major Pakistani languages include Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Balochi, Seraiki, Hindko, and Kashmiri. They represent a diversity in the rich cultural heritage of Pakistan.

4: Multiethnic Society:

Pakistani society is multiethnic, that is, there are many races or ethnic groups within the country. But being Pakistani, they are united.

5: Male Dominated Society:

In Pakistani society men have dominant position because they are responsible for the livelihood of the family.

6: Social Stratification:

Pakistani society is highly stratified. Divisions are based on responsibilities and duties.

The Social Problems of Pakistan:

1: Illiteracy:

Illiteracy is one of the biggest problems faced by Pakistani society. Education is the fundamental right of every Pakistani, but still the majority of the society is illiterate.

2: Poverty:

Poverty is the root cause of the evils. Either there is scarcity of the resources or the resources are not properly utilized. That is why people live in poverty, which are responsible for many evils in the society.

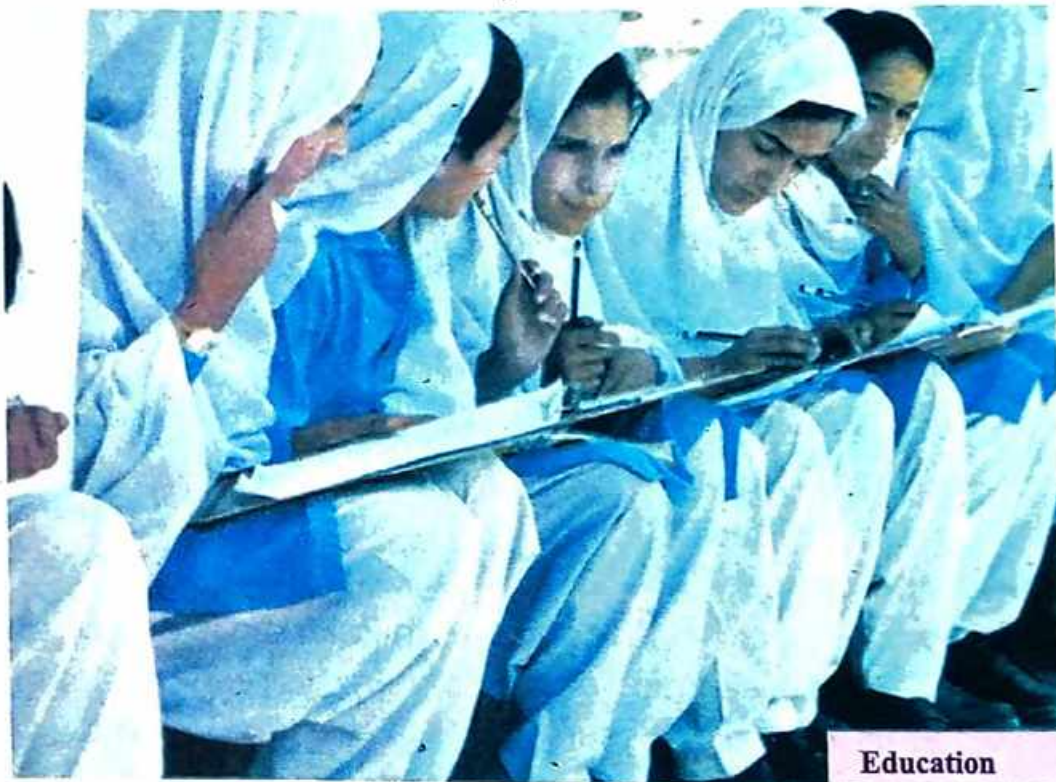
3: Health Facilities:

Pakistan's health services sector is insufficient to cater to the needs of the population. People die of diseases because they have no access to hospitals, doctor or medicine.

- 4: **Social Stratification:**
Social stratification is high in Pakistani society. Society is divided into different strata on the basis of creed and caste. Because of the uneven distribution of wealth there is a huge difference between the rich and the poor, which is also a cause of the evils in the society.
- 5: **Feudalism:**
Most of the land and property is owned by feudal lords while the poor farmers are deprived of it.
- 6: **The Curse of Dowry:**
The practice of dowry brings untold miseries to the poorer families.
- 7: **Drug Trafficking and Smuggling:**
Drug abuse and smuggling has played a big role in the destruction of the society. The society can not become happy unless and until this menace is controlled.
- 8: **Terrorism:**
Terrorism has created havoc in the society. No one feels safe or contented in such situation.
- 9: **Child Labour:**
Instead of imparting education, the children are subjected to child labour, which is not just a problem but an evil.

Education:

Literacy rate is the yard-stick for judging the educational progress in a country. According to the 1998 Population Census in Pakistan, the rate of literacy in the country was 45 percent which is estimated to have grown to around 57.7 percent by now.



Education

India, China and Sri Lanka have a higher literacy rate than Pakistan. In 1990, the number of school going children between the age of 5 and 9 years was about 16.3 million which had grown to about 27 million in 2005. New schools must be opened to enroll greater number of children to achieve 100% literacy.

Health:

In Pakistan, health facilities are very less as compared to population. Infant mortality rate in the country is 83 per thousand while maternal mortality rate 350 per hundred thousand. The relatively poor state of health services in the country is also reflected in the average life expectancy which is 64 years in Pakistan, smaller than most of the countries in Asia. In Sri Lanka and Malaysia, for example, it is 73 years, in China 70, in Indonesia 66 and in Thailand and the Philippines it is 69 years.

In Pakistan, according to 2013 statistics, the number of patients per doctor was 1127, the number of patients per nurse was 2245, and the number of hospital beds was one for 1786 persons which is very low by international standard.

Private hospitals and clinics also provide medical services. But their high costs make them beyond the reach of the ordinary



Hospital Camp

people. Many of the poor health condition in Pakistan is due to giving less attention to care and prevention of diseases. In this respect cleanliness at the individual level and around one's surrounding is very important.

Pakistani Society and Culture:

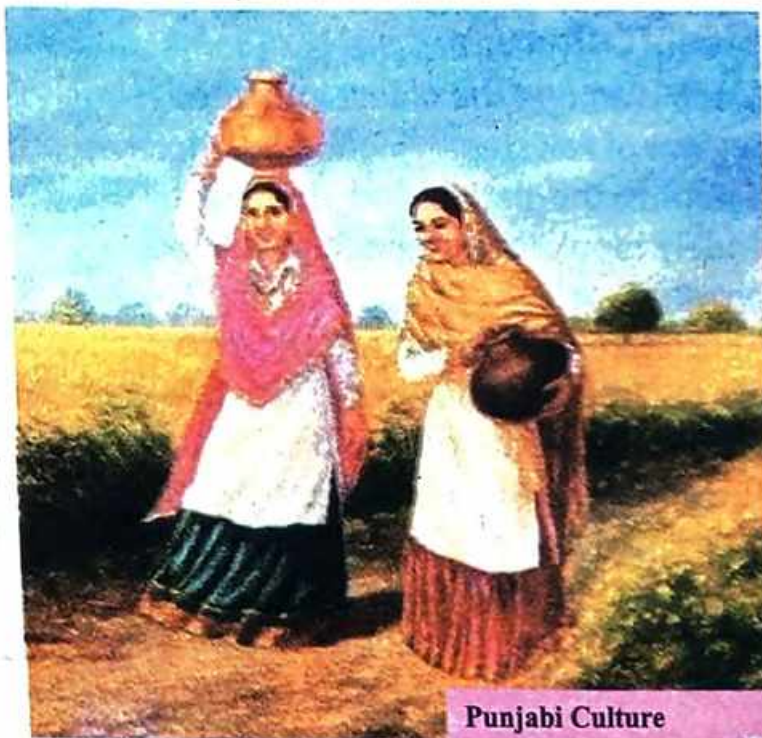
Those characteristics of a society which are related to culture includes all learning, belief, art, morality, and law. Culture is a societal heritage through which a community's collective experiences are transmitted from one generation to the next. It is the communal human behavior and the daily life

of a people. Culture is foundational to human society and its evolution. Pakistani society is relatively simple and traditional. The family structure is generally extended. Communal bonds are strong. People respect their elder and love the youngsters. They respect each other, particularly the ladies. Marriage ceremonies are traditional. The provinces have their own cultural traditions.

Punjabi Culture:

Punjab, the land of five rivers, is among the most fertile regions in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. Punjabi is the most widely spoken language in the province, followed by Seraiki.

Luddi dance, horse riding, passion for food, devotion to Sufi saints, love for folk literature, and story telling are some features of the culture of Punjab. The beautiful folk tales of Heer Ranjha, Sohni Mahiwaal, and Mirza Saheban are very famous which reflect Punjabi culture and social life.

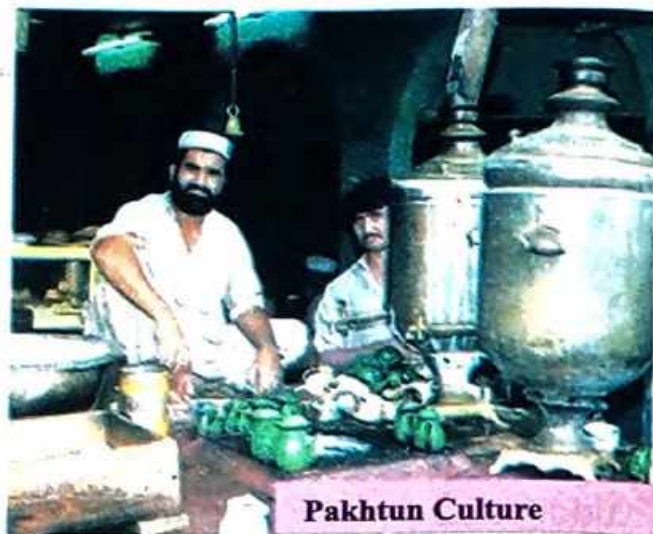


Punjabi Culture

Pakhtun Culture:

Pakhtun culture is prevalent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, parts of Balochistan and parts of Punjab like Mianwali.

Hard work, hospitality, horse-riding, love for freedom and honor, love for Islam, modesty and parda, ego, share the grief and respect of the elders characterize Pakhtun culture.



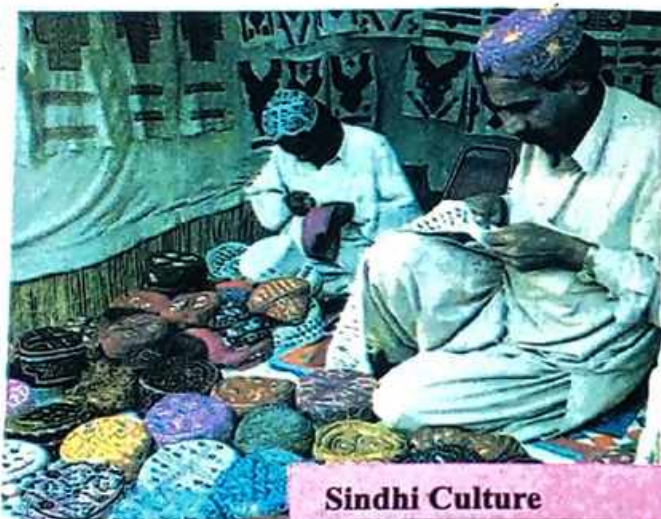
Pakhtun Culture

Sindhi Culture:

Sindh is among the oldest inhabited regions of Pakistan.

Sindhi is the native and the most widely spoken language of the province.

Agriculture and fishing are the two most important traditional professions of the people of Sindh. The impact of Sindh's ancient past are still visible and reflected in Sindhi culture. Malakhra, bull-racing, the patterns of embroidery on women's garments, the kalah and lungi of the men, the custom of keeping long



Sindhi Culture

moustache by the men, the famous Sindhi *topi* (cap), *ajrak*, the unusual popularity of bangles among the womenfolk, hospitality and the *jirga* system, are the main features of Sindhi culture.

Balochi Culture:

Baloch culture is largely nomadic, with livestock playing an important role in its economic life. Tribal system continues to play a major role in Baloch society. Marriage and other ceremonies in society, embroidery on dress and typical food are some basic features of Baloch culture.



Balochi Culture

The Common Features of Pakistani Culture:

Different regions and nationalities have different customs and traditions. That explains the presence of so many cultures throughout the world. But there are also many commonalities among various cultures.

Pakistan is a Muslim country and Islam is the dominant feature of Pakistani culture. Islam is against the divisions of people and societies on ethnic, linguistic, or traditional grounds and provides a common framework for uniting its followers in a single nationhood beyond territorial frontiers. Besides, religion, the constitution of Pakistan, also, provides freedom and benefits to every one.

Following are the main characteristics of Pakistani culture:

Mixed Culture:

Pakistani culture is a mixed culture. This region has been a melting pot of different cultural traditions since human prehistory. The earliest settlers of the region were part displaced, part mingled with the Aryan invaders. Later on various people, Iranians, Afghans, Greeks, Arabs, Mongolians and Turks settled and mingled with local populations. Thus, in spite of the many apparent differences in the customs and traditions of various regions in the country, they also exhibit deep, underlying similarities, known as Pakistani culture.

Social Life:

In Pakistan social life is basically simple and modest. Customs and traditions are also simple. A majority of the population lives in combined family system. Respect for the elders is common among all regional and local traditions.

A vast majority of the national population lives in villages, with farming and livestock management being the primary sources of earning their livelihood.

Commerce, industrial works, and the service sector are the major employment sources of the people in urban areas.

Marriage ceremonies are still held in traditional manner. Religious festivals are generally celebrated with passion and devotion throughout the country.

Dress:

Pakistan's national dress is simple but graceful. Men wear *shalwar* and *qamees* or *kurta*. The use of traditional caps and *pagries* as headwear among men is common. Women generally wear *shalwar* and *qamees* for clothes and *chader* (shawl) for headwear.

Besides, every region has its own style of dress. Embroidered dress is popular with women. But its cutting, colour and design are different. Hence, every dress follows the principle of modesty and *parda*.

Food:

Food of Pakistani people is quite simple. Bread made from wheat taken with vegetables, various kinds of pulses, is common. Rice with meat is another favorite dish. Milk, *lassi*, tea, green tea and simple water are the major drinks.

However, during marriage ceremonies and other feasts, the provision of more expensive and richer foods and drinks is arranged. Some foods are more popular than others in certain areas due to regional and climatic variations. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, for example, because of the cold weather, meat and green tea are consumed in larger quantities. In Sindh and Punjab, vegetables, milk and dairy products like yogurt and butter, are consumed avidly. In Balochistan, lambs, meat, beef and dry fruits are the favourite food.

Arts and Crafts:

Pakistanis are skilled craftsmen. The art of crafting various metals into jewellery and other utensils and instruments in the region is thousands of years old, predating the coming of the Iron Age into the region.

The people of ancient Indus Valley Civilization and of the Gandahara Civilization were experts in the art of melting and casting bronze into various forms and the carving of stone into sculptures and making seals. Even now, there are people who can carve stone in sculptures. Numerous buildings in Lahore, Multan, Uch Shareef, and Thatta are monuments of the splendored Islamic architecture in the region. Muslims in the region's past also promoted minting of coins, the arts of calligraphy and drawing as well as jewellery involving precious stones. The jewellery and seals in the museums at Peshawar, Lahore, Taxila, Hyderabad, and Karachi reflect the ancient civilization of the region.

Handicraft:

The skill of handicraft is inherited to Pakistan's people from ancient times. Modern Pakistan's craftsmen are capable and have a great aesthetic sense. Craftsmanship is generally a family business. Certain crafts are jointly undertaken by men and women.

The city of Gujarat is famous for the craft of paintings on earthen ware. The craftsmen of Peshawar city retain the same mastery of the art of engraving on bronze, copper and tin implements as their ancestors. The goldsmiths of Peshawar, Multan, Bahawalpur and Hyderabad are renowned for their work in both gold and silver. Balochistan and Punjab are famous for the craft of weaving hand-woven carpet. Pakistanis are also heir to a rich tradition in the handicrafts of embroidery and the decoration of fabrics.



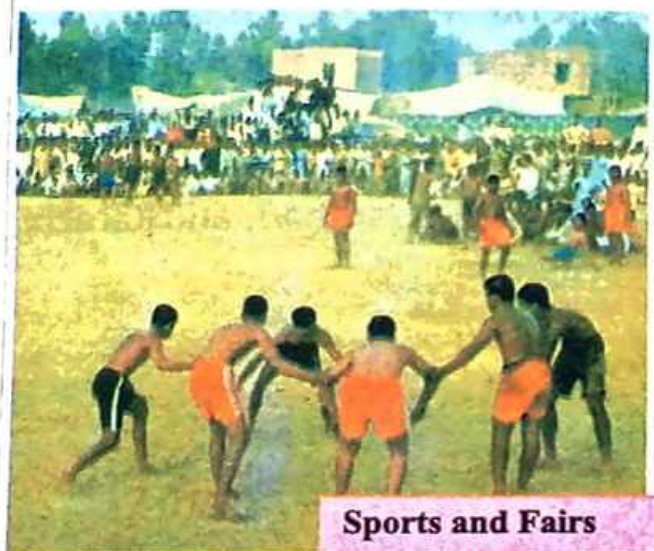
Craftmanship

Sports and Fairs:

Sporting events and fairs are important aspects of Pakistani culture.

In various regions of the country, fairs are held with the changing of seasons and on eve of crops cutting or on occasions of important events in the lives of Sufi saints. People from all walks of life come to participate in these fairs. Some of these events are quite colorful.

Some of the famous fairs held in the country include the Horse and Cattle Show in Lahore, the annual cattle-fair held at Sibbi in Balochistan, and the Shandur Polo Festival at Chitral in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



Sports and Fairs

Regional sporting events play an important role in regional cultural and recreational life. Wrestling, marksmanship competitions, kabadi, and *malakhra* are among the most important regional sports of the country.

Marriage Customs:

Marriage ceremonies throughout the country are often celebrated with due pomp. Even in these ceremonies the Islamic touch is there. In Islam, marriages are solemnized by *Nikkah*. People enjoy themselves and make merriment.



Marriage Customs

Certain aspects of customs related with marriage are negatively affecting the fabric of Pakistani society. The practices of dowry and bride price are some of the examples. To overcome the menace, the government has promulgated the *Jahez* ordinance.

Rites of Birth and Death:

The occasion of birth in the family is traditionally celebrated by the distribution of sweets. According to Islamic practices, the *Azan* is recited in the ears of the newborn. Felicitations, and sometimes gifts, are due from relatives and friends.

In the event of death in the family, nears and dears as well as the neighbours share the grief of the bereaved family. The costs incurring from the provision of drinks and food to the visitors are shared, if needed, by the relatives of bereaved family. In this way, brotherhood and co-operation develops in the society.

The Languages of Pakistan:

Language is the source of communication. It is the medium for transmitting thought and feelings to others. All natural languages evolve through complex social processes. Different sounds are transformed in words, which in turn makes a language.

Following are the major languages spoken in Pakistan:

Urdu:

Urdu is a word of Turkish origin meaning 'army'. When Muslim rule was established in the Indian sub-continent, these people spoke various dialects. Their interaction led to the development of a new language i.e Urdu. In its vocabulary, Urdu has heavily borrowed from Arabic, Persian, Turkish and many of the sub-continent's regional languages.

Urdu is the national language of Pakistan. It is spoken in all the four provinces of Pakistan. Urdu is highly flexible. It embraces numerous words from the regional languages and Urdu has also deep influence on these languages.

Urdu has played vital role in reflecting the Islamic traditions of the Muslims of the sub-continent and in spearheading the Pakistan Movement. Presently Urdu is making fast progress. The *Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Urdu*, *Urdu Science Board*, and the National Language Promotion Department have worked for the promotion of Urdu by writing and translating foreign books on science, history, economics, international relations and arts. Urdu script resembles the regional languages. Arabic, Persian and regional languages are basis of Urdu. Hence these languages share many traditions and values. Besides being a link language, Urdu is also a symbol of national identity.

Pashto:

Pashto is an ancient language. It is widely spoken and understood not only in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but also in Balochistan and parts of the Punjab like Mianwali and Attock. Pashto is deeply influenced by Persian language. Its script is similar to Arabic.

The oldest poem in Pashto language was written in the eighth century and is attributed to Ameer Karor. In the thirteenth century, Salman Mako wrote a book on the history of the learned (*Kitab Tarikh-el-Awlia*). Pashto language has produced great writers throughout its long history. Some of the more famous among these include Bayazid Ansari (*Pir Rukhan*), Khushal Khan Khattak, Rehman Baba, and Hamza Shinwari.

Pashto literature has made great progress in modern times. Many novels, dramas, books of poetry and works on history and literary criticism have been written.

The Pashto Academy is playing an important role in the promotion of Pashto language.

Punjabi:

Punjabi language is spoken in its true form in northern Punjab. Punjabi has a rich literary tradition. *Dohay* and the mystical poetry of Baba Farid are very famous. Baba Farid, Bhuley Shah, Sultan Bahu, and Waris Shah are among the greatest poets of the Punjabi language.

Sultan Bahu wrote mystical (*Arifana*) poetry in the seventeenth century. Then Waris Shah composed Heer Ranjha in the form of *masnavi*.

These poets have made immense contributions to the development of Punjabi language through their poetry.

Sindhi:

Sindhi language is based on *Sanskrit* and *Prakrit* which were spoken in Sindh during the Aryan period. After the arrival of the Arab traders and conquerors, Sindhi assimilated a vast number of Arabic vocabulary. The script was also changed to Arabic.

Shah Abdul Lateef Bhattai, Sachal Sarmast, and Abdul Qadir Baidel are among the most famous writers of the Sindhi language. Their contributions to the development of Sindhi as a literary language cannot be overstated.

Mirza Qaleech Baig (1853 – 1929) introduced the modern genre of novel into Sindhi language. He also translated several literary classics of the Western world into the Sindhi.

Balochi:

Apart from many parts of Balochistan, Balochi is spoken and understood in parts of Dera Ismael Khan in southern Khyber Pakhunkhwa, in parts of Dera Ghazi Khan in southern Punjab, and in parts of Sindh.

Balochi epic poetry reflects the nomadic lifestyle of its creators and narrates and glorifies the valiant deeds of their tribal heroes.

Mast Tawakkali and Mulla Fazel are celebrated poets of Balochi language.

Brahui:

Brahui is one of the oldest languages of the Indus Valley region. It is spoken in east and central Sindh, in parts of southern Punjab, and in coastal areas of Southern Balochistan.

Because of the nomadic way of life of its speakers, the language has been influenced by the regional languages with which it came into contact.

In recent history, Brahui has seen great progress. Apart from the translation of the Holy Quran, much has been written in the language on religious, educational, and literary subjects.

Malak Daad is among the most famous poets of the language.

Hindko:

Hindko is widely spoken and understood in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to recent research, the language predates the Aryan invasion of the subcontinent. It has great affinities with the extinct languages of Munda and Dravri. A two thousand year old inscription found at Taxila is written in a language that has similarities with contemporary Hindko.

Seraiki, Chitrali, Kohistani, and Gojri are also spoken in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Kashmiri:

Kashmiri is spoken in parts of Azad Kashmir. It is spoken largely by those who migrated from the Indian held Kashmir. Huba Khatoon, Mehmud Gaami, Armni Laal are among the well-known poets of the Kashmiri language.

Seraiki:

Seraiki is widely spoken in Bahawalpur and in southern Punjab, in northern parts of Sindh, and in parts of the Dera Ismael Khan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Khwaja Farid was famous poet of this language.

Many poets of the Sindhi and Punjabi languages have also written in Seraiki language. Sachal Sarmast, the celebrated Sindhi poet, is also among the greatest poets of Seraiki.

In recent years, Shazia Khushk, Attaullah Khan Eassakhelvi and Abida Perveen the famous singers have done much to promote Seraiki Language.

The Role of Minorities in the creation of Pakistan.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah was tolerant political leader. Therefore, the non-Muslim also took active part in the Pakistan Movement. The vision of the Quaid-e-Azam about minorities was laid out clearly in his speech on 11th August to the future Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. He said, "You are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion caste or creed, that has nothing to do with the business of the state of Pakistan."

Exercise

I: Choose the correct answer to the following questions:

- 1) What was the population of Pakistan in 1947?
A. 28 million B. 30 million
C. 33 million D. 35 million

- 2) What is the percentage of rural population in Pakistan?
A. 63.66 B. 68.5
C. 70 D. 75

- 3) Which of the following is known as land of the five rivers?
A. Sindh
B. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
C. Balochistan
D. Punjab

- 4) What percentage of Pakistan's population lives in cities?
A. 25 percent B. 28.5 percent
C. 36.33 percent D. 34 percent

- 5) Ameer Crore was a poet of which language?
A. Pashto B. Sindhi
C. Punjabi D. Seraiki

- 6) Urdu is a word of which language?
A. Persian B. Turkish
C. Arabic D. Iranian
- 7) Who laid down the foundations of the art of the novel in Sindhi language?
A. Sachal Sarmast
B. Abdul Qadir Baidel
C. Mirza Qaleech Baig
D. Shah Abdul Lateef Bhattai
- 8) What is the annual population growth rate in Pakistan?
A. 1.9 B. 2.8
C. 3.4 D. 4
- 9) What is the average life expectancy in Pakistan?
A. 66 B. 69
C. 70 D. 64

II: Write short answers to the following questions.

- 1) What is the ratio of urban and rural populations in Pakistan?
- 2) Describe the age and sex composition of Pakistan's population.
- 3) Write a note on Punjabi culture.
- 4) What do you know about Sindhi culture?
- 5) What do you know about the arts and crafts of Pakistan?
- 6) Write a note on Urdu language.
- 7) How is population growth affecting the state of health services in the country?

III: Give detailed answers to the following questions.

- 1) Write in detail about the social problems of Pakistan.
- 2) What are the basic features of Pakistani culture?
- 3) What do you know about history of national language and write a note on regional languages?
- 4) Discuss Population, its growth and distribution in Pakistan.

Activity

- Arrange a debate among the students on the subject of the impact of population growth on the life of the average man and woman.
- Draw out the main characteristics of Pakistani culture on a chart and post it on a classroom wall.
- Get the students to make charts with pictures showing the country's regional dresses.



About the Authors

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Miss Sania Murad is a student of M. Phil (Pakistan Studies) in Islamia College University Peshawar. She has participated in many workshops on textbook development, editing and reviewing. She has written many books for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textbook Board, Peshawar.

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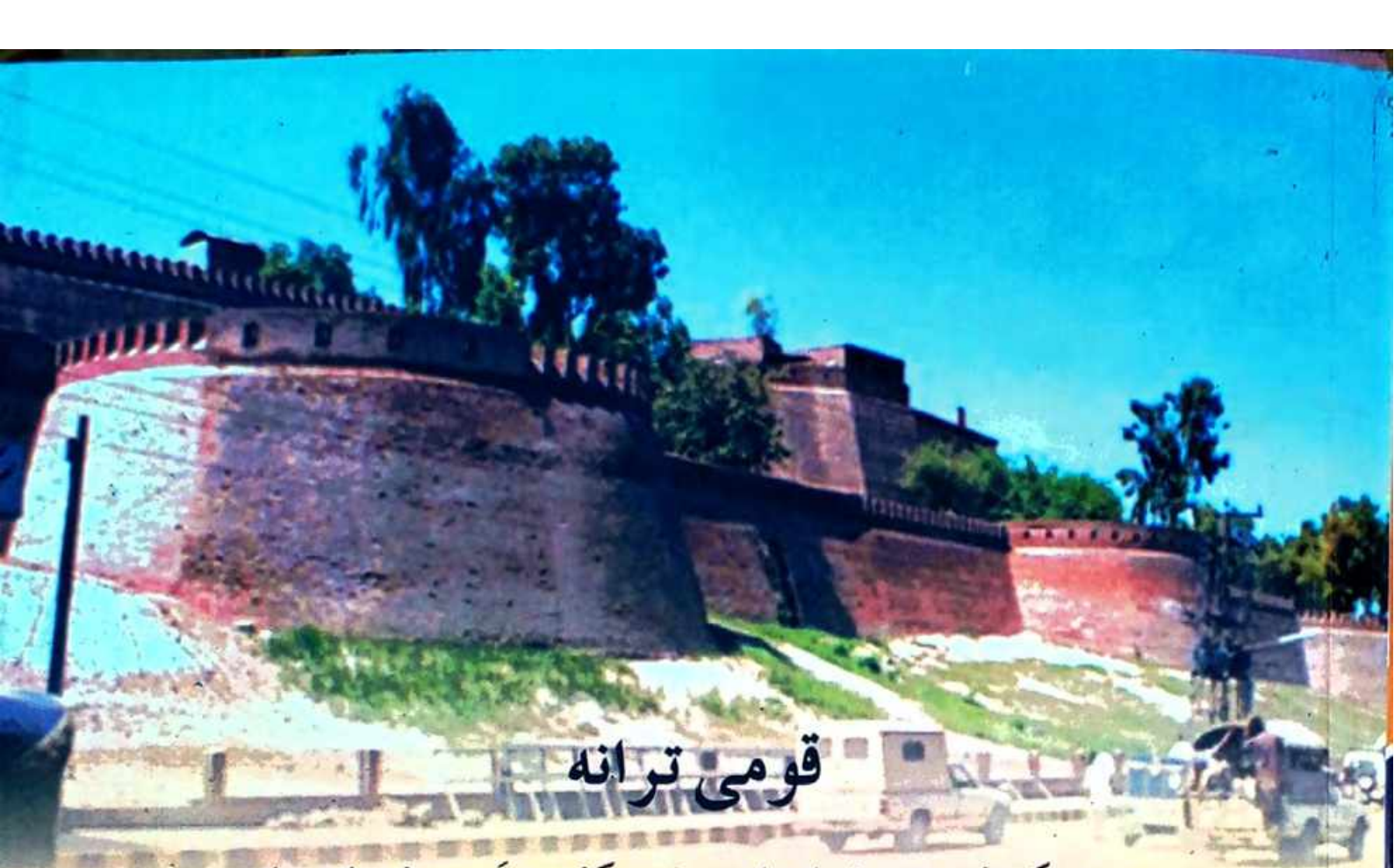
Miss Asma Khatoon is an educationist and has been teaching in the government schools since long. She actively participates in every curricular and co-curricular activity of the school. She has participated in many workshops on textbook development, editing and reviewing. She has written many books for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textbook Board, Peshawar.

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اور اللہ سے ڈرتے رہو تاکہ تم پر رحم
کیا جائے۔

(سورة الحجرات : ۱۰)

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والا دونوں جہنمی ہیں۔

(حدیث نبوی ﷺ)



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