

## The Impact of Extremism on Higher Education in Muslim Countries: A Case Study of Pakistan

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### Biography

Dr Mughal received a doctorate in international politics from Southern Illinois University, in 1972. He received a Master of Arts degree in General History and LL.B from the University of Sindh, Pakistan in 1961 and 1963 respectively. Dr. Mughal served as president of the University of Sindh from 1995-2000. During his term, he was awarded four gold medals for his innovative educational reforms in the area for higher education. He received the Pride of Performances award, the highest civil award in Pakistan in 2000. Dr. Mughal has frequently appeared on various media channels on CNN, NBC, CBS and Fox News. In 2004, he was appointed Honorary citizen and given Key to the city of Houston, Texas, USA for his humanitarian contributions. Dr. Mughal was awarded Fulbright Scholarship to serve in Europe, Bosnia. He is established on the subjects of terrorism and counter terrorism, American foreign policy and international politics. He has published number of books and professional articles on Pakistan, American Foreign Policy, International Terrorism, Islam and the Middle East. Mughal has been a consultant to UNESCO and was the first Pakistani to develop and teach courses on terrorism. He is also an Honorary President of Zibo University of Science and Technology and Jinan University of Science and Technology China Dr. Nazir Mughal is currently a professor of middle eastern studies and Islamic culture at Edinboro University. He is also the dean and chair of the social sciences department.

### Background

Higher Education and the Role of Madrissahs (Religious Schools) In Pakistan.

Pakistan, a frontline state in countering terrorism, is facing a growing insurgency by Islamist groups. A more pronounced Islamic extremism is now to be found among the middle and lower classes, educated and uneducated, young and old, women and children in Muslim countries, especially Pakistan. Religious institutions run by the moulvis or the ulemas called "Madrissahs" play a role in the social, educational and political development of Pakistan. The western media have branded Madrissahs as factories of Jihad and nurseries of violent extremists Islamists call them peaceful, charity-cum-educational institutions. The Islamists run schools, operate charities, lead prayers in thousands of mosques, provide free medicine to the poor and publish newspapers. Above all, they put their followers on the street to seek votes under the banner that Islam is in danger. Students after graduating from Madrissahs are sent for missionary purposes to public universities to convert traditional students to their way of life. The trade unions, student unions, and faculty association are infiltrated to acquire power. Schools for girls are forcefully closed; video and music shops are burned. Thus higher educational campuses became breeding grounds and recruiting targets for extremism in Pakistan.

The roundtable will explore how to make sense of growth and the impact of social extremism.

### Discussions Questions

- A. How is one to make sense of the growth and prominence of Islamic extremism in most of the Muslim World?
- B. What are the roots of Islamic resurgence?
- C. Is Islamic fundamentalism or revivalism a form of religiously motivated terrorism and extremism?
- D. If so, why does it enjoy such wide spread support?
- E. Why has Islam revivalism resulted in extremism to have an impact on educational system in Pakistan and prove to be strong in these countries long regarded as among the most westernized?