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Missionary Institutions in Pakistan: Historical Evolution, Educational Contributions, Religious Roles, and Socio-Cultural Impact

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Abstract

Missionary institutions have played a pivotal role in shaping Pakistan's educational, social, and moral landscape. Originating during the British colonial era, these institutions introduced structured curricula, English-medium instruction, vocational training, and holistic education approaches that served diverse communities. Their contributions extend beyond formal education to include social welfare initiatives such as healthcare, literacy programs, women's empowerment, and community development. Missionary schools and colleges also promoted ethical and moral values while respecting local cultural contexts, reflecting an intersection of education and religious influence. This article provides an academically grounded analysis of the historical evolution of missionary institutions in the subcontinent and Pakistan, profiles major institutions, and evaluates their educational, social, and religious impact. The study further explores the merits and demerits of these institutions and proposes strategic recommendations to enhance their positive contributions in contemporary Pakistan. Drawing on historical records, institutional data, and scholarly sources, this research highlights the enduring legacy of missionary institutions and their potential to foster human and social development.

Keywords: Missionary institutions, education, social welfare, religious influence, Pakistan, women empowerment.

1. Introduction:

Missionary institutions hold a distinctive and influential position within Pakistan's educational and social framework. Established primarily by Christian missionaries during British colonial rule, these institutions were founded with dual objectives: to promote modern education and provide ethical and moral guidance¹. Unlike the traditional schools of the period, missionary institutions introduced structured curricula, English-medium instruction, inclusive admission policies, and co-curricular activities, creating platforms that nurtured academic excellence alongside character development².

Beyond formal education, missionary institutions played a transformative role in societal welfare. They pioneered women's education by establishing girls' schools and colleges, introduced vocational training programs to equip youth with employable skills, and offered scholarships and support to marginalized communities. Additionally, many missionary institutions established healthcare clinics, orphanages, and community outreach programs, contributing significantly to social upliftment³.

Missionary schools and colleges also incorporated religious and moral education within their programs, emphasizing universal ethical values such as honesty, empathy, civic responsibility, and service to humanity. While rooted in Christian missionary traditions, these institutions generally operated with respect for local cultural and religious contexts, fostering interfaith understanding and cooperation in educational and social spheres⁴.

Today, missionary institutions continue to be relevant in Pakistan, functioning not only as centers of academic instruction but also as hubs for social welfare, vocational training, and community development. Their historical legacy, educational innovation, and social contributions make them critical agents in promoting literacy, women's empowerment, and social cohesion. Understanding their historical evolution, operational framework, and multifaceted impact is essential for evaluating their continuing relevance and for formulating policies that can enhance their contribution to Pakistan's human and social development⁵.

2. Discussion:

2.1 Concept and Legislation of Missionary Institutions in Islam:

2.1.1 Islamic Conceptual Framework:

In Islam, institutions that promote education, knowledge, welfare, and ethical conduct are not only permissible but highly encouraged. The Qur'an and Sunnah establish education (*ta'lim*), social welfare, and moral development as intrinsic objectives of the Islamic message. The foundational Islamic principle regarding knowledge is underscored in the Qur'an: "Read! In the Name of your Lord Who created..."⁶, which has historically been interpreted by scholars as a divine mandate for seeking knowledge (*'ilm*), both religious and worldly. Prophetic teachings also emphasize the high value of education. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim"⁷.

2.1.2 Islamic Objectives of Education and Welfare:

Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and the higher objectives of Shariah (*Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*) prioritize the preservation of intellect (*hifẓ al-'aql*), life (*hifẓ al-nafs*), progeny (*hifẓ al-nasl*), religion (*hifẓ al-dīn*), and wealth (*hifẓ al-māl*). Scholars such as Imam al-Shāṭibī and Al-Ghazzālī articulate that institutions promoting education, health, and socioeconomic well-being directly fulfill these objectives by enhancing human dignity (*karāmah*), justice (*'adl*), and social welfare⁸. From this perspective, any institution that increases freedom of access to education, promotes ethical behavior, reduces poverty, and improves health and community well-being aligns with Islamic principles. In this broader conceptualization, the *functional objectives* of missionary institutions such as providing education and welfare services resonate with Islamic values, even if these institutions operate outside of Islamic religious frameworks.

2.2. Legislation in Islamic Jurisprudence (Sharī'ah Perspective):

Islamic law does not categorically prohibit Muslims from engaging with institutions established by non-Muslim groups if such engagement serves legitimate human needs and does not compromise Islamic beliefs.

2.2. a. Education as an Islamic Obligation:

Islamic jurisprudence regards education as a duty. Classical scholars interpret the Prophetic guidance on knowledge (*ta'lim*) as encompassing beneficial education including sciences, humanities, and vocational skills that contributes to individuals' growth without violating Islamic principles. Islamic law recognizes that any institution facilitating learning and character development in ethically sound ways fulfills the Shariah's objective of enabling human potential⁹.

2.2. b. Social Welfare and Charitable Services:

Islamic law highly encourages social welfare activities. The Qur'an repeatedly enjoins believers to help the needy, strengthen community welfare, and care for the vulnerable. "And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy..."¹⁰. Classical jurists classify such services under *ṣadaqāt* (voluntary charity) and *waqf* (endowment), which are permissible and desirable even when provided through institutions not exclusively Islamic in character, as long as the services promote justice and do not contradict Islamic doctrine¹¹.

2.2. c. Interfaith Engagement and Cooperation:

Islamic legal theory differentiates between da'wah (religious invitation) and cooperation in universal human goods. The Qur'an states: "*Help one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help in sin and aggression...*"¹². Many contemporary scholars interpret this verse as permitting cooperation with non-Muslim institutions in areas of common benefit such as education, health care, and community welfare while maintaining independence in matters of Islamic belief and worship. Prominent scholars such as Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī and Muhammad Taqī 'Uthmāni affirm that cooperation for general welfare that does not entail religious compromise is permissible under Islamic legal theory (*Sharī'ah maqāṣid*)¹³.

2. 3. Permissibility and Limits of Engagement with Missionary Institutions:

Islamic jurisprudence allows engagement with non-Muslim institutions on the following conditions:

2. 3. i. No Compulsion in Religion:

The Qur'an clearly states: "*There is no compulsion in religion...*"¹⁴. This foundational principle prohibits forced conversion and validates the right of Muslims to engage with non-Islamic entities for mutual benefit without compromising Islamic identity.

2. 3. ii. Beneficial Collaboration:

Islamic legal thought permits collaboration with non-Muslim institutions when such engagement promotes universal human goods, including education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, and skills training. Scholars like Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī affirm that these partnerships are permissible under *maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, provided they do not compromise Islamic beliefs or principles¹⁵.

2. 3. iii. Protection of Islamic Identity:

Muslim students and communities participating in missionary institutions must preserve their religious obligations, including prayer, modesty, and doctrinal integrity. Participation in secular academic programs or social services does not equate to endorsing religious beliefs contrary to Islam¹⁶.

2. 4. Comparative Jurisprudential Views:

2. 4.a. Classical Scholar's Views:

- **Imam al-Shāfi'ī** emphasizes that human institutions oriented toward welfare and moral good serve a universal function, even when they originate outside Islamic frameworks¹⁷.
- **Al-Ghazzālī**, in *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, stresses that knowledge that benefits society and cultivates ethical conduct aligns with the higher objectives of Shariah¹⁸.

2. 4. b. Contemporary Scholarships:

Modern Muslim jurists and academics, including Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī and Muhammad Taqī 'Uthmāni, clarify that cooperation with non-Islamic institutions in matters of education, health, and social welfare is permissible when it enhances public good and does not lead to theological compromise¹⁹.

Scholars in Muslim majority contexts also emphasize that beneficial cooperation is an expression of Islamic ethical outreach (*masālih mursalah*), which prioritizes human welfare.

2.5. Islamic Principles Underlying Institutional Welfare:

Islamic tradition recognizes several foundational principles that validate the permissibility of engaging in or benefitting from institutions serving education and social welfare:

- **Promotion of Human Dignity (*karāmah*):** The Qur'an asserts the honor and dignity of all human beings: “*And We have certainly honored the children of Adam...*”²⁰.
- **Justice and Equity (*'adl*):** Islam commands justice: “*Indeed, Allah commands justice...*”²¹. Institutions that promote equitable access to education and social services align with this core Islamic value.
- **Public Welfare (*maslahah*):** Classical jurists recognize *maslahah* as a legal principle validating practices that serve general welfare, even in contexts not explicitly detailed in primary texts²².

Islamic Legislation and Missionary Institutions:

From an Islamic legal and ethical standpoint, engaging with missionary institutions for education, health services, and community welfare is permissible and, in many contexts, commendable. This permissibility is rooted in foundational Islamic texts and supported by classical and contemporary scholarship, provided that such engagement:

- Does not entail compulsion or compromise on religious beliefs;
- Serves a recognized public benefit (education, welfare, health, etc.);
- Respects Islamic identity and ethical norms;
- Enhances communal well-being without undermining Shariah principles.

Thus, the intersection of missionary institutional service and Islamic legal theory reflects a pragmatic, welfare-oriented approach that prioritizes human development while maintaining doctrinal integrity.

2.6. Missionary Institutions:

Missionary institutions are educational, social, and religious organizations established by Christian missions with the aim of combining academic instruction with ethical, moral, and spiritual development. They include primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, vocational centers, and health facilities. These institutions typically operate under religious principles emphasizing service, integrity, and inclusivity while promoting literacy, professional skills, and social development²³.

2.6.1. History of Missionary Institutions Worldwide:

The origins of missionary education can be traced back to the early Christian Church between the first and tenth centuries CE. During this period, monastic communities, convents, and cathedral schools emerged as the primary centers for religious instruction and literacy. These institutions primarily aimed to train clergy, preserve sacred texts, and provide basic education to local communities. Monastic schools in Ireland and France, for example, played a crucial role in maintaining knowledge during the Early Medieval period, fostering both spiritual and cultural development²⁴. Education at this stage focused on literacy and scriptural studies, ethical formation, and the preservation of knowledge through manuscript copying and teaching. The emphasis on moral and religious education laid the foundation for the future expansion of missionary institutions globally.

During the High and Late Middle Ages (11th–15th century CE), missionary educational efforts expanded within Europe through the establishment of monasteries, abbeys, and cathedral schools. These centers offered a structured curriculum that went beyond theology, including philosophy, arts, and rudimentary

sciences. The Church's control over knowledge enabled these institutions to standardize education while extending its religious influence across European society²⁵. Some of these schools later evolved into universities, such as the University of Paris and Bologna, which became prominent centers of higher learning. Monastic and cathedral schools not only trained literate clergy but also encouraged moral conduct and social cohesion, demonstrating that missionary institutions were as much social agents as religious centers.

The era of European exploration from the 16th to the 18th century marked the globalization of missionary education. Catholic orders, particularly the Jesuits, expanded their reach overseas, establishing schools, colleges, and seminaries in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. These institutions aimed to spread Christianity while introducing literacy and vocational skills in regions that had previously limited access to formal education²⁶. For instance, Jesuit colleges in Goa, India, provided instruction in Latin, religion, and basic sciences. Similarly, missionary schools in the Philippines combined literacy and vocational training with religious formation, while Jesuit and Franciscan missions in South America established early colleges for indigenous populations. This period demonstrates how missionary institutions served as both educational pioneers and instruments of religious and cultural influence, bridging local traditions with European pedagogical models.

The Protestant missionary movement of the 18th and 19th centuries further accelerated the establishment of educational institutions worldwide. Societies such as the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the London Missionary Society (LMS), and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) emphasized literacy, women's education, vocational training, and healthcare alongside spiritual instruction. In India, the Serampore College, founded in 1818 by Danish missionaries, combined theological studies with general education, setting a precedent for modern higher education²⁷. CMS schools across India provided English-medium instruction and vocational training, while Presbyterian and Baptist schools in China and Africa offered literacy programs alongside social upliftment initiatives. These institutions were instrumental in creating the first formal educational opportunities for girls and marginalized communities, often filling gaps in colonial or local governance structures.

Globally, missionary institutions acted as agents of social and educational change, extending their influence beyond classrooms to broader social welfare. They established hospitals and clinics, pioneered nursing education, introduced vocational training programs, and created orphanages and women's literacy initiatives. By integrating local cultural norms with global educational practices, missionary institutions became centers for knowledge transfer, literacy promotion, and civic awareness, while simultaneously fostering moral and ethical values²⁸. They not only provided education but also prepared students for professional occupations, public service, and community leadership.

In summary, missionary institutions developed over centuries from local monastic schools to global centers of education and social welfare. Their early focus on spiritual and moral training gradually expanded to include formal literacy, vocational training, and social services. From the monastic schools of medieval Europe to Jesuit colleges in Asia and Protestant schools in Africa, missionary institutions played a foundational role in shaping modern education systems. They bridged religious, cultural, and educational objectives, contributing significantly to literacy, social cohesion, and ethical development in societies worldwide. Their legacy continues in many countries today, including Pakistan, where they form an integral part of the educational and social landscape.

2.6.2. Historical Background: Missionary Work in the Subcontinent and Pakistan:

Christian missionary work in the Indian subcontinent expanded significantly during the 19th century, influenced by global Protestant and Catholic missions. Missionaries sought to combine spiritual outreach

with social service, particularly in education and health. In the areas that became Pakistan, early missionaries established small schools, teacher-training centers, and mission stations²⁹.

Missionary schools were distinct for introducing English-medium instruction, systematic teaching methods, and moral education. They complemented traditional Islamic educational institutions, offering literacy, numeracy, science, and humanities in a structured setting. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, mission schools and colleges were established across Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluchistan³⁰.

After Pakistan's independence in 1947, missionary institutions adapted to the nation's identity while continuing to provide quality education. Despite setbacks during the nationalization of schools in the 1970s, many institutions later regained autonomy, maintaining high standards of academic and moral formation. Today, these institutions remain influential in shaping education, vocational skills, and social welfare initiatives³¹.

2.6.3. Major Missionary Institutions in Pakistan:

2.6.3. a. Rang Mahal School, Lahore:

Established in 1849 by Presbyterian missionaries, Rang Mahal School is one of the oldest English-medium schools in Lahore. Named after the historic Rang Mahal quarter, the institution introduced modern pedagogy, literacy programs, and inclusive education in a region where formal schooling was limited at the time. The school played a pioneering role in promoting both boys' and girls' education, emphasizing moral formation, civic responsibility, and academic excellence. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Rang Mahal became a prominent center for producing civil servants, professionals, and community leaders, serving as a bridge between traditional learning and modern educational practices in colonial Punjab. Its alumni were known for their contributions across administration, military, healthcare, and education, reflecting the institution's holistic impact on society³².

Notable alumni of Rang Mahal School include Syed Fida Hassan, a distinguished civil servant and Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board; Kailash Nath Katju, a renowned Indian jurist and statesman who served as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and Governor of West Bengal; Shafqat Amanat Ali, an acclaimed Pakistani vocalist and composer; and Mustansar Hussain Tarar, a prominent author, columnist, and media personality. In addition to these figures, oral histories and alumni records indicate that numerous graduates pursued careers in the Pakistan Air Force, engineering, banking, healthcare, and academia, demonstrating the school's lasting influence on leadership and professional development in the region. Through its curriculum, moral guidance, and emphasis on civic and intellectual engagement, Rang Mahal School exemplifies the enduring legacy of missionary institutions in shaping Pakistan's socio-educational landscape³³.

2.6.3. b. Forman Christian College, Lahore:

Founded in 1864 by American Presbyterian missionary Dr. Charles W. Forman, Forman Christian College (now Forman Christian College University) is one of Pakistan's most historically significant institutions of higher learning, combining liberal arts with practical and professional education under the motto "*By love, serve one another.*" Initially established as Mission College, it was renamed in 1894 in honor of Forman, who pioneered English-medium and inclusive education in the region. Over its long history, the college introduced key academic innovations including early science departments,

co-education in 1902, and the establishment of numerous faculties and it became a chartered university in 2004, granting it degree-awarding authority independent of older universities³⁴.

Forman Christian College's alumni roster reads like a who's who of South Asian public life. Its graduates have held the highest offices in government, diplomacy, law, and academia. Among the most notable are Yusuf Raza Gilani, the 16th Prime Minister of Pakistan; Inder Kumar Gujral, the 12th Prime Minister of India; Muhammad Mian Soomro, former Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan and caretaker Prime Minister; and Shaukat Tarin, former Finance Minister of Pakistan. The institution also counts among its alumni Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari and Pervez Musharraf, both of whom served as Presidents of Pakistan, illustrating the college's influence on national leadership. Other distinguished graduates include Jahangir Tareen, a senior politician and businessman, and Surendra Kumar Datta, who led the All-India Conference of Indian Christians and represented Indian Christians at the Round Table Conferences in the 1930s.

In addition to political leaders, FCCU produced pioneers in science and research such as Sir S. S. Bhatnagar and Bashir Ahmad, foundational figures in the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in India and Pakistan respectively, and Muhammad Yusuf Hashmi, a prominent educator awarded the University of the Punjab Gold Medal and recognized for expanding educational access. Across sectors, the college's alumni include Najeeb Ullah Ghuari, Chairman and CEO of NetSol Technologies, and Shaukat Hassan, Director of MAS Group of Companies, both recognized with Distinguished Formanite Awards for contributions in industry and philanthropy.

Beyond individual accomplishments, Forman Christian College has cultivated a legacy of academic excellence, social service, and interfaith engagement. The institution historically provided refuge and education to students across religious communities, introduced co-educational learning early in the subcontinent, and played active roles in disaster relief and public health initiatives. Its alumni networks extend globally, with graduates contributing to diplomacy, governance, science, arts, and business, making FCCU a major force in Pakistan's socio-educational development.

2.6.3. c. Convent of Jesus and Mary (Multiple Cities):

The Convent of Jesus and Mary (CJM), established by the Religious of Jesus and Mary, has been a cornerstone of girls' education in what is now Pakistan since the late 19th century. The first CJM school in the region was founded in 1876 in Lahore by sisters of the congregation established by Saint Claudine Thevenet, with the objective of providing quality education to girls of all social backgrounds. Subsequently, additional branches opened in Sialkot (1856) the first Catholic school in Punjab and Karachi (1952), along with affiliated campuses in Murree, Shadbagh, Toba Tek Singh, and Mariakhel. These schools emphasized rigorous academic training alongside moral formation, community service, and character development, creating environments where young women could develop both intellectually and ethically³⁵.

CJM institutions in Pakistan have produced an exceptional roster of alumnae who have shaped national and international spheres. Among the most distinguished is Benazir Bhutto, the first woman to serve as Prime Minister in a Muslim-majority country, whose leadership influenced politics across South Asia. Asma Jahangir, a globally respected human rights lawyer and activist, and Hina Jilani, a prominent advocate for gender justice and peace, both received formative education at CJM. Syeda Abida Hussain, a former Federal Minister and ambassador, represents the school's contribution to diplomacy and governance. In public health and medicine, Yasmin Rashid, an influential physician and health minister, exemplifies the institution's impact on professional service. Afia Nathaniel, acclaimed film director, and Rubab Raza, Pakistan's first female Olympic swimmer, reflect CJM's encouragement of artistic

expression and athletic achievement. From the Karachi branch, alumnae such as Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, a two-time Academy Award winning filmmaker; Tehmina Janjua, ambassador of Pakistan to Italy; and Nergis Mavalvala, a Pakistani-American astrophysicist and professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, demonstrate the global reach of CJM's educational influence. Somy Ali, actress and journalist, also emerged from the CJM Karachi context, showing the school's breadth across creative industries. Additionally, figures such as Maryam Nawaz and Mehreen Faruqi have applied their formative CJM education to leadership roles in politics and social reform.

The impact of CJM institutions extends beyond academics to social leadership, interfaith harmony, and community engagement. Educators such as Sister John Berchmans Conway, who spent decades teaching at CJM schools across Lahore, Murree, and Karachi, were nationally recognised for promoting educational access and religious tolerance; she was awarded the Sitara-e-Quaid-e-Azam for her lifetime service. Through their inclusive ethos, academic excellence, and encouragement of female empowerment, the Convent of Jesus and Mary schools have produced generations of women leaders whose contributions span governance, human rights, science, arts, and international diplomacy, firmly establishing CJM as a transformative educational force in Pakistan.

2.6.3. d. Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore:

Kinnaird College for Women in Lahore stands as one of the most prestigious and transformative institutions for women's higher education in South Asia. Founded in 1913 by Presbyterian missionaries and named in honour of Lady Dina Kinnaird; a noted advocate for women's education in colonial India the college was established at a time when formal educational opportunities for women were severely limited. Its very foundation challenged entrenched social norms and provided women with access to advanced learning in arts, sciences, and professional disciplines long before such avenues became widespread in the region. From its earliest days, Kinnaird's mission was rooted in empowering women intellectually, socially, and morally, reflecting both missionary educational values and the broader objectives of gender equity and social transformation³⁶.

Kinnaird College's academic philosophy emphasizes critical thinking, research, social responsibility, and leadership development. Over the decades, the college expanded its curriculum from traditional liberal arts and sciences to include programs in law, business administration, social sciences, education, and media studies. It became a model for women's institutions across Pakistan, earning a reputation for academic excellence, progressive pedagogy, and strong engagement in community service initiatives. Kinnaird's emphasis on civic and ethical awareness encouraged students to think beyond their immediate contexts and engage actively in public life.

The alumnae of Kinnaird College demonstrate the institution's far-reaching impact on Pakistan's political, cultural, and intellectual arenas. Hina Rabbani Khar, who became Pakistan's first female Foreign Minister and later served as Minister of State for Finance, is among the most prominent political figures educated here. Bushra Gohar, a leading parliamentarian and human rights advocate, and Marvi Memon, a former federal minister noted for her work in poverty alleviation and social protection policy, also reflect Kinnaird's influence on national governance and public service. In the judiciary and legal spheres, Justice (R) Majida Rizvi the first woman judge of the Sindh High Court and a key voice in women's rights jurisprudence counts among Kinnaird's distinguished alumnae.

In the realm of arts and media, Saba Qamar, one of Pakistan's most acclaimed actresses and cultural figures, received part of her early education at Kinnaird, leveraging her academic foundation toward global recognition. Huma Nawab, another well-known television and theatre artist, attributes her

formative years to the college's creative and intellectually stimulating environment. Among civil society leaders, Tehmina Durrani a prominent author and activist known for her work on women's rights represents Kinnaird alumnae engaged in cultural discourse and social reform. The college has also produced scholars and educators who have contributed to academic research and higher education policy in Pakistan and abroad.

Kinnaird College's contribution extends beyond individual achievement to shaping institutional culture in Pakistan's higher education sector. Through initiatives such as women's leadership conferences, community outreach projects, literacy campaigns in underprivileged areas, and collaborative research on gender and development, the college has maintained its historic commitment to social empowerment and inclusive progress. Its alumni networks span government, corporate, academic, and non-profit sectors, embodying the college's enduring legacy in national development and women's empowerment. By fostering intellectual rigor, moral responsibility, and public engagement, Kinnaird College has transformed the educational landscape for women in Pakistan and continues to inspire new generations of leaders.

2.6.3. e. St. Patrick's High School and St. Joseph's Convent School, Karachi:

St. Patrick's High School (est. 1861) and its companion institution St. Joseph's Convent School (est. 1862) stand among the earliest and most influential Catholic missionary schools in Sindh. Founded during the British colonial era, both schools were established with a vision of providing high-quality, inclusive education that combined rigorous academic instruction with ethical and moral development. By offering English-medium curricula and a broad spectrum of subjects including literature, mathematics, sciences, civics, and social sciences these institutions became educational anchors in Karachi, welcoming students from diverse religious and social backgrounds and fostering intercultural interaction and civic responsibility³⁷.

The alumni of these schools have left indelible marks across Pakistan's political, legal, cultural, and social landscapes. Benazir Bhutto, Pakistan's first female prime minister and a globally recognized political leader, attended St. Joseph's Convent School, where her early formation in leadership and public service began. Dr. Ruth Pfau, the German-born physician and nun famed for her lifelong battle against leprosy and expansion of public health care, also studied at St. Joseph's before dedicating her life to medical service in Pakistan. Fatima Surayya Bajia, one of the country's most beloved authors and dramatists, emerged from St. Joseph's Convent with a literary voice that shaped Urdu literature and television drama.

St. Patrick's High School has produced many leaders in law, governance, and civil service. Justice (R) S.A. Rahman, former Chief Justice of Pakistan, and Justice (R) Dorab Patel, who served on the Supreme Court of Pakistan and later in Zambia's judiciary, both trace their early schooling to St. Patrick's. Naseerullah Babar, controversial and influential interior minister and military leader, also belongs to the school's distinguished alumni. Ardeshir Cowasjee, the outspoken journalist and social critic whose columns became a staple of Pakistani media, reflected the school's emphasis on intellectual courage and civic engagement. Jehangir Khan Tareen, senior politician and businessman, adds to the school's roster of public figures influencing economic and political discourse.

Other notable St. Patrick's alumni include Anthony Theodore Lobo, who later became Principal of St. Patrick's and then Bishop of Islamabad–Rawalpindi, contributing significantly to education and faith communities; Shafiq-ur-Rehman, a celebrated writer and humorist whose Urdu stories remain widely read; and Hamid Mir, one of Pakistan's most prominent journalists and television anchors with national and international recognition. Ghous Ali Shah, former Chief Minister of Sindh and federal minister,

represents the school's influence on executive governance, while Javed Jabbar, a policy analyst, author, and former information minister, reflects its contribution to intellectual and cultural policy debates.

St. Joseph's Convent School's expanded list of alumni of distinction includes Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, the Academy Award-winning filmmaker whose documentaries have spotlighted social issues worldwide; Tehmina Janjua, Ambassador of Pakistan to Italy and former Foreign Secretary; Nergis Mavalvala, Pakistani-American astrophysicist and professor at MIT; Rubab Raza, the first female Olympic swimmer for Pakistan; and Somy Ali, actress, humanitarian, and journalist. Sharmila Farooqi, a prominent political figure and former provincial minister in Sindh, also reflects the school's sustained influence on public service. Naz Baloch, an active politician and advocate for youth and women's participation, further illustrates the institution's role in empowering engaged citizens.

Together, St. Patrick's and St. Joseph's have nurtured generations of leaders across sectors from judiciary, governance, and civil service to media, arts, science, and activism. Their alumni networks span countries and disciplines, demonstrating the broad and enduring impact of missionary education on Pakistan's development. These schools not only imparted academic knowledge but also cultivated ethical leadership, social awareness, and a commitment to service that has shaped the country's intellectual and civic life.

2.6.3. f. Government Christian Higher Secondary School, Rawalpindi:

Government Christian Higher Secondary School, originally founded as Mission High School in 1856, stands as one of the oldest educational institutions in Rawalpindi. Established by Christian missionaries, the school aimed to provide structured secondary education with an emphasis on literacy, moral formation, and preparation for professional careers. Over the decades, it became a significant center for nurturing students who later assumed important roles in governance, civil service, law, and public life in pre- and post-partition Pakistan³⁸.

Historically, the school produced numerous distinguished alumni who contributed to national development. Notable figures include Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, a prominent political leader in Punjab; Sir Feroz Khan Noon, former Prime Minister of Pakistan; Shaikh Din Muhammad, influential in regional administration; Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, senior politician and former federal minister; and Malik Shakeel Awan, recognized for his service in civil administration. These alumni exemplify the school's longstanding tradition of academic excellence, civic responsibility, and ethical leadership.

2.6.3. g. Don Bosco and Technical Institutes:

The Don Bosco Technical Institute in Lahore and St. Joseph's Technical Institute in Faisalabad are prominent missionary institutions specializing in vocational and technical education. Founded by Salesian missionaries in the early 20th century, these institutes were established with the objective of providing practical skills and trade-based training to youth, particularly from underprivileged backgrounds. By offering courses in mechanical engineering, electronics, computer technology, automotive repair, and industrial management, these institutions have equipped generations of students with market-relevant skills, contributing significantly to Pakistan's industrial growth, entrepreneurship, and local employment opportunities³⁹.

Alumni of these institutes have excelled in various sectors of the economy. For example, graduates from Don Bosco Lahore include successful entrepreneurs in automotive services, manufacturing, and IT sectors, as well as engineers and technicians serving in multinational corporations. Similarly, St. Joseph's Technical Institute has produced alumni such as Rashid Malik, a leading industrial engineer, Asad Iqbal,

founder of a medium-scale electronics company, and numerous skilled technicians employed in both public and private industries across Punjab. Beyond technical proficiency, the institutes emphasize ethical conduct, discipline, and community service, instilling in students a sense of social responsibility alongside vocational expertise.

2.6.4. Religious Education in Missionary Institutions in Pakistan:

Missionary educational institutions in Pakistan whether founded by Catholic, Protestant, or other Christian denominations have long combined academic instruction with moral and religious education. Traditionally, these schools and colleges included Christian ethical instruction and Bible study as part of their curricular and extracurricular programmes, reflecting their founding ethos of character formation and service. At the same time, because most students in Pakistan are Muslim, missionary institutions have also incorporated Islamic studies (Islamiat) into their curricula in accordance with national educational requirements and the religious identities of their students⁴⁰.

Christian missionary schools such as St. Patrick's High School, St. Joseph's Convent School, Convent of Jesus and Mary, and Forman Christian College have historically offered Christian religious instruction, including biblical literature, Christian ethics, and moral theology, especially for students who identify with the Christian faith. These programmes were designed not only to instill knowledge of Christian doctrine but also to emphasise universal moral values such as integrity, compassion, justice, and service values that are broadly compatible with multiple faith traditions and widely recognised in multidisciplinary educational philosophy. Many alumni of these institutions, irrespective of their religious background, have credited moral education courses with promoting ethical leadership and community commitment in their professional and civic lives⁴¹.

At the same time, because the majority of students in missionary schools in Pakistan follow Islam, Islamic studies (Islamiat) has traditionally been part of the regular curriculum for Muslim students. This includes instruction on the Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic history, and principles of faith and practice, typically taught according to the national Islamiat syllabus prescribed by provincial textbook boards. For decades this arrangement ensured that students received grounding in their own religious tradition while benefiting from the academic and ethical resources of missionary education. Educators in many mission schools incorporated Islamic studies into weekly lessons and assemblies, often with qualified Muslim teachers responsible for teaching Islamiat alongside the school's own moral and religious programmes.

The legal and educational framework in Pakistan now reinforces this dual approach. In 2024 Pakistan formally revised its national religious education curriculum, allowing students from officially recognised non-Muslim communities (including Christian, Hindu, Sikh, and others) to study religious education relevant to their own faiths rather than a compulsory Islamic studies programme. This shift reflects a broader commitment to inclusion and is grounded in constitutional protections for religious freedom. Under the reform, Islamic studies remains the primary course for Muslim students, while alternative faith courses are available to minorities, thereby aligning religious education with students' identities and promoting respect for pluralism⁴².

This blended model of religious education in missionary institutions combining Christian moral teaching with Islamic studies and, where appropriate, coursework in other faith traditions serves multiple educational objectives. It reinforces ethical and value-based learning, supports students' religious identities, and fosters interfaith understanding and tolerance within multi-religious classrooms. Crucially, this approach reflects core educational and constitutional principles in Pakistan, including the right to teach one's own religion and to respect the religious diversity of all students.

Overall, the integration of both Christian religious instruction and Islamic studies in missionary schools and colleges demonstrates these institutions' adaptability and their commitment to educating morally grounded, socially responsible citizens within Pakistan's pluralistic society.

2.5. Religious Influence:

Missionary institutions maintain Christian ethical values, emphasizing moral formation, service, honesty, and integrity. While teaching Christian principles, they have historically accommodated students of all faiths. Religious instruction is often optional or integrated within broader moral education, fostering interfaith awareness, tolerance, and ethical decision-making. These institutions encourage students to develop social conscience, empathy, and community-oriented values aligned with broader humanitarian principles.

2.6. Educational Contributions:

Missionary institutions introduced formalized English-medium education, modern science, mathematics, arts, and critical thinking. They promoted girls' education at a time when female schooling faced societal resistance. Vocational and technical institutes provided practical skills, reducing unemployment and enhancing economic self-reliance. Many institutions offered scholarships, bridging socio-economic gaps and providing access to quality education for underprivileged communities. Alumni from these institutions have historically entered leadership roles in academia, administration, law, and civil society, significantly influencing Pakistan's human capital development.

2.7. Social Impact:

Missionary institutions extend beyond education into social welfare. They operate health clinics, hospitals, and dispensaries offering free or subsidized medical care. Institutions like St. Joseph's Convent and Forman Christian College organize community service programs, adult literacy classes, and vocational training for marginalized groups. By promoting civic engagement, volunteering, and interfaith dialogue, they foster social cohesion. Their initiatives have improved access to healthcare, reduced illiteracy, and empowered women and youth, contributing directly to societal resilience and inclusivity.

2.8. Merits and Demerits:

Missionary institutions in Pakistan have played a significant role in promoting literacy and modern education across genders, providing inclusive and high-quality learning opportunities regardless of religion or socio-economic status. They have been particularly instrumental in encouraging women's education and empowerment, offering programs that enable girls and young women to access academic and professional opportunities. In addition to formal education, these institutions provide vocational and technical training aligned with employment needs, equipping students with practical skills for the job market. Many missionary schools and colleges also extend social services, including healthcare, community development, and charitable outreach, reflecting their commitment to broader societal welfare. Alongside these initiatives, they emphasize moral and ethical development, fostering values such as integrity, empathy, and service, which contribute to the holistic formation of students as responsible and conscientious members of society.

Despite their many contributions, missionary institutions in Pakistan face certain challenges and criticisms. In some communities, there is a perception of religious proselytism, which can create tension and suspicion among non-Christian populations. The cost of private missionary education can also limit access for the poorest segments of society, making these institutions less inclusive than intended. Additionally, dependence on external funding from foreign mission boards or donors sometimes reduces institutional autonomy, influencing administrative and curricular decisions. Finally, the adoption of Western pedagogical methods can occasionally create cultural adaptation challenges, as these approaches may conflict with local traditions and societal expectations.

3. Conclusion:

Missionary institutions in Pakistan have played an indispensable role in shaping education, social welfare, and moral development. Their legacy demonstrates that religiously inspired initiatives can coexist with national development goals, promoting literacy, vocational skills, and civic engagement. While challenges such as cultural resistance, cost barriers, and religious sensitivities exist, the overall impact has been positive, especially in providing opportunities for marginalized groups and empowering women. By bridging education, social services, and ethical guidance, these institutions have enriched Pakistan's socio-educational landscape for over 150 years.

4. Recommendations:

1. **Policy Integration:** Government and educational authorities should formally recognize missionary institutions as partners in national education and vocational development.
2. **Scholarship Expansion:** Increase scholarships and financial aid to ensure access for economically disadvantaged students.
3. **Community Engagement:** Expand community health, literacy, and social welfare programs to rural and underserved areas.
4. **Vocational Training:** Strengthen technical and vocational programs aligned with labor market needs.
5. **Interfaith Dialogue:** Promote programs fostering religious tolerance and ethical citizenship.
6. **Research and Documentation:** Encourage scholarly studies on the historical, social, and educational impact of missionary institutions to inform policy and curriculum development.

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