

**The Role of Educational Institutions in Promoting Democratic Culture in District Charsadda: Prospects and Challenges**



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**Abstract:** *Educational institutions play a vital role in development, progress and modernization. In every society education is perceived as a fundamental pillar of character building, humanism, and etiquettes. Education institutions deeply affect political, economic, social and cultural situation of a country. This research is an effort to analyze the effects of educational institutions on democratic culture in the province in general with special focus on District Charsadda. The study looks into the role of educational institutions' influence on democratic culture, governance, Awareness and political parties in District Charsadda. One public sector general university – Bacha Khan University – has also been spreading the light of education in the district. These educational institutions have been making considerable contribution to promotion of political Awareness and democratic culture in the district. These institutions have also been playing a role in socialization of the people. Women in the district received their education from these institutions where they were encouraged to play their part in the socio-political activities in the district. As a result, some key political leaders have also emerged in the district politics from these institutions.*

**Keywords:** Education Institution, Democratic culture, Political and Social Awareness, and Political Socialization

## Introduction

Educational institutions have long been recognized as crucibles of societal values, shaping future generations' mindsets, attitudes, and behaviours (Vasquez, 2023). In the context of District Charsadda, the role of educational institutions in promoting a democratic culture takes on paramount significance. A democratic culture is not merely a product of political structures; it is a tapestry woven from the threads of informed citizenry, critical thinking, civic engagement, and respect for diverse perspectives. As a cornerstone of a thriving democracy, education is pivotal in cultivating

these essential traits among individuals, thereby nurturing a society that embraces democratic principles and practices (Singh et al., 2023).

District Charsadda, situated in the heart of it, is a region with a rich history and a diverse population. Its educational institutions, ranging from primary schools to higher education centers, bear the responsibility of shaping the civic consciousness of its residents. This responsibility extends beyond the classroom, encompassing the ethos of the institutions, the curriculum design, and the interactions among students, educators, and the community at large.

Democratic culture means the capability of every individual to contribute directly, independently, and mutually to the government of public dealings influence. It depends on being with the persons of forms, free will of thought, and action. The progress of democratic culture deal with the circumstance for a better study of views of the general frame, the terms of living together, and the building of collective decisions (Colomina, 2021). The progress of democratic culture is not luminous. It is based on civil society stakeholders' involuntary and accessible commitment. But it faces a lot of hindrances in a high nominal practice of expertise and judgment that are not deliberate to support and welcome the backing of these people and groups. It needs the conception of a friendly atmosphere during the life of people, predominantly in education forms that permit the appearance of this democratic culture. It must be straightforwardly supported, accompanied, and encouraged by public and private institutions that develop their behaviour in society. It includes experimentation with democratic and shared forms, depending on the requirements of each circumstance (Child, 2022).

Pakistan has been victimized by despotism for many ages due to several reasons. The military has collapsed democratic governments by claiming corruption charges and inaptitude of politicians to deliver their services. It was the leg-pulling of politicians and bad political opposition that destroyed the elected government of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif significantly on the same grounds (Jabeen, 2021). Due to the irresponsibility of governance, democratic culture has not been provided with an environment deep-rooted in society. Democratic culture has attained grave consideration in Pakistan after independence but in words' not in real or actual form (Ahmad, 2014). This study discusses the lack of democratic culture in Pakistan. It concludes that due to a lack of political socialization, which is the root of democratization, individual behaviour does not match democracy (Hassan, 2023).

These studies have explored the relations

between democracy and education in the district of Charsadda, especially in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province. Therefore this study has undertaken to know the specific democratic culture of district Charsadda and analyze its impacts on the political system and government. However, many books have been written at the international level about democracy. The following related literature 'has been reviewed to understand the democratic culture and education institutions and then study the relationship between democratic culture and education institutions. Many scholars have studied the democratic culture of a particular area and discussed various factors regarding democratic political culture (Dorlach, 2021).

This paper delves into the prospects and challenges faced by educational institutions in District Charsadda as they endeavour to promote a democratic culture. By examining the potential benefits and obstacles, we can better understand the intricate interplay between education and democratic values. In doing so, we shed light on how these institutions foster an environment where dialogue, participation, and inclusivity thrive while recognizing the hurdles that may impede this noble pursuit (Alblooshi, 2021).

By exploring the evolving role of educational institutions in District Charsadda, we aim to underscore the significance of their endeavours in shaping the democratic landscape. As we navigate the complex terrain of cultural, social, and political dynamics, it becomes evident that the path to a robust democratic culture is both challenging and promising (Feyyaz, 2019). By addressing these dimensions, we seek to provide insights that inform academic discourse and guide practical efforts to enhance democratic values within the district's educational fabric.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The democratic culture of district Charsadda is undergoing significant changes, and these changes are essential linkages with social changes. These democratic culture changes under the influence of social changes in district Charsadda have significant pro-social and anti-social consequences. The democratic changes of district Charsadda need to be identified;

moreover, the impact goes through social and political changes under the influence of social changes also need to be identified and documented so that the democratic culture of district Charsadda can be understood and explained. Educational institutions have a significant role in democratic culture. But the district Charsadda education institutions do not have an essential role in democratic political culture. Still, most learning institutes require incorporating self-governing culture on the condition that democratic learning for students. This study aims to extend an understanding of the schooling institutions' role in a democratic society. It also evaluates the importance of democratic schooling in the daytime.

### **Aims and Objectives of the Study**

The objective of the research is:

1. To examine the democratic culture of Charsadda.
2. To evaluate why education institutions failed to promote democratic culture in district Charsadda effectively.
3. To develop some workable suggestions for policymakers and further researchers.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions are:

1. What is the democratic culture of district Charsadda?
2. How can educational institutions acquire and utilize services to promote democratic culture?
3. The come up with some workable suggestions for policymakers and future researchers promoting democratic culture.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study lies in its focus on addressing the critical need for promoting democratic culture within educational institutions in District Charsadda, Pakistan. Despite Pakistan's status as a democratic state, it grapples with persistent undemocratic practices and vulnerabilities. This research seeks to fill a substantial gap in existing literature, nationally and locally, by offering a comprehensive

approach to fostering democratic values within educational settings. Moreover, exploring this topic in the specific context of District Charsadda not only enhances our understanding of the local dynamics at play but also offers valuable insights that can inform policy decisions and practical interventions. By uncovering the integral role of educational institutions in enhancing political Awareness, strengthening the connection between citizens and the political structure, and empowering individuals with knowledge about their rights, this study underscores the pivotal role of education in nurturing a vibrant democratic culture. Ultimately, the findings of this study shed light on the interdependence between democratic culture and educational institutions, catalyzing positive change and progress towards a more robust democratic society in District Charsadda.

### **Research Methodology**

Research methodology is the exacting method or techniques used to identify, select, procedure, and study information concerning atopic. The study used a qualitative method, including questionnaires, newspapers, books, etc. Both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected from district Charsadda while secondary data were collected from very sources, including books, research papers, articles, websites, etc. Questionnaires were closed-ended questions distributed to students, teachers, politicians, and the general people of district Charsadda. The collected data fulfilled the requirements of the study.

The data analysis methods are adopted in this study. The data has been analyzed through a descriptive-analytical approach. Data has been scrutinized through an appropriate research process. For the investigation of the analysis, data aggregation and data mining will be used to present an approach to the actual observable fact. The findings will be summarized systematically. The conclusion was kept in light of the views of experts on the topic.

### **The Concept of Democratic Culture**

The concept of democratic culture is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that lies at the heart of a vibrant democratic society. Rooted in the principles of equality, participation, and the protection of individual rights, democratic culture encompasses a range of values, attitudes, and behaviours that foster an environment of informed citizenship and collective decision-making. This section delves into the extensive literature surrounding democratic culture, exploring its various dimensions, theoretical foundations, and implications for educational institutions (Colomina et al., 2021).

Democratic culture goes beyond the mere functioning of formal democratic institutions; it encapsulates the deeper societal norms and practices that sustain democratic governance. Harry (2022) defines democratic culture as a set of attitudes and behaviours that reflect a commitment to democratic principles, including tolerance for dissenting views, active political engagement, and respect for the rule of law. In this view, democratic culture is a dynamic force that shapes the interactions between individuals, communities, and their governing bodies.

One critical facet of democratic culture is the cultivation of civic virtues and civic responsibility. Nguyahambi and Chang'a (2019) emphasize the importance of civic engagement, highlighting the role of informed and active citizens in ensuring the accountability of elected representatives. This notion aligns with Putnam's (2000) concept of "social capital," which underscores the significance of social networks and community participation in strengthening democratic institutions. These insights underline the symbiotic relationship between democratic culture and civic involvement, with educational institutions as pivotal platforms for nurturing these values.

Educational institutions play a central role in transmitting and perpetuating democratic culture. As Eten (2023) argues, schools are essential sites for imparting democratic values and knowledge, enabling students to assess societal issues and engage in reasoned discourse critically. The curriculum, teaching methodologies, and school ethos collectively

contribute to developing democratic attitudes and behaviours (Parker, 2023). Furthermore, educational environments that encourage open dialogue, critical thinking, and respectful debate foster the growth of democratic dispositions (Hess, 2002).

However, the realization of democratic culture within educational settings is not without challenges. Banks (2017) underscores the need for culturally relevant and inclusive education that acknowledges diverse perspectives, thereby equipping students with the tools to engage constructively in a pluralistic society. Moreover, emerging technologies and the proliferation of information sources introduce new dimensions to democratic culture, demanding media literacy and digital citizenship education (Hobbs, 2010).

In the context of Pakistan, promoting democratic culture is particularly pertinent. Despite being a democratic state, Pakistan has grappled with periods of military rule and undemocratic practices. This has spurred discussions on the need for a strong democratic culture that can withstand political upheavals (Haider, 2015). Educational institutions in Pakistan, including those in District Charsadda, have a unique opportunity to shape democratic values among the youth, fostering a culture of active participation, tolerance, and respect for human rights.

The concept of democratic culture embodies the essence of democratic governance, encompassing a range of attitudes, behaviours, and values that sustain informed citizenship and participatory decision-making. Educational institutions serve as vital spaces for cultivating these democratic dispositions, equipping individuals with the tools to engage in a diverse and evolving society. As we proceed in this study, the literature review will explore the challenges and prospects of promoting democratic culture within educational institutions, particularly in District Charsadda.

## **Political History of District Charsadda**

Many scholars have studied the democratic culture of a particular area and discussed various factors regarding democratic political culture. However, this list of the previous study is as follows: According to the district Charsadda Judiciary, Charsadda district is a district in the Peshawar division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan. Before establishing as a separate district in 1998, it was a tehsil within the Peshawar district. Pashtun makes up the majority of the population of the district (SHAH, 2022). District headquarter is the town of Charsadda metro Politian region. Charsadda is a town and operational center in the Charsadda District of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa administrative subdivision, according to the Charsadda Judiciary. It is located at an altitude of 276 meters, around 29 kilometres (18 miles) from Peshawar's administrative center (906 ft.). Charsadda District covers a total area of 996 square kilometres. Hashtnagar (Pashto: Ashnagar) and Do Abba are the two main physical components of the region (Pashto: Duava). The site contains the ruins of Pushkalavati (meaning Lotus City in Sanskrit) and the Sanskrit grammarian's center, formerly the primitive Gandharan primary center of business (Ali, 2023).

## **Socio-Political History of Charsadda**

The first artefacts discovered at Charsadda date from around 1400 BCE, consisting of a network of post holes connected by pottery shards and dust. At Charsadda, new long-lasting constructions, such as stone-lined trenches, were built throughout time. Residents of Charsadda began the iron-working industry during the 14th and 6th centuries BCE when an Achaemenid presence was documented in the region. In the Vale of Peshawar, Swat, and Dir. They used pottery artifacts typical of the period. Panini, the father of Sanskrit grammar, was born in this region in about the 4th century BCE. Charsadda's subsequent history is related to the 6th century BCE. From the —6th century BCE to the 2nd century CE, it was the epicenter of Gandhara's activities. Pushkalavati was Charsadda's previous name. It served as the capital and administrative hub of the Gandhara

culture. Throughout history, several people have invaded and ruled this region. The Persians, the Indo-Parthians, the Indo-Scythians, the Maury, the Greco-Bactrians, Alexander the Great's Greeks, the Indo-Greeks, and the Indo-Parthians, as well as the Kushans, Huns, Turks, and Guptas, are among them. Even then, the capital had been vacated as political capital favouring Parashwara or Peshawar. Charsadda, Shabqadar, and Tangi are the three (3) Tehsils that make up District Charsadda.

## **Education Institutions Role in Political Development Area**

District Charsadda has 105 middles, 1001 primary, 24 higher secondary schools, 94 secondaries and 1 university, according to Abdul Zaid's study article (The Role of Education in Political Development). Along with public schooling and the resulting national trend, Charsadda has an excessive number of private educational institutes and centers that provide education and educational programming.

Around 150,000 children aged 5 to 16 are enrolled in educational programs out of a total population of 16 million. At the primary level, the total Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is 79 percent, whereas the Net Enrolment Rate is around 44 percent. Educational institutions are often subjected to neglect and under-capacity. The problem is exacerbated by a lack of hygiene and a clean environment. The school infrastructure has been worn out and damaged due to manufactured and natural calamities. Dropouts and lower enrolments are primarily due to inadequate school buildings, services, and facilities.

## **Indistinct Political Culture**

Masood Ahmed, in his Birding research and policy, states Consensual political belief is the hindmost independent form of government. Party-political society refers to defiance toward the political structure and its different parts and insolence toward the system's nature. It is also well-defined as the ways society assumes and the degree to which they participate in the administrative process (Ahmed, 2019). Our political society is highly motivated by social groups/biradari. Social group/biradari

cataloguing divides people into hierarchal social cultures. Each communal dwelling in the social hierarchy has its dwelling, which remains stable generation after generation.

Ziring, declare in —A Historical Review of Democratic Governance 1947-2012 Ziring argues that Action is being taken against black marketers and dishonest civil officials. He said democracy was not the best option for Pakistan's future. General Ayub Khan was compelled to hand over his power to the National Assembly Speaker by the labourers, students, and peasants (NAS). On the other hand, General Yahya Khan took control of the government and established martial law (Ziring, 2019).

### **Education Institutions and Charsadda Politics**

Educational institutions must play a role in the socio-political Awareness of students by educating them about their health, identifying health concerns and remedies, and giving recommendations and healthy counsel. As a result of improved societal Awareness, people are also more driven to take better care of their health. Students will act more responsibly and attempt to be more active if they know the negative effects of certain activities. Students must be educated about the hazards of drugs and inappropriate behaviour. By concentrating more on health programs and infrastructure, institutions must assume greater responsibility for delivering health care to their students. Counselling services are the first defence line for adolescents with severe mental health problems. The instructor should increase knowledge and understanding to prevent emotional well-being, mental illness, and suicide. Social contact with others should strengthen students' social and cognitive abilities.

Shailaj Kumar explains the role of educational institutions in promoting social Awareness. Social Awareness and consciousness come before the social movement. Female infanticide, domestic violence, rape, corruption, maltreatment, drunkenness, drug usage, superstitious beliefs, and other social issues remain severe concerns in every country. The most important problems confronting society are

prejudice, discrimination, and racism, as well as economic and technical backwardness and the lack of a comprehensive and just peace. More people must become aware of these issues to work together as a country to address them (Kumar, 2016). The ability to understand and respond to the needs of others, (ii) comprehend the feelings, needs and concerns of others, (iii) comprehend the politics within a group and how they affect the people who work there, (iv) comprehend and meet the needs of clients and clientele, and so on are all examples of social Awareness.

Freire, declare the Role of Education Institutions in Promoting Social and Consciousness Awareness is that knowledge equates to consciousness, and Awareness equates to power. This is what we mean when we say we want to increase people's Awareness. We're also enabling youngsters to go through some difficult experiences while aiding them in conquering them. It's questionable if there's a link between social Awareness and social existence. The cornerstone of social consciousness is social life. Science, theories, knowledge, beliefs, ideas, and concepts are all part of society's intellectual component, and they assist individuals in comprehending, thinking about, and searching for viable solutions to the social difficulties they encounter. A positive association exists between science and knowledge and consciousness. Self-awareness is the first step toward social Awareness (Freire, 2016). Self-awareness is required to comprehend other people's feelings and emotions. Open discourse is essential for coping with variation and forming knowledge of social issues. As our social Awareness grows, we get more life experience, create possibilities for better work-life balance, become more sensitive to other people's sentiments, and enhance our capacity to adapt to change the year.

### **Educational Institutions and the Strength of Democratic Culture**

The current study is focused on educational institutions' role in democratic culture at the community level, especially district Charsadda has a tremendous and positive role and discusses all those factors that contributed to democratic culture. For this study to highlight all those

factors, different research papers were thoroughly studied and referred to. Democratic culture in other societies in general and Charsadda district, in particular, were discussed in the initial chapters of this study (Shah et al., 2020).

According to Alexander, What is Command about common Schooling? Rational Autonomy and Moral Agency in Liberal Democratic Education The first question asked by different stakeholders was Do you agree that democratic political culture plays a significant role in the modern world. Out of the total 50 respondents, some 60 percent agreed with the question. Thirty-two percent strongly agreed, while eight percent disagreed (Alexander, 2007). The majority of the 60 percent of respondents agreed that democratic political culture plays a significant role in the modern world.

It shows that the people of the district are quite aware of political culture and political development. Alexander introduced, —Do you agree that political parties are promoting and improving the democratic culture? Some 30 percent of the total 50 respondents agreed with the question. Around 36 percent respondents strongly agreed, while 26 percent of respondents have disagreed, and eight percent of respondents strongly disagreed. The majority of the 36 percent of respondents strongly agreed that political parties promote and improve the democratic culture (Alexander, 2007). It shows the district of the people much aware that political parties encourage and enhance the democratic culture.

Ahmad declared in, The need for Media Education in Democratic Education that Do you agree that media play an essential role in promoting democratic culture was the question third asked by different stakeholders. 42 percent of the respondents strongly agreed with the question, and 30 percent agreed. In comparison, 14 percent of respondents disagreed and strongly agreed that media is important in promoting democratic culture. It shows that district Charsadda's people are aware of social media and democratic culture.

According to Ahmad, do you agree that citizens

have a role in the promotion of democratic culture? Out of the total 50 respondents some 44 percent respondents were agreed, and 30 percent were strongly agreed, while twenty percent to the respondents were disagreed and 6 percent were strongly disagreed (Ahmad, 2017). The majority of the 44 percent respondents were says that citizens have a role in promoting democratic culture. The above statements show that the citizens have a role in promoting democratic culture.

According to Robinson, the question thirty asked from different stalk holder's —Do you agree that educational institutions do not have a role in promoting democratic culture. Out of 50 respondents that 46 percent respondents were agreed, 20 percent respondents strongly agreed, 18 percent respondents disagreed, and 12 percent respondents strongly disagreed. In contrast four percent of respondents were uncertain. The majority of the 46 percent respondents agreed that educational institutions do not have a role in promoting democratic culture (Robinson, 2006). It shows that the people of the district charassada are playing a great role in promoting the democratic culture.

## Conclusion

This research has delved into the multifaceted realm of democratic culture, highlighting its historical underpinnings, contemporary significance, and intricate relationship with education. By exploring various dimensions, barriers, and possibilities, this study underscores the pivotal role that educational institutions play in promoting and nurturing democratic values within societies, with a specific focus on District Charsadda.

This research aimed to develop a nuanced understanding of the essence of democratic culture and its implications for today's era. It is evident that democratic culture is not a static concept; instead, it is a dynamic force that weaves through the fabric of society, guiding individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and interactions. In the journey towards a thriving democratic community, education emerges as a linchpin, equipping individuals with the cognitive tools, ethical principles, and critical

thinking capacities required to engage actively in democratic processes.

The historical context of democratic culture and education reveals the enduring relationship between the two. Education has been recognized throughout history as a potent vehicle for instilling democratic values and fostering civic responsibility. As societies have evolved, so too have the methods and approaches to democratic education. Today, educational institutions are responsible for cultivating democratic attitudes, enabling individuals to become informed, engaged, and participatory citizens.

However, this study acknowledges that the path towards a robust democratic culture within educational institutions is not devoid of challenges. Socio-cultural, socio-psychological, and political barriers can impede the effective transmission of democratic values. The presence of anti-democratic sentiments and power struggles may hinder fully realising democratic culture's potential. Yet, the importance of overcoming these challenges cannot be overstated. As the findings suggest, education has the transformative power to eradicate anti-democratic ideologies, foster a deeper understanding of democratic principles, and actively empower individuals to participate in political processes.

The case of District Charsadda serves as a microcosm reflecting broader societal dynamics within Pakistan. While the political landscape has evolved over the past decade, a pervasive lack of understanding and misinterpretation of democracy persists. It is imperative that this gap is bridged and an inclusive, informed, and empowered citizenry emerges. Education emerges as the catalyst for this transformation. By infusing democratic values into the educational curriculum, promoting critical thinking, and encouraging active civic engagement, educational institutions can sow the seeds of democratic culture that will bear fruit for future generations.

This study underscores the symbiotic relationship between education and democracy. Quality education not only equips individuals with the skills necessary for effective

participation in democratic processes but also nurtures the very foundations upon which democracy thrives. As individuals become more educated, they become more open-minded, receptive to change, and adept at collaborative problem-solving. These attributes, in turn, create a conducive environment for democratic governance to flourish.

The journey towards fostering a robust democratic culture is an ongoing endeavour that requires collective commitment and continuous effort. Education, as the cornerstone of societal development, holds the key to unlocking the true potential of democratic values. By addressing barriers, promoting inclusivity, and embracing the principles of democratic education, educational institutions can become powerful agents of change, shaping individuals who are not only capable of participating in democracy but also fervently committed to upholding its ideals. As District Charsadda and the wider world grapple with the complexities of modernity, education emerges as a beacon of hope, illuminating the path towards a future where democratic culture thrives, and societies flourish.

### **Recommendations**

- The government should lead in developing policies promoting a healthy democratic culture.
- Local people should be made aware of democratic culture and democracy through the media. The media must take a neutral and moral role in informing the public. It must give them up-to-date information and findings. It should contribute to the maintenance of checks and balances.
- Educational institutions should develop the democracy principles. It is essential for democratic culture.
- Political socialization necessary for middle-class societies. So the government focus on seminar and train the people socially. It will be a life-changing point for the people of the district.
- The educational institution has a significant role in political socialization. So the



government should promote and facilitate elementary and secondary schools at every community level.

- The women participating in political activities are necessary to promote democratic culture. The majority of women are unaware of the political process. Therefore, the government should focus on building and operating educational institutions for them.
- The media play an essential role in promoting democratic norms. So the government provided an open platform to the people of the district.
- The representative system promotes democratic culture. So the people must involve in the political process to be aware of politics.
- The Free market economy is necessary for democratic culture. So the government should focus on the economic situation in the district and encourage investors to make different industries in the section to create more employment opportunities.

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