

The Educational Services and Philosophy of Bacha Khan

Mohammad Sohail^{1*}, Syed Munir Ahmad^{2*}, Hafiz Muhammad Inamullah³

¹PhD student, Institute of Education & Research, University of Peshawar, Pakistan

²Assistant Professor, Institute of Education & Research, University of Peshawar, Pakistan

³Associate Professor, Institute of Education & Research, University of Peshawar, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's (aka Bacha Khan) educational philosophy and charts his contributions underpinning educational services for educating the disadvantaged Pakhtuns of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In tracing his socio-educational and historical journey, the paper documents that Bacha Khan wanted modern education for the Pakhtuns, so they could compete with other nations of the world. The paper argues that Bacha Khan's educational philosophy was in consonance with the Islamic philosophy of life, inculcating peace and tolerance amongst the masses for eradicating detrimental customs and traditions practiced through generations. Through education, Bacha Khan wanted to channel bigotry, hatred and revengefulness for bringing peace and harmony in the Pakhtun community and he worked tirelessly to support women, their right to education and inheritance. The paper explicates Bacha Khan's continued emphasis on technical and vocational education so that the Pakhtuns get and settle in appropriate jobs and thereby serve the society. The paper discusses reformation of Pakhtun society as a great challenge that persists even after sixty-six years of independence. The paper concludes that Bacha Khan's Movement was for the welfare and reformation of society that yielded success, which unfortunately could not continue after independence.

KEYWORDS: Bacha Khan; educational philosophy; educational services; Pakhtun; Azad schools; peace; tolerance.

1 INTRODUCTION

The likes of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (aka Bacha Khan) (1880-1988) are born once in centuries. He was a great political leader, thinker, educationist, philosopher, social reformer and a pragmatic Muslim evolutionary leader, the 20th century ever produced. The 20th century produced two other prominent political leaders: Mahatma Gandhi and Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Bacha Khan was different from the other two contemporaries; a well prepared platform and stage of education, politics, nationalism, and recognition was not available to him like the other two high profile politicians.

According to Huma [1] (citing Majhoor), Bacha Khan was a leader of the Pakhtun nation, born in centuries. He argues that other Pakhtun leaders worked for the freedom and collective recognition of the Pakhtun nation. However, Bacha Khan not only worked for the freedom and recognition of the nation but he wanted reforms and development in education, social, ethical, economic and political spheres of the Pakhtun nation. He was not a politician but a leader, which reaffirms Nelson Mandela's famous quotation: A politician thinks for election but a leader strives for the nation.

Marwat is of the opinion that Bacha Khan was a pragmatic leader [2]. He faced the challenge of uniting a disgruntled Pakhtun society that had a history of disunity, disharmony and animosity between them. The same outlook of Pakhtun nature and the role of Bacha Khan have been well portrayed by Taizi in these words [3]:

“Those leaders are seldom born who raise their society from the ignominious depths of ignorance and obscurity to the heights of enlightenment and glory. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was one of those rare breed of leaders.”

Corresponding Authors: Mohammad Sohail, PhD student, Institute of Education & Research, University of Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, email: mas.uon@gmail.com, Tel: +92-91-9216756.

Dr. Syed Munir Ahmad, Assistant Professor, Institute of Education & Research, University of Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, email: munir_ahmad@upesh.edu.pk., Tel: +92-91-9216756.

Bacha Khan was making efforts for bringing reforms and getting his people educated, having a checkered record of intolerance, enmity, revenge, discord and disharmony. In explicating Bacha Khan’s personality and his political stature, Bright elucidates the following [4]:

“Ghaffar Khan is in complete accord with the principle of non-violence. But he has not borrowed his outlook from Mahatma Gandhi. He has reached it. And reached it independently. Independently like a struggler after truth. No doubt, his deep study of Koran has influenced his doctrine of love.”

Similarly, Easwaran [5], Ghandi [6] and Shah [7] place Bacha Khan in a more sublime category of global recognition. In a similar vein, Zeb [8] while portraying the context and ethos of Pakhtun community, draws parallels with Bacha Khan and other prominent political contemporaries:

“In many aspects, Khan stands tall in the line of the finest leaders of the world, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Mustafa Kamal Atatürk, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. Bacha Khan’s exclusivity was eminent due to the fact that he was born and raised in the mountainous region of Pashtun land, which is primarily agrarian, and encountered both family and tribal feuds. Bacha Khan was saddened to see such difficulties and hardships.”

Given the above introductory discussion about Bacha Khan, it is pertinent to trace his family background, upbringing and education.

2 Family Background and Education of Bacha Khan

In tracing his family and historical roots, Taizi [3] writes about Abdul Ghaffar Khan that he:

“...was born into an aristocratic family of Utmanzai, Hashtnagar, in 1890, according to school records. He grew tall and handsome, inspiring the hopes and ambitions of his family to become a feudal lord and uphold the family’s leading position in the area. He was the second and last son of Bahram Khan who was known as Mashar Khan (the Great Khan or the Khan of Khans) Bahram's first son was Dr. Khan Sahib.”

Bacha Khan’s genealogical table is given below:

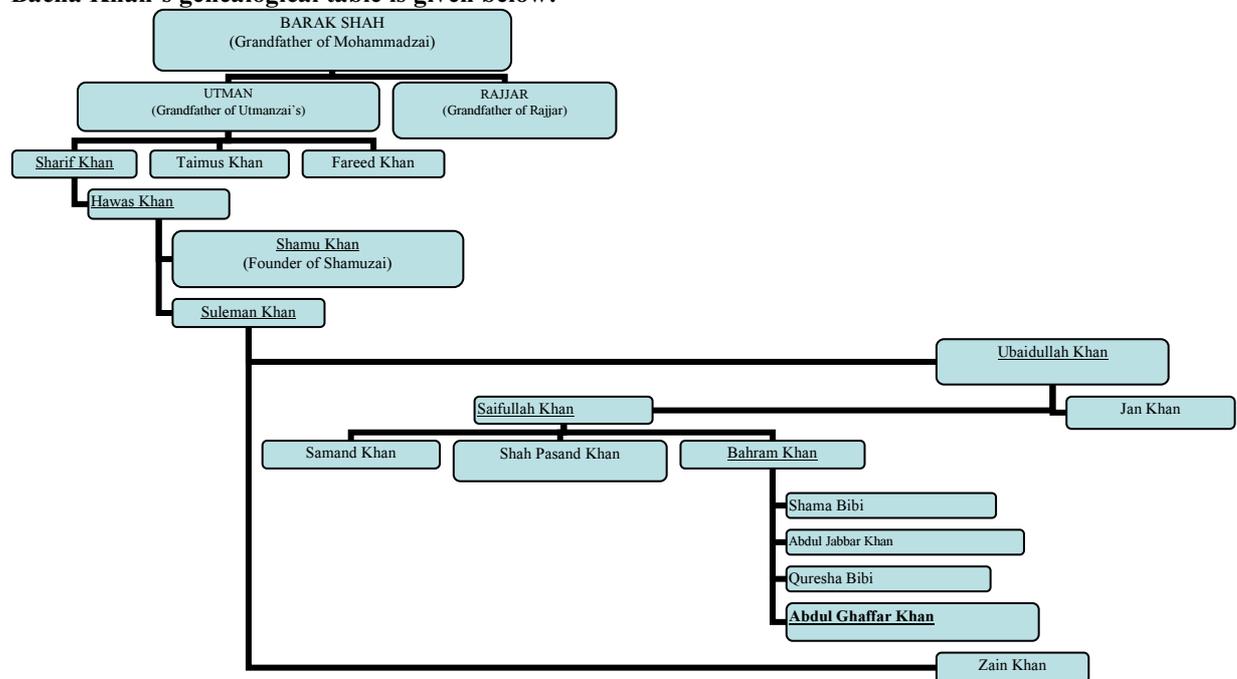


Figure 1. Genealogy of Bacha Khan [9]

Bacha Khan was the fourth child of Behram Khan. After high secondary education on the motivation of Barani Kaka (his family servant), he joined the British army. However, when he saw the rudeness and cruel treatment of the British officials he resigned and started farming on his land. In the agriculture sector, again he was much depressed because of the relationship between landowner and tenants. The landowner exploitation moved him to start reforms and education. Bacha Khan was not a politician originally but a social reformer, educationist, and a non-violent Muslim leader.

3 Change in the life of Bacha Khan

After receiving religious education in the nearby Mosque to his home (called *Swar Jumat* in local language), he was sent to Mission school in Peshawar for formal education. According to Shah [7], Ghaffar Khan was sent to the local Mosque to get religious education. The Pakhtun are staunchly religious and revere their religion, which is why most of the Pakhtuns send their children to mosques. Having finished Quranic lessons at the village mosque, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was enrolled in the Municipal Board High School at Peshawar. After his early education at this school, he was admitted to Edwards Memorial Mission High School Peshawar. Thereafter, Bacha Khan went to Qadian, attracted by the fame of one Hakim Noor-ud-Din of Qadian [10].

In tracing Bacha Khan's educational trajectory further, Shah [7] explains that Bacha Khan went to Aligarh after his brief stay at Qadian, where he was not satisfied. Having spent some time at Aligarh, Bacha Khan received his father's letter wanting him to come home. His father wished that Bacha Khan went to England for higher studies, as his elder brother Khan Sahib was already there for higher medical education since February 1909. Although arrangements had been in place, Bacha Khan's mother was unwilling to let her son go to England. Since her elder son was already abroad, she thought that she would lose another son, as those who go abroad never come back. Bacha Khan then decided to serve his people of the Frontier Province. The Pakhtun were not only backward educationally, remained engaged in factional fights and other evils prevailing in the society. Bacha Khan was of the view that the Pakhtun society must be reformed through education and developed by mobilizing organizationally.

Bacha Khan in his autobiography, explained the turn of his life, that how a missionary teacher in mission high school changed his whole life.

"I had taken my education in a mission school and many of my companions had studied in the Islamic school at Peshawar. My education had created in me the spirit of dedication to serve my community and country, but my companions had no such indication. The credit for this goes to my teacher who influenced me and had created in me the spirit of service to the creatures of God. He was not a Muslim but a British [Christian], the Rev. Mr. E.F.E. Wigram. I said to myself "We Pukhtoon have no sympathy for our poor brother who needs our help and they who came from foreign land and belong to an alien nation and faith, how much sympathy they have for humanity."

This was the turning point in his life that Bacha Khan's life trajectory in serving the creatures of God Almighty and particularly the Pukhtoon who were heading towards disaster and chaos [11]. Ahmed explains that once I asked Bacha Khan that, when did it come to his mind that service to his nation is supreme to all. Bacha Khan replied that it was during mission high school, in Peshawar during study [12]. The two brothers, one the Headmaster Mr. E.F.E. Wigram, serving the nation without taking the salary, greatly influenced and inclined him to serve the nation.

4 Bacha Khan: As an Educationist

Bacha Khan had a multi-dimensional personality and vision. His contributions can be divided amongst these categories.

1. Educational services
2. Literary services
3. Political struggle for freedom of the subcontinent
4. Struggle for bringing social reforms in the Pashtun society
5. Intellectual approach (Philosophy of life)

In his life, Bacha Khan focused on various faculties – including intellectual, social, physical, moral – for developing the Pashtun society, so that Pakhtuns are able to compete with other communities of the Subcontinent. The British Government deprived the Pashtun society of getting educated, by not establishing educational institutions in their region. On the other hand, educational institutions were regularly established in Hindu dominated provinces. It was the responsibility of the State to provide education to their citizens; however it was not like that in the case of Pashtuns.

4.1 Bacha Khan's First Educational Movement, 1910

Bacha Khan laid the foundation of two Darul Ulumi Islamia, one in Utmanzai (Charsadda) and the other in Gaddar (Mardan) with the help and contribution of Haji Fazli Wahid (Haji Sahib Turangzai), Maulvi Fazli Rahi, Maulana Abdul Aziz, Maulvi Taj Mohammad, Fazli Mehmood Makhfi and renowned spiritual and religious figure of Dewband Maulana Mehmoodul Hasan in 1910 [7]. Similarly, Khan writes that Bacha Khan and Haji Sahib Turangzai established small Madrassas in other villages by visiting and convincing masses towards the importance of education for their children [11]. The Utmanzai based Madrassa was established in front of a small hill located in the entrance of the village from adjacent village Turangzai, which is about two km far away from Utmanzai, the native town of Haji Fazli Wahid. There is a Girls High Secondary school, established in that property now.

Shah explains further that as these pioneers were very respectable figures in the masses, children were admitted in the Madrassas in an adequate proportion [7]. This was the beginning of a new era of inclination towards education. While these Madrassas were getting enough recognition, the British Government felt a threat to their authority. They deprived the Pakhtun nation intentionally to get educated, and if they were, it will multiply their force. Therefore, the British Government ordered to arrest Haji Sahib Turangzai. The intention of the government was conveyed to Haji Sahib by one of his followers, and Haji Sahib migrated to Lakaro Mohmand Agency. Afterwards the British Government abolished the educational system and arrested all the teachers of Madrassas. In 1910, Ghaffar Khan, only twenty years old, and Maulvi Abdul Aziz established a madrasa (school) in Utmanzai, and began visiting other areas with a view to establishing more madrassas.

4.2 Bacha Khan's Second Educational Movement, 1919

Khan documents that, Bacha Khan got married in 1913 [13]. Abdul Ghani Khan, his elder son was born in 1914 and Abdul Wali Khan in 1917. After the departure of Haji Sahib Turangzai to Mohamed Agency, the British regime made a surveillance of all his followers. Bacha Khan, too, was no exception in this regard and he was followed everywhere. The government already targeted the Mosque, considering it a threat. And now if the Pashtun Hujra, too, comes in front, then Pashtuns will become out of control for them. Bacha Khan was arrested in 1919 under Rowlet Act. When he was released, he tried another systematic attempt to eradicate illiteracy, unislamic norms and customs and traditional feudalism with disharmony. This time Fazli Mehmood Makhfi accompanied him. A Madrassa was formed in Khalomu (Dir). It received enormous recognition amongst the masses. But unfortunately the Nawab of Dir, with the help of the Political Agent of the Government, banned both Bacha Khan and Fazli Mehmood Makhfi in Dir. The Madrassa was abolished. The students and teachers were given serious life threats. This attempt was also unsuccessful as far as the continuity of the education system is concerned.

4.3 Bacha Khan's Final and Successful Educational Movement

Akbar writes about the final and successful education movement and argues that the third attempt was made after conclusive analysis of the previous two movements [14]. In fact, the findings were that, all three attempts were individual efforts without involving the masses and other stakeholders. For this purpose, Bacha Khan visited as many as 500 villages and made the masses convinced to educate their children. After getting enough support, he realized that it was the best time to launch a systematic, well organized, traditionally strong and a modern approach of formal, technical and vocational educational movement. Bacha Khan was accompanied this time by great colleagues like Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar of Umarzai, Khadim Mohammad Akbar of Prang charsadda, Barrister Ahmed Shah of Prang Charsadda, Mian Abdullah

Shah of Qazi Khel Charsadda, Maulana Mohammad Israel of Utmanzai, Mohammad Abbas Khan Utmanzai, Akbar Khan Utmanzai, Mian Abdul Rauf Shah of Rajjar, Haji Abdul Ghaffar of Utmanzai, Mian Fazli Akram of Utmanzai, Mian Jaffer Shah KakaKkhel, Haji Shah Nawaz of Utmanzai, Ghulam Mohiuddin of Tangi, Taj Mohammad Khan of Charsadda, and Khan Abad Khan of Utmanzai.

A grand *jarga* of influential persons was held in the presence of the above named celebrities. After consecutive nine days of the contemporary discussions, a society was formed called '*Anjumane Eslahe Afaghena*' – the society for the reformation of Afghans – in March, 1921. The meeting was held in the Hujra of Mohammad Abbas Khan of Utmanzai. A three member committee comprising of Abdul Akbar Khan, Khadim Mohammad Akbar, and Barrister Mian Ahmed Shah, was made to prepare Constitution for the purpose. The Constitution was prepared in twelve days. The stated objectives were agreed upon, which included, the promotion of unity amongst Pashtuns, the eradication of social evils, prevention of lavish spending on social customs, encouragement of Pashto language and literature, and the creation of 'real love' for Islam among Pashtuns. The only agent through which these targets were to be achieved, was recognized as, the education. As stated, one of the top most priorities of the society was to educate Pashtuns.

4.4 The Emergence of the First Azad School, 1921

On the 10th of April 1921, nine days after the formation of the *Anjumane Eslahe Afaghina*, the first branch of Azad Islamic Madrassa was established at Utmanzai, followed by many more branches in different areas of Peshawar Valley. According to Akbar, fifty-seven such schools were opened in three years from 1921 to 1923 [14]. Later on the number of schools increased to 134.

The British and *mullah* connivance against Azad schools ensued negative propaganda against Azad schools. One such propaganda example was the spreading rumours about the presence of demons in the big *Shesham* tree in the premises of school. As a result of the rumor, students started to believe that there were some supernatural things happenings in the tree; this made the students fearful. Maulana Mohammad Israel, a religious teacher in the school with the consultation of other members of the *Anjuman*, decided to cut the tree. As a result, students felt secure and started taking interest in their studies. (Interview with Abdul Majid, 1917-2012)

The establishment of Azad School Utmanzai, proved to be a great asset, both as an educational movement and as an awakening movement [15, 16]. Its annual meetings attracted thousands of people from all walks of life. It is reported that some 80000 people attended the annual meeting of Azad School in 1927, as compared to the one in 1921, in which 1200 people took active part [15].

Pashtu, being the medium of instruction in the school, played a pivotal role in the promotion and growth of literature. Intellectuals, writers, and poets attended all the annual meetings. It was considered a great honor to be part of the annual meeting. Some high profile personalities like Ghandi Jee and Nehru visited the school, apart from the local celebrities like Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Sahibzada Abdul Qayum Khan, Haji Mohammad Amin, Sir Abdul Rahim, Sardar Villa Bhi Patel, Mohadev Desi, Miss Maneben, and Babu Rajinder Pershad. It was the beginning of the cultivation of a new educational era amongst Pakhtuns. The poetry competition held after annual meetings, attracted hundreds of writers and poets to present their poetry, in which poets' contributions were recognized through prizes. This period produced significant patriotic poetry. (Interview with Prof. Dr. Jehanzeb Niaz, former student of Azad School)

Apart from poetry, Pakhtu dramas were staged, in which social justice, patriotism, and promotion of education were emphasized. Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar's "*Tarboor*" "*Taleem Jaded Tahzeeb Jadeed*" and "*Dree Yateeman*", like plays received enormous appreciation from the masses. The students of Azad schools staged all these dramas. The dramas became so popular that Sahibzada Abdul Qayum Khan requested the *Anjuman* to restage those for him. His request was honoured and he passed the remarks that, alas Islamia College should have the same talent? [15](Interview with Dost Mohammad Khan, former student of Azad School)

The students of Azad schools also staged a drama '*Dard*' written by Amir Nawaz Khan Jalya in Prang Charsadda, on 25th March 1931. It was watched by 10000 people. Some 168 students took part in it and seven directors, and all students, jointly directed it. It was staged from 9:00 pm to 2:30 am. On the next

day, the then British Assistant Commissioner Charsadda ordered immediate arrest of all students and the writer. Some students were arrested; however, the writer along with some students escaped. The writer of the drama was forced to leave the village and he left for Sukker, Sindh Province. [16] (Interview with Mirwais Khan s/o Amir Nawaz Khan Jalya)

The *Anjuman-i-Islahul Afaghina* established three committees, the responsibility of one was to generate funds, the other was assigned the duty of propagation and the third one accepted the function of schools matters. The big problem that damaged the cause of schools was the lack of funds. Some of the members stopped funding due to some feudal clashes with the founder members of the *Anjuman-i-Islahul Afaghina*. The other faction parted ways, due to alliance of *Khudai Khidmatgars* with Indian National Congress. The archive records show that one kilogram wheat was collected from villagers to operate the schools. It was the time when all the founding members remained behind the bars due to agitational politics in the Subcontinent. (from personal diaries of Master Karim and interview with his son Aurangzeb)

The Azad School Utmanzai received enormous popularity and students from all over the province were admitted in the school. A boarding house was established, to which food was regularly arranged and donated by the widow wife of Saman Khan – the uncle of Bacha Khan. She was also a regular member of the *Anjuman* and donated regularly Rs. 500 to the *Anjuman*. The anti-school masses made many conspiracies against the boarding house; however, strong management committees tackled all issues successfully. [16] (Interview with Dost Mohammad Khan)

Most teachers of the Azad schools were former students of Islamia College, or they were the scholars of Deoband. Amir Mumtaz Khan and Maqsood Jan Khan of Bannu, Master Karim of Utmanzai, Maulana Fazli Mehmood Makhfi of Bajaur, Ghulam Qadir of Akbar Pura, Shad Mohammad, Hakimullah, Husnuddin, Abdul Kafi, and Litaf Gul were amongst prominent teachers. Maqsood Jan Khan also remained Headmaster of the Government school Utmanzai, when Dr Khan Sahib (Chief Minister NWFP) merged Azad School in 1946. [17] (Interview with Abdul Majid)

The propaganda made against Azad schools compelled the *Anjuman* to rename the schools as ‘Azad Islamia Schools’ in 1931. It was a tactical attempt and after 1931, further 34 Azad Islamia schools were established. Inculcating peace and tolerance amongst the students were at the crux of the education imparted at the Azad Islamia Schools. Violence in the Pakhtun society had destroyed the social norms, values and culture. Violence in the Pashtun society is still the main problem, despite the fact that the literacy ratio is high, as compared to the beginning of 20th century. The better infrastructure, standard of education, and good economic conditions expects lower violence in the society. However, increasing violence in the society signifies the importance of non-violence movement of the Bacha Khan. Bacha Khan made popular and spread the non-violence education, having few resources of communication and propagation. Bacha Khan used the non-formal mode of education in a systematic and organized way to spread non-violence in the society. It is the need of the hour to relate Bacha Khan’s lessons of non-violence in our present educational system. (Interviews with Prof. Jehanzeb Niaz and Col Sher Shah s/o Abdul Akbar Khan)

It is also pertinent to mention that one of the strong paradigms of *Azad Madrasa* school system was the promotion of technical and vocational education. The students of *Azad* schools were given lessons in using technical skills, so that they were able to start their own business. Pakhtuns would feel hesitant and shy in starting their own business and trade. The *Anjuman* started preaching to take active role in the economic development of the Province. For instance, Bacha Khan himself opened a trade Centre in Utmanzai. (Interviews with Salim Raz and Begum Nasim Wali)

There was a lack of awareness and illiteracy was rampant in the province, leading to miserable condition for the people. Neither the colonial government made proper arrangements to educate the people, nor the Pakhtuns themselves made any efforts for changing their fates. In the event that there was a primary school anywhere in the province, the *mullahs* would create hurdles. (Interview with Begum Nasim Wali)

Bacha Khan had commented on this situation that it was most regrettable ... that the British government had not established schools, and if there were any, the *mullahs* were set behind them to create rumors that it was a sin to learn at school [11]. They wanted the Pashtuns to remain illiterate and ignorant. That is why the Pakhtun remained the most backward community throughout India.

In addition to other points raised by them when propagating against school education, they said;

Sabaq da madrase waye da para da pese waye
(They go to madrasa) (but do so, to earn money)
Jannat ke ba ye zai na ve pa dozakh ki ba ghupe waye
(They would have no place in Paradise) (And would be drowning in the Hell)

Tendulkar translates these poetry as: Those who learn at school (get modern education) do so just for earning. They have no place in the Heaven and will be tortured in the Hell. [18]

The reason behind *mullahs'* unacceptability of Azad Islamia School education was that they were not considering modern education as education. Bacha Khan (1984) has narrated that once, when they were in Muftiabad – a place near his home village – in connection with establishing a new Madrassa, a mulla, known as *Chitrale Mullah*, came with a gun and books and said that he did not acknowledge the education started by Ghaffar Khan. Also that the books taught in these madrassas contain things such as a dog is barking and 'a big pig'. He asked, is this education (knowledge)? Bacha Khan was well aware of the fact that due to mullah opposition the functioning of schools was not pragmatic. Beside the *mullahs*, the British were also involved in anti-Madrassa campaigning. The agitation against first educational movement of 1910 was neutralised by the significant religious personality of Haji Fazli Wahid alias Haji Sahib Turangzai. Despite imparting religious education in these madrassas as well, the mulla opposed them. More significantly, the name of the Utmanzai based Madrassa established in 1910, was Islamic Madrassa School and so is the case with the one that was established in Gaddar Mardan. (Interview with Dost Mohammad Khan)

Sultan-i-Room elaborates the role of Haji Sahib Turangzai and declared that the name of Haji Sahib Turangzai was useful as well as proved to be a great set back [19]. He further explains:

Haji Sahib of Turangzai patronage contributed towards countering the opposition of Mullah, and to progress of the educational scheme for the time being, but it latter proved to be a great set back. Being anti-British, and associated with those who were struggling for the freedom of India, Haji Sahib made a Hijrat (migration) to Buner – part of the then –independent Pakhtun tribal tract known as yaghistan (land of unruly).

However, Akbar [14] and Shah [7] are of the view that Haji Sahib made Hijrat to Lakaro (Mohmand Agency) after the British Raj decided to arrest him on account of establishing the madrassas. Bacha Khan struggled for the teaching of Pakhto when Pukhtoon were literally forgetting Pashto.

Bacha Khan envisioned a multipronged approach for improving and developing the Pakhtun society. In addition to benefiting from the preaching and tenets of Islam and modern education, Bacha Khan employed other strategies for connecting with the masses; he established the first Pashto newspaper, the Pashtun, in the Subcontinent in 1928. The newspaper aimed for enhancing awareness in Pakhtuns pertaining to important socio-cultural and development issues, aiming to transform them socially and educating them. Bacha Khan used to say that the Pakhtuns are so lagging behind that they are not able to read. Expressing his views about the importance of the newspaper, Bacha Khan said that, 'Pakhtuns literally look down upon their own mother tongue.'

Rasa explained that he was a student in Islamia College in 1928, and the then British Principal asked all the students to write some essays in Pashtu language for college magazine [16]. None of the students replied in affirmative, due to lack of writing skills of Pashtu language. The British Principal then brought some copies of Pakhtun magazine started by Bacha Khan in 1928. The students were asked to read them carefully and confine themselves in writing Pashtu essays. He further says that after that particular practice, they were able to write essays in Pashtu language that were published in the college magazine.

Bacha Khan struggled for the rights of both men and women and a classless society. He admitted her daughter in the school. Bacha Khan also realized during his untiring visits to almost 500 villages that education is the only means and way to address all social problems. He also visualized that Pakhtuns are only reading the Holy Quran and not focusing on understanding the verses in true spirit. He therefore interacted with great *Ulemas* (learned Islamic persons) and started establishing schools, which were having Islamic learning's, as well as modern subjects.

In a similar vein, Bakhtani writes that very rarely, politicians are attentive to social issues of their people. Leaders with vision and mission for their people, try social reforms in their people's life.

5 Conclusion

Bacha Khan's educational perception was to educate Pashtuns using a three-pronged approach. Firstly he wanted that Pakhtuns should be given modern education, so that they can compete with other nations of the world. Secondly, Bacha Khan envisioned that education must be given underpinning the Islamic Philosophy of life. He strived for inculcating peace and tolerance amongst the masses, so that they may combat detrimental customs and traditions inherited from their forefathers [21]. Education may create a sense in them to give up revenge like customs. Women were debarred from inheritance and had little access to education; Bacha Khan strongly favored women education. Thirdly, he was of the opinion that technical and vocational education is the need of the hour, so that the Pakhtuns may be able to find jobs and serve the society. He used to say 'Select right man for the right job' as an administrative term, which was recognized as famous proverb in Pashtu language: *Kar la khalak ogoray khalku la kar ma goray*.

Bacha Khan was a strong ambassador of humanity, and espoused that education should create in students the willingness to serve the society. The establishment of 134 *Azad Madrassa* Schools contributed in raising the literacy ratio in the then NWFP from 4 % to 5.1 % between the census of 1921-1931 [22]. In addition, through monthly journal 'Pakhtun' an awareness of culture, religion, and strong code of life was propagated and preached. He was against corporal punishment often given to the students, however only for moral development – for creating a sense of responsibility and ownership.

Poor students were given scholarships in Azad schools through *Anjuman-i-Islahul Afaghina* [23]. The efforts of educational movement were highly appreciated by renowned personalities, who not only visited the schools but morally supported the movement through their speeches in the school annual meeting. These include Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Haji Mohammad Amin, Sahibzada Abdul Qayum Khan, Miss Maniben, Babu Rajindar Parsad, Sardar Villa Bhi Patel, Mohadev Desai, Jawahir Lal Nehru and Ghandi Jee.

There were 134 Azad schools, 9567 students and 536 teachers in the system. Most of the teachers were also members of the management committees too. There were strong management committees for each school showing a sense of shared responsibilities and division of work that created awareness in masses about education fund raising and dealing of school matters. Co-pioneers like Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, Khadim Mohammad Akbar, Maulana Mohammad Israel, Barrister Mian Ahmed Shah and Mohammad Abbas Khan successfully extended the system of Azad schools.

The reformation of Pakhtun society was a great challenge and far most obstacle still after sixty-six years of independence [21]. The assumption of getting independence from the British Raj first and then reforming the society gradually led to closure of the Azad schools. It was Movement for the welfare and reformation of society that yielded success, unfortunately which could not continue after independence.

SOURCES (Interviews)

1. Abdul Majeed family mason of Bacha Khan (worked in establishing Azad schools)
2. Amanullah s/o Amir Mumtaz Khan (Amir Mumtaz Khan of Bannu was the first Headmaster of Azad School Utmanzai from 1928-42, having personal dairies)
3. Aurangzeb s/o Master Abdul Karim (Master Abdul Kareem was writer, poet, thinker and teacher in Azad School Utmanzai)
4. Begum Nasim Wali Khan (Having personal diaries of Bacha Khan)
5. Col Rtd. Sher Shah s/o Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar - co pioneer of Azad Schools
6. Dost Mohammad Khan (student of Azad School Utmanzai in 1938-42)
7. Dr Altafullah Khan, Chairman, Journalism Department University of Peshawar.
8. Dr Jehanzeb Niaz (Prominent writer, Remained student in Azad school Utmanzai in 1940-42)

9. Hamzad Khan s/o Fazli Mahmood Makhfi (Fazli Mehmoood Makhfi was prominent Pashtu writer, poet and intellectual – a teacher in the Azad School Utmanzai in 1926- 37)
10. Maulana Roohul Hasan s/o Maulana Mohammad Israel – co pioneer of Azad schools
11. Mashal Khan s/o Faredoon Khan (having personal diaries of Abdul Ghani khan)
12. Mir Wais khan s/o Amir Nawaz Khan Jalya (first drama writer in Azad School Utmanzai)
13. Prof Dr Farkhanda Hayat did her PhD thesis on Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar – a mentor of Azad school system.
14. Salim Raz (Prominent writer, poet, and historian of KPK)
15. Zulfiqar Khan s/o Abdul Ali Khan (nephew of Bacha Khan having Abdul Ali Khan and Bacha Khan's personal diaries)

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