Dear readers,

Thank you for taking the time to review my work and for your valuable feedback.

Kindly note the following as you read:

- This is my Qualifying Paper. It was passed recently but remains very important as it forms the background for my upcoming dissertation.

- I need your help in identifying themes that would be good to explore further in my dissertation.

- I will be collecting data in Pakistan starting this summer.

- The QP examines curriculum reform in Pakistan as a case study of policy change. My dissertation will take the same topic of examining how policy changes takes place, but explore it in a much larger province-wide or country-level context.

- I am looking to:
  
  o Make a map of decision makers (individuals and institutions) in Pakistan's education policymaking machinery (i.e. who are the participants - the boxes on this map)
  o Make a model that shows influence and power relationships between these participants (i.e. which way do the arrows point).
  o Methods: very similar to QP - interview data from politicians, bureaucrats, academics, donor agencies, NGOs, etc.

- If you are limited on time, please read the following sections for a quicker sense of the work:
  
  o Research Question (page 5)
  o Analysis (page 13)

Again, thank you very much for your feedback. Please be very honest in your critique as that would be a tremendous contribution to my progress.

See you soon!

Mariam Chughtai
Agenda Formation for Curriculum Reform in Pakistan

Qualifying Paper

Submitted by
Mariam Chughtai

November, 2011
Acknowledgements

For their faith and generosity, I must first thank my committee members: Professors Richard Elmore, Mark Moore and Amartya Sen. I hope to honor their mentorship and thank my writing group members, Lissa, Lauren and Charles, for investing in every step of my progress towards meeting that goal.

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Section 1: Introduction

The history of curriculum reform in Pakistan can be divided into three politically defined periods (1947-2006, 2006-2010, and 2010 onwards). Each period begins with a significant change in direction for the national curriculum policy. The first began with Pakistan’s independence in 1947 and ended in 2006, covering most years of Pakistan’s history. During these fifty-nine years, the national curriculum gradually acquired religiously conservative content, promoting an exclusionary Muslim ideology for students across government schools, high schools and universities. However, a significant shift in curriculum content beyond a conservative version of Islam towards a fundamentalist and militant version was made during General Zia-ul-Haq’s decade of military dictatorship (1977-88). Content in the national curriculum and textbooks was changed such that militant Islam and a dictator’s political aspirations became indistinguishable.

In his book, Rahman (2004) writes:

Islam was used to support the state’s own militaristic policies in such a way that it appeared to the reader that Pakistan, the Pakistan movement, Pakistan’s wars with India, the Kashmir issue were all connected not only with Pakistani nationalism but with Islam itself… [the purpose of a] garrison state is to persuade the citizenry to support militant policies and a costly defense establishment. This is done by glorifying the military and making people accept all nationalistic wars as religious struggles for righteousness (*jihad*). (pp.73-90)

General Zia, as a dictator head of state, decided that the education system should promote a strong allegiance of Pakistanis to a conservative, Arab-Muslim
identity. Thus, the connection Pakistanis had with their moderate, Sufi Islamic roots characteristic of South Asians for centuries was weakened even further.

In 2006, however, a completely new national curriculum for Grades 1-12 was produced by the Federal Curriculum Department. General Musharraf, the dictator head of state at that time (2000-2008), had a personal inclination towards liberal, Islam. In this new curriculum of 2006, there was a stark opposite shift in content towards a secular, inclusive and tolerant version of Islam. This paper analyzes agenda setting and policy-making processes of the second period (2006-2010) during which the national curriculum content was changed significantly by a small committee which produced the final product in a relatively short period of time for a curriculum which was to cover Grades 1-12 through a total of 108 subjects.

The historic 18th Constitutional Amendment of Pakistan (2010) decentralized several federal ministries, including the Federal Curriculum Department. Today, Pakistan no longer has a ‘national’ curriculum policy, which means that the 2006 national curriculum is no longer binding. Post-devolution reforms (2010 onwards) the four Provincial Ministries of Education have had complete autonomy over writing, approving and implementing their own curriculum policies. Thus, the 2006 national curriculum is now at best a recommendation to Provincial Ministries of Education, but otherwise obsolete. This paper does not include an examination of the third period, 2010 onwards, in curriculum policy change since the implications of devolution are yet to be seen.
The period between 2006-2010, the focus of this paper, is an excellent case study to understand how and why education public policy changes direction in Pakistan. There are a few theories that explore processes through which governmental agendas for new in public policy change. John Kingdon’s (1985, 2003) theory of agenda formation remains a foundational influence on new literature in the field. Therefore, I use Kingdon’s (2003) model to understand Pakistan’s curriculum reform, specifically the agenda formation processes that produced the 2006 national curriculum. While Kingdon’s model is useful in understanding many of the systemic interactions in Pakistan’s curriculum reform processes, the model is not very helpful in explaining individual level and interpersonal aspects of what transpired in Pakistan to create policy change. I seek to analyze these gaps in Kingdon’s theory (2003) and their implications. The paper ends with corresponding recommendations for future study in agenda formation literature.

Section II: Research Question

Prior to the 2006 national curriculum, the architects of the 1984-85 curriculum sought for all subject areas to enforce a conservative, Islamic ideology and an Arab-Muslim identity. Natural sciences spoke of Muslim chemists and physicists from centuries ago. Verses from the Quran were part of every subject area, even languages. World history was replaced by teaching a history of the Muslim world alone, and history as a subject for studying a post-independence
Pakistan was eliminated altogether (Aziz, 1993). The curriculum promoted militancy and Islamic orthodoxy through many channels, for example, by glorifying the military and religious warfare against non-Muslims (Nayyer and Salim, 2005). Textbooks misled students with incorrect assertions such as the Muslims and Hindus in pre-partition India (before 1947) had nothing in common (Sindh province Grade 5 textbook, as cited in Aziz, 1993).

However, in 2006, a new curriculum was developed and approved by the government. Several changes were made in the content. The government was now reintroducing history as a required subject for multiple grade levels, removing Islamic content from all subject areas except religion, and in general anchoring the identity of young Pakistanis as South Asians and not conservative, Arab Muslims (Ghauri, 2006). This paper explores reasons that precipitated such change to understand why and how the ideological direction of the curriculum content changed so dramatically. Further, I seek to understand why that change took the direction towards secular, inclusive content versus some other alternative. Accordingly, my research question is:

**How was Pakistan’s curriculum reform agenda in 2006 set, and in what ways does John Kingdon’s theory of agenda formation help explain this phenomenon?**

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1 In Pakistan, the curriculum is a national document with guidelines on what content to cover at each grade level. Textbooks conforming to the requirements of the national curriculum are developed at the provincial level. While a new national curriculum was approved in 2006, new textbooks have not yet been developed. The focus of this paper is the formation of the new national curriculum, not the subsequent process of developing textbooks at provincial levels.
Section III: Theoretical Framework

How does an issue secure the attention of a national or federal government while others, which might be equally important, are left ignored? Kingdon’s (2003) model of agenda formation is concerned with understanding this foundational question. He identifies three “families of processes” which interact to create change in a federal government’s agenda. These processes, referred to as “streams” by Kingdon (2003), are: “problem recognition, formulation and refining of policy proposals, and politics”.

Figure 1: Three sets of processes, or “streams”, in Kingdon’s model of agenda formation, without any area of overlap or confluence that would create agenda change.
Confluence between these streams is the focus of Kingdon’s (2003) theory. These streams are not sequential and each stream follows an evolutionary cycle of its own without inter-dependency (Kingdon, 2003). For example, policy proposals or solutions can be formulated or suggested to the government without a particular problem already on the table. Similarly, a problem can be put on the agenda without a policy proposal already available for it to be resolved. Following is a detailed discussion on streams and their confluence in Kingdon’s (2003) model of agenda formation.

Figure 2: Three sets of processes, or “streams” in Kingdon’s model of agenda formation, and the central area of confluence called “a policy window” where all three streams overlap for policy change.
3.1: Three Streams in Agenda Formation

According to Kingdon (2003), the stream “problem recognition” is the process in which an issue is identified as a matter of concern for the government and also considered urgent and thus high priority on the government’s agenda. At any one time, there are several public policy issues in competition for the government’s attention. These issues may relate to a new problem or an existing one. Not all public issues are perceived as problems by the government. Issues perceived as problems are not necessarily considered urgent (Kingdon, 2003).

A crisis or a focusing event can help draw the government’s attention to an otherwise ignored issue (Kingdon, 2003). Baumgartner and Jones (2005) add that new data or information can also lead to an issue to be identified as problematic. And lastly, policy makers must have an interest or experience with the issue for it to be recognized and become important (Kingdon, 2003).

Problems need to be perceived as urgent to be prioritized over other problems waiting in line (Kingdon, 2003). Problem prioritization is a complex process, affected by institutional costs that limit the number of issues that can be efficiently addressed by the government at one time. Moreover, with many institutions involved in government policy making, the system may gridlock causing delays if there is no consensus on whether an issue is problematic and or urgent (Kingdon, 1984). On the other hand, a difference of opinion on the best policy proposal for solving a problem can also cause the system to gridlock.
Where do ideas for solving a problem come from? The second stream in Kingdon’s (2003) model, called “formulation and refining of policy proposals”, focuses on this question. Dynamics within this stream are primarily concerned with what allows policy proposals to be constructed for the government’s consideration. Furthermore, how many alternatives are developed, the methods by which proposals are altered or even discarded, and the allocation of this work, are all processes within the second stream in Kingdon’s (2003) model.

Formulation of policy proposals can take place in different ways. One would imagine that policy proposals are developed as solutions to existing problems, especially those already prioritized by the government. To the contrary, given the three streams in Kingdon’s model are not lined up sequentially (see Figure 1), proposed solutions can be generated independent of a specific problem needing to be solved. “Policy entrepreneurs” are individuals who develop and propose policy completely independent of any recognized problems (Kingdon, 2003). Personal values or interests are usually the motivation behind developing independent policy proposals. Policy entrepreneurs hope that their proposal will be included in the set of solutions considered by the government when the time is right politically to solve a particular problem.

Finally, “politics” is the third stream in Kingdon’s (2003) model. It encompasses dynamics related to the larger political environment in which governmental agendas evolve and operate. Political circumstances include a range of variables, such as public opinion, changes in administration and
subsequent changes in government policies. National mood is also an important indicator that political circumstances are ripe for policy changes. Interest groups play an important role in this stream since they exercise a significant amount of influence over politicians and their decisions.

Power dynamics within this stream determine which problems are put on the government’s agenda and how potential solutions are developed, evaluated, and selected. This stream also rests on questions of who makes these decisions, and how much of the selection criteria is public information. If a policy proposal is not considered politically viable, it may be altered or discarded altogether. If a potential policy proposal were politically controversial, someone would need to ensure the protection of the proposal-formulation process. Politics, in Kingdon’s (2003) agenda formation model, may be seemingly chaotic but is in fact a carefully maneuvered and highly influential process affecting the entire system.

3.2: Four Regions of Confluence

Changes in the federal government’s agenda come about when there is confluence of all three of the above-described streams: problem recognition, formulation and refining of policy proposals, and politics (Kingdon, 2003). A “policy window” is the center region of overlap (see Figure 2 above) representing an opportune moment when the government has prioritized a problem and viable policy proposals are available. However, the confluence between problems and policies alone is not sufficient, unless a political climate conducive to policy
change also exists so that all three streams overlap at the same time. Of interest is when only two of the three streams overlap. There are three distinct conditions that can be examined when querying Kingdon in this way (see Figure 3 below).

I will seek to describe these conditions, and highlight the ways they influence agenda formation through the case of the 2006 curriculum reform in Pakistan. I explore particular variables that can either prevent or promote complete alignment. It is important to understand the dynamics of these additional incidents of confluence (regions A, B and C in Figure 3), since they help illustrate the comparative effect of removing one stream at a time from agenda formation processes.

![Figure 3](image): Three sets of processes, or “streams” in Kingdon’s model of agenda formation, the central area of confluence called “a policy window” where all three streams overlap for policy change, and three additional regions (A, B and C) with overlap between only two streams.
Section IV: Analysis

While Kingdon’s (2003) model is useful in understanding many aspects of agenda formation, it does not capture the significant influence that personal agency has on the process. In this section, I test the robustness of Kingdon’s theory in the different institutional context of Pakistan’s curriculum reform of 2006. That test reveals two particular aspects of agenda formation processes that are not considered in Kingdon’s theory. The first complexity not addressed by Kingdon’s theory is the effect of varying perceptions on issues across different individuals in the system. The second complexity is the question of whose perception takes precedence during agenda formation, particularly when participants disagree in their perceptions.

4.1: Role of Perceptions

Findings from Pakistan’s curriculum reform case confirm some aspects of Kingdon’s (2003) theory but disconfirm many others. Contrary to Kingdon’s (2003) argument, exposure to a problematic and urgent issue is not sufficient for a policy maker to perceive it as such. A condition perceived by one policy maker as a problem might be another policy maker’s solution. Similarly, a problem perceived by one as urgent or solvable does not necessarily mean that other decision makers would agree with that perception. In fact, policymakers could
potentially place an issue on the government’s agenda even if it is not problematic, urgent or solvable.

Kingdon’s (2003) first stream, “problem recognition”, is a good illustration of these gaps related to the role of perceptions. To be placed on the agenda, a condition must be both problematic and urgent, and a crisis or focusing event can trigger this process (Kingdon, 2003). We find initial support for Kingdon’s theory since, prior to the 2006 curriculum, there was a crisis in northern Pakistan based on discriminatory curriculum content against minorities in the country. Sectarian violence erupted and claimed five hundred lives because a textbook de-legitimized beliefs of Shia Muslims, a minority sect in Pakistan (The Post and Courier, 2005; Qazi, J. personal communication, June 2010). Applying Kingdon’s theory (2003) one could consider this incident as the focusing event that made discriminatory curriculum an issue both problematic and urgent for policymakers.

However, when General Qazi, the Federal Minister of Education of the time (2004-07), was called to intervene by President General Musharraf, he responded that in his perception the crisis was one of security not education. General Qazi believed that the Federal Interior Minister should intervene, even though schools in the area of conflict had been shut down for nine months already. However, President General Musharraf’s perception was different and it prevailed in a time of difference of perception between two important participants. This illustrates that not only perception but whose perception can also be a significant variable in agenda setting.
General Qazi’s perception of the curriculum as problematic enough was influenced upon receiving a letter from a student in the southern province of Sindh. It read: “I am a Hindu and I am studying in Class 8 in Sindh. My Pakistan Studies book says, ‘Do not trust Hindus. They are cheats and crooks and they are disloyal’. How should I feel as a Pakistani Hindu reading this about myself?” (Qazi, A. personal communication, June 2010). General Qazi began an inquiry on discrimination in the curriculum and discovered similar material against non-Muslims and minorities in many subject areas. He reviewed textbooks of his own children, who went to private schools with different textbooks, and found the same. General Qazi then put national curriculum reform on the government’s agenda, and as Minister of Education called a committee to formulate a new, more tolerant and inclusive curriculum (Qazi, A. personal communication, June 2010).

There is some discussion in Kingdon’s (2003) model on the impact of prior exposure to an issue in agenda setting. However, the model does not factor in changes in personal ideology, values and perceptions that the same individual can have over time, or that decision makers may have amongst themselves. Perceptions are altered in decisions on complex issues, where individuals cannot hold all dimensions in mind simultaneously. Disproportionate Information-Processing Model (Baumgartner and Jones, 2005) helps illuminate that individuals pay attention to selective issues due to institutional costs, such as gridlock (Kingdon, 2003), and cognitive costs (Baumgartner and Jones, 2005),

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2 “Class” refers to grade level in Pakistan
such as will power depletion or inertia. These costs can cause inefficiencies in attention allocation and inconsistencies in perceptions within and among individuals. Similarly, a policy maker’s prioritization of a problem is dependent upon an assessment of how extensive the threat of the issue is and whether it is likely to result in electoral change (Baumgartner and Jones, 2005). That assessment too may vary across decision makers in the system, illustrating again that whose perception is important to consider when studying agenda formation.

To illustrate further that perception is of immense significance in agenda formation, we can compare the previous, discriminatory curriculum of 1984-85 to the new, secular curriculum of 2006. President General Zia (1977-1988) perceived the lack of an Arab-Muslim identity in Pakistan problematic. He enforced a curriculum of exclusion and Islamic fundamentalism as a solution to that problem. President General Musharraf (2000-2008) perceived religious extremism in Pakistan problematic. The new curriculum was drafted as his solution under his slogan of “enlightened moderation” (Musharraf, 2004).

The predominant difference between the exclusionary and hate-based curriculum of 1984-85 and the moderate Islamic, inclusive curriculum of 2006 is the perception of decision makers in the agenda formation system. Both curricula, though completely opposite in ideological orientation, have stark similarities in agenda formation processes. Both decision makers were army men and dictators. They were both supported and closely aligned with the United
States. Finally, at both points of change in the national curriculum of Pakistan, the United States was involved in a war with neighboring Afghanistan and in need of Pakistan’s involvement. An exclusionary attitude towards non-Muslims aligned with US goals in the war against communism, and the inclusive attitude of moderation in Islam aligned with the goals of the War on Terror. Therefore, as Figure 3 illustrates, perception played a critical role in deciding what the problem was. By expanding regions B and C (Figure 3) the stream of “problem recognition” was brought in enough that a policy change window opened. The decision to change the curriculum, and the influences on decision makers, seem identical for both curriculum reforms (1984-85 and 2006). The content of the curriculum formulated, however, is entirely dependent upon different perceptions on what is problematic and what would make a good policy solution.

4.2: Leadership Matters

Kingdon’s (2003) model of agenda formation discusses that policy change comes about when all three streams (problems, policy proposals, and politics) overlap and a policy window is created (see Figure 2). However, the theory does not discuss non-systemic factors, such as individual leadership capacity, in pulling the streams together to create a policy window. How can one individual create confluence between the streams while another with the same resources, perceptions and support, is unable to bring any change in the government’s agenda?
A case in point is the minimal influence Minister Zobaida Jalal (1999-2003) had on curriculum change as compared to the high influence Minister General Qazi (2004-07) had when he held the same position. During Minister Jalal’s tenure, there were several focusing events that clearly highlighted prejudice against minorities and non-Muslims in the national curriculum. Growing extremism in the country led to many Pakistanis condoning the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. An eye-opening report called “The Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan” (Nayyar and Salim, 2005) was widely shared because it cited numerous examples from textbooks where jihad (holy war) was glorified, aspiration for sacrifice and martyrdom was rewarded, and discrimination against religious minorities encouraged (National Bureau of Curriculum and Textbooks, 1984 as cited in Nayyer and Salim, 2005). Furthermore, omissions and misleading facts in history textbooks, biases against women, and insensitivity towards human rights prevailed across subjects and in multiple grade levels (Nayyar and Salim, 2005). Yet, Minister Jalal was unable to manage the opposition in bringing about even a slight change in the curriculum content. As a journalist aptly described:

“The education ministry came under attack in parliament for trying to remove from textbooks what was alleged to be the content of Islam. The opposition, including the liberal PPPP, staged a walkout after rejecting the explanation given by education minister Ms Zubaida Jalal that a longer verse of the Quran on jihad was replaced by a shorter verse on jihad in a matriculation textbook and that jihadi verses were removed from an 11th class biology course because of lack of relevance. There was a spate of outraged editorials in the Urdu press about 'removing Islam from the textbooks' after the ulema [religious scholars] lashed out at the
government for subverting the ideology of Pakistan at the behest of the United States.” (Ahmed, 2004)

Minister Qazi, in his time, took on the opposition differently. He came on television and debated with representatives of Islamic political parties. Allegations were made on him in the Senate that he was removing Islamic content due to American pressure. He responded to all allegations, objections and opposition in the Senate and over the media. In his interview to me, he said, “Nobody dared resist me. When I run a ministry I rule that ministry. They did not dare because they knew their own weaknesses.” (Qazi, J. personal communication, June 2010)

A study comparing educational change in Latin American countries illustrates the importance of a minister’s personal characteristics in securing policy change. Ministers who developed strong relationships and alliances across sectors were more successful in dictating the agenda and policy alternatives, in spite of political opposition (Grindle, 2004).

In Pakistan, Minister Qazi was a close ally of General Musharraf and had been a successful Minister of Railways prior to his appointment at the Ministry of Education. He was known for his authoritative leadership style with which he revamped the Pakistan railway system. Being a General himself, he had strong relationships with most military men serving in General Musharraf’s government. On the other hand, Minister Jalal was not from the military and had been a passive participant in her prior roles with the government. She was a primary school teacher from rural Baluchistan. Word was that she was appointed primarily for fulfilling the gender quota requirement in the Musharraf
administration (Qazi, A. personal communication, June 2010). Therefore, it is worth considering that the impact of leadership capacity and reputation for creating change could be important variables in agenda setting and policy change.

We can rule out most other factors as reasons for why General Qazi was successful but Jalal was not because both of ministers had very similar circumstances to work with. Both saw radical Islam and fundamentalism in the curriculum as problematic, and both knew that a policy proposal removing excessive Islamic content would be the solution. Further, both ministers served under the same military dictator General Musharraf for about the same lengths of time. It seems that the ‘problems, policies, politics’ map was about the same in both circumstances.

Another difference between Jalal and General Qazi was the ability to pull a team together to actually write a new curriculum. General Qazi was able to marginalize the bureaucracy in a way that Jalal could not. He could create a curriculum-writing team of comprised of handpicked academics, and no bureaucrats, because of his authoritative leadership style, reputation and close relationship with General Musharraf. In terms of Figure 3, Jalal could only operate within regions where only two streams overlapped: Region B since she could not get policy professionals to formulate a team and Region C because she could not get the old curriculum identified as problematic. Whereas General Qazi was successful in increasing regions A, B and C enough that ultimately a policy
window opened when all streams overlapped. Ironically, General Qazi’s was so successful in his leadership style that his record of conflicting alliances in the past was overlooked. In 1993-96, when he was the head of Pakistan’s intelligence agency (ISI), General Qazi had effectively led the movement for the recruitment of Pakistani students to join the Taliban militia (Abbas, 2005).

4.3: Inclusion and Exclusion

Existing theories provide a lot of insight into dynamics between participant communities already involved in agenda formation. Participants interact with each other from inside and outside government (Kingdon, 2003). However, Kingdon’s framework does not explain how people are made participants in the system to begin with. In other words, how do some people gain any degree of influence on agenda formation processes while others are excluded altogether? In this section, I discuss individuals and factions that were included or excluded, unintentionally or strategically, from the 2006 curriculum reform. These factions are: academics with opposing points of view, teachers, bureaucrats, and international players such as donor agencies and governments.

Amongst strategic exclusion, a glaring oddity is that Ayesha Jalal, Pakistan’s most prominent historian and an internationally recognized scholar, was not included in any discussion of history curriculum reform. This seems confusing because she had, upon former Minister Jalal’s request, agreed to make time for this work and sent in her recommendations in a report (Jalal, A.
personal communication, March 2011; Jamil, B. personal communication, June 2010). Even though she too was arguing for the de-islamization of the history curriculum, she was not ultimately included in the history curriculum formulating committee. In her report to the National Curriculum Development Committee on History, Jalal (2007) wrote the following:

The constant exhortations to proper Islamic behavior on the part of the children suggests that history is not to be taught for its own sake but is deemed to be a means to turn them into good practicing Muslims - a worthy objective but arguably beyond the scope of a history curriculum. (p.2)

The problem was that some of her scholarly work on Pakistan’s history is considered controversial in certain academic communities of Pakistan. For example, in one of Jalal’s (1985) books, she argues that Pakistan was perhaps an accident in history, particularly because Pakistan’s Founder Jinnah meant for Muslims to live in a united India for many years. Jalal’s (1995) analysis in another book looks into the disparate political trajectories of India and Pakistan, where one has had sustained democracy throughout while the other has repeatedly shifted to military dictatorships.

Dr. Riaz Ahmad, the main coordinator for writing the history curriculum and a Professor of History as well, disagreed with Ayesha Jalal’s perspectives on Pakistan’s history (R. Ahmed, personal communication, June 2010). Therefore, Jalal was not included nor contacted again for feedback in any discussion for the new history curriculum. Had Ayesha Jalal been included in the meetings, the conversations, process and outcome might have been different, or certainly more
stressful for an otherwise ideologically homogenous committee. Therefore, the question of whose perception becomes relevant in inclusion and exclusion as well. Ayesha Jalal is a revered authority on Pakistan’s history for some, but she is an entity to be marginalized for others. In case of a new history curriculum for Pakistan, the latter group had exclusive authority over whom to include or exclude in the curriculum formulation process.

Another example of exclusion is the missing voice of teachers for guiding the development of a new curriculum. Teachers were excluded because, in Pakistan, relying on professors is perceived more useful on matters of the curriculum than including teachers in the process. As a result, the focus shifts from the learning ability of students to the correctness of content (Warwick & Reimers, 1995). The implications of this exclusion can be far-reaching. The 2006 curriculum also raised benchmarks for performance significantly. There was no simultaneous effort or policy proposal to prepare teachers to teach higher-level content. Neither did removing discriminatory content from the curriculum mean teachers’ personal perceptions and their impact in the classroom would change simultaneously.

Kingdon (2003) also does not discuss ideological differences amongst participants who are included in the agenda formation system but are marginalized within the system. How are inconsistencies managed when agenda setters, such as the president or political appointees (Kingdon, 2003), view an issue as a problem, but the proposal formulation community, such as the
bureaucracy (Kingdon, 2003), disagrees? The bureaucracy can cause significant delays in coming up with solutions if they do not agree with the agenda (Kingdon, 2003). In Pakistan, General Musharaf and his appointed Minister of Education had personal ideologies towards liberal Islam, and thus saw the exclusionary and prejudiced nature of the curriculum troubling. However, the bureaucracy saw nothing wrong with the extent and kind of Islamic content in the existing curriculum of 1984-85. In General Qazi’s words (personal communication, June 2010), his method of excluding bureaucrats was as follows:

These people [bureaucrats] were all Jamat-e-Islami\(^3\) members. They had come in as young people at General Zia’s time to the Curriculum Wing. Today they were all the senior officers. People who were not [qualified to be] of a particular subject were reviewing curriculum [for it]. Like the chap looking at the Physics curriculum and approving textbooks was Masters in Islamiyat (Islamic Studies). So I said all the surplus Islamiyat, Urdu, Pakistan Studies types to be posted to Federal Government Schools for the teaching of these subjects. Because the guys that I shunted out of the Ministry were actually permanent employees. They couldn’t be posted out or thrown out. They were sent on deputation to the schools.

"Then I wanted to assemble a team from outside, people who will coordinate the making of the curriculum, the consultants. So I went to the Prime Minister and I said I want to hire them on higher scales than the normal government servants but on contract because their job is temporary.

Finally, Kingdon’s (2003) model does not include the influence of international participants such as donor agencies or countries in political alliances with each other. In Pakistan, much of the opposition to minimizing Islamic content in the curriculum was driven by a high suspicion of a hidden, foreign agenda of the United States (Lone, N. personal communication, June 2010). To add fuel to

\(^3\) Jamat-e-Islami is the oldest religious political party in Pakistan
the fire, donor money was being used to fund all meetings of General Qazi’s handpicked committee, tasked with writing a completely new curriculum. In Kingdon’s terms, it seems the politics stream was so influential that the processes in the policy formulation stream were completely dictated by the people in power. For example, no alternative proposal for curriculum content was solicited or considered. In this way, Kingdon’s model also overlooks the comparative and potential over-shadowing effect of one stream on another.

Section V: Implications and Conclusion

In conclusion, the effect of personal ideologies, perceptions, and personal agency can be fairly significant on a system creating or resisting agenda change. A study of agenda formation would be incomplete unless relationships, influences and power dynamics at the individual and inter-personal level are closely examined. Future research should focus on developing literature and refining current models of agenda formation such that they incorporate both individual-level and system-level dynamics within the same framework. Heifetz (2009) argues that individuals are systems within themselves with several roles, relationships and limitations, much like the larger, external system in which they operate. Therefore, without personal agency there remains a major gap in our understanding of agenda formation processes.

The concept of “policy windows” as very brief periods of time (Kingdon, 2003) also needs further study in light of the connection between policy approval
and policy implementation. Current theories on agendas do not explain how complicated problems, which do not have quick policy solutions, can stay on the agenda long enough so a new, creative solution can be collectively formulated. Rather, the emphasis is on fitting independent policy proposals that already exist out there. Does leadership in agenda formation mean that a policy change was somehow achieved, while questions around the policy’s sustainability, chances of implementation and acceptance are a different issue altogether? If not, then Minister General Qazi does not seem much different than his predecessor Minister Jalal in his leadership capacity. While Jalal was unable to bring about change in the system, General Qazi’s was also unsuccessful since his curriculum was soon forgotten once General Musharraf’s military government toppled a year later (2007).

Specifically, with the approval of the new curriculum in 2006, the end of 2010 was set as a target date for the approval and distribution of textbooks for all 108 subjects covered in the new curriculum. According to the Chairman of the Punjab Textbook Board (A. Izhar, personal communication, June 2011) only 10 of those textbooks had been developed and distributed until very recently. The other three provinces besides Punjab had yet to begin their processes of new textbook development, it at all.

Distinguishing between practicing leadership and the exercise of power for policy change, therefore, is an important area of inquiry in how agendas are made and how that process gives clues to the sustainability of the new policies
put in place. A framework of adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 2009; Williams, 2005) may be a good point of departure since it hinges on distinguishing between problems which have readily-available solutions which can be enforced simply with power and authority, and those that need leadership to orchestrate long-term systemic change. In the mayhem of military dictators imposing conflicting identities on Pakistan, perhaps the problem to be brought on the agenda is not which curriculum to enforce and through which dictator. Rather, what is problematic is that the education system allows for decisions of nation-wide significance, such as the national curriculum, to be made by non-democratic, exclusionary and foreign-influenced regimes. There may not be a quick, policy fix for this problem, but the focusing event that Kingdon might identify is the crisis of Pakistanis not having a clear nor cohesive identity today.
Appendix 1: Research Methodology

I conducted one-hour, semi-structured interviews with nine participants, who were closely involved with the 2006 curriculum reform. I used interviewing as the method of data collection since it allowed me to understand how participants from different institutions were making sense of their individual experiences (Seidman, 2006)\textsuperscript{4}. Furthermore, I analyzed government documents, such as transcripts of parliamentary proceedings where the new curriculum was met with political opposition and debated at length.

Sample Selection

- **Government**: I interviewed General Qazi, the Minister of Education under whose supervision the new national curriculum was written. I also interviewed Baela Jamil, a close advisor to Minister Jalal, the former Minister of Education. Baela worked on the initial stages of curriculum reform.

- **Donor Agency**: I interviewed the curriculum reform coordinator, Nighat Lone, who was tasked with facilitating participants in writing the new curriculum. Her salary was paid by the donor agency German Technical Corporation (GTZ), which also provided funding and office space, along with training for curriculum writers recruited from the academic community. I interviewed Baela Jamil (mentioned above) also because her salary was

\textsuperscript{4} While these interviews were interactive, an interview protocol is provided in Appendix 2.
paid by a donor agency Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) when she worked for the former Minister of Education, Zobaida Jalal.

- **Academics and Professionals:** I interviewed academics that led the development of the history curriculum in particular, as history was to be introduced as a new subject and one that was comprehensive, secular and inclusive. I also interviewed other professionals who were active in the overall curriculum reform and write-up process.

**Data Analysis**

All interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. I used EDIC codes associated with agenda formation theory and also developed EMIC codes to ensure that I capture new themes that may emerge from the data (Boyatzis, 1998). In the first round of coding, I identified parts of data that seemed relevant to Kingdon’s (2003) model with three streams in the process of agenda formation. However, during the first round, new themes emerged from the data that needed to be coded. I then did a second round of coding, identifying new threads and aspects not covered by existing theories. Finally, I looked for ways in which the EDIC and EMIC codes could be categorized together by thematic areas.

**Validity**
A study of this nature entails four main threats to validity. First, there is a risk of selective coding of data given my personal familiarity with Pakistan. I might not have recognized and coded some important aspects of the data, considering them as implicit even if they are not. Secondly, there is the risk of biased interpretation of coded data due to my personal experience with Pakistan’s curriculum having attended school in the country. In order to mitigate both these risks, I engaged fellow doctoral students to code and interpret a section of the data. Through discussions with my peers, I identified assumptions I was making in applying thematic coding or in my interpretation strategy. I also wrote reflective memos throughout the research process to identify assumptions I might have been making. Third, there is a risk of incorrect translation since all interviews were bi-lingual in English and Urdu based on participants’ preferences. I worked with a creative writer, proficient in both languages, to translate bi-lingual data to English alone. Finally, there is a threat of generalization beyond the context of curriculum reform in Pakistan. Insights from this research cannot be generalized to other areas of public policy reform nor to other parts of the world. However, as a case study, the research does offer new insights and themes on agenda formation that can be explored through further research in other contexts.
Appendix 2: Interview Protocol

- Tell me about yourself, how did you get involved with this work of writing the history curriculum?
  o What is your story?
    ▪ Where were you working before this assignment?
    ▪ Who contacted you, how were you recruited?
    ▪ How did your interest in curriculum writing develop; was this something you were interested in for a while?

Referencing Learning Outcomes from 1940-1947 (or applicable) history curriculum section

- Can you tell me a bit about where these outcomes came from – why these and not others?
- What is your understanding of the institutional context in which this history curriculum was written?

- Looking at the Pakistan Movement 1940-1947:
  o How would tell the story of victimization of Muslims in India before partition?
  o What are your recollections of history and how you learned about the Pakistan Movement (1940-1947)?
    ▪ Why do you think it is important to tell this story today?

- If you were to describe our national narrative, what would you say?
  o Who struggled, against whom, who suffered, who benefitted?
  o What are the advantages of having this national narrative (or any) in your mind?
    ▪ Are there some disadvantages?

- Is there anything else that you would like to add that I might have missed but you think would be relevant?
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