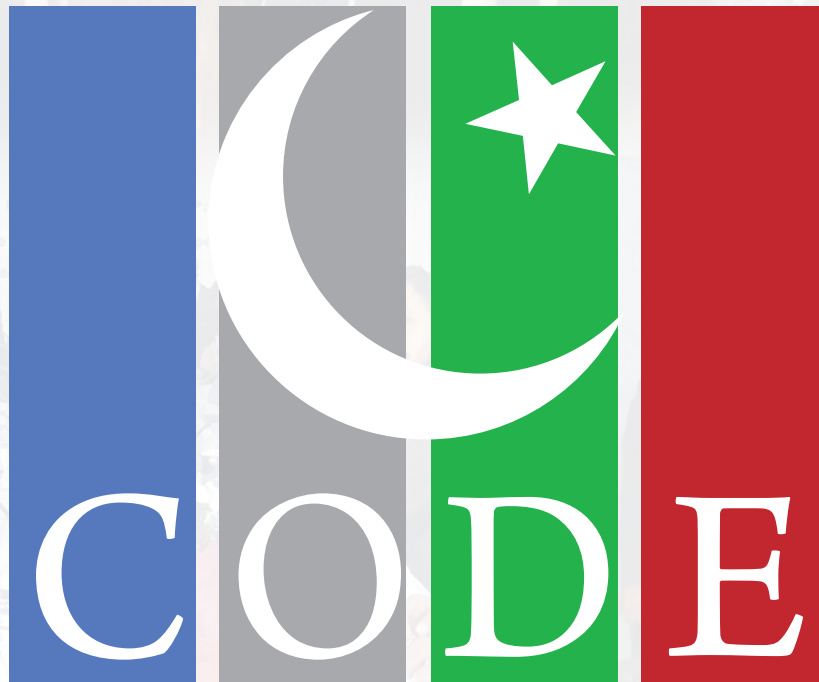


Impact Evaluation Report

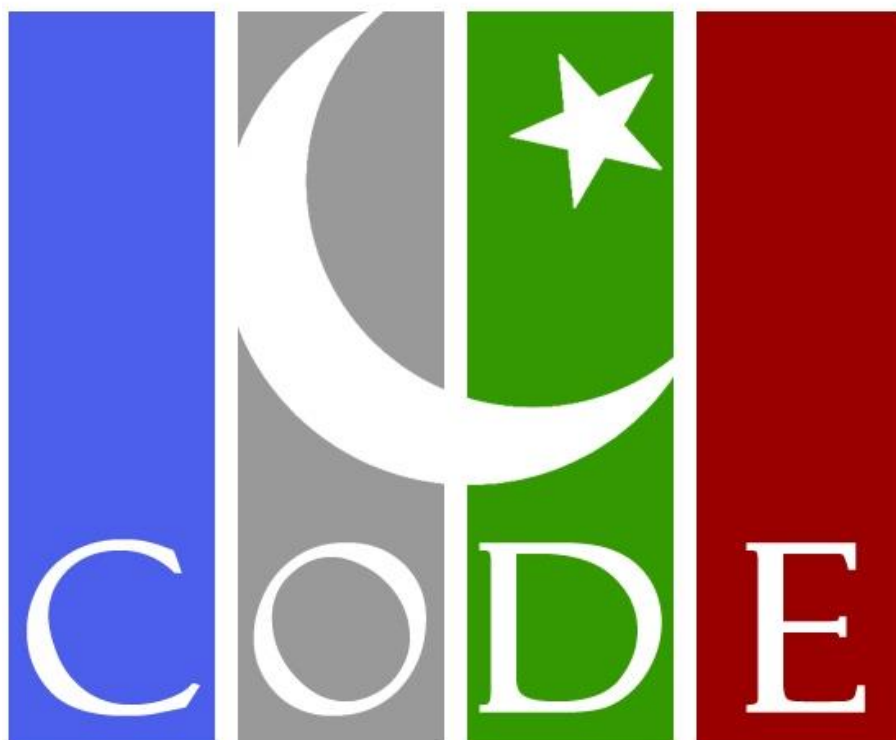
UNIVERSITY MADRASAH INTERACTION PROGRAM (UMIP)



**CURSOR OF DEVELOPMENT
AND EDUCATION PAKISTAN**

Impact Evaluation Report

UNIVERSITY MADRASAH INTERACTION PROGRAM (UMIP)



CURSOR OF DEVELOPMENT
AND EDUCATION PAKISTAN

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About CODE PAKISTAN

CODE PAKISTAN is a not-for-profit independent organization registered with the Government of Pakistan under Societies Act XXI of 1860 with registration No. RS/ICT/793. The organization believes in collective civil society efforts to bring about peaceful communities. Our main focus is to help Pakistanis help themselves because, ultimately, only Pakistanis can develop Pakistan.

CODE PAKISTAN is an effort to build an inclusive and prosperous Pakistan through development and education initiatives. Our special pledge is to groups that represent populations whose voices are least likely to be heard when development and education policies are made and resources apportioned. We aim to offer national and local level interventions in the fields of development and education based on grassroots feedback and insights.

The stratified economic landscape of Pakistan demands development initiatives aimed at social equality. We plan to offer sustainable empowerment by engaging communities for developing their capacities in helping themselves. We, draw our mandate from the powerful definition of a not for profit being, “to promote the public interest and serve the public good”.

Education system in Pakistan is seen as a problem and the majority wants to do something about it. The compartmentalized education system of Pakistan is nurturing multiple narratives in the society. Public schools with Urdu as the predominant medium of instruction and private schools with English, the education system in Pakistan remains divided.

The presence of thousands of madrasahs across the country adds to the polarization among the youth. This has stretched our social fabric and turned it into a blotting paper, where extremist narrative is increasing the radical spot, drop by drop. This divide has decreased the level of youth engagement around their neighborhood and communities. The indifference to the problem is exacerbating the sense of deprivation among the youth of Pakistan. The ever-widening gap needs attention. We believe that students of madrasah and universities need to come closer and create an environment of mutual trust and respect. We have developed a University Madrasah Interaction Program that enables both set of students to exchange views on important national topics.

CODE PAKISTAN believes in understanding the value of peaceful co-existence and the benefits of a tolerant and inclusive society. It aspires to help the youth in recognizing the worth of living in a violence free society where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and has equal opportunities to develop and activate his/her leadership abilities.

As an organization, our focus is to nurture youth leadership in Pakistan to enable them to get involved, inform others and speak out on the benefits of a peaceful, tolerant, and inclusive society.

Dilawar Khan
Founder
CODE PAKISTAN

About UMIP

Pakistan is struggling to contain rising extremism, and polarization within the society. The opaque religious and sectarian madrasah education system insulates its students from diversity and tolerance is compounding this social division and exclusion. The students of madrasahs hardly get a chance of any meaningful dialogue with the students of the mainstream education system, that is, schools, colleges, and universities etc. This causes polarization and radicalization among the madrasah students.

CODE PAKISTAN embarked on the four-month University Madrasah Interaction Program (UMIP) in October to bring the madrasah students closer to the students of the mainstream educational institutions through a series of ten discussions between students of Abasyn University and various Islamabad-based madrasahs. We are hoping that with the help of UMIP intervention, we will bring about moderation of views among the participating madrasah and Abasyn University students.

The specific objectives of the program were as follows:

- To train the 100 participating youth from Abasyn Universities and various Islamabad-based madrasahs in having a non-hostile and meaningful dialogue;
- To enhance the level of tolerance and understanding between the students of the Abasyn University and the madrasahs;
- To create a greater space for a non-violent and meaningful expression of ideas; and
- To study the views of the students of madrasahs and the university on the basis of interactions during the program as a baseline for such future interventions.

CODE PAKISTAN held ten discussions between the students of the two institutions as per the following schedule. For a brief overview of each of the ten discussions, please go to <http://codepak.org/university-madrasah-interaction-program/>

| No. | Discussion | Date |
|-----|---|-------------------|
| 1. | Muslim Ummah and the Challenges of Modern Times | October 12, 2015 |
| 2. | Peace through Economic Cooperation: Can India and Pakistan Move Forward? | October 15, 2015 |
| 3. | Problems of Education System in Pakistan | October 22, 2015 |
| 4. | Causes of Pakistan's Weak Economy | October 29, 2015 |
| 5. | Who We Are? Pakistan's Sectarian War | November 04, 2015 |
| 6. | The Shrinking White in the Pakistani Flag | November 26, 2015 |
| 7. | Pakistan's Cultural Identity: What are the Sources of our Cultural Pride? | December 03, 2015 |
| 8. | Art Forms and Islam: What is Permissible? | December 10, 2015 |
| 9. | Are Reason and Religion in Conflict with Each Other? | December 16, 2015 |
| 10. | The Role of Science in Development and Prosperity of Nations | December 23, 2015 |

Besides the discussions and the study based on the discussions, CODE PAKISTAN also conducted 10 training sessions for every participating group of madrasah and university students separately. The training sessions were aimed at introducing UMIP to the participating students as well as training them on having a non-hostile and meaningful dialogue in a situation where there could be serious disagreements in opinions. The participating madrasah and university students were trained on understanding the topic and giving logical arguments in favor of their stance on the topic. They were also trained on keeping the discussion relevant and on refraining from monopolizing time in order to give every participant of the discussion an opportunity to participate. The participating students were trained on how to express difference of opinion without getting confrontational in a spirit of a logical discussion rather than a competition as well. Since all the discussions under the program were moderated, the students were also trained on the rules and procedures of participation in moderated discussions.

An essay competition was also held among the participating students as part of the program to encourage them to hone their skills of logical reasoning and prove their point in a non-hostile and non-confrontational manner.

Introduction

This report is mainly aimed at assessing whether the program was able to achieve its second objective; that is, enhancing the level of tolerance and understanding between the students of the Abasyn University and the participating madrasahs. To an extent, this report also contributes to assessing the approval of the training sessions prior to the discussions among the students. The main aim of the report, however, remains an assessment of the impact of the program on the minds of the students not only in terms of their views about the students of the other institution, but also in terms of their thought processes in general.

Keeping this main objective of the program in mind, four different questionnaires were designed for the program:¹

- Pre-intervention survey questionnaire for the madrasah students
- Post-intervention survey questionnaire for the madrasah students
- Pre-intervention survey questionnaire for the Abasyn University students
- Post-intervention survey questionnaire for the Abasyn University students

The questionnaires were designed to get responses of the students on a wider scale rather than simple “Yes,” “No,” and “Don’t Know” answers. Therefore, the questionnaires got students’ response on a scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” on five points in a scale. Moreover, the questions were structured in a manner that would assess the pre- and post-intervention thinking of the madrasah students on important program-related parameters.

As shown in Annex I, most of the questions in the questionnaires for the madrasah students take their pre- and post-intervention viewpoints about the university students, and vice versa. There are a couple of questions in the questionnaires about their thinking on the likelihood of peaceful discourse on thorny issues between the two distinct sets of students. A question or two in the madrasah questionnaires also deal with their general views on important subject such as gender roles and Islamic ideology. Similarly, a couple of questions in the questionnaires for the university students deal with their general views on subjects such as madrasahs and radicalism, and madrasahs and women. A question was added to the post-intervention questionnaires for the students of both Abasyn University and madrasahs about how beneficial they thought the pre-discussion training sessions were for them.

Two open-ended questions were included in the pre-intervention survey questionnaires. The first asked the university students to give their suggestions on improvement of madrasah education and vice versa. The purpose of including this question was to assess the students’ perceptions on the shortcomings in the other education system. Their open-ended responses became a good indicator of their pre-intervention thinking about the other education system. An open-ended question was also included in the post-intervention questionnaire asking students to give their views on UMIP in their own words.

¹ All the questionnaires are appended to the report as Annex I

Methodology

As mentioned in the introduction, four different questionnaires were designed for assessing the impact of the program:²

- Pre-intervention survey questionnaire for the madrasah students
- Post-intervention survey questionnaire for the madrasah students
- Pre-intervention survey questionnaire for the Abasyn University students
- Post-intervention survey questionnaire for the Abasyn University students

The pre-intervention questionnaires for both groups of students contained seven structured and two unstructured questions. The purpose of the pre-intervention survey was to provide a baseline to compare the post-intervention survey results with. The structured questions were related to student perceptions on the level of pre-intervention interaction between the two groups of students, their perceptions about each other, and their opinions on the possibility of a constructive dialogue with the other group of students (see Annex I for samples of questionnaires). The two open-ended questions were related to their perceptions about the other group of students, and about their views on promoting greater understanding between the students of the two distinct institutions. The post-intervention survey questionnaires had seven structured questions on the same lines as in the pre-intervention surveys to assess the change in perceptions of the participating students. An eighth structured question was added to ascertain the views of the participating students on the training sessions which were part of the program. Another open-ended question was also added to the post-intervention survey which solicited the opinions of the participating students on the program that they participated in. The questionnaires were shared with and reviewed by USIP.

Twenty students, ten each from Abasyn University and the madrasahs, participated in every two discussions. Thus 100 students, 50 each from Abasyn University and madrasahs, participated in the program. The pre- and post-intervention surveys covered all the 100 students who participated in the program. The pre-intervention survey questionnaire would be distributed among and filled by all the participating students prior to the first discussion, and the post-intervention survey would be distributed among and filled by all the participating students at the end of the second discussion. In this way, the pre- and post-intervention opinions of all the participating students were collected. The opinions in the survey forms were collected anonymously to encourage the students to give their opinions freely without any concern for being held accountable for the views expressed. The sample size, therefore, was as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Abasyn University Students | 50 |
| Madrasah Students | 50 |
| Overall Sample Size | 100 |

² All the questionnaires are appended to the report as Annex I

The pre- and post-intervention surveys, therefore, ascertained the pre- and post-intervention opinions of the target group of participating students on the basis of the following parameters:

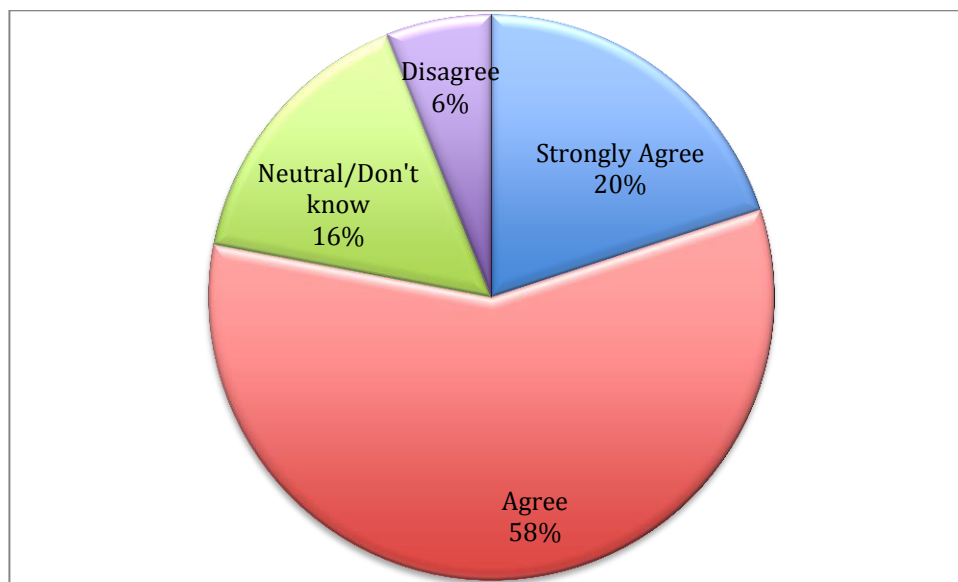
- Did the Program bring the madrasah and university students closer at personal level?
- Did the program change students' opinions about polarization between university and madrasah students in general?
- Did the program change one group of students' perception about the other group of students?
- Did the students learn from the training sessions?

Findings

Did the Program bring the madrasah and university students closer?

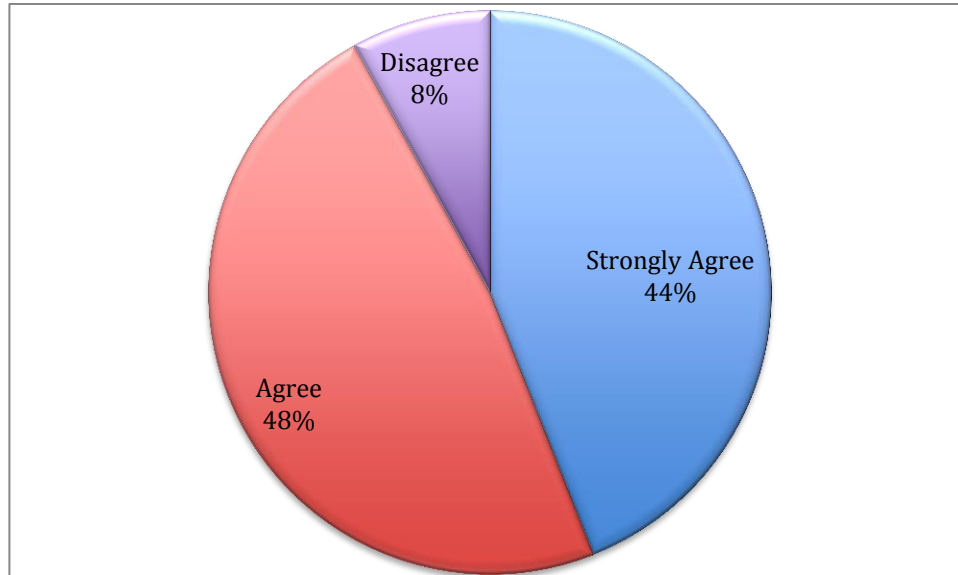
Since bringing the madrasah and university students closer to each other was a key theme of the program, the first question in the pre-intervention survey asked both sets of students whether they were used to frequent interactions with the other. As shown in **Figure 1**, although almost 80 percent of the university students agreed that they did interact with madrasah students, only 20 percent of the students chose the “Strongly Agree” option, which implies that whatever interactions they were having were not as regular and optimal as they would have liked them to be.

Figure 1: University students' pre-intervention response to the question: *Do you frequently interact with madrasah students?*



When the same question was posed to the madrasah students, the response was not very different from the response of the university students, as shown in **Figure 2**. About 90 percent of them also agreed that they had interaction with university students, but as was the case with the university students, only 44 percent of them expressed strong agreement with the statement. This, once again, showed that their interactions were irregular and sub-optimal.

Figure 2: Madrasah students' pre-intervention response to the question: *Do you frequently interact with university students?*



The post-intervention questionnaires for both sets of participating students asked them whether the activity had helped them make friends among the other group of students. The purpose of the question was to assess whether the activity had enabled them to develop any personal connection with the students of the other institution. Except one university student, all of them agreed that they had made friends among madrasah students through UMIP. The one student who did not believe so was also neutral. Similarly, all except four madrasah students also agreed that they had made friends among university students courtesy UMIP. These responses are a strong indication of the success of the project in creating personal closeness between the two groups of students despite the fact that some of them shared that they had been interacting with university students in the past.³

Did the program change students' opinions about polarization between university and madrasah students?

To assess the students' opinions about the level of polarization between university and madrasah students, two questions were included in each of the four questionnaires. The first question asked from the students of both education institutions was whether they thought that there were significant disagreements between the students of the two institutions. It was an important question to assess the impact of the program on the thinking of the participating students, because it exhibited their opinions about the possibility of agreement between the students of the two education

³ For complete results, see Annex II.

system. The success of the program in bringing about a change in perceptions on this was an important indicator of the program's overall success.

As shown in **Figure 3**, before program intervention, 40 percent of the university students agreed or strongly agreed that there were significant disagreements between university and madrasah students (See **Figure 3** below). Moreover, a significant 24 percent expressed neutrality or ignorance on the subject. After the project intervention, however, the "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" responses came down to 14 and 12 percent, respectively (see **Figure 4**). This was a significant improvement over their pre-intervention response to the question, which proved that project intervention had helped them change their opinions about the polarization of views between the students of the two education systems. For complete results of the survey, See Annex II.

Figure 3: University students' pre-intervention response to the question: Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah?

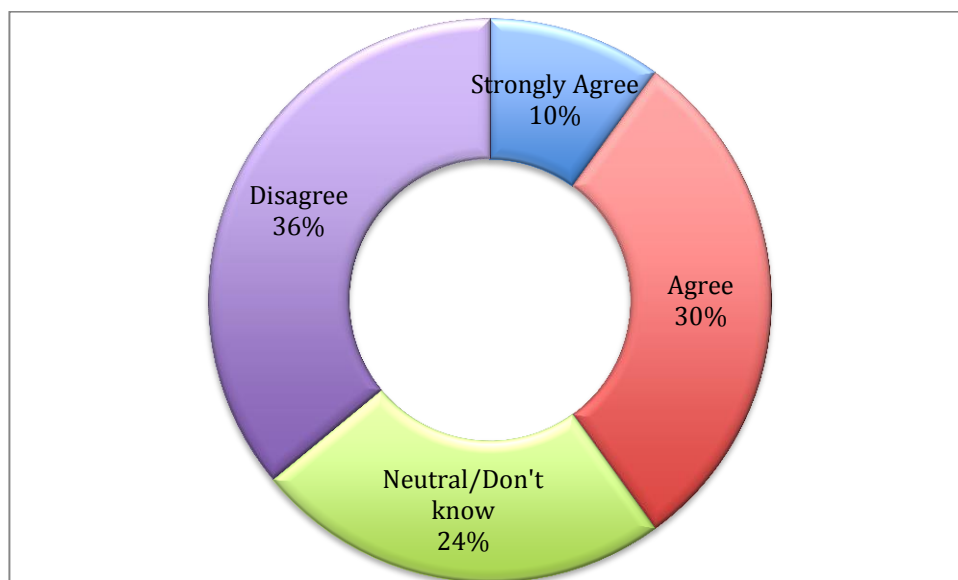
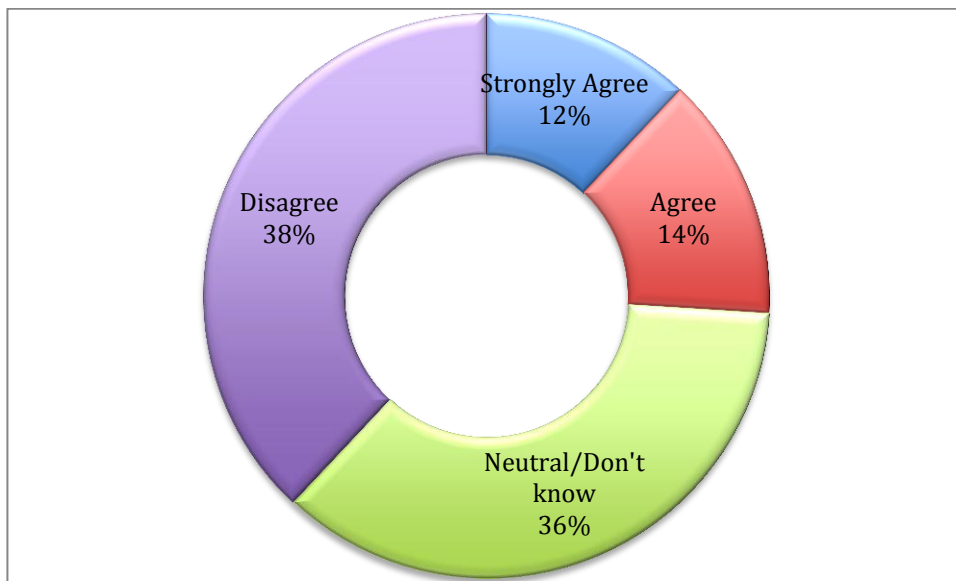


Figure 4: University students' post-intervention response to the question: Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah?



The pre-intervention views of the madrasah students on polarization between the students of the two distinct education systems were even stronger. As shown in **Figure 5**, an overwhelming 70 percent strongly agreed that there were significant disagreements between madrasah and university students. After participating in the program activities, however, the views of madrasah students on the polarity of opinions between madrasah and university students were considerably improved, actually more than the university students. As shown in **Figure 6**, after program intervention, the “Strongly Agree” response came down from 70 percent to a remarkable 4 percent, but the “Agree” response went up from 14 to 56 percent, which implies that program intervention was successful in softening the views of most of them on the polarity of views between madrasah and university students by at least one point on the scale. Moreover, the “Disagree” responses, which stood at only 6 percent prior to program intervention, increased to 34 percent. This is a significant change in perceptions.

Figure 5: Madrasah students' pre-intervention response to the question: Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah?

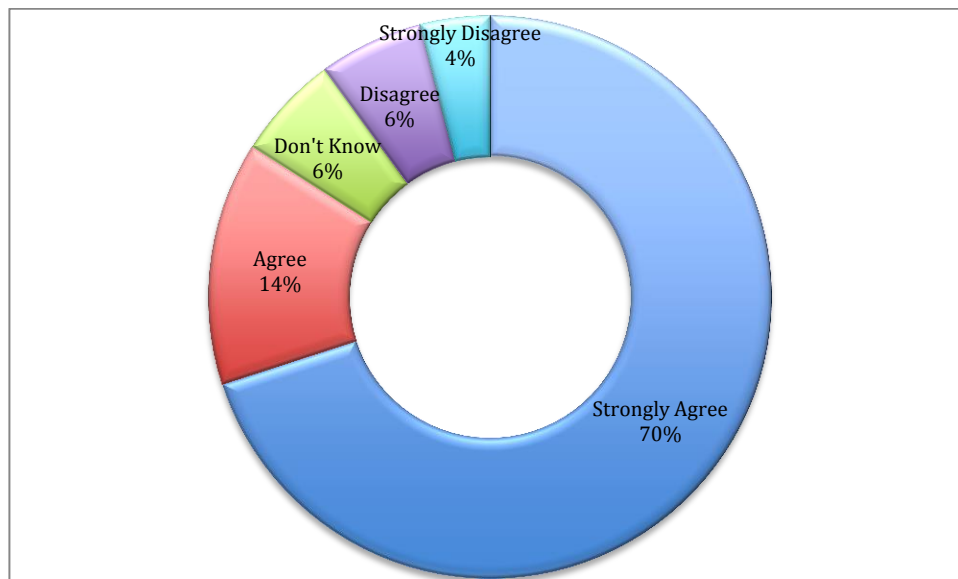
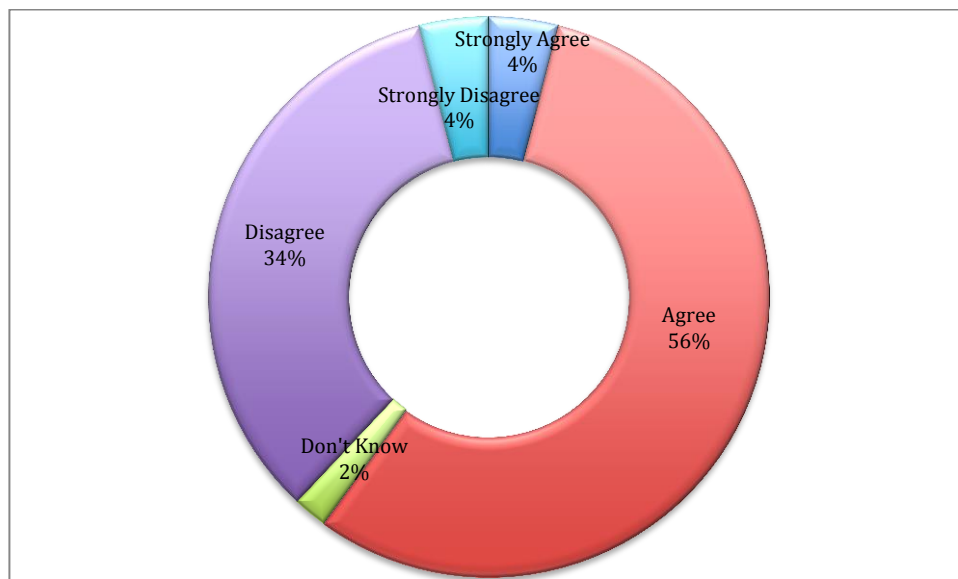


Figure 6: Madrasah students' post-intervention response to the question: Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah?



To further solidify the findings, the students were also asked whether it was possible for the university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country. The question was repeated in all the four questionnaires to assess the change on this key parameter of the impact of the project.

It was interesting to note that while around 40 percent of the university students agreed that there were significant differences between them and the madrasah students, they were optimistic about the possibility of a dialogue with the latter. As shown in **Figure 7**, prior to program intervention, an overwhelming 86 percent of the

students agreed that dialogue on important contemporary problems with madrasah students was possible. Their views were put to a test by the program intervention, however, by actually engaging them in such a dialogue with the madrasah students. The program intervention was successful in bringing further improvement in the number of students who agreed on the possibility of a dialogue with madrasah students, and took it to 90 percent (see **Figure 8**). It was interesting to note, however, that prior to program intervention, no university student had expressed disagreement with the possibility of a dialogue, but after program intervention a small 4 percent of the university students were disillusioned in their views about the possibility of a dialogue with madrasah students and expressed their disagreement.

Figure 7: University students' pre-intervention response to the question: *Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country?*

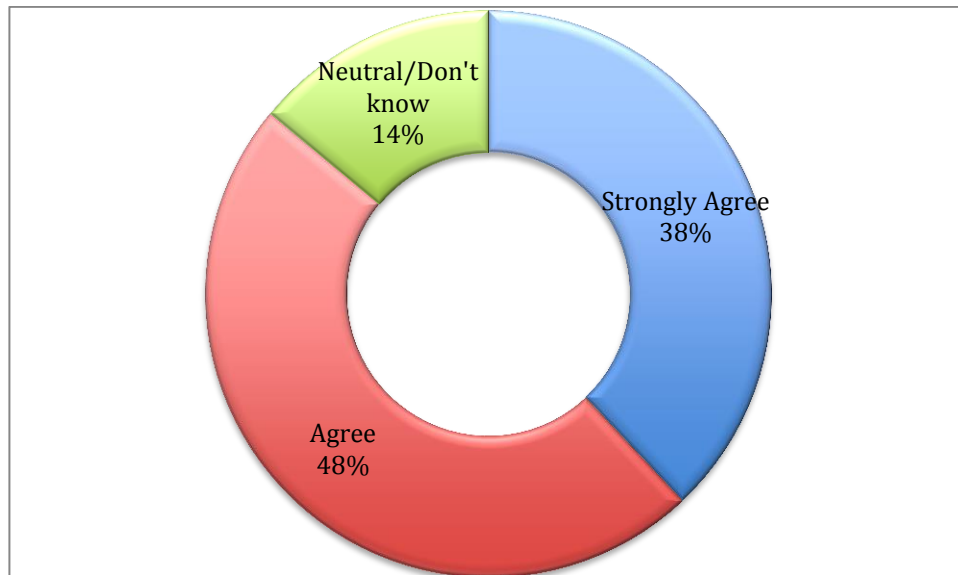
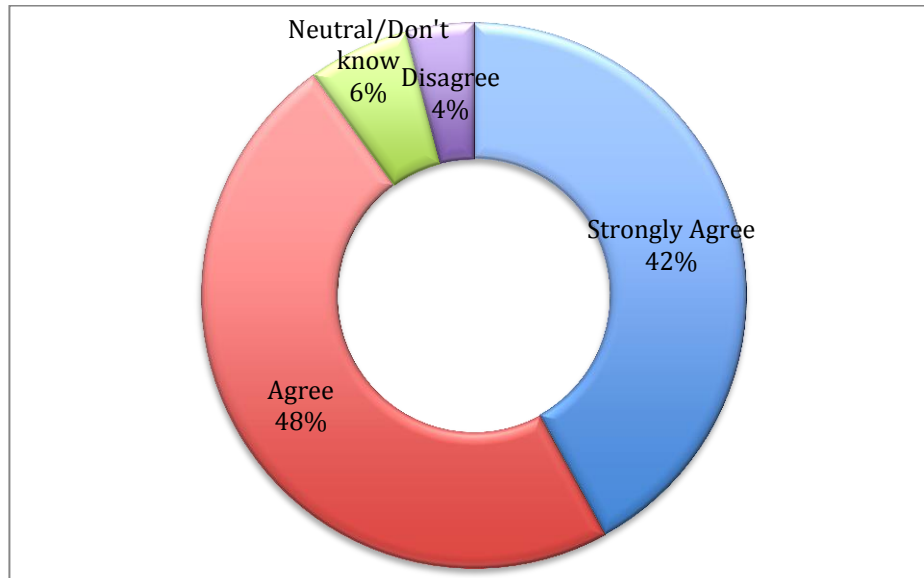


Figure 8: University students' post-intervention response to the question: *Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country?*



The same question was posed to madrasah students as well in the pre- and post-intervention surveys. Interestingly, an overwhelming majority of 96 percent of the madrasah students already believed prior to program intervention that that it was possible for them to sit with university students and discuss important national issues in a positive and non-hostile manner. The perception was reinforced by as much as there was the margin after program intervention, reaching a full 100 percent. See **Figures 9** and **10**.

Figure 9: Madrasah students' pre-intervention response to the question: *Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country?*

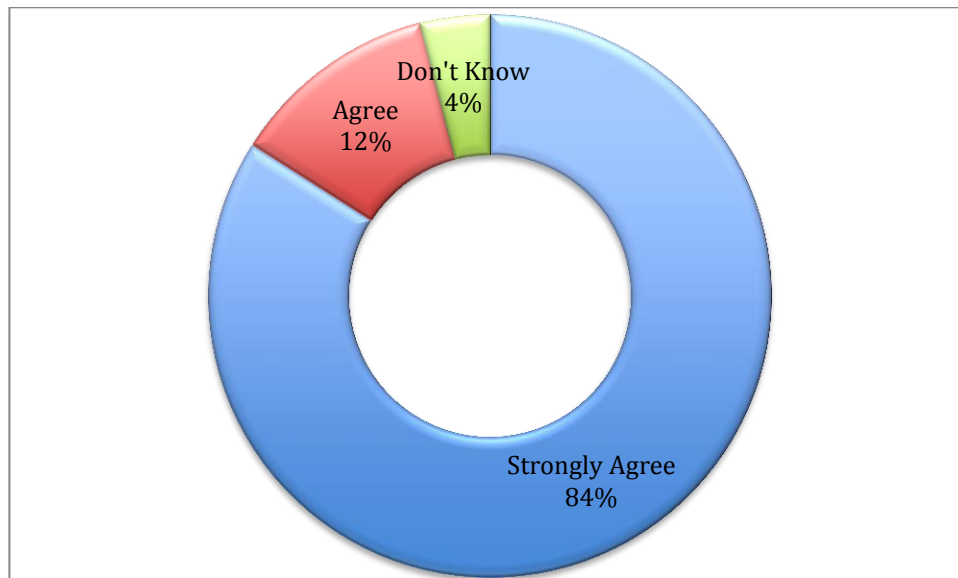
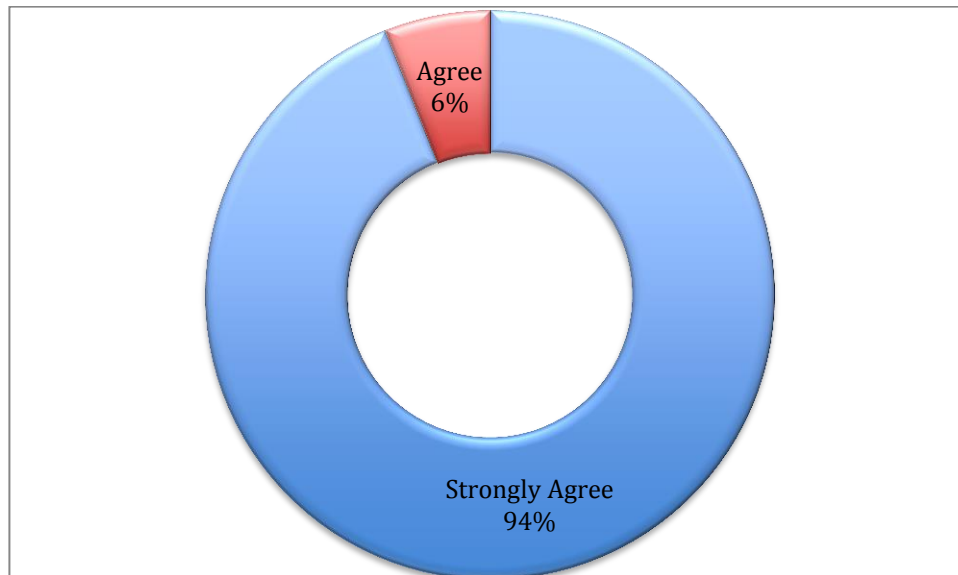


Figure 10: Madrasah students' post-intervention response to the question: *Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country?*



Moreover, both the groups of students were asked through an open-ended question in the pre-intervention survey questionnaire to give their suggestions on improvement of the other system of education; that is, the university students were asked for their suggestions on improvement of the madrasah education system and the madrasah students were asked for their suggestions on improvement of university education system. Most of the university students suggested incorporation of contemporary subjects into the curriculum of madrasahs, while most of the madrasah students called for incorporation of Islamic teachings into the curricula of the

universities. This indicated that the two groups of students did believe that there were significant differences in their education system that needed to be bridged through some give and take in their curricula.

Similarly when both groups of students were asked through another open-ended question about their suggestions for enhancing understanding and creating tolerance between madrasah and university students, an overwhelming majority called activities like UMIP the best course of action and called for more such activities.

Pre-intervention responses to both of these questions allude to the fact that although some of the students were having irregular contact with the other group of students, they had a latent impression that the differences in the two education systems were significant, which called for some kind of harmonization of curricula. Until that was achieved, however, most students thought of UMIP kind of intervention as the best possible alternative for bringing the two groups of students closer to each other.

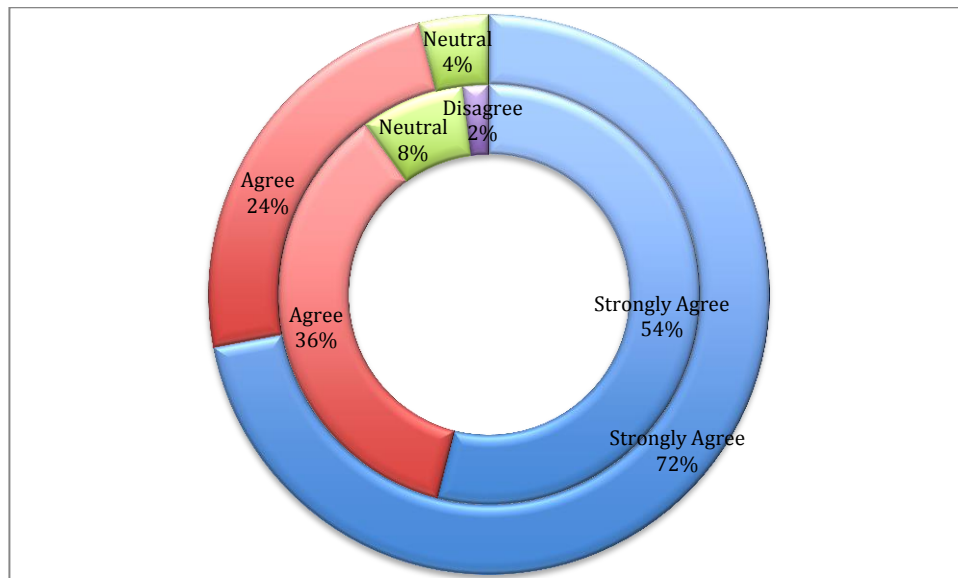
Did the program change university students' perception about madrasah students and vice versa?

The next four questions of all the survey questionnaires pertained to the perceptions of the university students about the madrasah students and vice versa. These questions were included in the questionnaires to ascertain the change in perceptions of the students about the so-called "other."

Views of university students about madrasah students

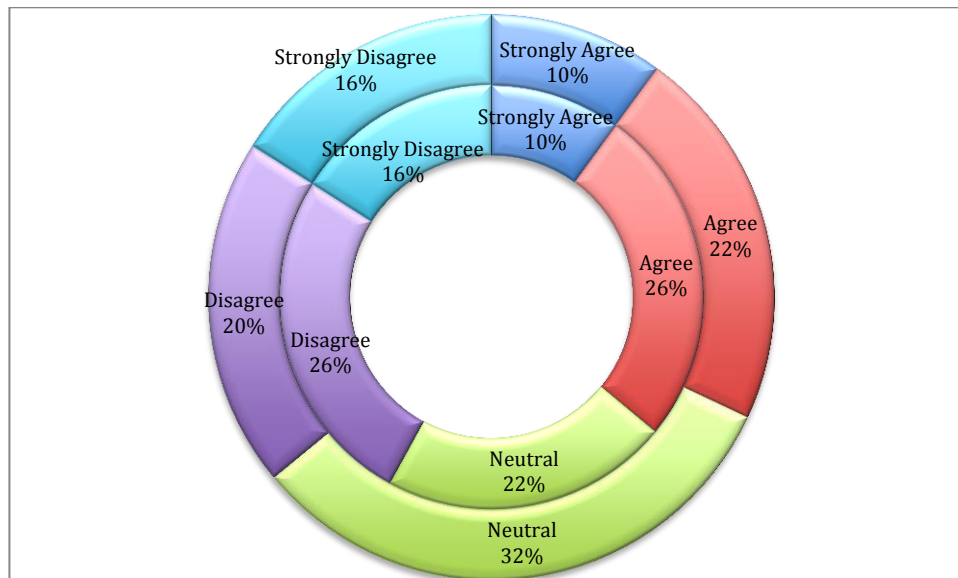
The first question asked from the university students to ascertain their perceptions about madrasah students was whether they thought the madrasah students could become good citizens of the country. As shown in **Figure 11**, although a majority of university students agreed or strongly agreed that madrasah students could become good citizens of the country prior to program intervention, after the intervention the perception was further reinforced. As the outer circle in **Figure 11** shows, after program intervention, 96 percent of the student agreed or strongly agreed that madrasah students could become good citizens of the country with only 4 percent being neutral while no student disagreeing.

Figure 11: University students' pre-intervention (inner circle) and post-intervention (outer circle) responses to the question: Can madrasahs students become good citizens of the country?



Another question that the university students were asked in order to ascertain their opinions about madrasah students was whether they believed that madrasahs were promoting extremism and tarnishing the image of Islam. The program intervention only slightly improved the perception of university students about madrasahs promoting extremism and tarnishing the image of Islam. As shown in the inner circle in **Figure 12**, 36 percent of the university students agreed that madrasahs were a source of extremism and were bringing bad name to Islam prior to participating in UMIP. The percentage, as shown in the outer circle in **Figure 12**, was reduced only marginally to 32 percent after participation in the program. The neutral responses increased from 22 percent to 32 percent after program intervention.

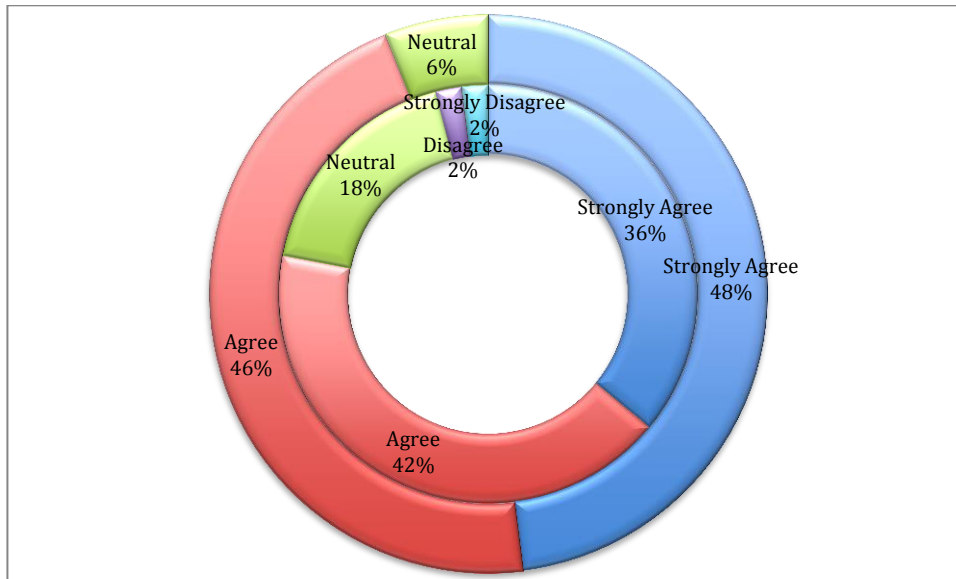
Figure 12: University students' pre-intervention (inner circle) and post-intervention (outer circle) responses to the question: Do madrasah promote extremism and are tarnishing the true image of Islam?



The apprehensions of the university students about madrasahs being a source of extremism were also exhibited in their responses to an open-ended question in the pre-intervention survey questionnaire. When asked to give their suggestions for improvement of madrasah education system, a good number of them called for greater government control and oversight of the madrasahs, which should that they were concerned about rising extremism among madrasah students caused by lack of government regulation.

The university students were asked before and after the program intervention whether they believed that the madrasah students were respectful towards girls / women. Although there was no gender dimension to the program, and no women were part of it on the insistence of Madaris Foundation Pakistan, partner of CODE PAKISTAN for the program, the program intervention, for some reason, was still able to influence the opinion of the university students in this regard. As shown in **Figure 13**, before participation in the program, 78 percent of the university students agreed that the male madrasah students were respectful towards the opposite sex. After participating in the program activity, however, the number increased to 94 percent with no disagreement.

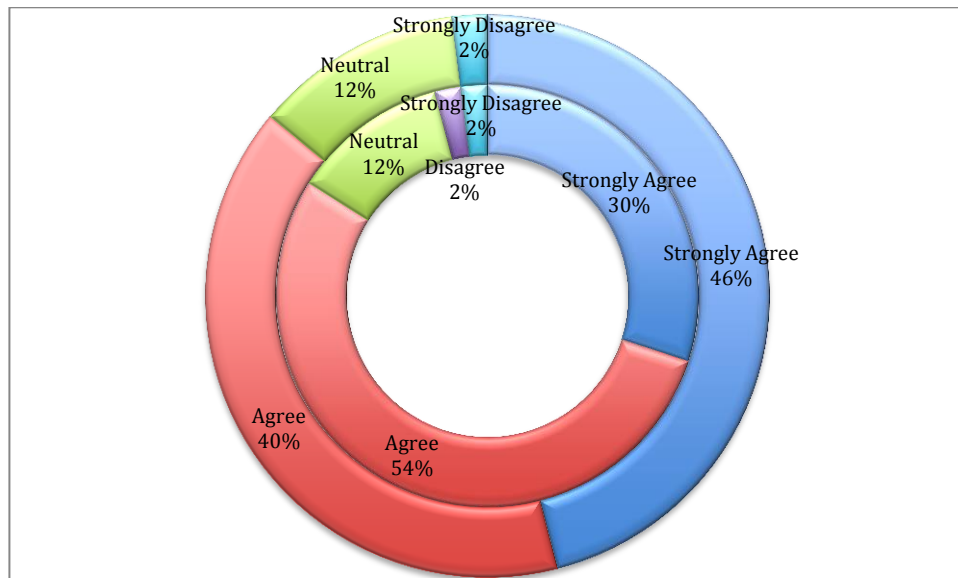
Figure 13: University students' pre-intervention (inner circle) and post-intervention (outer circle) responses to the question: Are madrasah students respectful towards girls/women?



The university students were asked before and after the program intervention whether they believed that the madrasah students were respectful towards university students and their teachers. While only a small percentage of the participating university students believed before program intervention that madrasah students were not respectful towards them or their teachers, there still was some improvement in their views about madrasah students' attitude towards them and their teachers. As shown in **Figure 14**, prior to participating in the program, 30 percent of the university students strongly agreed that madrasah students were respectful towards them and their teachers, while 54 percent agreed with it. After the program intervention, the percentage of "Strongly Agree" response increased to 46 percent as some of the pre-intervention "Agree" responses changed to "Strongly Agree." There was only a slight change in the small disagreeing responses while the neutral responses remained unchanged.⁴

⁴ For complete results of the survey, See Annex II

Figure 14: University students' pre-intervention (inner circle) and post-intervention (outer circle) responses to the question: Are madrasah students respectful towards university students and teachers?



Overall, it can be argued that the perceptions of the university students about madrasah students were not very negative to begin with. After program intervention, however, the positivity was much more reinforced in the minds of the university students about the madrasah students. One question on which the perception of the university students about madrasah students was only slightly improved was whether madrasahs were promoting extremism and tarnishing the image of Islam. Although only 36 percent agreed or strongly agreed prior to program intervention that it was the case, it only came down to 32 percent after program intervention.

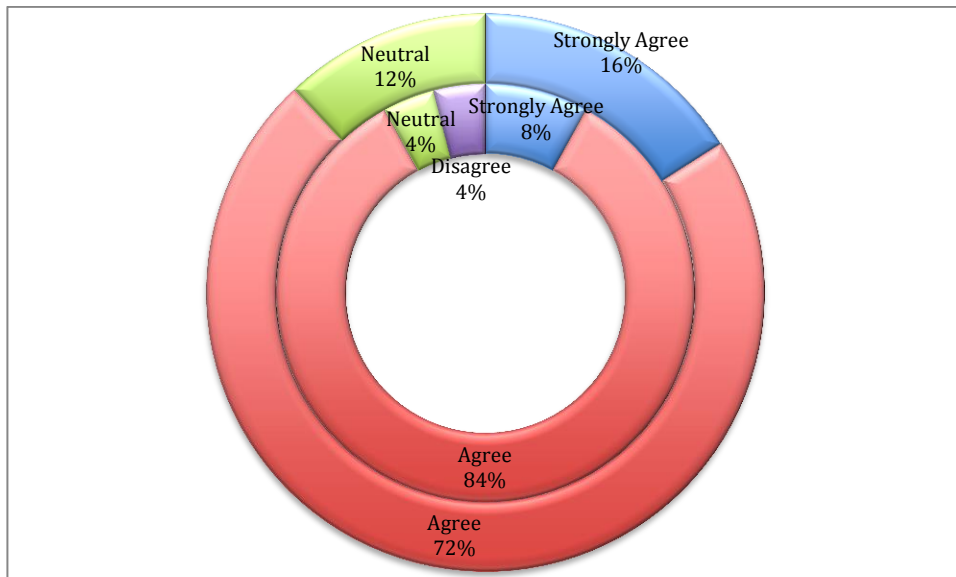
In addition, despite their overall positive outlook about madrasah students, some of the university students (through their responses to an open-ended questionnaire in the pre-intervention questionnaire) did express reservations about the madrasah education system. A good number of university students, when asked to give their opinions on improvement of the madrasah education system, called for greater government oversight of the madrasahs, which suggests that despite their overall positive outlook about madrasah students, they were apprehensive of the impacts of the insular education system of the madrasahs. In response to another open-ended question in the pre-intervention survey, they called for more interventions like UMIP to create understanding about madrasah students among them. Similarly, when asked to give their views on UMIP after participating in the program, all the university students were very positive and called for more such interventions.

Views of madrasah students about university students

Similar to the questions posed to the university students about their madrasah counterparts, the pre- and post-intervention opinions of the madrasah students were also solicited through the program. The first such question asked from the madrasah students aimed at ascertaining their perceptions about university students was whether

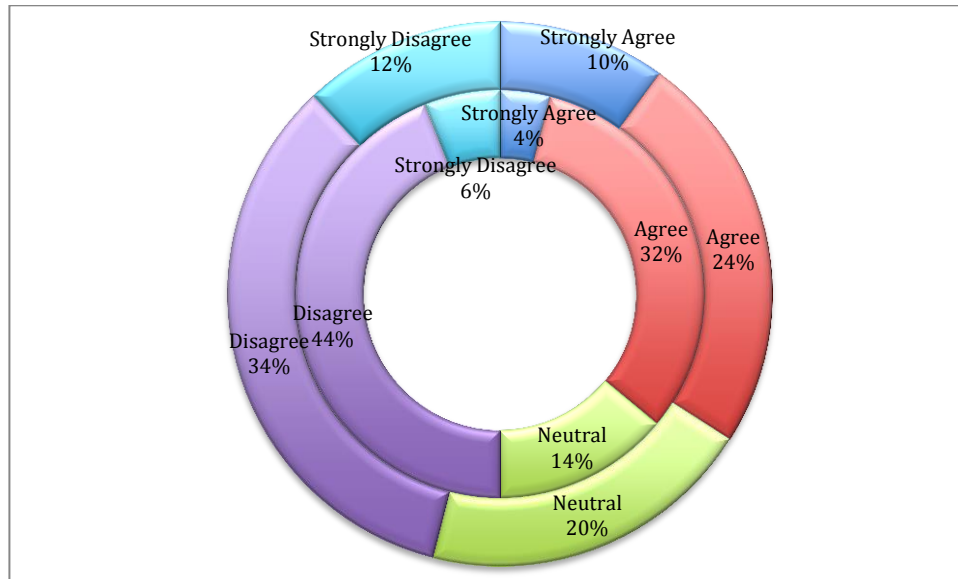
they thought the university students spent their lives according to Islamic teachings. As shown in **Figure 15**, prior to participating in the program, only 8 percent madrasah students strongly agreed that university students spent their lives according to Islamic teachings, while 84 percent agreed with it. After the program intervention, the “Strongly Agree” response was doubled to 16 percent, while the “Agree” response came down to 72 percent, which proves that through project intervention there was an 8 percent change in the perception of madrasah students on the question from “Agree” to “Strongly Agree.” Moreover, the program intervention was also helpful in eliminating the 4 percent “Disagree” responses that were there in the pre-intervention survey (see **Figure 15**).

Figure 15: Madrasah students' pre-intervention (inner circle) and post-intervention (outer circle) responses to the question: Do university students spend their life according to Islamic teachings?



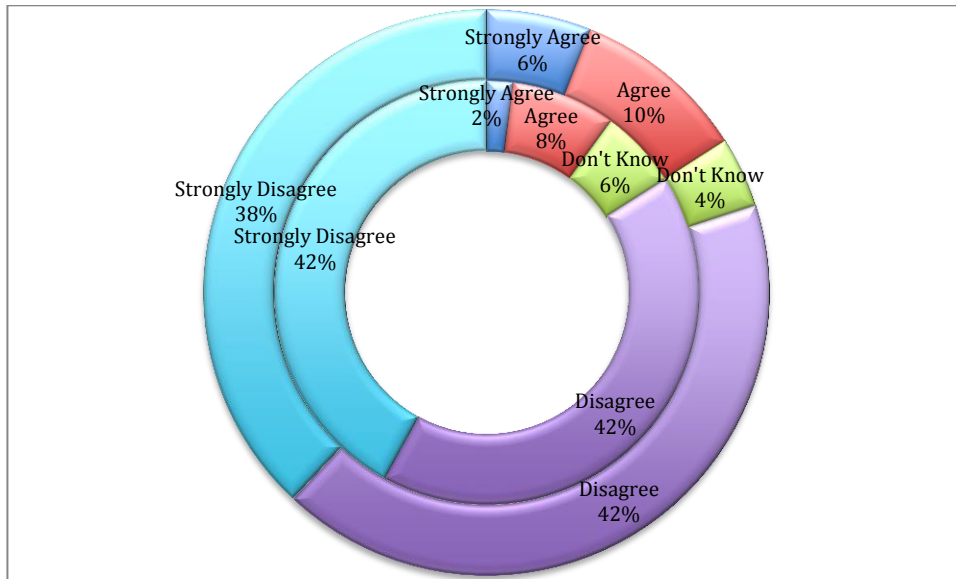
The madrasah students were also asked during the survey whether they thought that the university education was harming the Islamic ideology of Pakistan. Only 4 percent strongly agreed that this was the case, but an alarming 32 percent gave the “Agree” response to the question (see the inner circle in **Figure 16**). After participating in the program, stances of some of them actually hardened a bit with 10 percent giving the “Strongly Agree” response and 24 percent giving the “Agree” response. The overall count of the “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” responses did decrease after program intervention though. On the other hand neutral responses also increased from 14 percent in the pre-intervention survey to 20 percent in the post-intervention survey (see **Figure 16** below).

Figure 16: Madrasah students' pre-intervention (inner circle) and post-intervention (outer circle) responses to the question: *Is university education ruining the Islamic ideology of Pakistan?*



The way university students were asked whether the madrasah students were respectful towards girls and women, the madrasah students were also asked pre- and post-intervention whether they approved of co-education in the universities. Although this was a question about one very deep-rooted perception among the madrasah students, the program was able to create a marginal but remarkable change in the opinions of the madrasah students about it. As shown in **Figure 17** (inner circle), 42 percent of the madrasah students had shown disagreement with co-education in universities, while a similar percentage had shown strong disagreement in the pre-intervention survey. In the post-intervention survey, however, the strong disagreement with co-education was marginally reduced to 38 percent, while the “Disagree” responses remained unchanged (see the outer circle in **Figure 17**). At the very other end of the spectrum, although only 2 percent of the madrasah students had given “Strongly Agree” response to the question in the pre-intervention survey, the percentage slightly increased to 6 percent in the post-intervention survey (see **Figure 17**).

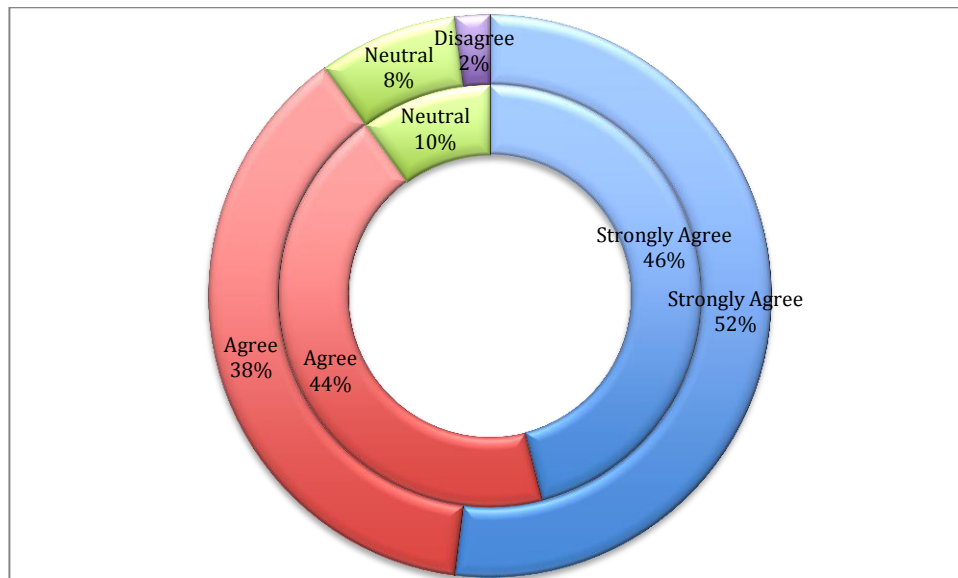
Figure 17: Madrasah students' pre-intervention (inner circle) and post-intervention (outer circle) responses to the question: Do you approve of co-education in the universities?



The program intervention could only bring a marginal change in this deep-seated perception of the madrasah students, perhaps, was because women were not part of the program. Another more important reason for that was that perception about gender roles and gender segregation is very deep-rooted among madrasah students. Even this slight improvement in the perceptions of madrasah students in this regard is a big achievement. As evidenced from the madrasah students' responses to an open-ended question in the pre-intervention survey questionnaire about suggesting improvements in the university education system, some of the madrasah students had called for getting rid of co-education. This indicates that the coming to the discussions, the madrasah students felt very strongly about co-education system being wrong. Despite the pre-intervention aversion to it, however, the program was successful in slightly improving their views on co-education, which is a great achievement.

The way the university students were asked to share their opinions on whether the madrasah students respected them and their teachers, the madrasah students were also asked whether they thought the university students respected them and their teachers. A slight improvement in the perceptions of madrasah students was observed in responses to this question after program intervention. In the pre-intervention survey (see the inner circle in **Figure 18**) 46 percent and 44 percent of the madrasah students responded with "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses to the question, respectively. In the post-intervention survey (see the outer circle in **Figure 18**), however, some 6 percent of the "agree" responses got converted into the "strongly agree" responses, increasing the "strongly agree" responses to 52 percent but decreasing the agree responses to 38 percent. Therefore, the overall responses in agreement remained the same (see **Figure 18**). On the other end of the spectrum, 2 percent "Disagree" responses appeared after program intervention (see the outer circle in **Figure 18**).

Figure 18: Madrasah students' pre-intervention (inner circle) and post-intervention (outer circle) responses to the question: Are university students respectful towards Madrasah teachers and students?



Overall, the views of madrasah students were slightly more negative about the university students to begin with than those of the university students about them. Considering the fact that the pre-intervention views of the madrasah students were more negative, and perhaps more rigid as well, the program intervention had a slightly smaller but still significant impact on their thinking patterns about the university students.

Bringing about a slight improvement in the thinking of the students of the *Deobandi* madrasahs participating in the program about the university students was a milestone achievement because the *Doebandis* are considered more hardline in their views. Let us also consider the fact that the responses of all the madrasah students about UMIP after participating in the activity were very positive. They gave these positive responses to an open-ended question in the post-intervention survey questionnaire soliciting their opinions about UMIP. When asked to give their suggestions on creating greater understanding between university and madrasah students through an open-ended question in the pre-intervention survey, most of the madrasah students called for more programs like UMIP. Similarly, when asked about their opinions about UMIP through another open-ended question in the post-intervention survey, most of the madrasah students appreciated the program calling for its continuity and strengthening.

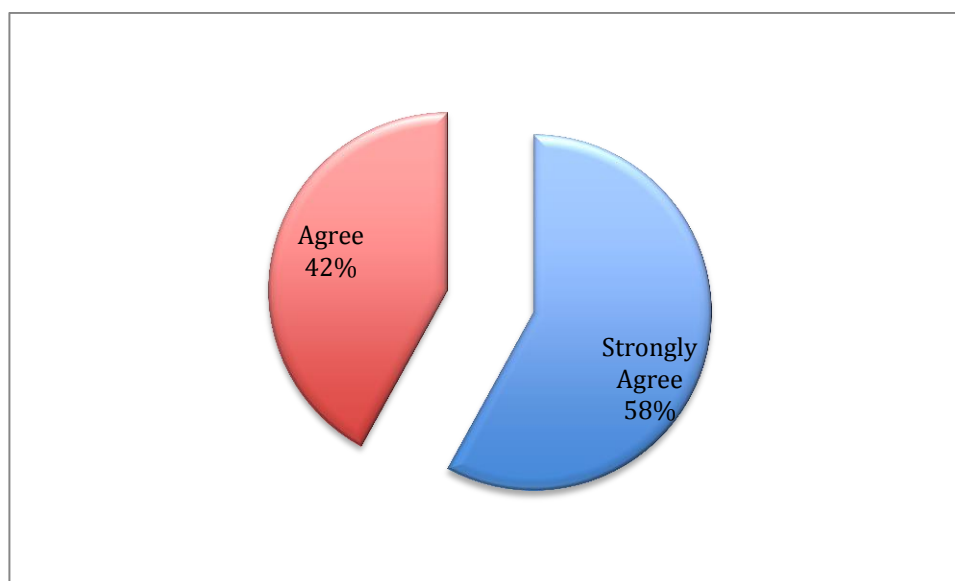
Did the students learn from the training sessions?

The program also envisaged separate training sessions for the madrasah and university students. The training sessions were aimed at training the students on having a non-hostile and meaningful dialogue in a situation where there could be serious disagreements in opinions. The participating madrasah and university students were trained on understanding the topic and giving logical arguments in favor of their stance

on the topic. They were also trained on keeping the discussion relevant and on refraining from monopolizing time in order to give every participant of the discussion an opportunity to participate. The participating students were trained on how to express difference of opinion without getting confrontational in a spirit of a logical discussion rather than a competition as well. Since all the discussions under the program were moderated, the students were also trained on the rules and procedures of participation in moderated discussions.

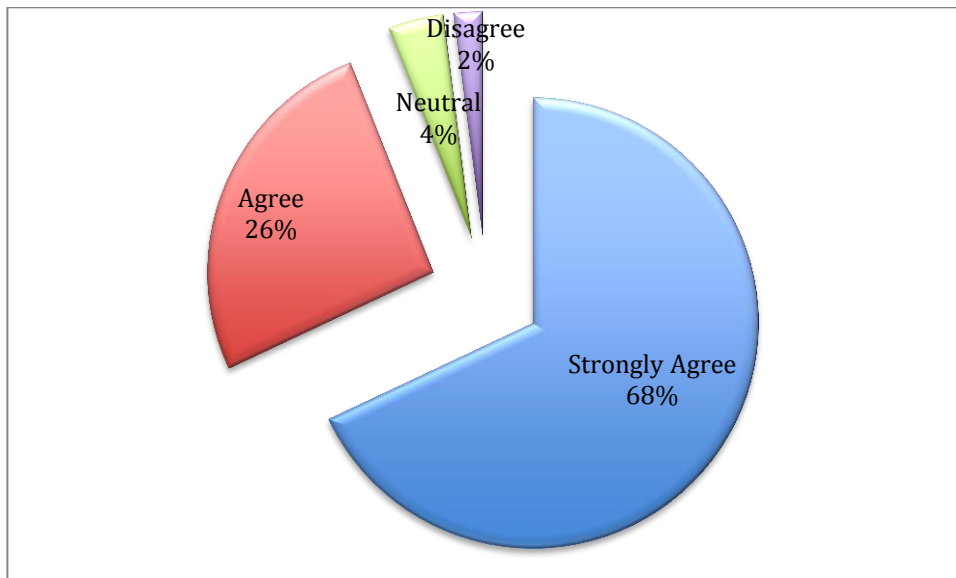
A structured question was added to the post-intervention survey to ascertain the opinions of the beneficiary students about the training sessions. The question asked the students whether they learned anything new about participating in discussions through training sessions held with them. All the participating university students replied in positive to the question. Actually, 58 percent of the university students strongly agreed that they had learnt something from the trainings, and 42 percent gave the “agree” response (see **Figure 19** below).

Figure 19: University students' post-intervention response to the question: Did you learn anything new about participating in discussions through the training sessions held with you?



The responses of the madrasah students to the question were a little more diversified, but still overwhelmingly approving of the training sessions. 68 percent of the madrasah students strongly agreed that they had learned something new from the training sessions, while 26 percent gave the “Agree” response. Although there were 4 percent neutral and 2 percent negative responses, the “Strongly Agree” responses at 68 percent were higher than the “Strongly Agree” responses of the university students at 58 percent (see **Figure 20** below).

Figure 20: Madrasah students' post-intervention response to the question: *Did you learn anything new about participating in discussions through the training sessions held with you?*



As shown from the survey results, 97 percent of all the students believed that they had learnt something new about conducting discussions from the training sessions, which is an exceptionally good approval rating of the training sessions. It is also important to note that 63 percent of the total responses were “Strongly Agree,” which is another indication of the success of the training sessions.

Conclusion

The University Madrasah Interaction Program (UMIP) was an important initiative that brought the madrasah and university students closer to each other. The survey results showed that although an overwhelming majority of the students agreed that they had frequent interactions with the students of the other education system, the “Strongly Agree” responses were still quite low. And when they were asked after the program intervention whether they had many any friends among the group of students, an overwhelming majority of them shared that they did so. This indicated the success of the program in bringing the students of the two institutions closer to each other at a personal level.

The program intervention also helped in moderation of opinions among the students of both the institutions on the possibility of a dialogue between them. The opinions of both madrasah and university were considerably moderated on the question of existing disagreements between the students of the two education systems. Although the students of madrasahs and Abasyn University were already positive about the possibility of a dialogue on sensitive subjects between them prior to program intervention, their positivity was further reinforced after the program intervention.

Although some of the students had had irregular contact with the other group of students, their responses to an open-ended question in the pre-intervention survey indicated that they wanted some sort of harmonization between madrasahs and universities to bridge the significant differences between the two education systems. If on the one hand the madrasah students were calling for greater inclusion of Islamic teachings in universities, the university students on the other hand called for greater inclusion of contemporary subjects in the madrasahs. Responding to another open-ended question in the questionnaire, most of the students termed UMIP kind of interventions as the best possible alternative for bringing the two groups of students closer to each other, until some sort of harmonization was achieved between the two systems of education at the government level.

As far as the perceptions of the students of the two systems of education about each other were concerned, the program brought about changes in the perceptions of both groups of students. The influence on some parameters was more pronounced than the others though. For instance, the opinion of some university students (not majority) about madrasahs being a source of extremism was only slightly changed for the better. On the other hand, the opinion of a small minority of madrasah students viewing universities as harming Islamic ideology of Pakistan actually hardened after program intervention.

On all other counts, however, the perceptions were improved on both the sides about each other. The university students’ perceptions about the potential of madrasah students to become good citizens, madrasah students being respectful towards them, their teachers, and women in general were considerably watered-down after participating in the program. The program intervention also diluted the more extreme views of the madrasah students about the university students. The perception of the madrasah students about university students spending their lives according to Islamic

teaching, co-education in universities, and the level of respect of the university students towards them and their teachers also showed improvement after participation in the program.

Therefore, we can argue that the program was able to influence the thinking of the students of both the education systems about the other group. The views of university students, however, were positively affected more than those of the madrasah students. It was not completely unexpected considering the fact that the madrasah education system is more rigid, exclusive, and insular than the university education system. Even then, the program was somehow able to influence the thinking of madrasah students about university students on subjects like co-education.

The students also found the trainings sessions very helpful in enhancing their understanding about conducting a meaningful dialogue in a non-hostile environment on issues on which there could be strong differences of opinion.

Recommendations for future Interventions in the Field

On the basis of the findings of this report, the following is recommended for future interventions directed toward enhancing the level of tolerance and understanding between the madrasah and university students:

- Madrasah regulation is a long-standing objective of the government of Pakistan. Registration of madrasahs is the 10th point in the 20-point National Action Plan of the government announced in December 2014. Until now, however, the government has made only limited progress in regulating and reforming the madrasahs. In such a scenario, there is a dire need for further dialogue between madrasah and university students involving more madrasahs and universities.
- The interaction between madrasah and university students needs to be made multi-faceted with inclusion of madrasah-university debating competitions, and sports competitions etc. This would not only enable the students of madrasahs to interact with the students of mainstream education institutions but would also provide more opportunities for understanding madrasah education and its students better.
- There is an ongoing debate at the policy level in Pakistan about an “identity deficit” in the country. To develop national consensus on a common national identity, there is a need for enhancing the level of interaction between the two education systems. Besides the students, meaningful interaction between the faculties and administrations of madrasahs and universities needs to be encouraged as well.
- Peace and tolerance needs to be inculcated through education. Therefore, there is a serious need for engaging the students from across this educational divide in, first, getting to know each other and the problems of the society well; and second, in working together for resolving common problems. Therefore, joint workshops for the madrasah and university students need to be conducted in which the students of both education systems should be engaged in learning, role-play, problem solving, and other joint academic activities.

Annex I: Sample Questionnaires

Pre-intervention Survey Questionnaire for University Students

CODE PAKISTAN – University Madrasah Interaction Program (UMIP)

Pre-Intervention Survey Questionnaire for University Students

(Please tick one option)

| No. | Question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral / Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-----|--|----------------|-------|----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. | Do you frequently interact with madrasah students? | | | | | |
| 2. | Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah? | | | | | |
| 3. | Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country? | | | | | |
| 4. | Can madrasah students become good citizens of the country? | | | | | |
| 5. | Do madrasahs promote extremism and are tarnishing the true image of Islam? | | | | | |
| 6. | Are madrasah students respectful toward girls / women? | | | | | |
| 7. | Are madrasah students respectful towards university students and teachers? | | | | | |

8. What are your suggestions for improving madrasah education in the country?

9. What is the best course of action for enhancing understanding and creating tolerance for each other between the students of madrasahs and universities?

Post-intervention Survey Questionnaire for University Students

CODE PAKISTAN – University Madrasah Interaction Program (UMIP)

Post-Intervention Survey Questionnaire for University Students

(Please tick one option)

| No. | Question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral / Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-----|--|----------------|-------|----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. | Has participation in the discussions helped you make friends among madrasah students? | | | | | |
| 2. | Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah? | | | | | |
| 3. | Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country? | | | | | |
| 4. | Can madrasah students become good citizens of the country? | | | | | |
| 5. | Do madrasahs promote extremism and are tarnishing the true image of Islam? | | | | | |
| 6. | Are madrasah students respectful towards girls / women? | | | | | |
| 7. | Are madrasah students respectful towards university students and teachers? | | | | | |
| 8. | Did you learn anything new about participating in discussions through the training sessions held with you? | | | | | |

9. Please explain in your own words what you think of the activity you participated in?

Pre-Intervention Survey Questionnaire for Madrasah Students

کوڈ پاکستان یونیورسٹی مدرسہ انٹریکشن پروگرام
ایکٹیوٹی سے پہلے کا سوالنامہ

(کسی ایک آپشن پر نشان لگائیں)

| ہرگز نہیں | نہیں | پتہ نہیں | ہاں کچھ حد تک | جی ہاں بالکل / ہمیشہ | |
|-----------|------|----------|---------------|----------------------|---|
| | | | | | ۱ کیا آپ کی یونیورسٹی کے طلبہ کے ساتھ اکثر ملاقات ہوتی رہتی ہے؟ |
| | | | | | ۲ کیا یونیورسٹی اور مدارس کے طلبہ کی سوچ میں کافی فرق ہے؟ |
| | | | | | ۳ کیا یونیورسٹی اور مدارس کے طلبہ عصر حاضر کے اہم ملکی موضوعات پر ایک دوسرے کے ساتھ مثبت انداز میں بات چیت کر سکتے ہیں؟ |
| | | | | | ۴ کیا یونیورسٹی کے طلبہ اپنی زندگی اسلامی تعلیمات کے مطابق گزارتے ہیں؟ |
| | | | | | ۵ کیا یونیورسٹی کی تعلیم پاکستان کا اسلامی نظریہ اور تشخص پامال کر رہی ہے؟ |
| | | | | | ۶ کیا آپ کے خیال میں یونیورسٹی میں مخلوط نظام تعلیم درست ہے؟ |
| | | | | | ۷ کیا یونیورسٹی کے طلبہ بالعموم مدارس کے طلبہ اور اساتذہ کا احترام کرتے ہیں؟ |

۸۔ یونیورسٹی کے نظام تعلیم میں کیسے بہتری لائی جاسکتی ہے؟

۹۔ یونیورسٹی اور مدارس کے طلبہ کے مابین کس طرح انڈر سٹینڈنگ مزید بہتری جاسکتی ہے؟

Post-Intervention Survey Questionnaire for Madrasah Students

کوڈ پاکستان یونیورسٹی مدرسہ انٹریکشن پروگرام ایکٹیوٹی کے بعد کا سوالنامہ

(کسی ایک آپشن پر نشان لگائیں)

| ہرگز نہیں | نہیں | پتہ نہیں | ہاں کچھ حد تک | جی ہاں بالکل / ہمیشہ | |
|-----------|------|----------|---------------|----------------------|---|
| | | | | | ۱ کیا اس ایکٹیوٹی کے توسط سے آپ نے یونیورسٹی کے طلبہ دوست بنائے ہیں؟ |
| | | | | | ۲ کیا یونیورسٹی اور مدارس کے طلبہ کی سوچ میں کافی فرق ہے؟ |
| | | | | | ۳ کیا یونیورسٹی اور مدارس کے طلبہ عصر حاضر کے اہم ملکی موضوعات پر ایک دوسرے کے ساتھ مثبت انداز میں بات چیت کر سکتے ہیں؟ |
| | | | | | ۴ کیا یونیورسٹی کے طلبہ اپنی زندگی اسلامی تعلیمات کے مطابق گزارتے ہیں؟ |
| | | | | | ۵ کیا یونیورسٹی کی تعلیم پاکستان کا اسلامی نظریہ اور تشخص پامال کر رہی ہے؟ |
| | | | | | ۶ کیا آپ کے خیال میں یونیورسٹی میں مخلوط نظام تعلیم درست ہے؟ |
| | | | | | ۷ کیا یونیورسٹی کے طلبہ بالعموم مدارس کے طلبہ اور اساتذہ کا احترام کرتے ہیں؟ |
| | | | | | ۸ کیا آپ نے ٹریٹنگ سیشنز کے ذریعے ڈسکشن کرنے کے بارے میں کچھ نیا سیکھا؟ |

۹۔ جس پروگرام میں آپ نے حصہ لیا اس کے بارے میں آپ کا کیا خیال ہے؟

Annex II: Survey Results of the Structured Questions

Pre-Intervention Survey Results of University Students

| # | Question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral / Don't know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|--|----------------|-------|----------------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | Do you frequently interact with madrasah students? | 10 | 29 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 50 |
| 2 | Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah? | 5 | 15 | 12 | 18 | 0 | 50 |
| 3 | Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country? | 19 | 24 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| 4 | Can madrasahs students become good citizens of the country? | 27 | 18 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 50 |
| 5 | Do madrasah promote extremism and are tarnishing the true image of islam? | 5 | 13 | 11 | 13 | 8 | 50 |
| 6 | Are madrasahstudents respectful towards girls/women? | 18 | 21 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 50 |
| 7 | Are madrasahstudents respectful towards university students and teachers? | 15 | 27 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 50 |

Post-Intervention Survey Results of University Students

| # | Question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral / Don't know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|--|----------------|-------|----------------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | Has participation in the discussions helped you make friends among madrasah students? | 22 | 27 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| 2 | Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah? | 6 | 7 | 18 | 19 | 0 | 50 |
| 3 | Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country? | 21 | 24 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 50 |
| 4 | Can madrasah students become good citizens of the country? | 36 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| 5 | Do madrasahs promote extremism and are tarnishing the true image of Islam? | 5 | 11 | 16 | 10 | 8 | 50 |
| 6 | Are madrasah students respectful towards girls/women? | 24 | 23 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| 7 | Are madrasah students respectful towards university students and teachers? | 23 | 20 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 50 |
| 8 | Did you learn anything new about participating in discussions through the training sessions held with you? | 29 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50 |

Pre-Intervention Survey Results of Madrasah Students

| # | Question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral / Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|--|----------------|-------|----------------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | Do you frequently interact with university students? | 22 | 24 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 50 |
| 2 | Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah? | 35 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 50 |
| 3 | Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country? | 42 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| 4 | Do university students spend their life according to Islamic teachings? | 4 | 42 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 50 |
| 5 | Is university education ruining Islamic ideology? | 2 | 16 | 7 | 22 | 3 | 50 |
| 6 | Do you approve of co-education system in universities? | 1 | 4 | 3 | 21 | 21 | 50 |
| 7 | Are university students respectful towards Madrasah teachers and students? | 23 | 22 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 50 |

Post-Intervention Survey Results of Madrasah Students

| # | Question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral / Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|--|----------------|-------|----------------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | Has participation in the discussions helped you make friends among university students? | 19 | 27 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 50 |
| 2 | Are there significant disagreements between the students of university and madrasah? | 2 | 28 | 1 | 17 | 2 | 50 |
| 3 | Is it possible for university and madrasah students to have a positive and non-hostile discussion with each other on important contemporary problems of the country? | 47 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| 4 | Do university students spend their life according to Islamic teachings? | 8 | 36 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| 5 | Is university education ruining Islamic ideology? | 5 | 12 | 10 | 17 | 6 | 50 |
| 6 | Do you approve of co-education system in the universities? | 3 | 5 | 2 | 21 | 19 | 50 |
| 7 | Are university students respectful towards Madrasah teachers and students? | 26 | 19 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 50 |
| 8 | Did you learn anything new about participating in discussions through the training sessions held with you? | 34 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 50 |

