



The experience of Ahmadis in Pakistan- an analysis of how a religious minority coexists in a country with a dominant religion

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Abstract

The Ahmadiyya community is a marginalized religious minority group in Pakistan. Although it identifies itself as a Muslim movement that follows the teachings in the Quran, it is regarded as heretical by the mainstream (Sunni) Muslims in Pakistan. The laws of the country have been designed to further marginalize the Ahmadis. The Second Amendment to the constitution of Pakistan officially declares Ahmadis as non-Muslims. Furthermore, in 1984, under the Zia ordinance, Ahmadis are not allowed to call themselves Muslims or to "pose as Muslims." Today, the community primarily lives in a small town of 70,000 people, called Rabwah, which serves as the headquarters of the community. The Ahmadiyya community is not involved in the political process of the country and individual Ahmadis continue to be jailed for 'posing as Muslims.'

For this study, I carried out an extensive field research for a month in Rabwah. The respondents were both community members and government officials. I collected data on how citizenship rights such as freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, and freedom to profess religion are violated. The paper discusses how Pakistan violates international human rights standards of citizenship with regard to its treatment of Ahmadis. However, the main argument of this thesis is to demonstrate that even in situations where a dominant religion persecutes a religious minority, the minority group can still survive if it has a strong value system. Therefore, a substantial part of the paper will give a detailed explanation of the administrative system of the Ahmadi community and the institutions that are created parallel to the government systems. I will also show how a

religious minority like the Ahmadiyya community coexists as a persecuted minority within a country that mostly has a homogenous dominant religion (Sunni). Finally, the paper argues that the Ahmadiyya community has developed a very organized and bureaucratic administrative system as a strategy for preserving and maintaining its identity and values.

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Abbreviations

ICCPR – International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN – United Nations

UNGA – United Nations General Assembly

CAT- Convention Against Torture

ECOSOC-United Nations Economic and Social Council

FIR- First Information Report

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Religious Minority

There is no internationally accepted definition as to what constitutes a minority, mainly because there is such a wide variety of situations and circumstances.¹ Some of the objective factors used in the categorization of minorities are factors such as the existence of a shared ethnicity, language or religion.² Minorities groups sometimes live isolated and separated from the dominant part of the population, while in other cases they are scattered throughout the country.³ Francesco Capotorti, the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities proposed a definition in 1977, according to which minority is “a group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a State, in a non-dominant position, whose members—being nationals of the State—possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language.”⁴ According to this definition, the Ahmadiyya community can be categorized as a minority as it has a non-dominant position, representing approximately 0.22% of the total population in Pakistan.⁵ Moreover, the community seeks to maintain its autonomy in terms of its value system and Ahmadi identity.

¹ OHCHR, “Minority Rights: International Standards and Guidance for Implementation” (2010) Office of the High Commissioner https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/MinorityRights_en.pdf

² ibid

³ ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Sadia Saeed, “Political Fields and religious Movements: The Exclusion of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan” (2012) Yale University, p.189

1.1 The Ahmadiyya Movement: Belief and Origin

The Ahmadi movement originated in British-controlled India in the late 19th Century.⁶ Initially, the community operated through its headquarters in Qadian, a city located in India, but after the 1947 partition of the subcontinent, the headquarters were threatened from the Sikhs.⁷ In this precarious time, Hazrat Mirza Basheer Ud Din Muhammad Ahmed, the second Caliph of the community, had a holy dream in which he saw that the community settled in a place where there are mountains and agriculture. The Caliph preached his dream to the people of Qadian and directed them towards Pakistan. A few miles from Lahore, the Caliph saw a land with mountains that seemed familiar from his dream. Even though the place was completely barren, he ordered his people to settle there.⁸ The community has attached great divinity and sacredness to the land of Rabwah, as it was called by the community when it settled an area known as “*Banjar Qadeem*” (barren past). With the blessings of God, the land was able to have agriculture.⁹

In 1948, the community purchased 2500 acres of land from the government of Pakistan and Rabwah was officially named as the headquarters of the community.¹⁰ Today, Rabwah is a small town with a population of 70 000 people, comprising 98 percent of Ahmadi population.¹¹

⁶ Ali Usman Qasmi, *Ahmadis and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan* (Anthem Press, 2014).

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ Mohammad Shahid, *Tareekh-e-Ahmadiyyat*, (Edition 2007, Nazarat Nashro Ishhat, 2007).

¹⁰ *Ibid*

¹¹ Population of Cities in Pakistan, (World Population Review 2018).

www.worldpopulationreview.com/countries/pakistan-population/cities/ accessed on 13 November 2018

UNHCR, “Pakistan: Religious and ethnic groups in Rabwah, including population size and regional distribution; availability of employment and housing for Ahmadis; situation of Ahmadis, including social discrimination” (2015) <https://www.refworld.org/docid/58945f6f4.html>

The Ahmadiyya community takes its name from the founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who was born in 1835 and is regarded by his followers as the promised Messiah.¹² The community identifies itself as a Muslim movement that follows the teachings of the Quran, but it is regarded as heretical by orthodox Muslims.¹³ According to the orthodox view, the Quran identifies the Prophet Mohammad, as the last prophet sent to mankind. However, the Ahmadi community considers Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the successor to Prophet Mohammad.¹⁴ They consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as “*Ummati Nab*” a prophet from the community of Prophet Mohammad who is absolutely submitted to His teachings and authority. Thus, because of this difference Ahmadi are considered heretics and subjected to persecution by the orthodox Muslims.¹⁵

1.2 Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The selection of Rabwah, as the case study area is mainly based on the geographical concentration of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan. The city of Rabwah is home to the highest number of Ahmadi people in Pakistan. Since the aim of the research is to explore how Ahmadi institutions operate, as the headquarters of the community, Rabwah is the crucial case area for the study. In January 2017, I started working with Professor Dr. Ali Usman Qasmi,¹⁶ a renowned member of the faculty of History at the Lahore University of Management Sciences and a prolific researcher on persecuted religious minority communities in Pakistan, as a research associate. During my work with Professor Qasmi, I provided him with assistance on his work on religious persecution – a

¹² Shaheer Ellahi Khan, “Exploring Rabwah as an identity Marker for the Ahmadiyya community: A Baseline Qualitative Study” (2015) Pakistan Association of Anthropology, pp 1615.

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ali Usman Qasmi, *Ahmadi and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan* (Anthem Press, 2014). As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

¹⁵ Sadia Saeed, “Politics of Exclusion: Muslim Nationalism, State Formation and Legal Representations of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan” (2010) The University of Michigan, pp 111

¹⁶Lahore University of Management Sciences accessed on 13 November 2018.

www.lums.edu.pk/lums_employee/3159

book titled as “Ahmadis and The Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan”. While working, I came to realize that there has been a considerable amount of research performed on the persecution and theological aspects of Ahmadi community in Pakistan, but there has been little attention to how Ahmadi religious, political, and administrative institutions coexist with mainstream intuitions. This lack of scholarly literature has largely influenced my decision to perform my individual research on Ahmadis’ internal institutions.

The duration of my field study was from June 01, 2017 to June 30, 2017. As the field research is exploratory in nature, I followed semi-structured interview techniques, including informal conversations and focus group discussions (FGDs). I organized my schedule with the help of the Education Department in Rabwah. Mr. Hafiz Sayed and Osman Naeem, who worked at the Education Department in Rabwah coordinated my meetings with concerned department heads and relevant people. During this time, I conducted 52 interviews with 40 community members and 12 government officials. Amongst community member, I interviewed department heads, teachers and doctors. From the government officials, I interviewed people such as District officer, Station house officer, and government clerks. The duration of each interview was on an average of 35 minutes. The composition of the respondents is further explained in Annex 1 and 2.

In case of qualitative research, a proper validation process needs to be ensured, so that the collected responses are not misinterpreted and the empirical information from the interviews is valid. Since I performed all the interviews in local Urdu language and respondents had a different level of formal education and training, after documenting and transcribing the collected data, I cross-examined all the documented information with the original interview notes to ensure their accuracy. If the information lacked clarity or was confusing, I relied upon local guides and contact persons to cross-check the information.

Along with the field research, the study also focuses on the relevant secondary sources. The secondary data was collected mostly from newspaper articles, journal articles, UN Human Rights Commission reports, scholarly books and other publications.

The most influential and extensive work on Ahmadi community is Yohanan Friedman's book, *the Prophecy continuous, aspects of Ahmadi religious thought and its medieval background*. Friedman explores the Ahmadiyya religion from the time when Muhammad emerged as the Prophet. Because of the conflict on the finality of Prophethood between the Ahmadis and the mainstream Muslims, Friedman compares the interpretations of Quran and the Sufi view regarding the finality of Prophethood.¹⁷ Friedman brings forth a thorough amount of nuance in elucidating the founder of Ahmadiyya community's, Ghulam Ahmad's, ideas about Prophetology and the various stages it has gone through.¹⁸ Friedman's work gives an extensive analysis of the rationale of the Ahmadiyya movement.¹⁹ However, he mainly explores the theological aspects of the community while political, social, judicial and economic aspects remain largely unexplored. Friedman's work holds immense importance as literature on the Ahmadiyya community, but it does not address how Ahmadi institutions work and to what extent emphasis is put into preserving the community identity and how institutions are formed on the basis of a strong value system.

Spencer Lavan's book *The Ahmadiyyah movement: a history and perspective* gives a historical background of the origins of the Ahmadi community. Lavan further explains the Ahmadi theology and biography of Ghulam Mirza Ahmad.²⁰ He raises questions about the education of Ghulam

¹⁷ Yohanan Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous: Aspects of Ahmadi Religious Thought and Its Medieval Background* (Oxford University Press, 2003)

¹⁸ *ibid*

¹⁹ *ibid*

²⁰ Spencer Lavan, *The Ahmadiyyah movement; A history and perspective Unknown Binding – 1974* (Manohar Book Service, 1974)

Ahmad prior to the founding of the Ahmadiyya community. His book consists of polemics between Ahmadis, Hindus, and Christians.²¹ Another frequently referenced book on Ahmadis is by Adil Husain Khan, *From Sufism to Ahmadiyya: a Muslim minority movement in South Asia*. Adil Husain's work, unlike Spencer, focuses on the contemporary status of Ahmadis. He gives theological details and links the origins of Ahmadi religion with various Sufi and esoteric concepts from the medieval period. Husain has referred to the Ahmadi identity as an emerging phenomenon in his work.²² However, he focuses on how Ahmadi beliefs correspond to modernist ideas and how they reject the traditional methodologies of Islamic scholarship, which eventually leads them to a controversial path.²³ Thus, he has not explored the aspect of Ahmadi identity in terms of how it is transformed into institutions. Both Lavan and Husain's works are prominent resources for understanding the Ahmadi community, but their work is either focused on the life of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad or on the theological aspects of the community. Therefore, the literature provides little understanding of the everyday life of an Ahmadi. For instance, matters such as the education system, health facilities, funding system, and the legal system are not explored.

A final genre of literature about the Ahmadi community is represented by Ali Usman Qasmi's book, *Ahmadis and the politics of religious exclusion in Pakistan*. The book gives a thorough analysis of the chronological events that lead to anti-Ahmadi movement in Pakistan. It provides proper documents for its analysis, for example, parliamentary records of the proceedings of 1974 are used to examine the Second Amendment of the constitution which declared Ahmadis as non-Muslims.²⁴ The literature is relevant in terms of understanding why Ahmadis were declared as

²¹ Ibid

²² Adil Hussain Khan, *From Sufism to Ahmadiyya: A Muslim Minority Movement in South Asia* (Indiana University Press, 2015)

²³ ibid

²⁴ Ali Usman Qasmi, *Ahmadis and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan* (London: Anthem Press, 2014)

non-Muslims in Pakistan. However, the role of strong community identity and parallel institutions is not explored. Therefore, the empirical literature in this book is a relevant and effective source for understanding the political climate of 1973 but it is not as relevant as a resource for understanding the functioning of the administrative system of the Ahmadiyya community.

1.3 Importance of the Present Research

A comprehensive amount of research has been done by many academicians and human rights organizations on the persecution of the Ahmadis in Pakistan. Moreover, a considerable amount of scholarly literature also exists on the theological aspects of Ahmadiyya community, the history of Ahmadi movement, and the life of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. However, the community has not been examined from a perspective focusing on how it maintains its highly bureaucratic organizational structure or how Ahmadi identity is maintained? Specifically, the question of how the community has been able to survive persecution in Pakistan or how it has been able to keep its headquarters safe and operational since the creation of Pakistan, are not empirically investigated in the existing literature. The present study aims to address some of the unique institutional aspects of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan.

Religious minorities are usually seen through the lens of persecution. While this thesis focuses on the persecution aspect and the laws of the country that are unfavorable towards the community, it also explains how a religious minority may itself want to maintain its exclusive nature. How it may endeavor to preserve its values and eventually make these values a foundation for its institutions so it can survive persecution. Thus, the aspect of a strong value system and administrative institutions is a unique view. Issues like where they register their marriages, where they file legal cases, the process of elections, the police and security system, health care, and

education are crucial to Ahmadiyya community life. However, existing literature provides limited information for understanding these issues from an institutional perspectives. This study will try to explore the behavior and functionalities of Ahmadi institutions and how these institutions shape the course of Ahmadiyya community as one of the marginalized minority groups in Pakistan. Most importantly, the study builds on the argument that since the community attaches immense importance to its values, therefore, it has been able to form institutions on the basis of these values and has been able to survive in Pakistan. The values of equality, compassion, and humility and serving the community, are the primary values that Ahmadiyya institutions are based on. The study will explore how these values and institutions of Ahmadiyya community coexist alongside the mainstream (Sunni) Muslim institutions in Pakistan.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 provides a background of the Ahmadiyya community and its origin in Pakistan. It also describes the methodology and a theoretical framework for the thesis. The second chapter explains why Ahmadis were declared as non-Muslims and the anti-Ahmadi provisions such as the Second Amendment and Zia Ordinance. It discusses the fundamental citizenship rights that are granted to the citizens of Pakistan and how despite being citizens, these rights are violated for the Ahmadis. Chapter 3 focuses on the disregard of international human rights standards by the government. Despite being a party to International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) the government has not adhered to its provisions. Finally, Chapter 4 builds upon the main argument of the thesis that is, even if a religious minority is persecuted, it can still survive if it has a strong value system. The chapter is divided into four sub chapters and discusses in detail the value system and the institutions that are created as a result. It also provides a competing view of

the government officials on the Ahmadiyya institutions and a comparison is drawn between the government and Ahmadiyya institutions.

Chapter 2: Anti Ahmadi Laws and the Violation of Ahmadi rights

2. Why Ahmadis were declared as non-Muslims?

The idea of questioning Ahmadi beliefs first emerged in 1949 when a Sunni organization called *Ahrar* demanded Ahmadis to be officially declared as heretics.²⁵ The protest died down for a while until 1973, when a leading Islamic political party Jama'at-e-Islami organized demonstrations all over the country. Religious clerics justified their actions by proclaiming that the Ahmadi religion was corrupting the message of Islam.²⁶ They claimed that the Ahmadi beliefs were a diversion from the Sunni faith and therefore is a threat to the integrity and existence of the Muslim community.²⁷ Since Pakistan is a country that has Islam as a state religion.²⁸ Therefore, this aspect of a religious homogeneity gives space for religious claims (of other religious groups) to be challenged.²⁹ At that time, *Jamaat-i-Islami* was the major party in opposition and it forced Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to transform Pakistan into an Islamic theocracy.³⁰ Thus, in 1973, many “Islamic” provisions were introduced in the constitution.³¹ One of the provisions also included the Second Amendment which declared Ahmadis as non-Muslims.

²⁵ Ali Qadi, “Parliamentary hereticization of the Ahmadiyya: The modern world implicated in Islamic crises” (2014) University of Tampere p.130.

²⁶ *ibid*

²⁷ *Ibid*

Predominant Sunni Muslim population consider Holy Prophet as the last Prophet sent to mankind. This belief is the foundation of Islam and unifies the Muslim Ummah. Therefore, Ahmadi belief in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is considered as a diversion from the mainstream Muslims belief.

²⁸ Islam to be State religion, accessed on 10-November-2018 <https://pakistanconstitutionlaw.com/article-2-islam-to-be-state-religion/>

²⁹ *Ibid*

³⁰ Amjad Mahmood Khan, “Persecution of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan: An Analysis Under International Law and International Relations” (2004) Harvard Human Rights Journal Vol. 16,pp 218.

http://muslimwriters.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/ahmadiyya_persecution.pdf

³¹ Islam to be State religion, accessed on 10-November-2018 <https://pakistanconstitutionlaw.com/article-2-islam-to-be-state-religion/>

2.1 Constitutional Provisions

2.1.2 Second Constitutional Amendment, 1973

In 1974, under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's government, the opposition political party *Jamaat-i-Islami* demanded that considering the definition of a Muslim, Ahmadis do not fall in the mainstream Islam.³² Therefore, they should be declared as non-Muslims.³³ The Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto gave in to the pressure and created a committee on the issue. On September 7, 1974 a unanimous decision was reached in parliament adopting the Second Amendment, which reads as follows:

Article 260:

“A person who does not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of The Prophethood of Muhammad, the last of the Prophets or claims to be a Prophet, in any sense of the word or recognizes such a claimant as a Prophet or religious reformer, is not a Muslim for the purposes of the Constitution or law.”³⁴

³² According to Sunni Belief, a Muslim is the one who believes Prophet Muhammad to be the last Prophet, contrary to Ahmadi belief who regard Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the successor to the Prophet Muhammad.

³³ Ali Qadi, “Parliamentary hereticization of the Ahmadiyya: The modern world implicated in Islamic crises” (2014) University of Tampere p.130

³⁴ The Constitution of Pakistan, 1974

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

2.1.3 1984 Ordinance

In 1984, General Zia-ul-Haq issued an ordinance under which Ahmadis were not allowed to call themselves as Muslims or to “pose as Muslims.” All religious activities of the community were made criminal offenses.³⁵ The law 298 of the Pakistan Penal Code Section C reads as follows:

*“Any person of the Ahmadi group who directly or indirectly, poses himself as a Muslim or in any manner whatsoever outrages the religious feelings of Muslims shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.”*³⁶

Ahmadiyya places of worships are not allowed to be called mosques, under the law 298 section B of Pakistan Penal Code. The Law also forbids Ahmadis from performing the Muslim call to prayer. Moreover, the use of traditional Islamic greeting in public is an offence. Public quoting from the Quran and preaching in public is also prohibited. Publishing and disseminating of Ahmadi religious books is also banned.³⁷

³⁵ Amjad Mahmood Khan “Persecution of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan: An Analysis Under International Law and International Relations” (2004) Harvard Law School p.217.

http://muslimwriters.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/ahmadiyya_persecution.pdf

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

³⁶ “Religious Minorities in Pakistan” (2002) Minority Group Rights Report on Pakistan. As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

³⁷ ibid

2.1.4 Zia’s Anti-Blasphemy code

Zia also introduced the blasphemy laws under which any Muslim could file litigation against an individual based upon an allegation of committing blasphemy. Penal Code Section 295–C reads as follows:

*“Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to a fine.”*³⁸

Thus, this law especially weakened the position of religious minorities in the country, particularly of the Ahmadis. Between 1980 and 2008, over 970 people were charged in blasphemy law cases. Of which 350 had been Ahmadis.³⁹

2.2 Basic rights of Citizens in Pakistan

Since Ahmadis are citizens of Pakistan, they are entitled to be guaranteed rights listed in the first chapter of the Constitution as fundamental rights of the citizens of Pakistan. These provisions include security of all citizens, right to a fair trial, right to association, freedom of assembly, and freedom of speech.⁴⁰ Furthermore, Article 25A recognizes the equality of all citizens before the

³⁸ *ibid*

³⁹ ‘Blasphemy law’ (Newline 2010) accessed on 13 November 2018

<http://newlinemagazine.com/magazine/chilling-statistics-on-blasphemy-and-the-law/>

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁴⁰ The Constitution of Pakistan. 1974.

Article 9. “No person shall be deprived of life or liberty save in accordance with law”

law. Article 20 of the constitution ensures freedom to profess religion and to manage religious institutions.⁴¹ Article 36 makes the state responsible for safeguarding the interests of minorities.⁴² Article 22 safeguards educational institutes in respect to religion, etc.⁴³ Article 28 gives all citizens the right to preserve their script.⁴⁴ However, despite these provisions, various rights of Ahmadis are frequently violated.

2.3 The Violation of Citizenship Rights

Even though Ahmadis are citizens of Pakistan but the voting system for them is different from the rest of the citizens. To register as voters, Ahmadis either have to abandon their belief entirely or sign a declaration accepting themselves as a “non-Muslim.” If they choose to sign the declaration, then they are placed in a separate “non-Muslim Ahmadi” electoral list.⁴⁵ Since Ahmadis identify themselves as Muslims, they do not sign the declaration and therefore also do not vote at all.⁴⁶ Hence, the law effectively excludes Ahmadis from the electoral process. While the Hindus and

Article 16. “Every citizen shall have the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of public order”

Article 17. (1) “Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality”

Article 19 Freedom of speech, “Every citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression”

⁴¹ Article 20. “Subject to law, public order and morality, — (a) every citizen shall have the right to profess, practice and propagate his religion; and (b) every religious denomination and every sect thereof shall have the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions”

⁴²Article 36. “The State shall safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minorities, including their due representation in the Federal and Provincial services”

⁴³ Article 22. “No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, or take part in any religious ceremony, or attend religious worship, if such instruction, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.”

⁴⁴ Article 28, “any section of citizens having a distinct language, script or culture shall have the right to preserve and promote the same and subject to law, establish institutions for that purpose”

⁴⁵ “Pakistan: Ensure Ahmadi Voting Rights” (2018) Human Rights Watch.

⁴⁶ *ibid*

Christians have a guaranteed number of seats in the parliament of Pakistan, the Ahmadis have no representation at all.⁴⁷

Rabwah, being the headquarters of the community, faces very strict regulations by the government. Any sort of assembly, which means a gathering of more than 10 people, is strictly prohibited in Rabwah.⁴⁸ The religious congregation has been a very important part of the Ahmadi religion. Before the Zia Ordinance, Ahmadis from all over the world gathered in Rabwah for the annual religious congregation. In fact, Rabwah served as the focal point of the community. However, after 1984, any form of assembly has been strictly banned by the government.⁴⁹ Sadr Amoumi, the mayor of Rabwah (elected from the Ahmadi community) asserted that “it has been 32 years that we are not able to have the *jalsa* (congregation). Each year we file an application in the hope that the government will allow us, but every time it has been rejected. The annual *Jalsa* (congregation) was an important part of our Ahmadi identity. It brought the whole community closer”.⁵⁰ He further added, “On 23rd March 1989, it was a significant day for the community as it marked 100 years of completion of the community. However, even this celebration was strictly prohibited under section 298-C of Pakistan Penal Code. According to the order, no decoration of buildings was allowed, no raising of slogans, nobody could exhibit the community badges or

⁴⁷ *ibid*

⁴⁸ ‘Religious and ethnic groups in Rabwah, including population size and regional distribution; availability of employment and housing for Ahmadis; situation of Ahmadis, including social discrimination’ (2017) Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.

⁴⁹ HRC, “Ahmadis in Pakistan face an existential crisis” (2017) International Human Rights Committee. p.3.

<http://hrcommittee.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Persecution-2017-Final-PRINT-COPYV2-.pdf>

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁵⁰ Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

exchange sweets amongst themselves.”⁵¹ The right to assembly is violated to this extent that even gatherings related to recreational activities are banned. In addition, the right to Freedom of speech is also violated. For example, even the use of microphones for any reason is strictly prohibited.

Furthermore, Ahmadis are not allowed to publish their religious books.⁵² For example, religious books on Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of Ahmadiyya faith, have been banned as seditious materials.⁵³ According to an Amnesty International Report, in 2001 two Ahmadi shopkeepers were arrested for selling religious books. They were reportedly arrested because the books were stirring up “religious hatred”.⁵⁴ Moreover, Ahmadi newspapers and magazines are banned because they offend the religious sentiments of other Muslims.⁵⁵ Hence, the right to explore religion is routinely violated for the Ahmadis.

Although freedom to profess religion is a fundamental right, for Ahmadis, the Blasphemy laws have restricted the ability to practice their faith. For Ahmadis, everyday religious activities pose a risk of prosecution.⁵⁶ According to a report by United States Department of State, in 1984, Rana Karamatullah, an 80-year-old man, was arrested as he was “posing as a Muslim” when he greeted another Muslim by the words *assalam-o-alaikum* [peace be upon you]. Since he offered greetings

⁵¹ Ibid (As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University)

⁵² “Violations of human rights of Ahmadis” (1999) Amnesty International Report.
<file:///E:/Downloads/asa330151991en.pdf>

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁵³ ibid

⁵⁴ ‘International Religious Freedom Report’ (2016) United States Department of State.

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁵⁵ Ibid (As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University)

⁵⁶ HRC, ‘Ahmadis in Pakistan face an existential crisis report’ (2017) International Human Rights Committee. p.3.
<http://hrcommittee.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Persecution-2017-Final-PRINT-COPYV2-.pdf>

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

in the Islamic manner, he committed blasphemy. Thus, he was sentenced to eight months imprisonment and a heavy fine.⁵⁷ The torture under the blasphemy laws is appalling, primarily because it makes the community defenseless if the FIR (First Information Report) is filed against them.

Chapter two focuses on why and how Ahmadis were declared non-Muslims in Pakistan. It discusses the fundamental citizenship rights listed in the constitution of Pakistan, but how despite being citizens of Pakistan, Ahmadis are not able to fully exercise their rights. The chapter also explains the persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan.

⁵⁷ 'International Religious Freedom Report' (2016) United States Department of State.

<https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/269184.pdf>

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

Chapter 3: International Human Rights Standards

3. Disregard of the International Human Rights standards by the government of Pakistan

Pakistan is a party to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.⁵⁸ It is also a member of the UN General Assembly and therefore is bound by the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination on Religion 1981.⁵⁹ However, these International Human Rights Standards are frequently disregarded when it comes to exercising minority rights in the country.

According to international treaties, the state must not impose religious beliefs on its people. However, in the case of Pakistan, a whole community has been labeled as a religious minority because of its religious belief. Article 2 of the ICCPR reads as:

“No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.”⁶⁰

Furthermore, Article 26 of the ICCPR states that everyone is equal before the law and should not be discriminated against on the basis of their religion.⁶¹ The article reads as follows:

“All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to

⁵⁸ Nazila Ghanea, *Freedom of Religion Or Belief: An International Law Commentary* (2016) Oxford University Press. As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁵⁹ *ibid*

⁶⁰ OHCHR, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁶¹ *ibid*

*all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”*⁶²

Similarly, Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights also declares a broad conception of religious freedom and practice. Article 18 states:

*"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.”*⁶³

The Second Amendment of the Pakistani Constitution is contradictory to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion and Belief, which was adopted in November 1981 by consensus in the General Assembly.

Its preamble reads:

*"Considering that religion or belief, for anyone who professes either, is one of the fundamental elements in his conception of life and that freedom of religion or belief should be fully respected and guaranteed.”*⁶⁴

⁶² International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Ohchr

⁶³ ‘Violations of human rights of Ahmadis’ (1991) Amnesty International Report.
<file:///E:/Downloads/asa330151991en.pdf>

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁶⁴ UNGA, United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion and Belief. Accessed on 10 Dec 2018. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/36/a36r055.htm>

The legislation of Zia Ordinance, requires Ahmadis to be imprisoned and fined if they greet someone with the traditional Islamic greeting. They are prohibited to practice their religion as then they “are posing as Muslims”, thus if they do, they can be sentenced to a death penalty. Hence, the Ordinance violates Article 6 of the ICCPR, which reads as follows:

*“In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes in accordance with the law in force at the time of the commission of the crime and not contrary to the provisions of the present Covenant and to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.”*⁶⁵

In 1984, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) published the Safeguards Guaranteeing the Protection of the Rights of Those Facing the Death Penalty; it clearly stated that the death penalty is only allowed if a person has committed an extreme grave crime.⁶⁶ It stated that *"capital punishment may be imposed only for the most serious crimes, it being understood that their scope should not go beyond intentional crimes, with lethal or other extremely grave consequences."* These safeguards were also propagated by UN General Assembly, which strongly advocated against death penalty in Pakistan. Furthermore, in August 1985 the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities passed a resolution expressing "grave concern at the promulgation of Zia Ordinance as a whole."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ OHCHR | International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁶⁶ 'Death Penalty under international law' (2008) International Bar Association.

file:///E:/Downloads/Deathpenalty_Paper.pdf

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁶⁷ Nazila Ghanea, *Freedom of Religion or Belief: An International Law Commentary* (2016) Oxford University Press.

Under Law 295 Section C of Pakistan Penal Code, anyone can file an FIR against Ahmadis.⁶⁸ Their houses are frequently damaged by angry mobs, they are subjected to hate speech and their jobs are not secured as they can be fired on the basis of religion. Even though Pakistan has ratified the Convention against Torture (CAT), it violates Article 1 of the treaty when it comes to the treatment of Ahmadis. Article 1 specifies the term torture as “*pain both physical or mental that is intentionally inflicted on a person for any reason based on discrimination of any kind.*”⁶⁹ Although, the torture faced by the Ahmadis is not physical but they experience various forms of mental torture resulting into a constant state of psychological fear.⁷⁰

3.1 The question of Ahmadi Rights and International Pressure

In July 1989, a delegation from the Amnesty International expressed its concern over the treatment of Ahmadis in Pakistan and urged successive governments in Pakistan to consider the abolition of the death penalty and consequently drop charges against the Ahmadis under Pakistan Penal Code. Amnesty International urged the government to amend laws affecting the freedom of religion of religious minorities including the freedom to profess, practice, and propagate their belief. Amnesty International further said that efforts should be made to protect the right to freedom of expression, the right to liberty, and security of person.⁷¹ In addition, The U.S. Department of State

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁶⁸ Pakistan Penal Code, accessed on 4 November 2018 <https://www.oecd.org/site/adboecdanti-corruptioninitiative/46816797.pdf>

⁶⁹ Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Ohchr. As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

⁷⁰ Pakistan Penal Code, accessed on 4 November 2018 <https://www.oecd.org/site/adboecdanti-corruptioninitiative/46816797.pdf>

⁷¹ Amnesty International report, 2017 http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/PAK/INT_CCPR_CSS_PAK_27663_E.pdf

also expressed concern about the human rights violations of Ahmadis particular under the Blasphemy law as it makes them vulnerable in the society.⁷²

Chapter three explains how Pakistan has disregarded international laws and international pressure concerning the Ahmadi issue. In the next chapter, I will provide evidence to support the argument of how due to a strong value system a religious minority can maintain its institutions and eventually survive.

⁷²International Religious Freedom Report, (2016) US Department of State.

<https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/269184.pdf>

As cited in Hooriya Rashid, "The Ahmadiyya religious community in Pakistan; A Human Rights Analysis" (2018) Central European University.

Chapter 4: The Analysis of the value system and survival mechanism of the Ahmadiyya Community

Chapter Four argues that even if a religious minority is persecuted, as in the case of Ahmadis, the community still can survive if it has a strong intention of maintaining its identity and values. In line with this argument, the chapter emphasizes on how the strong value system of the Ahmadiyya community is transformed into a force for building institutions that work parallel to the intuitions of the government. These institutions are very organized and systematic and, in specific cases, perform better than the respective government institutions. The community attaches immense significance to the values of being an integrated community. These values form the foundation of all the institutions that are created as a result. Thus, it is because of these values that the community, being a religious minority, sustains itself and coexists in a country where the dominant share of the population is Sunni Muslims. The subsequent sections of this chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of the argument that strong values help to create strong institutions and survival mechanisms.

In 1948, the Ahmadiyya community bought the land of Rabwah for the purpose of creating the headquarters of the community.⁷³ The government and the community reached an informal tacit agreement for Rabwah to be treated as an autonomous region in Pakistan.⁷⁴ Rabwah, being the headquarters, is a defining feature of the Ahmadiyya identity, therefore, the government has allowed the community to operate its institutions independently. Most importantly, the community itself wants its institutions to be autonomous so that it can preserve its values. In other parts of

⁷³ Ali Usman Qasmi, *Ahmadis and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan* (London: Anthem Press, 2014)

⁷⁴ *ibid*

Pakistan, basic public infrastructural facilities like sanitization, fire stations, emergency hospitals and clinics, community parks, roads, street lights are usually provided by the government. In Rabwah, these services are not provided by the government mainly because the government is aware that the voluntary system of the community itself is efficient and therefore developed the infrastructure, education, and health facilities on its own. Unlike other cities or towns, Rabwah is not dependent on the funding of the government for its development projects. The community has its own funding mechanism, which caters to the finances of the community. Therefore, institutions are built accordingly. The community itself has established the infrastructure of Rabwah. Thus, we may say that Rabwah is a ‘state within a state.’ As has also been mentioned by Sadia Saeed, in her paper, *Pakistani Nationalism and the State Marginalization of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan*, in which she indicates Rabwah to be an example of a ‘state within a state.’⁷⁵

Administration

The Ahmadiyya community has an internal system of administration, which has been structured in a way to keep the community integrated. This unification is a result of a top-down bureaucratic hierarchical system.⁷⁶ The system is organized into various levels of hierarchy. At the top is the Caliph, whose selection through the election is considered divine and has absolute power in decision making.⁷⁷ Four departments report directly to the Caliph including *Majlis e shoora*, *Sadr*

⁷⁵ Sadia Saeed, “Politics of Exclusion: Muslim Nationalism, State Formation and Legal Representations of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan” (2010) The University of Michigan, p 111 (Sania Saeed refers to Rabwah as a state within a state because of its operational system. She has not explored the idea further)

⁷⁶ Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

⁷⁷ *ibid*

Anjuman, Tehreek e Jadid, and the election committee.⁷⁸ See Annex 2 for the details of Ahmadiyya's administrative hierarchy.

The idea of separate Ahmadi institutions was first introduced by the first Caliph, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The rationale behind these institutions was to maintain the community's identity and to have a mechanism that can cater to the needs of its members proactively and effectively.⁷⁹ The institutions were exclusive for community members and were based on the deep-rooted religious beliefs of the community. The people who work in these departments are mostly *waqf*, individuals who have voluntarily devoted their lives to serve the community.⁸⁰ Even though, these institutions had been functional since the formation of the community, however they were not systemized and organized into hierarchal levels. In 1905, the second Caliph, Mirza Basherser Ud Din Mahmood Ahmad, systematized these institutions. In fact, he initiated and established a specific set of rules, regulations, and procedures to hold institutions accountable for the greater wellbeing of the Ahmadiyya community. The following sections provide brief explanations of the organizational structure of the Ahmadiyya community. It will develop the argument of how a strong value system helps a community forge exclusive set of institutions, create a survival mechanism and coexist in an environment of continuous hostility.⁸¹

⁷⁸ *ibid*

⁷⁹ Interview with Hafiz Sayed, Administration head, Nazart e Taleem (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

⁸⁰ *ibid*

⁸¹ *ibid*

4. Sadr Anjuman(Central Administrative Council)

Sadr Anjuman is the central council of the Ahmadiyya community. It is the most crucial department because it deals with the administration of the entire community.⁸² During the time of the first Caliph, Sadr Anjuman only consisted of a board of directors, but later in 1919, according to circumstances and time, there was a need to establish different departments.⁸³ Therefore, the second Caliph, Mirza Bashsher Ud Din Mahmood Ahmad established separate departments for education, health, women, children, security, local affairs, legal affairs, social work, publication, and collection of funds.⁸⁴ *Waqf-e-nau* department, Fund collection department, Arbitration council, *Rishta Nata*, *Nazarat e Taleem*, and *Hifazt e Marqaz* all fall under Sadr Anjuman. As Sadr Anjuman is the core to the Ahmadiyya administrative system, in the following sections, the paper will provide detailed explanations of these departments.

4.1 Foundational values that define Ahmadiat

4.1.1 Waqf-e-Naou Department

The community has a system of *waqf* in which members of *waqf* voluntarily devote their entire lives to serve the community. In Ahmadi culture, these people are known as *Waqf-e Zindagi*, meaning devoted for life to serve.⁸⁵ The *Waqf-e -Zindagi* are very important for the community because these people work in the institutions of the Ahmadiyya system. Without them, the

⁸² Interview with Osama Naeem, Department head of Nazart e Talee, Nazart e Taleem (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

⁸³ *ibid*

⁸⁴ *Ibid*

The names of the department are exactly mentioned how they were originally indicated by the respondents during the interviews.

⁸⁵ Interview with Raheel Khalid, Department head of Waqf e Nau, Waqf e Nau department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

institutions would not be able to function. The whole idea to serve the community is deeply ingrained in the members. Serving the community acts as an integral part of Ahmadi identity.

During my interviews with the respondents, as I was exploring how the whole system worked, I found out that the entire mechanism is very unique. The waqf completely submit their lives for the community.⁸⁶ Hence, it often happens that they are not able to make life choices as they would want to, and instead, are dictated by the caliph what they should do for their entire lives. This mainly includes the decision of relocation, marriage, and choice of profession.⁸⁷ If the community feels that there is a shortage of teachers or technicians, then the waqf are trained according to that; if they feel there is a shortage of engineers then the parents are advised by the caliph to enroll their child into an engineering school.⁸⁸ Similarly, orders of the caliph have to be followed in matters of marriage and which country to serve in. The system is characterized by a lack of personal choice. However, the people who serve the community think differently. I interviewed a Ph.D. graduate, who was serving as a principal in one of the schools in Rabwah, and inquired about how the idea of complete devotion comes at an expense of personal choice. She said that “I am very content that I have devoted my life to serve the community. I am a *waqf*, so is my husband and so is my only child. I do not feel it comes at a cost of my own choices and aspirations because I know I am doing something to give back and make a difference. This is part of who we are. It’s a major part of us as human beings. I only feel honored that my family gave me for *waqf*.”⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Interview with Osman Butt, Registry head, Waqf e Naou department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

⁸⁷ *ibid*

⁸⁸ *ibid*

⁸⁹ Mona Hussnain, Head Principal of Nusrat Jehan college, Nusrat Jehan College (Rabwah, Pakistan, 20 June 2017)
The quotation marks are mentioned just how they were originally explained by the respondents. This is done so that the originality of the filed work is maintained.

The people who devote themselves do not have any monetary incentive to serve the community. They usually receive remunerations, which are lower than the minimum wage in Pakistan.⁹⁰ Usually, the waqf are paid between Rs. 6000 to 13000.⁹¹ Even the most experienced person in a profession can only be paid as high as Rs. 13000.⁹² I interviewed a member of the community, who previously worked at a multinational company in London and returned to Rabwah to serve the community. While conducting the interview, I asked him about how it feels to not be able to earn the amount of money he once did and how it feels to not be able to make one's life decisions. The respondent replied, "yes, Rabwah does not have the resources like the rest of the world but I am happy because I am working for a divine cause. I do not need rewards, this is completely spiritual." He further added that, "yes there are days when I do not have any money and I am worried how I will spend the coming days but somehow, with God's blessings something happens and somehow I get the money. It is difficult to not have financial security, but I know that serving the community is what makes me an Ahmadi. Serving the community and my identity is the foremost priority in my life."⁹³

There is also a separate department which keeps all the records of the people who are waqf called *Waqf-e-Naou*. The department has a whole process in which parents can register their children as waqf (devoted for the community).⁹⁴ This decision can be made by parents when the children are

⁹⁰ "Minimum Wages in Pakistan with effect from 01-07-2017 to 30-06-2018" accessed 3 November 2018. <https://paycheck.pk/salary/minimum-wages/>

[In 2017, the government set the amount of minimum wage (for unskilled laborers) as 15000 PKR]

⁹¹ Mona Hussnain, Head Principal of Nusrat Jahana college, Nusrat Jehan College (Rabwah, Pakistan, 20 June 2017)

⁹² Ibid

⁹³ Hassan Shaukat, Editor in the Publication department, Zai Ul Islam (Rabwah, Pakistan, 14 June 2017)

⁹⁴ Interview with Raheel Khalid, Department head of Waqf e Nau, Waqf e Nau department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017).

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

young and both girls and boys can be devoted for the cause of the community.⁹⁵ As soon as the parents make a decision, they tell the administration of the community that is closely linked to the Caliph. Upon the approval from the Caliph, the department takes and records all the details of the child. The child becomes the responsibility of the department, in the sense that the department keeps a close check on the wellbeing of these children including their education, health, social manners, and etc.⁹⁶ The responsible department also trains these children by giving them Ahmadi religious knowledge. When the child comes off age as a young adult i.e. reaches the age of 18, he is asked again whether he wants to serve. If he/she agrees, proper documentation is done by the administration.⁹⁷ According to a member in the *Waqf-e-Naou*. department, a total of 56000 people have been registered as waqf, out of which 6000 are from Rabwah and 28000 from the rest of Pakistan.⁹⁸ If these people did not serve the community, then Ahmadi institutions would not work as effectively as they currently do, and the entire administrative system of the community could be jeopardized.⁹⁹

4.1.2 Fund Collection Department

The fund collection department is one of the most important departments of the community, mainly because it maintains the financing system of the community. The department was set up by the first Caliph as a voluntary donation movement to instill the feelings of generosity.¹⁰⁰ At that time

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶ ibid

⁹⁷ Interview with Osman Butt, Registry head, Waqf e Naou department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Interview with Raheel Khalid, Department head of Waqf e Nau, Waqf e Nau department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Azhar Mehmoud, Registry department head, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

donations were made voluntarily. However, with the passage of time, the community felt the need to have a proper system for steady finances.¹⁰¹ Therefore, the Caliph made it mandatory for every member of the community to pay 10 percent of their earnings, on a monthly basis, to finance the activities of the community. This 10 percent limit is the lowest percentage, the community also accepts donations that are above this rate.¹⁰² The criteria for the obligatory fund is that when a member reaches the age of ten, he/she is obliged to pay the lowest amount (10 percent) of their savings or earnings each month.¹⁰³ The system is designed from the age of ten so that the value of giving is instilled from a young age.

The act of generosity and serving the community is considered a very important practice in Ahmadi culture. Giving of funds is not treated as a burden but as an integral part of being an Ahmadi.¹⁰⁴ The people in the *Waqf-e-Naou* department believe that the mandatory 10 percent rule keeps the community together and unified. An extreme example of that is, if a person commits a serious crime then the “obligation to pay” is the first aspect of the Ahmadi identity that is taken away¹⁰⁵ The non-collection of funds is the worst kind of punishment given by the Arbitration Council in cases of severe commission of crime.¹⁰⁶ The exemption from 10 percent funds means that the person has been ostracized from the community and will not be returned under any circumstances. The head of the Arbitration Council also elaborated on this. He said, “it is the worst form of punishment. There is a difference between your world and our world. If we cannot serve the community, we consider ourselves useless. We will be devastated if the community refuses our

¹⁰¹ ibid

¹⁰² ibid

¹⁰³ ibid

¹⁰⁴ ibid

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Zain Abid, Judge at the Arbitration council, Qaza Department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 5 June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

¹⁰⁶ ibid

funds. Our sole reason to live is to serve the community”¹⁰⁷ He further added, “consider it this way, there is a person who wants to bestow his everything for the sake of his love, but the person is indifferent towards him. That is how we feel when we are punished by the community. In the sense that we want to give funds, but the community has ostracized us and has become indifferent towards our existence.”¹⁰⁸

Due to the fund collection department, the development of Rabwah is more efficient than other towns in the country. This is mainly because the community has its own funds and can plan the budget and finances accordingly. Usually the district government, the top tier of provincial government is responsible for the provision of social services and finances of the towns.¹⁰⁹ However, it often happens that the federal government does not give autonomy to the provincial government and therefore the local government is dependent on the federal government for funding.¹¹⁰ Thus, there are instances when the provincial government does not have the required amount of funding as required, therefore, development becomes slow.¹¹¹ In case of Rabwah, this is not a problem because both the finances and planning are controlled by the community.

The need to maintain its institutions efficiently is very important in Ahmadi culture. This fund collection process is based on the need to maintain the integration and exclusivity for the Ahmadis.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

The quotation marks are mentioned just how they were originally explained by the respondents. This is done so that the originality of the filed work is maintained.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid

¹⁰⁹ Zulqarnain Hussain Anjum “New Local Government System: A Step Towards Community Empowerment?” (2001) The Pakistan Development Review Part II pp. 845–867
<http://www.pide.org.pk/pdf/PDR/2001/Volume4/845-867.pdf>

¹¹⁰ Federal govt not releasing funds for development projects’ Express Tribune (Lahore 23 February 2018)
<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1642073/1-federal-govt-not-releasing-funds-development-projects/>

¹¹¹ Ibid

Therefore, the members have conceded to the obligatory percentage amount to be given as funds for the community.

4.1.3 *Qaza* Department (Arbitration Council)

A very important department of *Sadr Anjuman* is the *Qaza* department, an arbitration council for the community. The council handles issues related to family, finances, land disputes, and intellectual rights.¹¹² Established in 1919, the department is based on the concept of the provision of justice for the Ahmadiyya community members.¹¹³

During my interview with one of the judges at the Arbitration Council, the rationale behind establishing a separate council is to resolve cases promptly and effectively.¹¹⁴ Since the government courts usually have a backlog of cases, therefore, the community felt that there needs to be a separate council that can exclusively deal with the issues of Ahmadi members. In Pakistan, the judiciary system is very slow. As per the 2017 statistics of the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, the number of pending cases in the Supreme court of Pakistan has reached 38,539. Moreover, 293,947 cases are pending in high courts and 1,869,886 cases have been pending in the local courts at provincial levels.¹¹⁵ I also interviewed a judge from the high court in Lahore and inquired about the speed at which the final verdict is given. He mentioned that it often happens that civil and revenue matters take a decade to be resolved. He also said that “sometimes the wait

¹¹² Interview with Zain Abid, Judge at the Arbitration council, *Qaza* Department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 5 June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

¹¹³ *ibid*

¹¹⁴ Interview with Muhammad Aleem, Judge at the Arbitration council, *Qaza* Department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 5 June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

¹¹⁵ Malik Asad, 'Over 1.8 million cases pending in Pakistan's courts' DAWN Newspaper (Lahore, January 21, 2018) <https://www.dawn.com/news/1384319>

is so long that a member from the third generation of the petitioner gets the verdict.”¹¹⁶ However, according to the judge of the arbitration council, the Ahmadi system is very fast. According to him, “it takes eight to nine months for us to resolve property cases and 3 months to resolve family cases. We have established this council so that we can solve cases promptly and provide justice in the right way.”¹¹⁷

Furthermore, the most astonishing feature of the Arbitration Council is that it does not charge any fee at all, therefore, the council is accessible to the most poverty-stricken members of the community.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, in government courts the cost of filing a case is insignificant but litigation involving cases of divorce, property or intellectual rights requires extremely high amounts of money.¹¹⁹ The council even has its own rules of retribution and remedy.¹²⁰ The most severe form of punishment is the ostracization of the member from the community. It means that the person will not be integrated in the community upon serious commission of crime,

¹¹⁶ Interview with Asif Majoka, Civil Judge, Lahore High Court (Lahore, Pakistan, 4 July 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹¹⁷ Interview with Muhammad Aleem, Judge at the Arbitration council, Qaza Department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 5 June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹¹⁸ *ibid*

¹¹⁹ Naeem Sahoutara, ‘Speedy and cheap justice’ Express Tribune (August 9, 2013)
<https://tribune.com.pk/story/588596/speedy-and-cheap-justice-when-litigation-costs-less-than-a-cup-of-tea/>

¹²⁰ *ibid*

4.2 The Sense of Community and Altruism

One of the very important values preached by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is equality. Following his teaching of equality, the community has developed a strong sense of brotherhood and altruism. In the following three sections, the paper will explain how these two values act as a foundation for the functioning of Ahmadi institutions. In most cases especially in the government bureaucratic system, monetary rewards play a crucial role in the running of the institutions, however, in the case of Ahmadis, just voluntary service has allowed these institutions to function for years. Thus, the administration of these institutions itself can be taken as a case study.

4.2.1 Security System

Rabwah, being the headquarters of the community, requires an efficient system of security. Especially being a town of a religious minority in Pakistan, the security of the headquarters is of paramount importance to the community. The provision of security is not a formal institution of the community, but the informal system itself proves to be effective.¹²¹ The community considers the town safe because of its efficient informal security system. Although general security is provided by the government in all cities and towns of the country, the government does not intervene in Rabwah as the community itself maintains an efficient system of security. Most importantly, the community has reached a tacit agreement with the government that since Rabwah serves as the headquarters of the community, therefore the community itself is responsible for the security of the town.¹²² To learn about the government perspective on the security of Rabwah, I

¹²¹ Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹²² Interview with Hammad Noor, Station House Officer, SHO Office (Chiniot, Pakistan, 4th June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

interviewed the Station Housing Officer (SHO) of the town. On the question of the effectiveness of their security system, he answered “we know that it is our job to provide security but the community members themselves voluntarily take all the security measures. The system is efficient because whenever security is needed, the members themselves patrol streets. So, the government does not have to provide security.”¹²³

The whole system of security is based on the idea of waqf (devotion to the community). When I interviewed the head of Rabwah, Sadr Amoumi, he explained that, “The security of the town is a top priority for the administration. Every member of the *jammāt* (Ahmadiyya community) is responsible for the security of Rabwah. We believe that only the community members can best protect the headquarters. The whole system is voluntary. The people living in Rabwah keep themselves aware of the outskirts and inside of Rabwah and any unusual activity is reported directly to the top. This is all because we have a strong sense of community. At night, community members voluntarily take their private cars and patrol the streets to ensure security”¹²⁴ He further added, “It is my duty to train people how they can protect the headquarters. Being the mayor, I instruct people what security measures they should take. We have also given emergency numbers to every household in Rabwah, to inform us if any suspicious activity happens.”¹²⁵

Since the community has an informal security system, the members are not trained personnel with a uniform. According to the mayor of Rabwah, this system worked better than the official security system. He said, “yes we do not have uniforms, but this system is better because we covertly keep

¹²³ *ibid*

¹²⁴ Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹²⁵ *Ibid*

The quotation marks are mentioned just how they were originally explained by the respondents. This is done so that the originality of the filed work is maintained.

ourselves aware of the surroundings. We do not make the criminal aware of our presence and this is better than security the government provides with policemen. In most cases, the police itself have a discriminatory attitude that causes us problems rather than protecting us. Therefore, for us, this is the best system.”¹²⁶

For the protection of schools, mosques or important events, the community has an organization by the name of *hifazat-e-marqaz* that consists of 40 to 50 trained volunteers from the *Khudaam* (men between ages of 17-40).¹²⁷ These volunteers are allowed to carry arms by the permission of the government. Other than that, the community has installed CCTV cameras all over the town to ensure security. ¹²⁸

4.2.2 Dar ul Ziyafat (Guest House Service)

The values of equality and a strong sense of community can be further portrayed by a 24-hour open guest house service system called Darul-Ziyafat. The guest house serves everyone and does not discriminate on the grounds of religion or profession.¹²⁹ Serving humanity is very important in Ahmadi culture. The institution has become an Ahmadi symbol because it demonstrates Ahmadi beliefs in the sense that no one is discriminated on grounds of being rich, poor, homeless, or belonging to a different religion.¹³⁰ It is remarkable that despite the persecution and human rights

¹²⁶ *ibid*

¹²⁷ Interview with Ahmad Aleem, A member in the Hifazat e Marqaz, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 15 June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹²⁸ *ibid*

¹²⁹ Interview with Naveed Shah, Manager of Dar ul Ziyafat, Dar ul Ziyafat (Rabwah, Pakistan, 15 June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹³⁰ *ibid*

violations, the community has not developed hostility towards their fellow countrymen but instead welcomes everyone.

The guest house was established in 1964. Based on the legacy of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, it is famously said that he was a humble man and would serve food to guests himself. Today, Dar-ul-Ziyafat feeds 6000 to 7000 people per day without any charge.¹³¹ Moreover, it gives hospitality services to anyone at any time of the day.¹³² According to a manager, the guest house has 300 rooms, where it can accommodate a maximum of 700 guests per night. The institution also employs physically and mentally challenged young people as gardeners or housekeepers.¹³³

The strong value system of the community has obliged it to treat people equally, even if it means serving people who support persecution against them. In the year 2017 alone, Dar ul- Ziyafat served a total of 850 guests who were non-Ahmadis.¹³⁴ In my interview with the hotel manager, I inquired about the stance of the community on the practice of serving people who persecute them, the manager replied that “we do not think about how we are persecuted. All we know is that we are supposed to treat guests as people of the promised Messiah, whether they are Ahmadi or non-Ahmadi. We work under the Caliph and serving the guest means serving the Caliph.”¹³⁵ I further inquired about how the institution functions financially when it hosts all people for free. The

¹³¹ Interview with Allahdeta Shaukat, Chef at Dar ul Ziyafat, Dar ul Ziyafat (Rabwah, Pakistan, 15 June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

¹³² Interview with Naveed Shah, Manager of Dar ul Ziyafat, Dar ul Ziyafat (Rabwah, Pakistan, 15 June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

¹³³ *ibid*

¹³⁴ *Ibid*

Rabwah has a population where 98 % of the people are Ahmadis. Since it is an Ahmadi dominant region, very few non-Ahmadis visit Rabwah.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*

According to Ahmadi Religion, people belonging to different religions are all equal. Serving the humanity is preached by the Caliph.

manger replied that “we have our community funds to make this institution work. That’s how important it is for us to treat people equally and be hospitable, we spend our own community funds to maintain this institution because this is what our Caliph taught us.”¹³⁶

4.2.3 Noor Ul Ain (Blood and Eye Center)

The values of altruism are very strong in the community. The community believes in providing relief to the disabled or the ones in pain. Therefore, the community has established a specialized center as eye and blood bank called Noor Ul Ain. ¹³⁷

During my interview with the head of the eye center, he mentioned that the main objective of the center is to perform corneal transplants and help blind people after the death of the donor.¹³⁸ He further mentioned that Rabwah is the second most eye donating place after Sri Lanka.¹³⁹ According to records, 8200 people have donated their eyes and 262 patients have been treated.¹⁴⁰ However, the center only accepts eye donations from Ahmadis and not from non-Ahmadis. He added that “we do not discriminate the non-Ahmadis but we do not take donations from them.”¹⁴¹ Furthermore, people are also very keen on giving blood. Rabwah has a separate blood bank where under the Caliph’s order, every healthy member of the community is ordered to give blood on a

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Interview with Muhammad Hassan, Manager of Noor Ul Ain, Noor Ul Ain (Rabwah, Pakistan, 22 June 2017) Noor Ul Ain Blood & Eye Bank, (accessed on 5 November 2018) <http://www.irabwah.com/2016/01/15/noor-ul-ain-blood-eye-bank/>

¹³⁸ ibid

¹³⁹ Ross Velto, “The country that supplies eyes” BBC News, Colombo (1st Feb 2016)

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Muhammad Hassan, Manager of Noor Ul Ain, Noor Ul Ain (Rabwah, Pakistan, 22 June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹⁴¹ ibid

monthly basis.”¹⁴² The system is designed so the community stays intact. All these institutions have been created so that the spirit of compassion remain in the community.

4.3 Parallel institutions

4.3.1 Nazarat e Taleem (Education Department)

The education department is known as *Nazarat e Taleem*. Most of the funds of the community are spent on the education department because the community puts great emphasis on education as a necessity.¹⁴³ This department is responsible for the provision of quality education. The department itself has subdivisions; a separate unit deals with the designing of the curriculum, the other works with counseling and career advice, another manages the finances, and a separate unit manages special schools for mentally challenged children.

The community provides quality education for all members. This is the reason why Rabwah has a literacy rate of over 90 percent.¹⁴⁴ Compared to that, Pakistan has a much lower rate of 58 percent according to the 2018 statistics.¹⁴⁵ This significant difference can be attributed to the fact that the community has made efforts to make education accessible to all, especially to the most poverty-stricken groups of the community. The community has established eleven primary schools and two higher education colleges in Rabwah.¹⁴⁶ These schools are operated by community funds.

¹⁴² *ibid*

¹⁴³ Interview with Hafiz Sayed, Manager at Nazart e Taleem (Rabwah, Pakistan, 18 June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹⁴⁴ Saba Imtiza, "Thinking proactively: Ahmadis have found their own solutions in Rabwah" *The Express Tribune* (11 July 2011)

¹⁴⁵ Rizwan Khuwaja, "Literacy rate in Pakistan" *The Nation* (Lahore, Jan 2017)

¹⁴⁶ 'Nazarat e Taleem' accessed 28 October 2018 <http://nazarattaleem.org/>

Moreover, primary level education is completely free.¹⁴⁷ The department also provides free books, uniforms, and school bags to students. For undergraduate level education, the fee charged is 2000 RS per month.¹⁴⁸ This is remarkably lower than what is charged in rest of the colleges in Pakistan. According to the Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement Survey (PSLM) whether government or private, higher education is the most expensive item for households. The average annual expenditure on higher education in government institutes is Rs25,374 and Rs42,704 in private facilities.¹⁴⁹

Since quality education is an integral part of the Ahmadiyya community, it has developed its own curriculum. Previously, the community followed the government board's curriculum, however, due to concerns about the quality of curriculum, the education department developed its own curriculum that is taught in Ahmadi schools.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, apart from the curriculum, the department has its own grading system and a central examination body to ensure transparency. In order to maintain the quality of the Ahmadi education system, the department also trains the faculty itself. Rabwah has 784 teachers, including 4 doctorates.¹⁵¹ Proper training workshops are arranged for the faculty mainly through Skype sessions conducted by experienced people of the community members in London.¹⁵² Other than this, the department also makes sure that there are extracurricular activities in schools. The schools also have an etiquette program that teaches Ahmadi values. The community also employs psychologists in schools and colleges to ensure that

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Hafiz Sayed, Manager at Nazarat e Taleem (Rabwah, Pakistan, 18 June 2017)

Nazarat e Taleem accessed 28 October 2018 <http://nazarattaleem.org/>

¹⁴⁸ *ibid*

¹⁴⁹ Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, accessed on 5 November 2018

http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files//pslm/publications/pslm2013_14/A%20report%2013-14%28%2012-05-15%29_Flnal_1.pdf

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Hafiz Sayed, Manager at Nazarat e Taleem (Rabwah, Pakistan, 18 June 2017)

¹⁵¹ *Nazarat e Taleem* accessed 28 October 2018 <http://nazarattaleem.org/>

¹⁵² *Nazarat e Taleem* accessed 28 October 2018 <http://nazarattaleem.org/>

students can better manage academic pressures and related mental stresses.¹⁵³ The department has also taken the responsibility of providing career counseling and guidance on various scholarships available to study abroad.¹⁵⁴ The community sponsors merit and need-based scholarships to students who cannot afford higher education. According to a member of the department, an equivalent of 4 million rupees of scholarships is given per year.¹⁵⁵ Thus, all these measures are taken to maintain and improve the quality of Ahmadi education system.

Furthermore, a separate unit in the department deals with the education of mentally and physically challenged people. The community does not ignore them and considers itself responsible for their education as well. Rabwah has a special school for the mentally challenged and disabled children.¹⁵⁶ The school also has a medical service and customized bus service for children to be picked up from their houses.¹⁵⁷

In order to learn about the competing views, I also interviewed the principal of a government school at Rabwah. I inquired about the stance of government with respect to Ahmadi schools and education system. The principal replied that “Ahmadi schools are a problem for us. You see 98 percent of the population at Rabwah is Ahmadi, but two percent is not. This two percent goes to the government schools for education and not the Ahmadi schools. But since the Ahmadi schools provide services such as scholarships, free books, and uniforms to the students, they set the bar too high and our student and parents complain about our educational services. We do not have a psychologist either and all the other services that are provided in Ahmadi schools. The government

¹⁵³ *ibid*

¹⁵⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵⁵ *ibid*

¹⁵⁶ Institute for Special Education Rabwah, accessed on 5 November 2018.

¹⁵⁷ *ibid*

does not have sufficient funds as the Ahmadiyya community. So, in conclusion, the Ahmadi schools and educations system makes us earn a poor reputation.”¹⁵⁸

4.3.2 *Rishta Nata Department (Marriage Council)*

In Pakistan, marriages are registered through the government union councils.¹⁵⁹ However, the Ahmadi have their own department called the Rishta Nata that registers marriages for its community members.¹⁶⁰ The community wants to maintain their marriage registration system separate so that it can have its own records.¹⁶¹ During my data collection, I found out that the formation of marriage council has immense religious significance. In an interview with the head of the council, it was mentioned that the rationale behind the separate marriage council for Ahmadi community has a deep religious meaning. According to him, ‘it is said that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad kept a personal register with himself to note down the names of people who expressed the desire to marry someone. The marriage council is also based on the same principles.’¹⁶² The concept of marriage council is based on religious and historical significance. The marriage council, located in Rabwah, also registers marriages of community members that live in different parts of the world.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Shahnawaz Rasool, Principal of Taleem Aam school (Rabwah, Pakistan, 20 June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

¹⁵⁹ ‘Pakistan: Marriage registration and related civil status documents’ Danish National ID Centre, 2018

¹⁶⁰ Department of Rishta Nata, accessed on 29 October 2018
<http://www.rishtanata.us/index.php/content/index/about-us>

¹⁶¹ *ibid*

¹⁶² Interview with Murtaza Ali, Department Head of Rishta Nata (Rabwah, Pakistan, 25 June 2017)
Department of Rishta Nata, accessed on 29 October 2018 <http://www.rishtanata.us/index.php/content/index/about-us>

¹⁶³ *ibid*

4.3.3 Tahir Heart Hospital

Tahir Heart hospital is a cardiac care hospital was established by the community through its own funds. The hospital has facilities for open-heart surgery and angioplasty treatment.¹⁶⁴ In 2004, the present Caliph Hazrat Mirza Masoor Ahmad laid the foundations of the hospital. The hospital provides efficient services with modern equipment.¹⁶⁵ Therefore, patients from all over the country come to receive better treatment from here.

Like all Ahmadi institutions, this institution has deep religious significance attached to it. Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the third Caliph had dreamt of a heart institute that could serve all people without any discrimination on the basis of religion or sect. However, he died before he could turn his dream into reality. Later, the community members initiated the project.¹⁶⁶ The hospital does not charge any fee.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, the most astonishing aspect of the hospital is that it treats not only the Ahmadis but also the non-Ahmadis. In fact, over 80 percent of its patients are not Ahmadis.¹⁶⁸

During my interview with the top heart surgeon, I inquired about what the community feels about spending its own funds on non-Ahmadis. The doctor replied that “it was our caliph’s dream to serve the humanity and not discriminate anyone on basis of religion. If a distressed non-Ahmadi patient is not able to afford treatment, we will treat him. We treat people who discriminate us and call us non-Muslims, but we have our own values. Our values teach us to set up a precedent of equality.”¹⁶⁹ He further added that “our pay is very low, the community does not have enough

¹⁶⁴Tahir Heart Institute, accessed on 29 October 2018

¹⁶⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Mohmmad Qasmi, Surgeon, Tahir Heart (Rabwah, Pakistan, 26 June 2017)

¹⁶⁷ *ibid*

¹⁶⁸ Saba Imtiaz, “Thinking proactively: Ahmadis have found their own solutions in Rabwah” The Express Tribune, Rabwah, 2011

¹⁶⁹ *ibid*

funds to support us but all the doctors who work here are all *waqf*, they have devoted their lives for a cause, so we continue to do this.”¹⁷⁰

I also interviewed the District officer of central Punjab to know the perspective of the government on the provision of health services provided by the Ahmadiyya community.¹⁷¹ He said, “it is obvious that government healthcare system in Pakistan lacks quality. Most people prefer the private sector to the public for health services.¹⁷² But at the same time, private healthcare is very expensive. The poor in our country spend a greater proportion of their income on health care than the rich. Eventually, the poor suffer in this. Tahir Heart Hospital is a great initiative as it provides quality healthcare for free. People from all the nearby places, come to Rabwah for their treatment mainly because they have the necessary expertise, technology, and medical equipment. Government hospitals, on the other hand, are not well equipped and lack skilled workforce. Thus, the initiative is very valuable for Pakistan’s population.”¹⁷³

Tahir heart hospital serves as a perfect example of how a strong value system helps an institution to not only function but also sustain itself as one of the best medical institutions in Pakistan. Even though the community is a persecuted religious minority in Pakistan, it does not reciprocate the

¹⁷⁰ Ibid

The quotation marks are mentioned just how they were originally explained by the respondents. This is done so that the originality of the filed work is maintained.

¹⁷¹ The land of Rabwah falls into the control of the District officer, who has the highest position in local Punjab government.

¹⁷² Ather Akbari, ‘Demand for Public Health Care in Pakistan’ (2009) The Pakistan Development Review. (According to the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey, 70 % of the population consult private health care services as compare to the public health service)

¹⁷³ Interview with Ahsan Chawla, District Officer of Central Punjab, DCO Office (Chiniot, Pakistan, 26 June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

hatred when it treats non-Ahmadis, instead follows the instructions of their Caliph; to treat everyone equally.

4.3.4 Planning and Development Department

Although, the provision of basic infrastructure such as street lights, roads, fire stations, and etc. are traditionally financed through the public sector, however, in Rabwah the community has its own system of development and planning for the town. From managing the finances to budget planning, distribution, and implementation, the whole process is managed by the community itself.¹⁷⁴ Architects and engineers are hired from within the community.¹⁷⁵ The community also has a specific department called the beautification department which manages and monitors the creation of parks in Rabwah. Moreover, the voluntary system of the community itself maintains the greenery and cleanliness of the town. It is considered a culture in the community to have an activity called *waqar-e-amal*, in which, every Friday each member must clear garbage and plant a tree in the town.¹⁷⁶ The community has also two fire stations in Rabwah with trained professional for any emergency.¹⁷⁷ Thus, this voluntary system itself works for them.

On the contrary, the development of infrastructure in other small towns in Pakistan is not as efficient as it is in Rabwah. Mainly because other towns depend on government funding for its development. The government gets most of its finances through foreign aid.¹⁷⁸ Although, it is

¹⁷⁴Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹⁷⁵ ibid

¹⁷⁶ Ibid

¹⁷⁷ ibid

¹⁷⁸ Vaqar Ahmed, "Public Infrastructure and Economic Growth in Pakistan: A Dynamic CGE microsimulation Analysis" (2017) Pakistan Institute of Development Economics.

difficult to document the level of corruption in the public sector, but it is prevalent.¹⁷⁹ According to the Planning Commission of the Government of Pakistan, 10 to 15 percent of the corruption takes place in infrastructure development projects. Thus, because of the corruption and inefficient system, an average project takes, on an average, thrice the time to complete than that of the time initially planned.¹⁸⁰ Corruption is also widespread in the construction of roads. It often happens that roads are deliberately made weak and left to deteriorate so that contracts can be signed again, and the chances of corruption can be increased.¹⁸¹ Furthermore, according to the OECD Foreign Bribery Report, two-thirds of foreign bribery cases in Pakistan are occurred in infrastructure development projects.¹⁸²

In my interview with the Mayor of Rabwah, he mentioned that “the system of developing Rabwah is efficient for us because we pay close attention to the finances, budget, and the need. The evaluation of the need to have a particular road or school is very important. Then we involve other stakeholders like engineers and architects. We monitor this process very closely and keep appropriate scrutiny. Therefore, not depending on government for our projects is better because there is no corruption.”¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ *ibid*

¹⁸⁰ Vaqar Ahmed, “Public Infrastructure and Economic Growth in Pakistan: A Dynamic CGE microsimulation Analysis” (2017) Pakistan Institute of Development Economics.

¹⁸¹ *ibid*

¹⁸² Ian Hawkesworth, “Towards a framework for the governance of infrastructure” (2015) Organization for Economic Corporation,
<https://www.oecd.org/gov/budgeting/Towards-a-Framework-for-the-Governance-of-Infrastructure.pdf>

¹⁸³ Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

4.4 Institutions to maintain Ahmadi identity

Over the years, a strong value system has allowed the community to survive years of persecution. Thus, the community attaches great significance to its culture and religious beliefs as these values define the Ahmadi identity. Therefore, specific institutions have been designed to reinforce Ahmadi values among the members. In the following two sections, I will explain how institutions such as a TV channel and press reinforce these values which in turn, help the community stays intact to its beliefs.

4.4.1 Muslim Television Ahmadiyya (MTA)

MTA is a nonprofit globally-broadcasted satellite television network that is exclusive to the Ahmadi community. Its main aim is to reinforce Ahmadi values amongst members living around the world and spread the message of the Ahmadi religion. MTA is established and funded by the community members. MTA International is the main source of media for the Ahmadiyya Muslim community around the world.¹⁸⁴

The first channel of MTA was launched by Mirza Tahir Ahmad (fourth Caliph of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community) in 1992. The concept of a TV network was introduced because of the significance of Friday Sermon in Ahmadi religion.¹⁸⁵ The Friday Sermon is a weekly address directly by the Caliph to the entire community. It is a chance for the Caliph to communicate to the people. It acts as a unification force for the community, as it is a norm in Ahmadi families to listen to the address each week.

¹⁸⁴Muslim Television Ahmadiyya, accessed on 5 November 2018 <https://www.alislam.org/library/book/brief-history-ahmadiyya-muslim/muslim-television-ahmadiyya/>

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Uzair Ikram, Head of MTA, MTA Office (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

MTA serves as a platform to educate Ahmadis about their religion, values, and culture. It broadcasts talk shows and educational programs. MTA aims to reach a large amount of Ahmadi diaspora that lives abroad. Therefore, it has been launched to specialize in European languages, to target parts of Ahmadiyya community in Europe.¹⁸⁶ Also, in the Arabic language which broadcasts across the Middle East, North Africa, and North America. Due to the worldwide audience, the channels are translated into different languages including English, German, Bengali, French, Urdu, Arabic, and Indonesian, Russian, and Spanish.¹⁸⁷ Thus, MTA serves a larger purpose of disseminating Ahmadi values in the community, so that the community has an identity which in turn helps it to be more intact.

4.4.2 Zia Ul Islam Press (Publication Department)

The community has a separate publication department which works to publish newspapers, books, and magazines for the community. A daily newspaper called *Al Fazl* is published from Ziaul Islam Press located in Rabwah.¹⁸⁸ The newspaper has been an integral part of the community since 1913, even before the creation of Pakistan. The newspaper contains news and articles relating to the Ahmadi community.¹⁸⁹ The purpose of the newspaper and magazine is to reinforce Ahmadi values in the community, which include values of brotherhood, integrity, and coexistence. Thus, the community has separate magazines specified for each age group. A specific magazine for women called *Misbah* is published every week. The magazine teaches religious obligations as an Ahmadi woman.¹⁹⁰ *Tashhez ul Azhan* is directed towards children. It is also published weekly which

¹⁸⁶ Muslim Television Ahmadiyya, accessed on 5 November 2018 <https://www.alislam.org/library/book/brief-history-ahmadiyya-muslim/muslim-television-ahmadiyya/>

¹⁸⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Jaffar Khan, Head of Ziaul Islam, Publication department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017) Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Filed Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹⁸⁹ *Al Fazl*, accessed on 5 November 2018 <https://www.alislam.org/alfazl/>

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Jaffar Khan, Head of Ziaul Islam, Publication department (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)

reinforces religious values of how children can be close to the Ahmadi values, *Khalidi* deals with youth and contain articles written by and for youth, and *Ansarullah* is a magazine for elderly members.¹⁹¹

4.4.3 Lajna and Khuddam Ul Ahmadiyya

The Ahmadiyya community wants to maintain its identity as a collective and an integrated community. Therefore, it has adopted a unique way where the community institutions are not only divided into departments but categorized by an organizational structure. The organizations are divided according to gender and age. Boys who are between the ages of 7 to 15 fall under the organization called Itfal. Men who are between the ages of 16-40 are categorized in the organization of Khudaam-ul- Ahmadiyya. Men over 40 years of age fall under the organization of Ansaar. Similarly, young girls between the ages of 7-15 are called Nasraat. And women between ages of 16 to 40 have a separate organization by the name of Lajna.¹⁹² The reason for such a unique division of organizations is that the community remains intact as a whole. Separate organizations have been made so that each member feels a sense of belonging with the community. The heads of these organizations are approachable to the concerned member of the organization. These departments work autonomously from each other and make sure that Ahmadi values are disseminated in the members.

Both *Khudaam-ul- Ahmadiyya* (men of the community) and *Lajna* (women of the community) have separate offices located in Rabwah. Both originations work to foster Ahmadi values in the specific age group that they are responsible for. The organization keep all the records of the

¹⁹¹ ibid

¹⁹² Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

concerned age groups and collect funds from them.¹⁹³The *Lajna* organization was founded in 1922. It is an institution that does not go against the wishes of the caliph in any circumstances.¹⁹⁴*Misbha*, the magazine specifically targeted for the women is published from here. The organization teaches how a girl should conduct herself according to Ahmadi practices. Girls are also encouraged to play sports. The head office of the organization has a separate department for skill training which offers diplomas in arts, creativity, and sewing. Girls are encouraged to work and become financially independent.¹⁹⁵ Similarly, the *Khudaam-ul-Ahmadiyya* works in a similar fashion. The headquarters are located in Rabwah. Funds of male community members from all over the world are accumulated by the department. The head of *Khudaam-ul-Ahmadiyya* is the head of the male community members who are between ages of 16-40.¹⁹⁶

4.4.4 Top-down approach of the organizational structure

Since the community wants to maintain its aspect of integration, therefore even the organizational structure of the community has been designed in a way to keep the community close. The organizational structure is divided both horizontally and vertically. The top-down approach is designed as such that each member feels as if he or she has a crucial role in serving the community. The system can be understood further with an example of how blocks in Rabwah are organized. Rabwah has 72 blocks and each block has its own president. This president comes under *Sadar Amoumi*, mayor of Rabwah and has his cabinet.¹⁹⁷ The cabinet deals with issues such as e.g. education, health, cleanliness, and code of conduct. So there is a top-down approach of being under

¹⁹³ Interview with Sarhat Hussain, Head of Lajna, Lajna Office (Rabwah, Pakistan, 4th June 2017)

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

¹⁹⁵ ibid

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Musarat Bahseer, Head of Khuddam al Ahmadiyya, Sad Anjuman Office (Rabwah, Pakistan, 4th June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017. [(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017))]

¹⁹⁷ibid

the authority of Sadr Amoumi but also a horizontal approach where the president of the block has a cabinet.¹⁹⁸ All the departments have a head and subordinates accordingly. This is how each neighborhood has a president and duties are assigned to every person in the neighborhood. Due to this continuing top-down approach, this hierarchy system reaches down to every single member in the community.

5. *Tehreek-e-Jadeed* Department (International Affairs Department)

In previous sections, I have discussed departments under Sad Anjuman, which deals with the local administration of the Ahmadiyya community. *Tehreek-e-jaded* on the other hand, manages all the foreign affairs of the community. The organization was founded in 1934 by the second Caliph, Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ud din Muhmud Ahmad.¹⁹⁹ Initially it was formed as a donation movement, where members of the community were encouraged to donate for the betterment of the community. Later, as the community expanded to other parts of the world, a need was felt to specify the objective and purpose of the organization.²⁰⁰ Today, this organization works internationally to spread Ahmadi religion and maintain the religious values of the huge diaspora of Ahmadiyya community.²⁰¹ This is done by sending missionaries internally and building new mosques and centers.

Tehreek e Jadeed is responsible for community members living around the world. It itself is an organization of the community, but it has many departments that manage specific matters.²⁰² One

¹⁹⁸ *ibid*

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)
Tehreek Jadid, a Divine Scheme accessed on 5 November 2018 <https://www.ahmadiyya.us/lajna/TEHRIKE-JADID-Scheme.pdf>

²⁰⁰ *ibid*

²⁰¹ *ibid*

²⁰² Interview with Hafiz Sayed, Administration head, Nazart e Taleem (Rabwah, Pakistan, 17 June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

of the department is *Waqlat Maal Salis*, which manages property to build Ahmadi centers and mosques outside Pakistan.²⁰³ *Waqlat Tasneef* is responsible for translating the Quran and Hadis (Prophets teachings) into different languages.²⁰⁴ With all the departments, Nusrat Jahan Scheme also falls under *Tehreek e Jadeed*. It is based on the values of altruism and compassion, as considered very important in Ahmadi religion. The scheme focuses on providing relief to disaster-hit situations and provides quality education in the most deprived regions of Africa.²⁰⁵

Waqalat tabsheer is another department of *Tehreek e Jadeed*. It is very important, as it deals with spreading the message of Ahmadi religion and maintaining religious values of the huge diaspora of Ahmadiyya community living all over the world. The department keeps the community closer to its values. It trains and sends missionaries to all over the world. If a family living outside of Pakistan requires a missionary, then this department is contacted, and arrangements are made accordingly. The department also facilitates visa for the missionaries.²⁰⁶ Under this department, a special institution for the training of missionaries called Jama-e-Ahmadiyya has been created.²⁰⁷ After completing college, the men who devote their lives for the cause of the community are admitted in this institution. The training course for the missionaries (Murabi) is for 7 years.²⁰⁸ The curriculum of the training course has been designed in a way that teaches them values and etiquettes of the community. The students in these institutions do not pay any fee as they are

²⁰³ ibid

²⁰⁴ ibid

²⁰⁵ Nusrat Jahan Project, accessed on 5 November 2018 <https://www.alislam.org/library/book/brief-history-ahmadiyya-muslim/nusrat-jehan-project/>

²⁰⁶ Interview with Furqan Sheikh, Head of Jamai institute, Waqalat Tabsheer office (Rabwah, Pakistan, 14 June 2017

Institute of Jamia Ahmadiyya accessed on 5 November 2018

²⁰⁷ Interview with Hafiz Sayed, Administration head, Nazart e Taleem (Rabwah, Pakistan, 12 June 2017) Institute of Jamia Ahmadiyya accessed on 5 November 2018

<http://www.alhakam.org/institute-jamia-ahmadiyya>

²⁰⁸ ibid

serving the community.²⁰⁹ Thus, they also get a monthly allowance arranged by Tehreek e Jadeed.²¹⁰ Institutions like Jam-e-Ahmadiyya are present in UK, Germany, Indonesia, and Canada. All these institutions come under the authority of the department of Waqalat Tabsheer. After getting the training from these institutions, these missionaries are sent to different parts of the world to preach the Ahmadi religion.²¹¹

6. *Majlis-e-Shoora* (Advisory Council)

The Ahmadi religion greatly exhorts the practice of consultation in all important matters of life. *Majlis-e-Shoora* is a body where all department heads meet to discuss important matters. The community stresses the importance of consultation in all matters of life.²¹² This includes politics, education, religion, clothing, etiquettes, funding, and etc. The organization is responsible for discussing all sorts of issues that the community might face at a point in time.

The idea of a consultative body was first initiated by the Second Caliph of the community, Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ud din Muhmud Ahmad.²¹³ The reason for the creation of a separate advisory body has significant religious significance. During my interviews with the Mayor of Rabwah, who also served as a member of *Majlis-e-Shoora*, mentioned that *Majlis-e-Shoora* is formed on basis of a Quranic verse which says “And make Mashwara (consult) with them in affairs (of importance). Then when you have firmly decided, have trust on Allah. Verily Allah loves those who have trust (in Him)” Surah Al Imran. 03:159.²¹⁴

²⁰⁹ ibid

²¹⁰ ibid

²¹¹ ibid

²¹² Interview with Sibtain Haider, Mayor of Rabwah, Sadr Anjuman (Rabwah, Pakistan, 2nd June 2017)

Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.

[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

²¹³ ibid

²¹⁴ Quranic Verse, Surah Al Imran. 03:159 <https://quran.com/3/159-169?translations=20>

Today, Majlis-e-Shoora acts as a consultative council. Before making an important decision, the Caliph asks the members of Majlis-e-Shoora to give its opinion. All department heads hold a meeting where decisions are made through voting. Majlis-e-Shoora acts as a place to consult and debate. However, it may also happen that the votes of the majority are not taken into consideration by the caliph. Thus, it entirely depends on the caliph whether he wants to pursue with the majority votes or not. The decision of the Caliph is considered with great divinity. Therefore, the members in the Shoora do not object if the vote is not acted upon.²¹⁵ They submit to the idea of the Caliph being an authority which makes the best decisions. When the decision is made by Majlis-e-Shoora, including the Caliph, then a press notification is issued so that the entire community becomes aware as well.²¹⁶

7. Election committee

The election committee consists of the top heads of Sadr Anjuman, Tehreek e Jadeed, the Mayor of Rabwah, and the Caliph. According to the head of Lajna department, the committee has a very unique way of selecting people for posts in the sense, no person can nominate himself or express the desire to contest for a particular position, instead if somebody shows the desire for a position then he or she is disqualified. Moreover, instead of standing for election, the community has open votes where people vote for whoever they think is deserving for the position. Thus, any sort of politics is forbidden by the Caliph.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ ibid

²¹⁶ ibid

²¹⁷ Interview with Sarhat Hussain, Head of Lajna, Lajna Office (Rabwah, Pakistan, 4th June 2017)
Hooriya Rashid, "Ethnographic Field Survey Data on the Ahmadiyya Community" Rabwah, Pakistan June 2017.
[(C:\Users\Hooriya\Desktop\Ethnographic Interview, Rashid, Hooriya (June 2017)]

The community has its own set of beliefs when it comes to the selection of a person for a position. The community believes that the whole process of nomination and the eventual selection is divine. They feel that a person gets a post because he was destined to get the post. The community member believes that only fate determines a person selected for a particular position. According to the head of the Lajna department, “these decisions are considered divine in our part of the world since no one nominates himself, we believe that the whole process of open votes is divine. The selection happens how it is planned or destined to be by the grace of god. That is how we also see the selection of the caliph as well. Its divine and sacred. Its destined in a way what God plans.”²¹⁸ Once the selection is done, whoever gets the post for a particular position takes the oath of allegiance.

This chapter provides detailed evidence of how a strong value system helps a community to not only survive persecution but also maintain its institutions and identity. The Ahmadiya community attaches immense significance to the values of compassion, humility and equality and have based the foundation of its institutions on these values. The chapter also explains how the Ahmadiyya community wants to keep its institutions autonomous and independent, so in turn the system can work efficiently.

²¹⁸ ibid

Conclusion

The Ahmadiyah community is a persecuted religious minority in Pakistan, where despite being citizens of the country, they are not able to fully exercise their rights. Constitutional provisions such as the Second Amendment, the Zia Ordinance and Blasphemy laws curtail their right to practice their religion. Because of these laws, they continue to be persecuted, to an extent that under the Zia Ordinance, they cannot “pose as Muslims”. An act such as a mere greeting in the Islamic way is considered blasphemous and according to the law anyone can report to the police against them based upon an allegation of committing blasphemy. Incidents of private property belonging to the Ahmadis being burnt by an angry mob are routine. Moreover, they have no representation in the political process of the country, they are not promoted in government jobs and any sort of gathering of the community is strictly prohibited. Even though the community is marginalized, it has been able to coexist as a religious minority within a country with a dominant homogenous (Sunni) region. The main argument of this thesis is that a religious minority can survive persecution in a country and can coexist if it has a strong value system. The Ahmadiyah community serves as the best example of a community that has gone through persecution since the creation of Pakistan but due to its need to preserve and maintain its identity, the community has been able to not only to survive but also continue to maintain its headquarters in a small town in Pakistan, which operates the entire community including the diaspora living all over the world. The community uses its strong value system as a foundation to build its institutions which in turn help it to survive the widespread persecution against them.

Most importantly, the community wants to maintain its exclusivity therefore it has reached a tacit agreement with the government, for its headquarters to be treated as an autonomous region. The government does not intervene in the functioning of the town and instead the community itself has

built all the infrastructure including hospitals, schools, roads and other institutions. Thus, Rabwah is ‘ a state within a state.’ The community has an education department that has its own curriculum. It manages the colleges, primary schools and a special school for the disabled. The Ahmadiyah community has its own marriage council to register marriages which works parallel to the union councils of the government. It has its own arbitration council, in which retribution and remedy are according to the community. The Ahmadiyah community also has its own security system that ensure the security of the town. As the community believes that its own administration system is more effective and efficient therefore it wants to maintain its institutions separate and independent.

The values of compassion, equality, humility, and serving the community are very central in Ahmadi culture and therefore Ahmadi institutions have also been founded on these values. For example, the community has a health service that treats patients from the rest of the country for free. Similarly, the community also has a 24-hour guest house service that caters to everyone including non- Ahmadi. The idea of treating everyone equally is stressed by the Caliph and therefore is based on the value of equal treatment. Other than that, members of the community have a very unique system of voluntary devotion of their entire lives for the community. This service is done on the intention of only serving the community. Thus, the devotees are the people who work in these institutions and keep the institutions functioning. The waqf department is the most important department, because it ensures that there are volunteers working in the institutions. The waqf system serves as the best example of how the community wants to maintain its institutions based on the voluntary system.

Since it is important to maintain the identity of the community, the community also has institutions that work to reinforce its religious values in the diaspora that lives in other parts of the world. It has institutions such as MTA, a publication department and a missionary training department

which have been created with the intention of keeping the community closer to its values. Moreover, the community also has a unique way of electing people at the top (including the Caliph) which is considered divine.

The thesis also presents a competing view of the government officials with regard to the Ahmadi institutions and a comparison of the Ahmadiyah institutions with the institutions of the government. In most cases, the Ahmadiyah community prefers its own institutions over the government institutions. For example, the community considers its own funding mechanism more efficient than that of the government. Mainly because when the government is planning, there may be more chances of corruption, but in case of Ahmadis, the process is carefully monitored and scrutinized.

In conclusion, the thesis puts forward the argument that a religious minority can coexist within a country of dominant religion and can survive the persecution if it has a strong value system, a strong need to maintain its identity, which transforms into strong institutions and act as a survival mechanism. The subsequent detailed examples attempted to provide evidence for this argument.

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Annex 1

Fig 1: Summary Information on Interviews

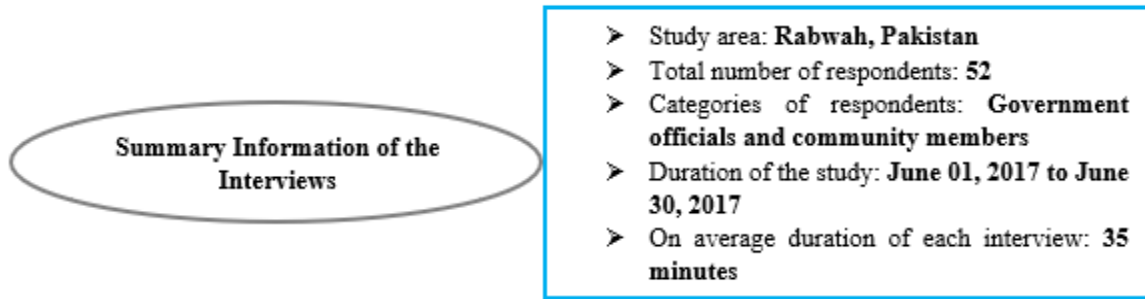
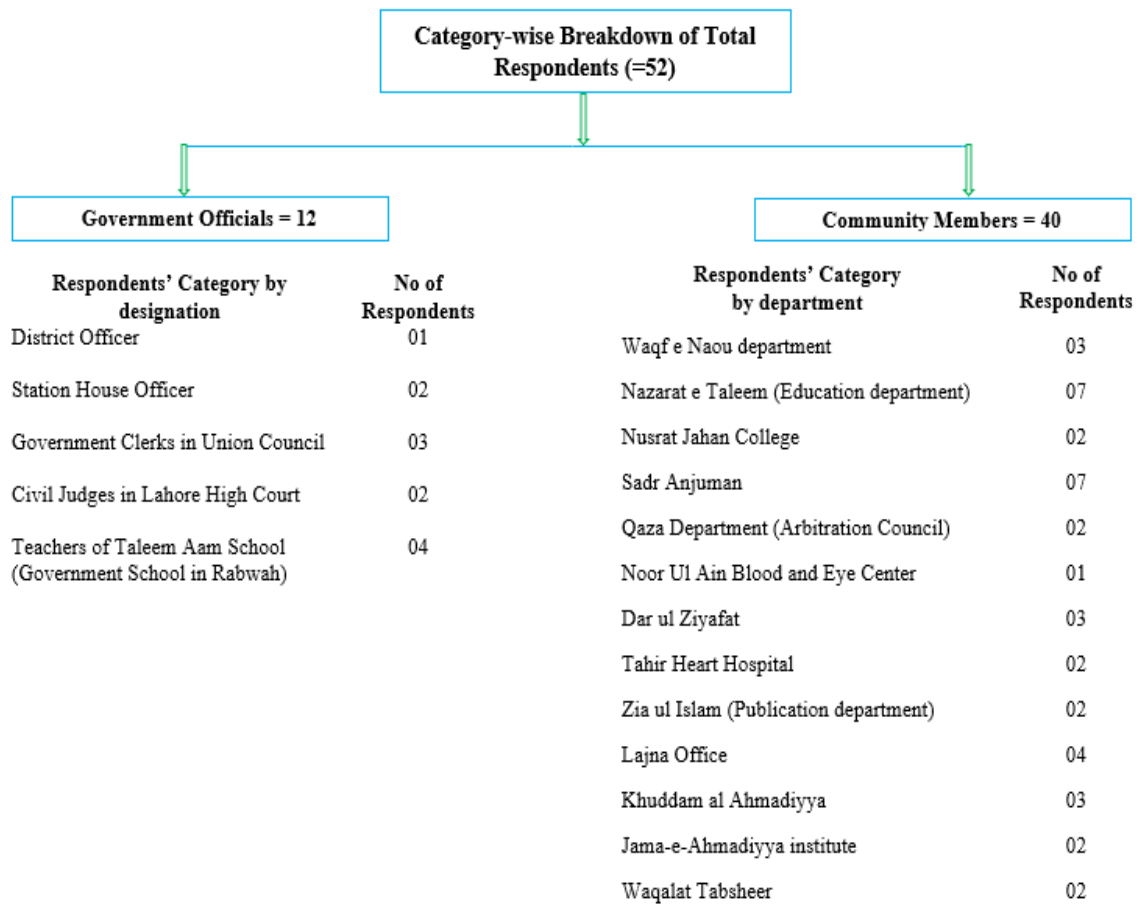


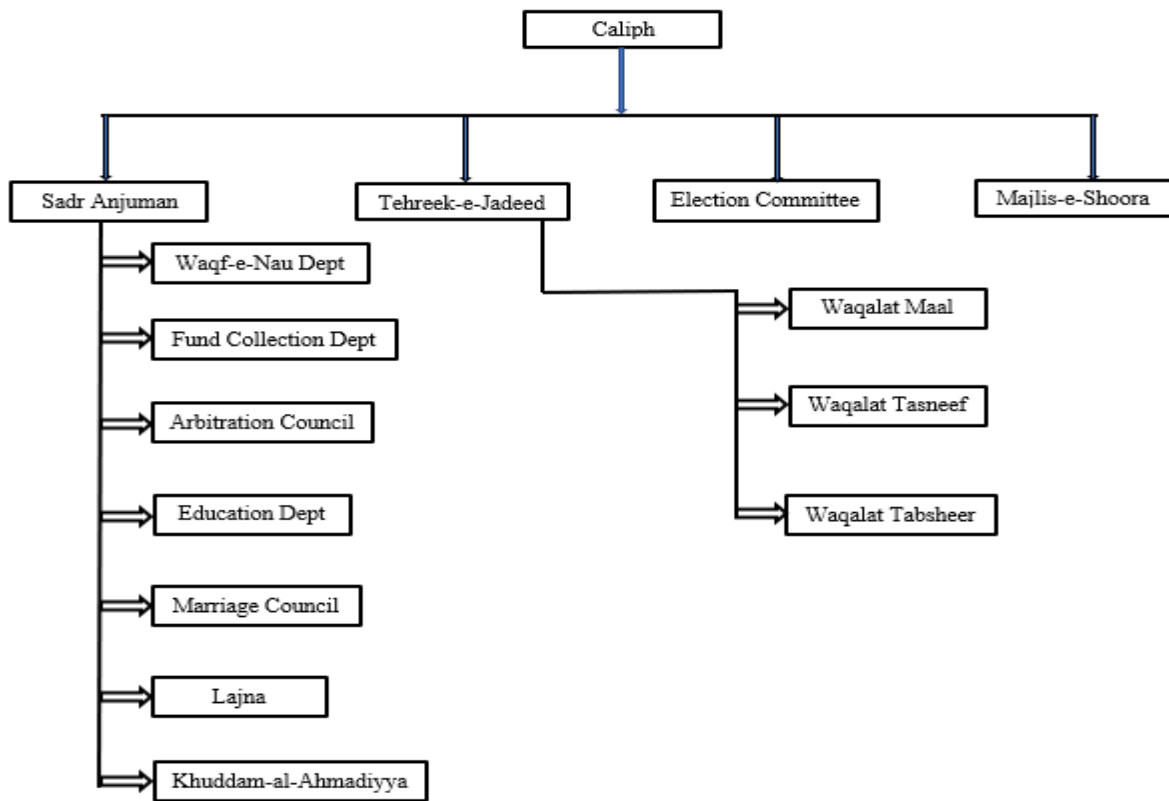
Fig 2 Composition of the Interviews



Source: Author's Contribution

Annex 2

Fig 3 The organizational Structure of the Community



Source: Author's Contribution