

Social Structure of Pakistan: An Attempt at Developing Some Concepts

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I. THE THREE PROPOSITIONS

In this paper I would like to introduce three interrelated propositions about the Social structure of Pakistan: (i) that Pakistan society is characterized by a social *stratification process which is compensatory in nature*; (ii) that the compensatory process of social stratification over the years has given rise to *status-centric value orientation*; and (iii) that the most significant indicator of status-centric orientation is *emergence of artificial middle class* which can be distinguished from real middle class in terms of norms.

II. RATIONALE

The above propositions in the form of a model are presented for four reasons. Firstly, a conceptual framework was desired about the social structure of Pakistan and the direction of social change taking place. Secondly, concepts were needed to study the norms of social classes in Pakistan. At best, some studies conducted by economists like Naseem [13] and Talat [1], for instance, have assessed the magnitude and degree of poverty, not who the poor are. What are their norms or value orientations? What are the norms of other social classes? Do the poor share the norms of other social classes or do they possess their own norms? Furthermore, these studies indicate that "an excessive concern with overall inequality of income may conceal important factors which tend to widen or equalize the income inequalities at a disaggregated level" [13]. What are those factors? Thirdly, it was intended to make a further contribution to the theoretical understanding of social structure and the social stratification process. The existing literature deals with social stratification as a distributive process, established bases of social classes, social status in society, their measures, explanations and relationships among social classes and social status groups and the rate and magnitude of mobility from one

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social class to another. All these are relevant topics for investigating contemporary sociological realities in Pakistan. But certain changes are also taking place in the structure of social classes in Pakistan which need to be studied and conceptualized. Observations suggest that while the real middle class is shrinking due to brain drain and the slow rate of legitimized upward occupational mobility, a new social formation is emerging due to various reasons which is parallel to the middle class in economic terms and not in sociological or normative terms or educational attainments. What are the norms of this new formation? Does this new social formation pose a threat to middle class or compensates for it? Theoretical or conceptual explanations to these questions are sought. Fourthly, some dimensions of social structure are conceptualized to explain why education in Pakistan is not economically productive or why education as a legitimized avenue for upward occupational mobility is underutilized or why there is a gap in planning and implementation at the lower levels in education.

III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for formulating propositions in this paper is inductive. Data from micro studies, observations and experience with the Pakistani society are organized by means of simple logic to formulate the concepts in the propositions which, of course, need to be operationalized and tested on diverse samples of people from various socioeconomic backgrounds.

Proposition I

(That Pakistan society is characterized by social stratification which is compensatory in nature.)

It is assumed in Pakistan that the two processes of *social stratification – compensatory and distributive* – exist parallel to each other. Little or no research has been done on either of the two in Pakistan.

Social stratification as a *compensatory* process is unfolded in terms of the following basic assumptions:

Assumption 1: Everyone in society has his own definition of his social status as superior in power, privilege and prestige taken together or singly. (Available tests measuring own concept may be used for assessing this but in this case the focus will be on measuring his/her perceived own definition of his/her power, privilege and prestige¹.)

¹Prestige, privilege and power have been defined as follows:

Prestige: Prestige is a measure of the amount of deference and respect that is defined as appropriate for a person by the norms that govern particular social relationship [3].

Privilege: Privilege is a benefit or right enjoyed by a particular class of persons not shared with or available to a generality of persons. It denotes a "special right, benefit, exemption or immunity (legal, economic, social) conferred by a law or custom on a particular group, office or class" [5].

Power: Power is the *ability of one person to control or determine the behaviour of another according to the controller's desire* [3].

Assumption 2: While one defines one's social status as superior to that of others in terms of power, privilege or prestige, one also realizes or acknowledges the inferior aspect of one's status in any one of the three aspects. The lower groups justify their superiority in non-material terms; the top groups may explicitly or implicitly acknowledge their inferiority in terms of degrees of the three aspects of their status.

Assumption 3: Decision on the superior aspect and inferior aspect of one's status is consciously made by constantly comparing one's status with that of others at various intra- and inter-societal levels.

Assumption 4: In the comparing process, one consciously weighs one's deprivations against one's possessions and attempts to compensate either by asserting one's possessions of certain aspects of social status (power, privilege or prestige) or by acquiring the deprived aspect.

The above assumptions taken together mean that individuals are conscious of their share from available entitlements and none or several social rewards, and react to equalize by way of compensation for social rewards. Their expectations and responses matter a great deal in equalizing inequalities in social status. These reactions of individuals, when taken collectively, define Pakistani society as a struggle-oriented society and not passive or indifferent society. This definition of Pakistani society tends to cast doubt on the existing literature about the traditional societies' strategy that individuals in these societies do not react to their deprivations. Let us compare this meaning with the other concepts available within the context of the existing theory of social stratification. It appears that some comparisons can be made of social stratification as a compensatory process with some conceptual ingredients found in the viewpoints of Marx, Veblen and Weber but the concept defining the process of social stratification as a compensatory process extends to a different viewpoint with some new concepts. From Marx and Weber it borrows the element of struggle for power and from Veblen it takes the element of imitation of the higher by the lower classes and the norm of conspicuous consumption. Generally speaking, the Marxist notion split society into two antagonistic classes growing out of the property structure of the economy. Marx is concerned with the consciousness of the social classes.

In defining social stratification as a compensatory process, it is assumed that an individual's level of consciousness of the distribution process of entitlements in the society determines his decision about superior or inferior aspect of his status, which in turn determines his aspirations and struggle patterns for gains in his status (Fig. 1). Individualistic quiet struggle goes on to acquire gains at best in social status equal to

that of upper middle class or upper social class. That is all. No revolutionary change in the structure of social classes is aspired or achieved. This idea finds support in the studies conducted on the overseas workers where their aspiration level and actual achievements, in terms of their earnings and property have emerged to be of the level of the middle class, and not of the owner's class [1;9].

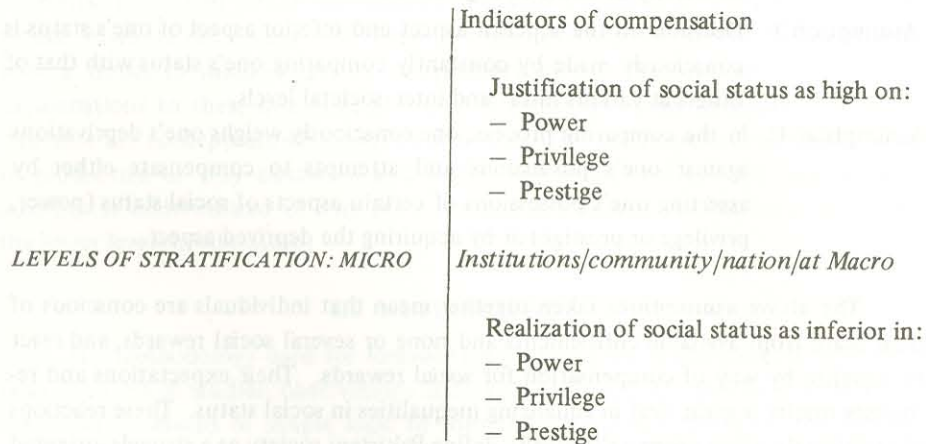


Figure 1. Levels of Social Stratification as a Compensatory Process

It is hypothesized that in Pakistan there is no *visible*, identifiable, and recurring collective struggle for gains in status. But quiet individualistic struggle for gains in status is patterned and discernible. One may argue that such a struggle is initiated by the emigration of overseas workers which will taper off with the decline in their remittances that has begun to occur. It is assumed in the paper that even if this happens the demonstration effect of their achievement will still persist and continue to affect their struggle orientations for improving their material costs. In this sense, achievement is a product of new system, rather than a reproduction of the old system. This is another point which distinguishes the viewpoint on social stratification as a compensatory process from Marx's viewpoint on struggle between social classes. My contention in this paper is that the overseas employment might have reinforced the prevailing norm defining quiet struggle to acquire quick gains in one's status which has emerged due to three main hypothetical explanations (subject to verification and validation by means of research). Firstly, at the time of the inception of Pakistan innumerable refugees brought with them nothing but nobility or honour of their families which over the years has been embedded as an important aspect of an individual's social status either as a reaction to his family's inability to

claim the property which the family had left behind in India or as an attempt to justify his status based on the property which his family has rightfully or wrongfully claimed in Pakistan. Secondly, as people participated in the struggle for Pakistan, they accumulated emotional capital for participation in and contribution to the development of their newly created nation which, for instance, manifested itself in their collective struggle to rehabilitate the refugees from India by way of organized volunteer work for their welfare and development. This emotional capital or collective struggle for various reasons, which need to be investigated over the years, has been drained or re-channelized towards individualistic struggle for the accumulation of instant materialistic gains in one's social status. Thirdly, generally the expectation from the birth of Pakistan was that it would improve one's lot which over the generations has been patterned as individualistic struggle to accumulate quick gains in one's material status.

In discussing individualistic quiet struggle for accumulating gains in status the element of emulation or imitation by the lower class of the higher class, as assumed by Veblen, also comes in the process of comparing one's social status with that of others in the society. According to Veblen, the rich, of course, set the pace and their rivalry is conducted in terms of a norm of conspicuous consumption by which they must demonstrate their position by absenteeism from productive work, lavish expenditure and, in general, non-productive consumption of time.

Veblen brought to our notice the importance of status symbols in the process of legitimization (in Weber's terms) and called attention to the corruption of culture in the process.

Status compensation, as defined in this paper, involves an element of struggle for acquiring the norms of conspicuous consumptions as indicated by the studies on overseas workers through over-indulgence in productive work, multiple employments or savings on daily necessities. Conspicuous consumption is not the only way to compensate for the deprived aspect of status. Prestige is affirmed or asserted by those who feel deprived of power or certain privileges of any sort. According to Weber, status compensation includes the element of struggle for power but Weber's idea is that a status group may use its prestige to shore up a weakening economic position. Individuals may quietly struggle to acquire power in order to compensate for low prestige.

Emulation or imitation of the power symbols of the higher class is also done by the lower class. A study conducted on 999 male volunteers in an urban slum of Karachi for assessing their operating effectiveness as varied change agents indicates that the highest expenses (Rs. 200) on the chief activity in each category – health, education, welfare – is less than the average amount spent on the least maintenance category, i.e. on furniture [7].

Proposition II

(That the compensatory process of social stratification over the years has given rise to status-centric value orientation.) (See Fig. 2.)

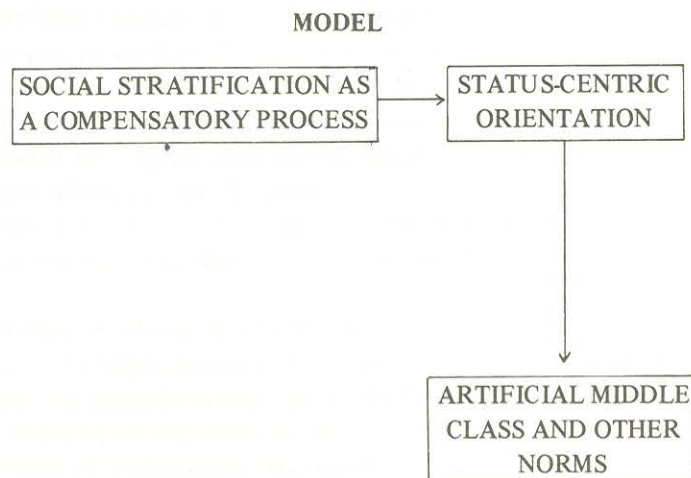


Figure 2

Status-centric orientation is defined as identifiable, recurring and patterned differentiation among people belonging to various statuses in terms of centring of positive attitudes on own social status, power or privilege or prestige. It is orientation that one's social status is to be preferred to those of all others. One's own social status has a true appreciation of moral values or cultural values whereas social statuses of others are debased by wrong values. It is uncritical prejudice in favour of one's social status and a distorted and biased criticism of other social status. It is belief in the superiority of one's own status and a corresponding dislike or misunderstanding of people belonging to other status groups. Status-centric concept is different from ethnocentrism. The latter is taken to mean justification of one's culture and the former is taken to mean justification of one's status.

The Pakistani society is characterized by two orientations: status orientation and status-centric orientation. Like any other society, Pakistan is characterized by status orientation or differentiation of society into different social classes whose boundaries can be assessed by occupation corresponding to the level of education. Using occupation, which is declared by most sociologists as the most reliable indicator of social class boundaries, the bulk of the people in Pakistan can be classified as lower class or poor class, a very small middle class topped with an upper class,

the tip of the iceberg. According to the 1981 Census, this social stratification means: 75.1 percent as workers, 50.0 percent as agriculturalists, fishermen and hunters, 25 percent as production and related workers. Only 20.7 percent are white-collar workers or the members of the middle class: 3.8 percent as professionals and technical workers, 1.3 percent as administrative and managerial workers, 3.1 percent as clerical and related workers, 8.1 percent as sales workers. A handful of all types of elites – landed gentry, industrial elites, political leaders, religious elites and professional elites – make up the upper class. Individuals move from one social class to the next, or occupational mobility occurs, although no systematic attempt is made to assess the magnitude and rate of occupational mobility in Pakistan. This is one pattern of social stratification and changes therein defined and delineated by the occupational boundaries. Side by side with this social stratification there is emerging another social stratification where individuals quietly struggle to compensate for losses in their social status either by asserting or justifying their gains or by acquiring something to compensate for losses. Status gains and losses are subjectively defined by them and according to their own definitions struggles are made to acquire objective aspects of status. For instance, a typist who studies during his spare time acquires legal education and becomes a lawyer represents a case of status orientation. A typist who accumulates wealth through overwork or multiple employments or illegitimate means represents a case of status-centric orientation.

Embourgeoisement

Embourgeoisement of the working class perhaps is the only concept available in the social scientific literature which comes closer to some meanings of status-centric orientations. Diverse enquiries during the 1950–1960 decade seemed to lend support to the thesis of embourgeoisement of some sectors of the British working class. This change was assessed in terms of an impressive improvement in the living standards of manual workers as measured by better housing, increase in home ownership and possession of domestic equipments such as the washing machine, T.V. and car, and change in standard of living was accompanied by changes in norms and style of life. "Their work situation and experience were not typical of that of the middle class, however affluent they might be. The rich manual workers have nothing to do with social relations. They are concerned with money only" [12].

But the concept of embourgeoisement is limited to the ways or means by which the working class gains material status. Status-centric phenomenon, is all-pervasive in the society; it is shared by all social classes. Stability of claim to enhance power by those in high status which manifests itself in varied forms is one indicator of status-centric orientation. In the middle class two emerging trends indicate status-centric orientation. Firstly, over a decade or so the emerging trend, as indicated earlier, is to move away from hired jobs to self-employment, as is suggested by the

increased percentage of the self-employed over the decade. In 1981, 55.5 percent persons were reported to be self-employed as against 49.1 percent in 1972. This macro result implies that in general the trend in the middle class and the lower class is to learn more and more rather than to rely on fixed salaries. Secondly, data for the four years (1980, 1981, 1982 and 1983) about the preferences of the candidates who passed written examinations for the civil service indicate a trend more towards the District Management Group (DMG) and Customs than towards the foreign service (Table 1). Although data from earlier years are not available to ascertain the changes in the preferences of the potential civil servants but observations suggest the foreign service was a highly preferred service as it was rated highly prestigious. Now the trend among the candidates is to choose DMG or customs against the foreign service. That is they prefer positions with power or extra economic benefits. In 1980 the percentages of the candidates choosing the three services were more or less the same. In 1981 the percentage of the candidates preferring DMG was much higher (81.59) than of those preferring foreign service (41.2 percent) or customs (42.2 percent).

Incidence and prevalence of corruption and the system's inability to control corruption are yet another indicator of the status-centric orientation present in all social classes of Pakistan.

Proposition III

(That the most significant indicator of status-centric orientation is emergence of the artificial middle class which can be distinguished from the real middle class in terms of norms.) (See Fig. 3.)

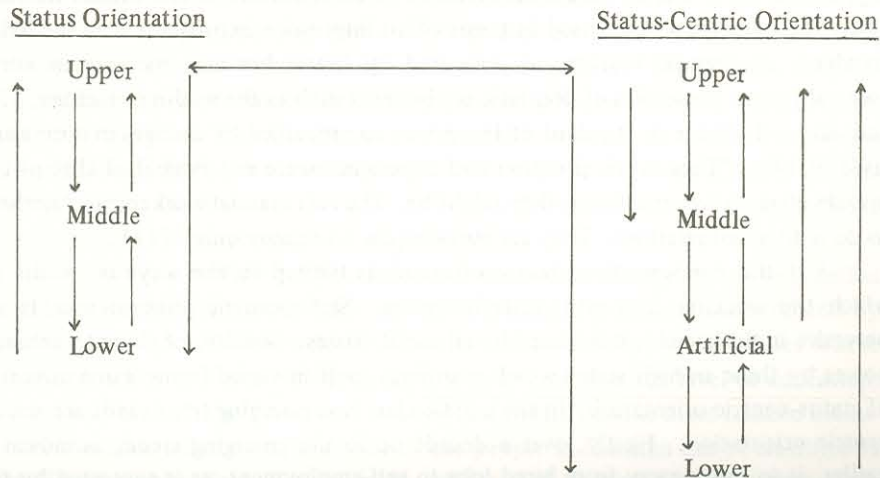


Figure 3

Table 1
Number and Percentages of Male and Female Candidates who passed Written Tests for their Preferred Services

Years	Total No. of Candidates	District Management Group						Foreign Service						Customs					
		Percentage of candidates who passed the tests			Percentage of candidates who passed the tests			Percentage of candidates who passed the tests			Percentage of candidates who passed the tests			Percentage of candidates who passed the tests					
		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%				
1980	314	118	37.58	19	6.10	112	35.67	19	6.10	114	36.31	19	6.10	19	6.10	19	6.10		
1981	402	328	81.59	23	5.72	166	41.29	19	4.73	170	42.29	12	2.99	12	2.99	12	2.99		
1982	276	238	86.23	14	5.10	108	39.13	10	3.62	158	57.25	12	4.35	12	4.35	12	4.35		
1983	773	687	88.87	37	4.79	267	34.54	37	4.79	480	62.10	45	5.82	45	5.82	45	5.82		

Source: Federal Public Service Commission, Islamabad.

Artificial Middle Class

Artificial middle class is characterized by the income level comparable to that of the real or ideal middle class but without comparable changes in their educational attainments and the nature of occupation². Ideal middle class is characterized by distinct occupational boundaries with its norms. According to Weber, the middle class includes groups who have all sorts of property, or marketable abilities through training and who are in a position to draw their support from these sources. Ideal middle class can be distinguished from artificial middle class in terms of the following norms. Each of these norms needs to be operationalized and measured on diverse socio-economic groups.

Table I

Artificial Middle Class	Ideal Middle Class
1. Emigration of overseas workers is one factor which has given rise to uneducated wealthy class or artificial middle class.	Brain drain is one factor which is responsible for shrinking the middle class.
2. Wealth or affluence is the basic necessity for advancement in this social class. Studies on overseas workers and the urban poor indicate that they spend their money mainly on the construction of their own houses which according to them brings status to them. [1; 4; 9; 19].	Education or training is the basic necessity for advancement in social status.

Preference for owning a house is indicated in a study on poor women like factory workers based on the responses of more than 2000 women from diverse sectors of industry in 30 cities [8].

The second priority in spending money is for marriage of children. High spending on these

² The artificial middle class is not just the class of emigrants. Its norms are shared by those who have not gone abroad to earn.

ceremonies enhances the status of the family. A respectable marriage will cost one year's savings [9]. In case of factory women, preference for expenditure on preparation of dowry for their daughters is indicated; this varies with the provinces. [8].

Another exploratory study based on 10 villages from Sind suggests that the community preferred to spend on building a wedding hall rather than a school. The other items of expenditure by the families are clothes, cooking utensils, crockery, household furniture and some imported articles, such as T.V., cassette recorders, transistors, etc., possession of which is considered a status symbol. "However, electrical goods for domestic comforts like airconditioner, refrigerators, washing machine, etc. are not brought by the emigrants for home [9]. This consumption pattern of earnings is shared by the factory women. In Sind the percentage of women who had purchased T.V. after they entered working in the factories has gone up from 10.0 to 24.6. In the Punjab the increase in the percentage of women who said they purchased T.V. only after they had taken up a job in the factories was tremendous: from 0.43 percent to 25 percent. Similarly, in the NWFP 75.5 percent said they had

T.V. at home compared to only 0.4 percent women who said they possessed T.V. before they entered paid employment. The same pattern was followed by the women from Baluchistan: 5.5 percent had T.V. against 3.7 percent women who possessed T.V. before they undertook jobs [7]. Data from the studies on overseas workers further indicate that they do not spend on providing education to their children. They engage their children in work instead of educating them. In the study on factory women it is found that although they rate the provision of good-quality education as an important reason for working, they actually spend on items other than education of their children. Most of them have purchased items of luxury and status after they started working. They said they consumed their earnings on necessities like food, clothing, transport, and payment of loan. This finding, by implication, suggests that the instant satisfaction of status needs through the purchase of desirable luxury items from their husbands' wages delays the satisfaction of their basic needs for food and clothing. The delay cannot be stretched long. The basic necessities must be provided from the limited salaries of women. The expectation is to earn fast and more. There is a dis-interest in

education among male children after Class III [4] and a decline in the number of male students pursuing higher education because of incentives associated with emigration [19]. In the study on factory women, 76.8 percent from the Punjab, 78.7 percent from the NWFP and 62.8 percent from Baluchistan said their relatives were impressed by their improved standard of living. Fewer said they were impressed because of their capacity to provide services such as education to their children (46.9 percent in Sind; 41.4 percent in the Punjab; 58.1 percent in Baluchistan) [8]. Whenever the expenditure on the education of children is made, it is directed towards acquiring status. Approximately 15 percent of the returnees are keen to educate their children through English medium institutions. However, 4 percent among them are currently educating their children through English medium school [14; 15].

3. People do not utilize education for self-advancement. Despite higher investment during the Fifth Plan period or the investment of 80 percent of allocated budget, the enrolment in primary schools increased marginally. The participation rate in primary schools declined from 54 percent in 1977-78 to 50 percent in

1982-83 and the female participation rate was far less than the average. (See the Sixth Five-Year Plan: 1983-88 published by the Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan in 1983.)

4. Multiple-generation or intergeneration social mobility gradually leading to upward occupational mobility. A study indicates that those returnees who are employed wish to continue with their present jobs except a few (12 percent) who plan to change their economic activity over the next one year — "When asked to mention the desired income, they gave a figure which was at least four times their current incomes" [14].
5. Degree tag is significant. A study on rural Sind indicates that adults of 18 years get themselves registered in primary schools in the hope of acquiring a tag, of having completed primary education. This is done to acquire social status.
6. Education or degree may be acquired simply as the condition to meet the requirements of middle class after acquiring the wealth.
7. Social process for the artificial middle class is an instant leap into material status or instant mobility.

One-generation journey or intrageneration occupational mobility leading to social mobility. Studies in general on occupational mobility indicate that a child or a son acquires a higher occupational status, although evidence also exists about the sinking middle class.

Instruction process or learning experience is significant.

Education is aspired as a condition to meet the requirements of upward social and occupational mobility.

Social process for the real middle class is legitimized occupational mobility. It is contest mobility where all

Some from the middle class use sponsored mobility for protecting the individuals of their own class from sinking into lower class. In the case of sponsored mobility "the elite supervise the process of accent entry by sponsorship into a club and their segregations in favoured institutions"[12]. In this sense artificial middle class is generated from within the middle class.

8. The artificial middle class sees society in terms of an individual's illegitimized struggle to accumulate material gains as he is not successful in gaining status through legitimized means.
9. Presupposes struggle-orientation for quick gains in social status. In the case of overseas workers, in order to effectively fulfil money-making motive, life-style at home and abroad is organized and the possibilities of present social psychic gratifications are sacrificed. Minimal cultural interaction with the Westerners is kept because of the money-saving motive. Frequent visits to Pakistan are avoided for the same reason. Living conditions abroad: perceived discriminatory treatment and cultural isolation do not seem to have any upsetting effect on them so long as their earning capacity is not interfered with by any factors such as above. They

can compete, and competitors are not segregated.

The middle class sees society as a kind of ladder and an individual as master of his fate in so far as that is decided by his place on it.

Presupposes self-discipline and commitment to certain career goals. The middle class sees the present only in relation to some future personal goal, to achieve which, plans are consciously formulated and the possibilities of present gratifications are sacrificed.

continue to work abroad. Thus an emigrant organizes his life abroad to earn and save as much as possible [9] but this is not done without social and emotional costs of the families left behind. Although no change is reported in the assumption of additional responsibilities, women suffer from various anxiety symptoms: fainting attacks, back aches, sexual frustration and an increase in drug abuse. [1].

Table II

Status -centric Orientation

1. Snatching and grabbing of privileges either through exploitation of family affiliations/provincial affiliations or by use of pressure tactics is the patterned behaviour.
2. High aspirations for quick increases in size of earnings through unfair means, overwork, multiple employment and emigration to other countries.
3. Compensation for low prestige is found in quick increase in earnings. Hawkers of Karachi in the study mentioned earlier were found to desire money, not change in their occupation. Fifty-three percent felt that they needed more money and with more money they could easily

Status Orientation

- Acquisition of rights/privileges through the legitimized means is the patterned behaviour.
- High aspirations for development of inner talents, abilities and capabilities.
- Prestige is enhanced through the development of culture — inner talents, inner capabilities and inner horizons.

improve their lot. But 12 percent sellers expressed the desire for a better job. They do not aspire to become shopkeepers to improve their lot, although most feel that others view their occupation as a low one. Upward mobility which within the profession is taken to mean moving up from mobile to stationary hawker and that to shopkeeper is found to be not pronounced. The study shows that 55.9 percent of the mobile hawkers, 55.2 percent of the stationary hawkers and 51.2 percent of the shopkeepers have remained in their jobs ever since they came to Karachi. Only 8.5 percent of the shopkeepers started off as mobile hawkers and 4.8 percent as stationary hawkers and 12.11 percent of the stationary hawkers as mobile hawkers. [11].

4. Prestige is asserted at wrong time in wrong situation. In any situation those who do not have power or privilege assert their prestige, or, till power or privilege is made accessible, prestige is asserted. This is manifested in day-to-day living and in sensitivity to any criticism positive or negative. Even if the criticism is legitimized and correct it is not accepted or heeded. It arouses strong reactions. Mistakes are seldom acknowledged or accepted. Instead, they are defended.

Prestige is earned through education or expression of cultured behaviour.

5. Power³ is the strongest motive. Individuals aspire for power most and society internalizes power as a more significant motive than achievement. It is found in one study based on the content analysis of 20 novels and short stories from Urdu and English text books of the four provincial boards for classes VI to X that power motive is the strongest motive in the total fiction to which children in Pakistan are exposed. The imagery for power motive is found in 82 percent of the fictions. The fiction assigns least significance to the achievement motive. The imagery for this motive is found only in 50 percent fictions. The third motive, viz. affiliation, is placed in between. It is found that 70 percent of fiction contains imagery for affiliation motive [18]⁵.
6. Desire for recognition exists to compensate for powerlessness. The lower participants in organizations perpetuate elitism as they prefer spending time in *khush-amad* (sycophancy) than in work. In a study conducted on 999 male voluntary leaders and 22 female voluntary leaders in one slum of

Achievement⁴ is the strongest motive.

Recognition is acquired through achievement.

³Power motive is "an attempt to control the means of influence through thought, feelings of action."

⁴Achievement motive is "a desire to attain a goal through competing with some standards of excellence, unique accomplishment or with a long term involvement."

⁵Affiliation motive is "a concern over maintaining, establishing or restoring a positive effective relationship with another person."

- Karachi, it has emerged that the leaders who have scored high on powerlessness, through the open-ended questions demanded prestige/deference from the government and other elites, not so much services and programmes for the physical development of their community. They felt their voices could be heard if and when they are accorded respect, and their community's status in socio-economic terms is improved [7].
7. Underlying assumption in interpersonal communication: "I am always right, you are always wrong"; "I am better than you. You are not as good as I am".
8. Prestige is self-defined or self-ascribed.
9. High aspirations, low achievements.
10. Priority: Winning.
11. Elitist definition of national work: strong identification of political elites with national or centre. Local elites, while maintaining their group pride, seek identification with nation or centre or power in order to be in a higher status than they would be in if

Underlying assumption in interpersonal communication: "I can acquire a high social status like you if I acquire a certain level of education and occupation corresponding to a certain level of education."

Judgement on prestige is made in terms of norms relevant to socialization and achievements.

High aspirations, high achievements.

Priority: Good Performance

and when they identify themselves with their local areas or provinces. Group pride becomes a motivation force to seek position and status in power or centre.

Hypothesis

In Pakistan, the magnitude of status-centric norms is higher than the rate and magnitude of legitimized occupational mobility, with the result that instant or artificial middle class has emerged as a new social structure, perhaps larger in size than the ideal or the real middle class. The emerged social formation competes with the ideal middle class and poses threat to its emergence and growth.

A Critical Issue

Two incompatible paths to move upward in social status operate concurrently. The one is promotion of education and employment; the other is instant accumulation of wealth strongly desired and pursued by most.

Policy Implications*

Competition for gains in wealth and incomes is enhanced at the expense of under-utilization of education, particularly in the rural areas.

Policy Concern

How to decrease the rate and magnitude of status-centric orientation or how to increase the rate and magnitude of occupational mobility.

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*There are many other policy implications which will call for separate discussion.

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**Comments on
"Social Structure of Pakistan: An Attempt
at Developing Some Concepts"**

Dr Sabeeha Hafeez has given us an excellent paper in which new concepts dealing with the social structure of the Pakistani society have been explored. Starting with concepts of status orientation and status-centric orientation, the contradictory forces active in the society are discussed, namely (i) to emulate the higher class, specifically in economic terms and the accompanying status symbols and the form of conspicuous consumption, and (ii) the countercurrent, the centricity of each group in terms of morality and feeling of superiority in moral and normative terms. These concepts were then applied to two groups, the real middle class and the upcoming new middle class termed artificial, and it was shown that there exists a certain correlation.

Dr Hafeez thus builds up concepts about phenomena that are otherwise rumours or simply generally believed to be right and the development of these concepts is built on factual and empirical evidence collected from studies made in Pakistan. These concepts then are further built into an analytical framework useful for the understanding of social phenomena important to the Pakistani society.

Further on, it is shown that conventional wisdom can be right by indicating the accuracy of public opinion in such cases, throwing an interesting light on how and why public opinion is formed.

Further on, the paper brings up important questions leading necessarily to further research on these and similar issues, some of which are mentioned below.

By taking the standpoint of the real middle class, as the author does in the paper, it still remains to be seen which and what this middle class is. The definition of the middle class needs clarification and should be more precise if this instrument of analysis should be useful in future. The relation of this middle class to the other classes should be included and economic indicators should be integrated.

Secondly, the percentage of the middle class in relation to the overall society and the working force should be approximated; likewise the percentage of the artificial middle class should also be approximated.

Thirdly, it has to be considered whether the real middle class is not actually the IDEAL middle class, as it seems that norms elaborated here for the artificial middle class are also to be found in the "real" middle class.

Fourthly, the question of education needs closer investigation. Does education really decrease or are the latest figures simply not available? Certain reports from selected areas of high out-migration indicate that education, especially for girls, is on the rise, whatever problem this entails for the future generation of brides.

Furthermore, the warnings about English medium schools springing up from nowhere, without real resources for an adequate education, and the subsequent warnings about these schools in the mass media seem to indicate that these "educationists" cater to the needs of certain groups that do come from the middle class, real or artificial.

It can also certainly be assumed that the premium on vocational training is still very high, as a welder, a plumber, etc., is still a sought-after person, also in terms of migrant labour. That these skills can be gained without literacy is certainly true, but they do constitute a form of education.

Another implication of the thesis of this paper should be considered: the new or artificial middle class, according to the definition of this paper, seems to be more of an *ad hoc* group with economic equivalence to the traditional middle class. The artificial middle class seems to be further identical to the migrant labour group. The paper thus contains valuable information on attitudes of migrant labour and their families and provides a quantitative and qualitative profile of these workers in the column on the artificial middle class.

The most important question to be asked in this context seems to be whether these phenomena are of a lasting nature, i.e. whether the upcoming middle class will be able to maintain its status as a middle class, since Dr Hafeez has also shown that a change in values and norms of this will have to take place if they want to constitute a lasting part of the middle class.

When talking or writing about the artificial middle class as mainly recruited from the migrant labour group, it has to be kept in mind that by no means is migrant labour a homogeneous group. Migrant labour does include professionals such as doctors and engineers as well as skilled and unskilled labour.

Furthermore, inside Pakistan, migrant labour does belong to groups similarly to be differentiated: an unskilled worker can by all means belong to a middle class, if a certain amount of landholding or a reasonable business is part of the family property.

All these considerations — who is the worker inside Pakistan, and who is outside Pakistan in terms of class — have to be taken into account.

Furthermore, the income effects on the family should be viewed with caution: the average time spent abroad is no more than 2.8 years, which is a short time when seen in relation to the whole working life of a person. The average savings of migrant workers are no more than 60,000 rupees. Now, coming back, having lost a place in the Pakistani labour market, the returnee spends most of the money not only for consumer goods, but certainly also to bridge the time between the come-back and the taking up of a new job in Pakistan.

The question of the upcoming middle class is thus foremost a question of whether the phenomena under consideration are really of a lasting nature, thus contributing significantly to a new middle class.

The question of the definition of class still looms the largest.

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