

## **AIPS Short-Term Research Grant Final Report**

Project's Title: Students Strike Back: Youth Life and the Promise of Post-Colonial Pakistan

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This summer (2021), I conducted my research at the Punjab Archives located in the Secretariat Building in Lahore, Pakistan. The Punjab Archives houses colonial records that were inherited by the newly founded country, East Pakistan in 1947. The records have been well-preserved and the Punjab Archives is a valuable resource for scholars working on this region. I mostly browsed the educational reports in the Colonial Punjab. I was fascinated by discovering the rich diversity of educational institutions during the colonial era and how the founders had competing interests in mind. The nationalists, Hindu and Muslim, established their own institutions while the missionaries set up their schools and colleges. The key insight I received from this research is the division of student body during colonial times. This research is necessary as it establishes historical context for the formation of youth-culture in the 1960s and the kinds of institutions that became laboratories of protest and social revolt. Besides conducting my archival research, I also conducted oral-interviews with the retired members of NSF (National Student Federation). NSF was a progressive, leftist organizations and founded in the 1950s. These interviews establish the rich tradition in Pakistan of social activism, student unions and protest. The gender dynamics of this organization adds another dimension to the heyday of this umbrella organization. I interviewed both male and female workers and the questions I asked them included: What is your educational and family background? What was your involvement in the revolt? How did your experience in the 1960s impact your future careers? I asked these questions in an unstructured way in order to help them reflect on their experience as college students and their involvement or not in student elections and NSF.