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Message from National Coordinator

I am pleased to present, the fourth issue of “Pakistan Journal of Terrorism Research” (PJTR). The Journal is the first of its kind in the field of terrorism studies in Pakistan. Although terrorism has been given a befitting response by the state in the battle field yet it needs to be understood from academic and research perspectives. The publication of PJTR is a step in that direction.

This edition offers both quantitative and qualitative perspectives on different manifestations of terrorism in Pakistan. It will not only provide guidelines for policy makers in the country but will also be a valuable addition to the academic literature. The journal is a reflection of NACTA’s continued commitment to quality research. Renowned academicians, researchers, and prominent practitioners have contributed valuable articles to this edition making it more diverse in terms of its content and theme.

I appreciate the efforts of the Research Wing, the peer reviewers, and the editorial board for their tireless efforts which made the publication of this edition possible. I pray that the journal goes further in its journey and flourishes in the times to come.



Mehr Khaliq Dad Lak
National Coordinator NACTA

Editor's Note

In continuation of its journey since its launch in 2019, National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) now presents the second issue of its 2020 volume of “Pakistan Journal of Terrorism Research” (PJTR). While the journal is still in its nascent stage, it has been able to secure an esteemed place in policy and academic circles. The diversity of the contributors has been able to provide a blend of scholarly articles that are backed by practitioner’s perspective on counter-terrorism and extremism.

The seven articles in this issue provide a comprehensive picture of the landscape of terrorism, counter-terrorism and extremism. From micro to macro levels of analysis this edition analyses the way terrorism affects the income and consumption patterns as aptly discussed by Hafsa Hina an economist at Pakistan Institute Development Economics (PIDE) Islamabad. Brig (R) Tughrul Yameen has presented his scholarly insight on the subject of peace in Afghanistan and its implications on Pakistan after the Doha accord. Shehryar Khan who heads the country office of National Dialogue Forum (NDF) has made a thought-provoking analysis on the “Push and Pull factors” for the female gender towards radicalization. Mossarat Qadeem a practitioner, shares her experience from the field and makes a strong case for intervention at the grass-root level and use of soft approaches to de-radicalize the women who are vulnerable to the propaganda of militants. The element of propaganda is also analyzed in detail by Ammad Malik in his thematic analysis of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Sub-Continent (AQIS) magazines. Taimur Shah *et al* comparatively discusses and identifies the commonalities between the extreme ideologies of white supremacists and Hindutva. Lastly Nadeem-uz-Zaman *et al* offers a comprehensive and

quantitative analysis of terrorism and insurgency in Balochistan.

NACTA is dedicated to playing a constructive role by disseminating the scientific understanding in the fields of counter terrorism and extremism. The publication of this journal like other activities of NACTA is another effort to perform its legal obligation. I am confident such endeavors will further attract researchers and bring them closer to the policy makers.

Disclaimer

The views and opinion expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy of NACTA.

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Contents

i. The Resurgent Jihadist Threat: A Thematic Analysis of Contemporary Al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) Propaganda Ammad Malik	1
ii. Gendered Analysis of “Push and Pull Factors” towards Radicalization and Violent Extremism Shehryar Khan	23
iii. Gender Responsive Preventive and Remedial Measures to Prevent Violent Extremism: A Practitioner’s Perspective Mossarat Qadeem	48
iv. Household Consumption Behaviour in Pakistan under the Shadow of Personal Insecurity Dr. Hafsa Hina	70
v. Terrorism in Balochistan: issues, Causes, Consequences and Cures. Nadeem Uz Zaman, Safia Bano, Muhammad Shafiq	94
Vi. Extremism as a Transnational Threat: Comparative study of White supremacy and Hindutva Syed Taimoor Shah, Bakhtawar Ali	118
VII. Afghan Peace Process and Security Implications for Pakistan Dr. Tughrul Yameen	141

The Resurgent Jihadist Threat: A Thematic Analysis of Contemporary Al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) Propaganda

Ammad Malik

Abstract:

The study seeks to analyse and explain major themes present in contemporary Al-Qaeda propaganda focusing on Pakistan. Despite challenges by rival Jihadist outfits in the region, Al-Qaeda has been successful in maintaining a significant ground presence and has undergone a resurgence, primarily due to international counter terrorism efforts focused on its direct rival, ISIS. As part of this revival, Al-Qaeda announced the creation of its subcontinent affiliate, 'Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent' (AQIS), in 2014. Since then, AQIS has emerged as a major security threat in South Asia, with the scope of its ambitions outlined in its widely circulated online propaganda magazines. AQIS's most recent propaganda venture, titled '*Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind*', is an Urdu language publication aimed at fostering local support for Al-Qaeda's regional and global objectives. By examining how the Pakistani state is depicted in the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* publication, the research argues that Al-Qaeda considers the present democratic Pakistani state to be an obstacle for its radical goals in the region. Lastly, the study outlines steps which can be taken by concerned security departments to counter the dissemination of online jihadist propaganda.

Keywords: Online Jihad, propaganda, Al-Qaeda, Media, Terrorism.

Introduction:

The Al-Qaeda chief, Dr. Ayman al Zawahiri, announced the creation of a dedicated affiliate branch in September 2014 to fight governments in South Asia, including Pakistan¹. The establishment of the new group, known as Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), was made in a video message posted online and circulated via Jihadist handles on social media². For Al-Qaeda, South Asia holds important significance, as the region is home to the world's largest Muslim population, with as much as one-third of all Muslims belonging to South Asia. There have also been historical linkages between Al-Qaeda and domestic terror organizations operating in the area (such as *Harkat-ul Jihad al-Islami* operate as AQIS allies). For example, the leader of Bangladesh's Jihad Movement, Fazlur Rehman, was one of the signatories of Sheikh Osama Bin Laden's 1998 *fatwa* calling for *jihad* against the United States and Israel³. According to Bruce Hoffman, the creation of AQIS demonstrates an intent on part of Al-Qaeda to shift from an Arab to South Asian demographic base⁴. A particular matter of concern for Islamabad is that the establishment of AQIS also signalled the beginning of a formal institutional relationship

1 Staff, "Al-Qaeda Chief Zawahiri Launches Al-Qaeda in South Asia," BBC News (BBC, September 4, 2014), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-29056668>.

2 The announcement was made public originally on the anonymous video sharing platform 'liveleak' (https://www.liveleak.com/view?i=888_1409777288). It has since been removed because of incitement to violence.

3 Report, "Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS): The Nucleus of Jihad in South Asia," The Soufan Center, accessed July 29, 2020, <https://thesoufancenter.org/research/al-qaeda-in-the-indian-subcontinent-aqis-the-nucleus-of-jihad-in-south-asia/>, 11.

4 Report, "Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS): The Nucleus of Jihad in South Asia," 13.

between numerous terrorist factions operating inside Pakistan (detailed list given below)⁵. Even though linkages between different terrorist organizations inside Pakistan is not an entirely new phenomena; AQIS represents an unprecedented threat due to the cementing of alliances between local terrorist groups on one hand, and increased coordination with terrorist organizations operating all over South Asia on the other. According to Dr. Alistair Reed's study⁶, AQIS has successfully established linkages and brought elements of the following organizations under the Al-Qaeda banner:

- Afghan Taliban (Afghanistan)
- Tehreek-e-Taliban / TTP (Pakistan)
- *Harkat-ul-Jihad al Islami* / HuJI (Pakistan and Bangladesh)
- *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen* / HuM (Kashmir)
- *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen al Almi* / HuMA (Pakistan)
- Brigade 313 (Pakistan)
- *Jaish-e-Mohammad* / JeM (Pakistan)
- *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* / LeJ (Pakistan)
- *Jundullah* (Pakistan)
- *Ansar ut-Tawhid wa al Jihad* (Kashmir)
- *Ansar al Islam* (Bangladesh)
- *Indian Mujahideen* / IM (India)
- *Lashkar-e-Taiba* / LeT (Pakistan)
- Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (Pakistan)

5 Ibid.

6 Alastair Reed, "Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent: A New Frontline in the Global Jihadist Movement?," *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies*, 2016, pp. 1-25, <https://doi.org/10.19165/2016.2.02, 4>.

- Turkistan Islamic Party (Pakistan)

In addition to formal operational linkages between various terrorist organizations, AQIS has relied extensively on exploitation of tribal divisions in erstwhile FATA to carry out attacks against the Pakistani state⁷. Because of Al-Qaeda's historical presence in the area, the jihadists have fostered deep ties with tribes in the Waziristan region, according to the interrogation of high-profile Al-Qaeda operative Mohammad Asif, the now late chief of AQIS, Asim Umar, who spent most of his time under the protection of TTP in their stronghold of South Waziristan. In turn, AQIS provided logistical and operational support to TTP for its numerous attacks against the state of Pakistan. The University of Maryland's Global Terrorism Database confirms this collaboration, as it estimates that TTP and AQIS have launched joint attacks against Pakistan on numerous occasions⁸. Another major reason why AQIS has been successful in its collaboration between various terrorist organizations is because Al-Qaeda appointed a local jihadist to lead the organization. Maulana Asim Umar, who led AQIS before his assassination in a drone strike on 23rd September 2019⁹, was an Indian citizen and trained theologian with extensive contacts throughout South Asia. Maulana Umar also served as a commander in the TTP and later joined Al-Qaeda to lead its online propaganda efforts. After his assassination, it is thus far unclear as to who has

7 Report, "Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS): The Nucleus of Jihad in South Asia," 16.

8 Ibid.

9 Staff, "Asim Umar: Al-Qaeda's South Asia Chief 'Killed in Afghanistan'," BBC News (BBC, October 8, 2019), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49970353>.

succeeded him. However, given that Al-Qaeda has come to rely increasingly on local leadership in South Asia, it is unlikely that a foreign jihadist would be chosen to lead AQIS.

Limitations of Research:

This study, despite aiming to tackle important security issues, presents certain challenges and difficulties. The primary issue is that the research relies on a fairly limited sample size of four issues of the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* propaganda magazine. A possibility thus exists that the themes highlighted in these editions would later on change. On the other hand, analyzing limited issues has its own merits. The primary advantage is that it makes the research more manageable and coherent, in addition to allowing for a more thorough reading. Also, since *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* is Al-Qaeda's most nascent propaganda venture, a study of its editions allows us to gauge the direction which the terrorist organization might take in the near future. Another possible concern with the study is that it seeks to interpret the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* magazine in isolation, while ignoring vast amounts of propaganda produced by Al-Qaeda in other languages, most notably English¹⁰. Al-Qaeda's media cell has a reputation of being a pioneer in publishing Jihadist propaganda in the English language and an ideal study would have been a comparison of themes present in its vast propaganda publication in English with those pointed out in the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* magazine. However, as explained later in the study, Al-Qaeda has undergone a strategic shift of late and now

¹⁰ For reference, see *Inspire* and *Resurgence* magazines.

places more emphasis on fostering on-ground support through the propagation of localized popular objectives. In such a changing scenario, analyzing *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* in isolation makes more sense, since it is an Urdu language publication with a more specific subcontinental Muslim target audience as opposed to the more global narrative of Al-Qaeda's English propaganda. A similar problem is that the research does not address prior Al-Qaeda narratives on South Asia, which were reflected in the now defunct English language *Resurgence* magazine. The research is thus based on the assumption that the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* magazine presents a shift from previous Al-Qaeda propaganda focusing on the subcontinent region. Lastly, the study does not quantify details of dissemination nor does it provide an estimate of the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* magazine's readership figures. One way to tackle this problem is tallying the magazine's download frequencies but such a venture has its own limitations. Firstly, software availability for such a process is an issue and secondly; the magazines are hosted online on several changing websites and blogs, which make an authentic tally or estimate of readership almost impossible.

Al-Qaeda's 'Strategic Logic' behind AQIS:

Varying explanations exist as to why Al-Qaeda chose to establish AQIS in September 2014. As per Dr. Alistair Reed's study¹¹, Al-Qaeda's intent to diversify its branches and ensure regional autonomy for its affiliate groups is the primary reason behind the

¹¹ Reed, "Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent," 5-10

formation of AQIS. Other scholars, such as Jordan Olmstead¹², have argued that AQIS was created to counter the ISIS ‘caliphate’ and is the outcome of an intra Jihadi conflict. In one of its prominent propaganda publications, Al-Qaeda claimed that the roots of the AQIS project go back to mid-2013 and has got nothing to do with the rise of ISIS¹³. In a similar argument, security expert Shreya Das¹⁴ asserts that the groundwork behind AQIS was laid well before the emergence of ISIS and that Al-Qaeda had earlier made a failed attempt to establish a South Asian affiliate. Furthermore, Das also points out that the creation of AQIS is part of Al-Qaeda’s public relations strategy to bolster its image and maintain a distinct brand identity. There have also been indications on part of Al-Qaeda that there were geo-political factors at play behind the formation of AQIS.

In another propaganda publication (*Resurgence*), Al-Qaeda linked the establishment of AQIS to the American withdrawal from Afghanistan and the failure of Allied troops to subdue the Taliban insurgency¹⁵. This indicates that Al-Qaeda plans to re-deploy its battle-hardened fighters all over South Asia after the eventual American troop withdrawal from Afghanistan¹⁶. Likewise, such a scenario may also signal a shift from Al-Qaeda’s *grand strategy* of

12 Jordan Olmstead, “The Real Reason Al-Qaeda Is Establishing an India Branch,” *The Diplomat* (The Diplomat, September 23, 2014), <https://thediplomat.com/2014/09/the-real-reason-al-qaeda-is-establishing-an-india-branch/>.

13 AQIS, *Resurgence Issue 2*, p.67.

14 Reed, “Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent,” 6.

15 AQIS, *Resurgence Issue 1*, p.20.

16 Staff, “Afghan Conflict: US and Taliban Sign Deal to End 18-Year War,” BBC News (BBC, February 29, 2020), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-51689443>.

targeting the ‘far’ enemy towards focusing on fighting domestic governments in South Asia, including that of Pakistan. Historically, Al-Qaeda established itself as the world’s most feared terror organization by staging a series of high-profile terrorist attacks against the ‘far’ enemy, namely the United States and NATO. The attacks included the 1998 bombings of US embassies in Tanzania and Nairobi; as well as a series of simultaneous explosions in Madrid’s train system during the lead up to the 2004 general elections. The most publicized Al-Qaeda attacks were of course the 9/11 hijackings and the July 2005 bombings in London. If Al-Qaeda indeed plans to shift its focus away from western powers and towards targeting regional governments in South Asia, this would mark a colossal break from its established operational blueprint and present a challenging threat to the South Asian region. The rise of AQIS also raises the possibility that the future leadership of Al-Qaeda would be drawn from its ranks¹⁷. As the Afghan *jihad* draws to a close, the South Asian region would become more susceptible to terrorist violence, since AQIS would be competing with other Al-Qaeda affiliates for overall command of the jihadist movement.

Evolution of Al-Qaeda’s Online Propaganda:

The internet is an ideal medium for dissemination of Jihadist propaganda as it is easy to use, offers terrorist organizations multimedia features and maintains anonymity. The emergence and growth of freeware platforms such as *WordPress*¹⁸ means that a

17 Reed, “Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent,” 6.

18 Staff, "About," WordPress, accessed July 31, 2020, <https://wordpress.org/about/>.

significant online presence can be ensured at almost zero financial cost and bare minimum technical expertise. Likewise, the proliferation of secure internet messaging apps such as *Signal*¹⁹ and *Telegram*²⁰ allow terrorists' to securely communicate and plan operations. With more than 3.2 billion internet users, comprising over half of the world's population, terrorist organizations have come to rely increasingly on the internet for their operations²¹. According to a study by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, 90% of people in their early teens to late twenties are active on the internet and spend a staggering 19.2 hours per week online²². It is therefore not surprising that the concerned age group is the primary target audience of radical Jihadist propaganda.

Although the online propaganda efforts of ISIS have gained most attention and notoriety, it is important to note that it was Al-Qaeda which established itself as a pioneer in the use of modern technology for terrorist activities. In the decade of the 90's, Al-Qaeda employed *mail lists* to share information on a mass scale and used *encrypted communication* to mount infamous attacks such as the embassy bombings in Tanzania and Nairobi, as well as

19 Brian X. Chen, "Worried About the Privacy of Your Messages? Download Signal," The New York Times (The New York Times, December 7, 2016), <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/07/technology/personaltech/worried-about-the-privacy-of-your-messages-download-signal.html>.

20 Stuart Dredge, "Messaging App Telegram Added 5m New Users the Day after WhatsApp Outage," The Guardian (Guardian News and Media, February 24, 2014), <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/feb/24/telegram-messaging-app-whatsapp-down-facebook>.

21 Gabriel Weimann, "How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet," 3.

22 Patryk Pawlak and Beatrice Berton, "Cyber Jihadists and Their Web," European Union Institute for Security Studies, January 30, 2015, , accessed July 31, 2020, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/cyber-jihadists-and-their-web>.

9/11²³. In 2001, Al-Qaeda launched its own website on the *world wide web* and by 2003, Al-Qaeda's mass circulated manifesto called *39 Principles of Jihad* began citing 'Cyber Jihad' as one of its key principles²⁴. Concerned that their statements were being filtered or manipulated by mainstream media outlets, Al-Qaeda next attempted to launch its dedicated online news service called *Voice of the Caliphate* in 2005²⁵. The Al-Qaeda leadership clearly understood the power of public opinion and the benefits which a PR centric approach could reap. In a letter to one of his commanders, Dr Ayman al Zawahiri wrote, *'We are in a battle, and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. We are in a media battle for the hearts and minds of our Ummah'*²⁶

Like Dr. Zawahiri, former Al-Qaeda chief Sheikh Osama bin Laden also understood the importance of public opinion and his statements indicate that Bin Laden had a thorough understanding of the media's potential in aiding the Jihadist cause. In his most well publicized interview with CNN journalist Peter Arnett in March 1997, when Bin Laden was asked about his future plans, the Al-Qaeda chief replied; *'You'll see them and hear about them in the*

23 Robert Graham, "How Terrorists Use Encryption," Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point, November 15, 2017, accessed July 31, 2020, <https://ctc.usma.edu/how-terrorists-use-encryption/>.

24 Laden, Joel. "Al-Qaeda's 39 Principles of Jihad." Israel News Agency. Accessed June 09, 2018. <http://www.israelnewsagency.com/Al-Qaeda.html>.

25 Anton La Guardia Diplomatic Editor, "Al-Qaeda Launches Voice of the Caliphate Internet News Bulletins," The Telegraph, September 28, 2005, accessed July 31, 2020, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/1499428/Al-Qaeda-launches-Voice-of-the-Caliphate-internet-news-bulletins.html>.

26 Final Report of the 9-11 Commission," F.A.S., accessed July 31, 2020, http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2005/10/letter_in_arabic.

*media, God willing*²⁷.' In another interview, Bin Laden spoke at length regarding the Western media's role in spreading fear amongst masses by engaging in a propaganda campaign against Al-Qaeda. According to Bin Laden; Western media is more harmful to the West than it is to the Jihadists, and that, '*What the enemies of the America cannot do, its media is doing*²⁸.' Another prominent example of Bin Laden's attempt to shape public opinion was an Al-Qaeda document titled *Offer of Armistice with Europe* circulated online in April 2004. In the concerned document, Bin Laden directed his followers '*to form a permanent committee to enlighten the European people of the justice of our cause...they can make use of the huge potential of the media*²⁹.' In addition to their media statements and interviews, the Al-Qaeda leadership also employed the policy of strategic media blackout to spread confusion. When Bin Laden was inquired as to which target would Al-Qaeda hit next, the Al-Qaeda chief replied; '*Our silence is our real propaganda*³⁰.'

The next stage in Al-Qaeda's online media strategy arrived after the launch of popular video sharing website *YouTube* in 2005. Around the same time, an American born cleric, Anwar al Awlaki

27 CNN, "Exclusive Osama Bin Laden- First Ever TV Interview," YouTube, January 10, 2012, accessed July 31, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqQwnqjA-6w>.

28 Staff, "Sheikh Osama Bin Laden's Interview to Daily Ummat," Khilafah.com, September 28, 2001, accessed June 11, 2018,

www.khilafah.com/1421/category.php?DocumentID=2392&TagID=2v.

29 Al-Qaeda, "Offer of Armistice With Europe," Archive.org, April 14, 2004, , accessed June 31, 2020, www.archive.org/download/hygNGF/454.mp3.

30 Staff, "Sheikh Osama Bin Laden's Interview to Daily Ummat," 2001.

emerged as Al-Qaeda's leading online propagandist³¹. Awlaki considerably improved Al-Qaeda's ability to recruit via online platforms and was highly influential in the launch of Al-Qaeda's first mass circulated English propaganda magazine called *Inspire*. Awlaki was killed in an American drone strike in 2011, terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda have followed and added innovations to Awlaki's propaganda strategy, leading to an unprecedented expansion in online presence.³² Regional associates of Al-Qaeda, such as AQIS, have also followed the Awlaki blueprint. This has led to a proliferation of online jihadist propaganda in multiple languages.

Thematic Analysis of AQIS Propaganda:

In response to the Afghan peace deal of February 2020, AQIS announced the rebranding of its online Urdu language propaganda magazine as *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind*. The rebranding is a clear indication that AQIS plans to shift its attention away from the Afghan theatre and instead focus on targeting countries in the Indian subcontinent, including Pakistan. For the purposes of this study, four issues³³ of the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* propaganda magazine are analysed to explain recurring themes. The study aims

31 Staff, "Online Preachers of Hate: Anwar Al-Awlaki, 'bin Laden of the Internet'," The Telegraph, June 07, 2011, accessed July 31 2020, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8560438/Online-preachers-of-hate-Anwar-al-Awlaki-bin-Laden-of-the-internet.html>.

32 Scott Shane, "The Enduring Influence of Anwar Al-Awlaki in the Age of the Islamic State," Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point, November 16, 2017, <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-enduring-influence-of-anwar-al-awlaki-in-the-age-of-the-islamic-state/>.

33AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 1-4*.

to provide a clear picture of AQIS propaganda against the state of Pakistan, so that an effective counter strategy can be developed.

1) Provoking a Pakistan-India war and attempts to discredit Kashmir's democratic resistance:

The possible scenario of a full-scale Pakistan-India war features heavily in AQIS propaganda. Al-Qaeda believes that such a conflict would create conditions which enable the realization of its goal to establish a 'caliphate' in the region. AQIS has previously attempted to stage terrorist attacks which would lead to a catastrophic war in South Asia. The most infamous of such incidents was the failed attempt to hijack a Pakistan Navy vessel in September 2014³⁴. AQIS has consistently featured war mongering rhetoric in its propaganda. In the first issue of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* published in April 2020, AQIS calls for a *jihad* throughout South Asia to establish a Shariah state which encompasses the territories of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Myanmar³⁵. Similarly, AQIS has attempted to hijack Kashmir's democratic mass movement against the Indian government by depicting it in terms of a religious struggle and appealing to jihadists to stage violent attacks against the Indian government. Such a scenario would both discredit the peaceful Kashmiri resistance and increase the likelihood of war between Islamabad and New Delhi. Similarly, in the May 2020 issue of the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* magazine, AQIS published an article paying

34Fahim Zaman, "Dockyard Attackers Planned to Hijack Navy Frigate," DAWN.COM, September 13, 2014, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1131654>.

35AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 1*, p.1.

tribute to former militant commander Zakir Musa³⁶. It is known that Musa was actively working against Pakistani interests in Kashmir and had pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda chief Ayman al Zawahiri³⁷. As opposed to Islamabad's declared policy of claiming Indian occupied Kashmir as its sovereign territory, Zakir Musa instead joined ranks with global Jihadism³⁸. This had the effect of undermining Indian occupied Kashmir's political struggle for independence, as New Delhi began to associate protests with radical Jihadism to gain international support for their violent crackdown. Al-Qaeda's patronage and continued eulogizing of Zakir Musa in propaganda is therefore another indicator of threats posed by the terror group to Islamabad's national interests. Likewise, in the June 2020 issue of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind*, AQIS featured an article calling for women to aid their cause by staging suicide bombings in the Kashmir region³⁹. As noted, before, high casualty attacks such as suicide bombings caused by Al-Qaeda would spike tensions in the subcontinent and likely result in a Pakistan-India military conflict. Lastly, apart from encouraging Jihadists to conduct attacks, AQIS has called on the Pakistani state to ignite a military conflict with New Delhi. In an article published for the July 2020 issue of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind*, AQIS questioned Islamabad's existing policy of restraint and diplomacy to solve the

36 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 2*, p.79.

37 Farhan Zahid, "Zakir Musa's Death and Its Impact on Al-Qaeda's Ambitions in Indian Kashmir," Jamestown, July 31, 2019, <https://jamestown.org/brief/zakir-musas-death-and-its-impact-on-al-qaedas-ambitions-in-indian-kashmir/>.

38 Saad Hasan, "Zakir Musa: Kashmir's 'Loneliest Militant'," TRT World, May 25, 2019, <https://www.trtworld.com/asia/zakir-musa-kashmir-s-loneliest-militant-26955>.

39 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 3*, p.110.

Kashmir dispute. Instead, AQIS urges for a military solution to the matter⁴⁰ and downplays repercussions of such a move.

2) Arguments against Pakistan's democratic structure:

AQIS considers Pakistan's Westminster style parliamentary system to be an obstacle in the establishment of *khilafah* in the region. Critiques on Pakistan's governance system are hence a recurrent feature in the *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* magazine. The April 2020 issue of the propaganda document contains a lengthy critique of the emergence of *nation-states* post Westphalia⁴¹. AQIS argues that nation states, such as Pakistan, take decisions based on *national interest* and avoid policies which are in the greater good of the Islamic Ummah. The solution, according to AQIS, lies in the upheaval of the democratic state structure of Pakistan and its replacement with a Sharia enforced *khilafah* encompassing all of South Asia. In addition to criticism on the nation state system and calling for a return of the caliphate, AQIS has also published *fatwas* of likeminded religious scholars and excerpts from their published work. This is done to create a sense of legitimacy for their claims. One such article was published in the May 2020 issue of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind*, which criticised democracy by referencing the works of *ulema* such as Shah Wali Ullah, Maulana Ashraf Ali, Maulana Yusuf Ludhianvi etc⁴². Quotes were cited from the work of such scholars to build a narrative amongst readers that democracy is incompatible with Islam. Likewise, the June

40 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 4*, p.81.

41 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 1*, p.67.

42 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 2*, p.35.

2020 issue of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* features another article criticizing democracy and the capitalist system⁴³. The free market economic system has emerged as a foundational cornerstone of democracy since the Industrial Revolution and AQIS highlights the social inequalities resultant from government's non-interference in the economy. The concerned article is a complicated take on issues which come about because of a few Western powers exerting disproportionate influence in the world's interlinked economy. According to AQIS, its *khilafah* would rid the Muslim world of the supposed hardships and tribulations associated with both democracy and the capitalist economy. These problems include political instability, widespread poverty and western hegemony in the international system. Finally, in the July 2020 issue of the magazine, AQIS provides a brief sketch of Pakistan's political history since independence and a narrative is built linking democracy to the constant recycling of a few prominent families in power⁴⁴. Such propaganda seeks to create mistrust amongst readers regarding the viability of Pakistan's democratic process. AQIS seeks to capitalize on this mistrust and then eventually build up more on-ground support for its terrorist activities.

3) Indications of greater geo-political ambitions:

Amongst the four issues of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* analysed, there were repeated references which indicated that AQIS holds geo-political ambitions problematic to the Pakistani state. In the April

43 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 3*, p.84.

44 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 4*, p.79.

2020 issue of the magazine, AQIS discusses the ongoing corona virus pandemic and portrays it as divine punishment for China's persecution of Muslims in Xinjiang province⁴⁵. The Chinese government's treatment of its Muslim minority is a source of intense debate and there are political factors at play, as Beijing's state rivals such as the United States are accused of spreading misinformation regarding the issue. AQIS declared the Xinjiang province as *East Turkestan* and declares it to be part of its envisioned *khilafah*. China and Pakistan are close allies with deep rooted mutual interests in the region. By shifting focus to Beijing and threatening violent action there, AQIS poses additional challenges to the Pakistani state as Islamabad's economy is in the process of receiving a major boost through Chinese investment and infrastructure development. Another threat to Islamabad posed by AQIS are its plans for Afghanistan post American withdrawal. In one of its propaganda pieces, AQIS states that the exit of foreign troops from Kabul would usher a *khilafah* and Afghanistan would in future become a base of jihadist operations in the region⁴⁶. This is in stark contrast to Pakistan's Afghan policy. Islamabad seeks to support the Afghan peace process and bring about an end to the ongoing conflict. To achieve the objective of a compromise in Afghanistan, Islamabad has played a pivotal role in bringing about all warring factions to the negotiating table. AQIS propaganda concerning Afghanistan therefore indicates that in future Pakistan would have to be wary of a Jihadist attempt to regain a foothold on

45 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 1*, p.34.

46 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 2*, p.74.

its western front. The prospective threat of AQIS in Afghanistan is further demonstrated in a regular series of articles featuring in *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* which detail AQIS fighting against rival groups in Afghanistan⁴⁷. The articles describe capture of sophisticated weapons and paint a picture of an impending victory for jihadist factions. In the years following the rise of ISIS, Jihadist groups have proliferated and there have been several instances of in-fighting. Military operations conducted by AQIS in Afghanistan along with allied Jihadist factions provide them valuable battlefield experience, which in turn poses a security threat to Islamabad because of its vast porous Western border.

4) Appeals to a more educated demographic:

One of the most prominent features of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind* magazine was that its content was clearly directed at an educated audience familiar with western literature and socio-political thought. One of the most prominent examples of this approach was an article titled *1984* published in the June 2020 issue of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind*⁴⁸. The article featured a commentary on George Orwell's classic 20th century novel *1984*, which discussed themes of mass surveillance, excessive state control and a world plagued by perpetual conflict. The novel is considered compulsory reading material for university students studying the humanities and social sciences, as it details the dangers of paranoid governments amassing too much power over citizens. The article argues that the world we live in today is strikingly similar to the one described by

47 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 4*, p.88

48 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 3*, p.75.

Orwell and that media organizations toe the government's line. AQIS then calls for its readers to disregard misinformation spread about them through mainstream media and decide for themselves what the actual reality might be. Likewise, the April 2020 edition of the propaganda magazine contains an analysis of the *market economy*⁴⁹. The article employs the use of academic terminology and is a surprisingly well researched introduction to the history of the world's economic system post World War Two. There are references to the famed Bretton Woods Conference which kick-started the world economic model as we see today, as well as the de-merits of paper currency and the inherent advantages of using alternatives such as gold for trading purposes. The overarching argument is that such an economic system is inherently rigged in the favour of a few select countries and that Western hegemony over the Muslim world is made possible by their grip on the world's cash flow.

AQIS has also published material on the independence movement against the British Raj. One such article was featured in the May 2020 issue of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind*, which described the anti-imperialist struggle of Sayyed Ahmed Shaheed⁵⁰. The concerned article was loaded with historical references and AQIS published this piece with an educated reader as their intended audience. Finally, in the July 2020 issue of *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind*, AQIS featured a commentary on contemporary developments in the

49 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 1*, p.60.

50 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 2*, p.35-39.

world⁵¹. The article discussed diverse issues including politics and the corona virus pandemic, as well as the latest developments in the scientific world. The focus of AQIS on educated youth presents an alarming development. As inflation and unemployment increases in Pakistan, disenfranchised youth are at risk of becoming vulnerable to extremist propaganda. The problem is compounded as the overwhelming majority of Pakistan's population is under the age of 30. Terrorist organizations such as AQIS hence sense an opportunity to capitalize on socio-economic grievances to recruit the young educated demographic for terrorist activities.

Countering Online Terrorist Propaganda:

Despite attempts made by terrorist organizations such as AQIS to sustain their propaganda operations, there exist several steps which can be taken by Islamabad to counter the dissemination of online terrorist propaganda. These include:

- 1) Establishment of a dedicated authority to monitor terrorist propaganda posted on social media handles operating from Pakistan. As of now, existing institutions such as the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) perform a variety of different tasks. With increasing social media usage in the country, a separate authority to monitor extremist content is recommended.

51 AQIS, *Nawai Ghazwa-e-Hind Issue 4*, p.67.

- 2) Greater state level collaboration with ‘big tech’ companies such as Facebook and Twitter to take down problematic content before it is shared.
- 3) Creating ‘counter-narratives’ by discrediting claims made by terrorist organizations⁵².
- 4) Extensive intelligence-based efforts to trace out sources of terrorist propaganda.
- 5) Timely registration of Virtual Private Network (VPN) users in Pakistan.
- 6) Limiting access to secure messaging apps such as Telegram and Signal to verified users only.
- 7) Greater collaboration with friendly countries such as China which possess technological expertise in countering online terrorist propaganda.
- 8) Cooperation between public and private sector institutions to further enhance protocols to stem online extremist content
- 9) Use of Artificial Intelligence to identify and remove extremist propaganda. A.I. algorithms can be developed by a comprehensive study of terrorist propaganda to identify and block future instances of such content.
- 10) Developing reporting mechanisms for extremist content on lesser-known forums such as 8chan/4chan etc.

52 See next page for an example.???

Most of the recommended steps highlighted above constitute swift reactionary measures. However, by far the most important long-term policy decision in this regard is the creation of ‘counter narratives’ to discredit the claims of terrorist organizations such as AQIS. Terrorist organizations, similar to other groups vying for power, thrive by creating a narrative which resonates amongst a certain group of people. For a long term and permanent solution to the matter, it is the narrative which must be discredited by creating an alternative retelling of events which provides an alternative world view to the one espoused by terrorist organizations. Former de-radicalized jihadists and *ulema* which support a peaceful interpretation of religion can be utilized for such narrative building.

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Gendered Analysis of “Push and Pull Factors” towards Radicalization and Violent Extremism:

Sheharyar Khan

Abstract

It is important to understand the unique vulnerability of women to extremist ideas and the peculiar impacts extremism has on them. At the same time, it is also important to understand how women can exercise their agency to resist extremism and what are the capacities that they need in order to do this. This study aims to understand the structural realities that shape women’s worldview and behaviour as well as the factors that may help them deal with intense extremism. It is the nuanced understanding of the various factors that determine the interplay between this structure-agency duality that may lead to policy recommendations aimed at reshaping social realities. Given the gendered underpinnings of this agenda, the very promotion of gender equality is a counter-measure to the spread of deep-rooted aggressive ideologies. Women are well placed to help build cohesive communities, inform and lead a prevention response to tensions and demonstrate a clear recognition of the need for a gender sensitive approach to countering violent extremism.

Keywords: Push and Pull factors of radicalization, Female radicalization, women in conflict, women in peace building.

Introduction

The Question of Women’s role in violent conflict and peace building has been much debated in the academic and development literature¹. With the United Nations (UN) and other international bodies prioritizing the inclusion of a “gender-focused” agenda in their wider remits of peace-building, sustaining peace, and security, focus has turned towards the various ways in which gender-specific interventions can advance (or regress) the cause of peace and social cohesion². However, academic research and relevant policy debates on women’s radicalization and resultant participation in terrorism in South Asia remains limited.

The agenda of “Women, Peace and Security” was first initiated in October 2000, when the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1325. The resolution focused on the importance of the role of women in the “prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stressed the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security³”.

Moreover, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242, adopted in October 2015⁴, explicitly urges to incorporate the gender dimension in P/CVE programming and encourages Member States and the UN, “to ensure

¹ There is no set definition of peace-building/peace-making. However, peace-building often happens after conflict has ended, or possibly such activities might start even during conflict

² There is no single definition of social cohesion. Broadly, social cohesion refers to individuals within a community coexisting peacefully with each other, regardless of background, ethnicity or religion (See Stanley, 2003). Furthermore, there can be a breakdown in social cohesion, for example which can result because of conflict and violent actions.

³ <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/>

⁴ <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc12076.doc.htm>

the participation and leadership of women and women’s organizations in developing strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism,...[and] calls for adequate financing in this regard and for an increased amount, with the funding of the UN for counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism ... to be committed to projects which address gender dimensions including women’s empowerment”⁵.

Even though Pakistan has made substantial gains in its fight against terrorism, the struggle is far from over. According to a report published by Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS)⁶ there has been a consistent decline in the incidences of terrorism in the country. Nearly 370 terrorist attacks were reported in Pakistan during 2019 with 518 fatalities. This presents a 30pc drop from 739 fatalities from nearly 400 terrorism incidences in 2018. Moreover, suicide attacks also declined significantly in 2019, decreasing from 26 in 2018 to nine in the year 2019. These attacks resulted in 295 casualties in 2018, but dropped to 56 casualties in 2019.

However, hard interventions through kinetic operations⁷ (yet successful) alone can’t resolve Pakistan’s terrorism woes⁸. Tackling security issues have mostly meant a reliance on “law and order” and security centric approach⁹ involving Law enforcement agencies of the state.

It is important to emphasize that issues related to internal security and widespread extremism in Pakistan, cannot simply be taken as one of law-

⁵ ibid

⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1525816>

⁷ <https://cgpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CGP-Countering-Violent-Extremism-in-Pakistan.pdf>

⁸ <https://cscr.pk/explore/themes/defense-security/getting-pakistani-counter-terrorism-paradigm-right/>

⁹ https://ndu.edu.pk/issra/issra_pub/Non-Kinetic-Challenges.pdf

and-order enforcement. In fact, these issues are merely manifestations (though violent ones) of much deeper issues with regards to the relations between and within the state and civil society. The main philosophy sustaining Prevention or Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) programs is that the state should not counter terrorism exclusively with kinetic intelligence, police, and military means¹⁰, but the structural drivers of violent extremism must also be tackled¹¹. For long-lasting and tangible changes to occur, further interventions are necessary at the state level, including countering passive backing for extremist groups, tackling extremist ideas and tendencies that marinate in suggestive minds, taking a whole of the society approach, and pre-empting ways in which extremist organizations influence, exploit and recruit capitalizing on the mindset of the communities.

However, despite an international push towards gender sensitive security discourse and policy debates; In Pakistan, women generally figure as “passive” rather than “active” players. The focus has always been in the traditional roles that women acquire in the culture mainly “mothers”, “daughters”, “sisters”, “wives”. Women taking part in extremist or violent movements/organizations is overlooked and goes under the radar for many reasons. Firstly, it’s a societal norm and cultural understanding that just like war, violent extremism is a male domain and women are passive players in this field. This flawed understanding also gives root to the perception that since women are invisible in the public sphere, they must capitalize private

¹⁰ https://nacta.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Nacta-Journal_Issue2-Final.pdf

¹¹ Frazer, O. & Nunlist, C. (2015). The Concept of Countering Violent Extremism. Centre for Security Studies, ETH Zurich. Accessed at: <http://www.css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securitiessstudies/pdfs/CSSAnalyse183-EN.pdf>

gatherings to play their role just as sympathizers, fundraisers and facilitators. They are often viewed as victims rather than initiators of violence. Resultantly, academic literature and policy debates on women’s participation in extremist organizations is limited.

Masculine and Feminine Stereotyping in Violent Extremism:

Even though concepts of masculinity and femininity vary across societies, cultures, societies and timeframe, they become more pronounced during periods of political violence and conflict. Masculinity is linked to “violence” and femininity is often perceived to be non-violent, “supportive and complementary”. Under this type of framing, men are perceived to take on roles such as “fighters” and “protectors”, while women assume roles of the “heroic housewife,” “sacrificial mother” and “loving wife. In the context of violent extremism women take supplementary roles and tend to be classified as victims rather than initiators. Femininity also strongly correlates to women’s biological capability to give birth, implying that they are largely life-givers as opposed to life-takers¹².

To analyse the gendered drivers of extremism in Pakistan, it is also necessary to look at the historical context of conflict in the country. Historically, participation of Pakistani women in terrorism and extremist movements can be traced across three waves starting from the Afghan Jihad (1980s), leading to Kashmir jihad, formation of TTP leading to IS linked groups¹³. It should be noted that during the era of Afghan jihad in the 1980s,

¹² Mahmood, S. (2019). *Negating Stereotypes: Women, Gender, and Terrorism in Indonesia and Pakistan*.

¹³ Mahmood, S. (2019). *Negating Stereotypes: Women, Gender, and Terrorism in Indonesia and Pakistan*.

women were limited to “secondary” roles¹⁴ such as providing logistical and financial support which evolved with time. TTP was the first terrorist outfit to use women as suicide bombers, with the initial case¹⁵ reported to have emerged in 2010 in Bajaur Agency in erstwhile FATA.

Moreover, when it comes to assessing the motivation of women joining extremist organizations, gender biased explanations¹⁶ are served: men are perceived to join terrorist groups for political reasons, while women’s motivations are personal assumed to be personal, such as, finding a husband, providing/protecting her children or avenging the death of a loved family member.

Viewing violent extremism through a gendered lens, using orthodox explanations dividing men into violent roles and women into non-violent role hamper deeper analysis of their contribution to such outfits. Developing effective countering violent extremism initiatives warrants deeper analysis into women’s motivations and drivers of extremism independent of gender biases and recognition of their agency.

Is that true? Are women really passive actors in the arena of violent extremism? Evidence from the field suggests otherwise. There have been numerous incidences of women radicalization resulting in violence in Pakistan and abroad.

¹⁴ Noor, Saba, and Daniela Hussain. 2005. “Women and Radicalization: An Empirical Study.” Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies. <https://pakpips.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/205.pdf>.

¹⁵<https://www.dawn.com/news/593552/explosion-in-bajaur-agencies-khar-head-quarter-several-injured>

¹⁶Nacos, Brigitte. 2005. “The Portrayal of Female Terrorists in the Media: Similar framing patterns in the news coverage of women in politics and in terrorism.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. 28:5, 435–451.

In 2005, Gul Hassan, a known leader of sectarian militant organization Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, (LEJ) revealed to the law enforcement agencies, militants’ his plan to use women suicide bombers for terrorist attacks on individuals and specific locations. Hassan trained his two nieces Arifa and Saba¹⁷, who were students of mainstream schools in Karachi, as suicide bombers, who were arrested in 2005 by law enforcement agencies in Swat. Upon interrogation, the girls revealed that they decided to become suicide bombers after listening to radical speeches of Fazlullah, leader of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan in Swat, through his illegal FM radio broadcasts. Female students of Jamia Hafsa¹⁸ (associated with Lal “Red” Mosque in Islamabad) played a vital role in creating a law-and-order situation which eventually led to the military operation against militants inside the Red Mosque in July 2007. Furthermore, female students of the same madrassa Jamia Hafsa pledged allegiance¹⁹ to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the Emir of (ISIS), in a video statement²⁰ released in 2014.

Similarly, in January 2010, an 11-year-old Afghan refugee girl, Meena Gul²¹, who escaped from a suicide bomber training camp in Bajaur Agency (now tribal district in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa) along with Farida, a

¹⁷ Women Suicide Bombers: An Emerging Security Challenge for Pakistan Author(s): Saba Noor

Source: Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, Vol. 3, No. 11 (November 2011), pp. 1-3
Published by: International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research
Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26351018>

¹⁸ A female Islamic seminary was established in 1992, adjacent to the Lal Masjid Mosque Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. The mosque and its seminaries are overseen by cleric Abdul Aziz Ghazi.

¹⁹<https://www.thenews.com.pk/archive/print/541350-capital%E2%80%99s-jamia-hafsa-declares-support-for-islamic-state>

²⁰The statement (in Urdu) can be viewed here:
<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2cw1y9>

²¹<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/10608-terror-plans-of-al-qaeda-womens-wing-exposed>

granddaughter of Swat militant leader Sufi Muhammad²², revealed that her two brothers and father were involved in torching and bombing of girls’ schools in Bajaur and that one of her brothers trained female militants in Afghanistan. She said they were forcing her to commit a suicide attack, but she was reluctant to carry out such an attack and escaped from the camp when she got a chance.

In another case in December 2010, a woman suicide bomber blew herself up at a distribution centre of the World Food Program, in Bajaur killing 45 people who had queued for aid and wounding 80 others²³. Official reports stated that the attack was on Salarzai tribe, which had raised a private army “*Lashkar*” in resistance to militants operating in that region. The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility of the attack. In August 2011 a female attacker blew up a suicide vest that she was wearing, killing a 60-year-old woman and injuring 17 people at Lahori Gate Peshawar²⁴. In June 2015, a female suicide bomber carried out an attack on a bus carrying students of Sardar Bahadur Khan Women’s University²⁵,. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LEJ) had claimed responsibility for the bus bombing.

The Pakistani Taliban (TTP) have frequently used female suicide bombers for their assassination bids, including the late Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Qazi Hussain Ahmed, who narrowly escaped on November 19, 2012 when a female bomber exploded herself²⁶ as his convoy passed through Mohmand Agency. Infamous Lal Masjid prayer leader Maulana Abdul Aziz had also

²² https://www.rferl.org/a/gandhara_female_suicide_bomber_pakistan/2260218.html

²³ <https://www.dawn.com/news/593552/explosion-in-bajaur-agencies-khar-head-quarter-several-injured>

²⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/651101/terrorists-use-girl-for-suicide-attack-in-peshawar>

²⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1018631/female-suicide-bomber-responsible-for-quetta-attack>

²⁶ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/467981/former-ji-chief-escapes-attack-in-mohmand>

warned on February 10, 2014 that Pakistani Taliban had 500 female suicide bombers in Waziristan and other tribal areas who were ready²⁷ to attack.

Early 2015 saw the launch of the women wing of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) headed by Afinda Binte Ayesha under the guidance of Umaima Hassan (one of the wives of al-Qaeda chief, Dr Ayman Al Zawahiri). It was named “Al-Qaeda Shaheen Force²⁸” Umaima Hassan had already asked Muslim women in a pamphlet to raise their children in the service of Jihad and martyrdom:

“All the Muslim women of the world should raise their children to love Jihad and die in the cause of Allah. Besides helping to preserve the Mujahedeen and raise their children in the best way, women could go the extra mile and participate themselves in martyrdom missions as suicide bombers.”²⁹

In September 2015, Bushra Cheema³⁰ traveled with her 15-year-old son, Abdullah, and three younger daughters, Zainab, Aisha and Nabiah to Syria from Pakistan to join IS. Bushra was highly educated and had completed MPhil in Islamic Studies from Punjab University³¹ and was an honorary principal and founder of Noor-ul-Huda Islamic Centre situated in Town Ship, Lahore.

In an infamous voice note, she left a message for her husband from Syria, “I want to die a martyr’s death...if you can’t join us then pray your wife and children die in jihad³²”. Evidence suggests that Cheema was not radicalized

²⁷<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-02-09/pakistan-taliban-readies-500-female-suicide-bombers-cleric-says>

²⁸ <https://crss.pk/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/Al-Qaeda-Women-Wing.pdf>

²⁹ “Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri’s Wife Predicts Muslim Spring”, The Telegraph, June 8, 2012.

³⁰ <https://www.newsweekpakistan.com/pray-your-wife-and-children-die-in-jihad/>

³¹ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/95462/the-state-in-a-state-of-denial/>

³² <http://herald.dawn.com/news/1153362>

due to her husband joining an extremist group; instead, her examples demonstrates exercise of her agency where she made an independent, political and religious decision to join IS.

A terrorist attack in San Bernardino³³, California, U.S.A on December 2, 2015 resulted in the killing of 14 persons and 22 individuals seriously injured. Perpetrators were American born Syed Rizwan Farook and his wife Tashfeen Malik. They targeted a San Bernardino County Department of Public Health training event and Christmas party where at least 80 employees had rented a banquet room. Tashfeen malik³⁴ (29 years of age) was a highly educated woman who got her degree in Chemistry,

A prominent case of a young medical student Noreen Leghari³⁵ gained national headlines in 2017. Affiliated with IS, Noreen was recruited to undertake a suicide bombing mission targeting a local church during easter celebrations. When arrested by the authorities before conducting the attack, Noreen admitted to being influenced by IS propaganda online. After leaving her home, she had married Ali Tariq³⁶, a militant from Lahore who was killed in an encounter with law enforcement agencies. This further provides evidence that terrorist groups have evolved in their recruitment methods, strategies, and target audiences.

On the contrary, militants evolving policy of using burqa clad female suicide bombers to effectively attack their targets without detection is a serious

³³<https://edition.cnn.com/2015/12/08/us/tashfeen-malik-syed-rizwan-farook-radicalization/index.html>

³⁴<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1007081/who-do-we-blame-for-tashfeen-maliks-radicalisation>

³⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1327453>

³⁶ <https://tribune.com.pk/article/48864/naureen-laghari-pakistans-very-own-is-bride>

cause of concern for security agencies. The ability of the burqa clad women to breach security poses a big challenge to authorities.

The key questions that need in-depth investigation is as to why did women act so radically, and what compels them to support and join extremist/terrorist organizations? What are their motivations, vulnerabilities, and gendered drivers that may contribute to security threats and fragmentations of social cohesion which increase the impact of violence and security threats? What are the contexts and factors which cause mobilization of women especially young women, and what roles women/young women can play in preventing violent extremism?

Analysis of the “Push and Pull” factors.

At a macro level, a combination of academic studies has identified a number of “push” and “pull” factors which influence recruitment into violent extremist groups³⁷. Structural “push” factors create a favourable topography for the spread of violent extremism, and these include prolonged and unresolved conflicts, underdevelopment, relative deprivation and lack of access to education or employment, and human rights violations. These are then combined with adjacent “pull” factors such as the material and financial benefits of joining extremist groups, perceived social status, and appealing ideologies and recruiters. Studies focusing on youth recruitment into violent Islamist organizations have also uncovered the propagation of youth-

³⁷ Hedayah and GCCR. (2015). Policy Brief: Thinking Outside the Box: Exploring the Critical Roles of Sports, Arts, and Culture in Preventing Violent Extremism. Hedayaha and Global Center on Cooperative Security.

specific discourses³⁸. These involve a combination of exploiting regional sensitivities through tailored media/social media statements, with the discursive construction of a cohesive “identity”. Thus, “believing” youth are placed at the centre and vanguard of a millenarian battle against the “enemies of Islam” and “apostates” to create an “Islamic state”³⁹. Moreover, warrior references from Islamic and jihadist history are mobilized in contrast to traditions emphasizing tolerance, moderation, and pluralism/coexistence.

Drivers of Radicalization:

Academics, researchers and practitioners are of the view that there isn’t a certain set of root causes that can effectively explain how women or men could be radicalized leading to violent acts. However, various observed indicators have been recognized dependent on context.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has investigated various “push” and “pull” factors that foster and propagate extremism. “Push” factors are socioeconomic, political, and cultural in nature⁴⁰. Factors include: high levels of social marginalization and fragmentation, poorly governed or ungoverned areas, cultural threat perceptions, endemic corruption and elite impunity⁴¹. Pre-existing,

³⁸ Cheong, P. H. and Halverson J. R. (2010). Youths in Violent Extremist Discourse: Mediated Identifications and Interventions. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 33: 1104–1123.

³⁹ Pauline Hope Cheong & Jeffrey R. Halverson (2010) Youths in Violent Extremist Discourse: Mediated Identifications and Interventions, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 33:12, 1104-1123, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2010.523862

⁴⁰ “Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism,” USAID (Feb. 2009), p. 9; “The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency,” USAID (Sept. 2011)

⁴¹ <https://www.cipe.org/resources/drivers-violent-extremism/>

protracted and violent local conflicts that can be exploited by violent extremist organizations seeking to advance their own agendas.⁴²

Furthermore, USAID states that “Pull” factors work on an individual level and have a direct impact on recruitment and radicalization⁴³. They include: social status and respect from peers, a sense of belonging, adventure, and self-esteem, and the prospect of achieving glory and fame. “Pull” factors also include interpersonal relationships, the appeal of a particular leader which can often lead to cult following, and the attraction and membership of social networks. Practically, “pull” factors work in conjunction with “push” factors to have influence. The USAID⁴⁴ identified five main individual “pull” drivers: (1) reasonable and specific political, economic, and social grievances; (2) ideological; (3) economic gain; (4) personal factors; and (5) coercion.

According to Mossarat Qadeem (practitioner), some of the common push factors⁴⁵ include dissatisfaction with the existing justice system, drone attacks, the death, detention or abuse of family members by the Law enforcement agencies and a lack of understanding of Religion and religious traditions. The pull factors⁴⁶ were the promise of a paradise for mothers of martyrs, assurance of easy access to justice, guarantees of just and equal distribution of resources, the promise of sharia enforcement, and others. A common practice used by extremist groups involves using text from

⁴² ibid

⁴³ ibid

⁴⁴ ibid

⁴⁵ Qadeem, Mossarat. 2018. “Engendering Extremism: Women Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism In Pakistan.” London School of Economics (Centre for Women Peace and Security). <http://www.lse.ac.uk/womenpeace-security/assets/documents/2018/wps16Qadeem.pdf>.

⁴⁶ ibid

religious scriptures without context to charm the mothers, school and madrassa teachers, local activists and other women in the community. It should be noted here that contrary to popular perceptions the influence was not only limited to illiterate women only, educated women also felt an obligation to fulfil their duty to contribute to Jihad.

Academic research has identified various ideological “pull” factors as well. These include pull factors such as religious ideology, ethno-religious and nationalist goals and aspirations⁴⁷, the rejection of “Western” political and economic systems⁴⁸, the perceived justness of the group’s goals, and

<p>Political Drivers (Push)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of social marginalization and fragmentation • Poorly governed or ungoverned areas • Corruption and elite impunity • Dissatisfaction with existing justice system • Perceived justness of extremist organizations goals 	<p>Personal/Identity Drivers (Pull)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social status and respect from peers • Sense of belonging and self esteem • Adventure and prospect of achieving glory • Desire for social and political agency • A desire to find protection from domestic abuse
<p>Socio-economic Drivers (Push)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantees of just and equal distribution of resources • Financial rewards • Stability • Poverty and lack of education (weak) • Lack of opportunities and hopelessness for the future 	<p>Religious/Ideological (Pull)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promise of paradise for mothers of martyrs • Out of context use of text from religious scriptures. • Enforcement of a particular brand of religion. • Pan-Islamic Religious Ideology.

⁴⁷ KARLA J. CUNNINGHAM (2003) Cross-Regional Trends in Female Terrorism, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 26:3, 171-195

⁴⁸ <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5881d4e44.pdf>

selective incentives provided by extremist organizations⁴⁹ (e.g., stability, security, financial rewards, opportunities for advancement).

Furthermore, analysis of literature propagated by extremist organizations shows that the focus is usually placed on issues of identity, existential threats, cultural domination or oppression, narratives of victimization and threats by foreign intervention⁵⁰. Interestingly enough social indications such as poverty, unemployment, service delivery, and economic opportunities are not given attention. In summation, violent extremist groups present a world view in which the international system as against their way of life and link local grievances as manifestations of greater international political dynamics.

The Curious Case Study of Radio Mullah:

While we can garner some information about violent extremism and women at the larger level, zooming into specific communities provides interesting perspectives and nuances. Women have been seen to play active roles in the promotion of political violence and conflict. In contrast to popular perception of women being passive victims of war, fundamentalist strains (such as the Tehreek-e-Nifaz-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNFZ) in Swat), Pakistan to ISIS recruitment in Pakistan and among Muslim diasporas in the West) have actively recruited and mobilized women to the cause of violence⁵¹. In doing so, they have drawn upon discourses of idealized

⁴⁹ Karen Jacques and Paul Taylor, “Female Terrorism: A Review,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21, no. 3 (2009): 499–515.

⁵⁰ <https://www.cipe.org/resources/drivers-violent-extremism/>

⁵¹ Akhtar, Aasim Sajjad. 2010. “Islam as Ideology of Tradition and Change: The “New Jihad” in Swat, Northern Pakistan,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 30 (3): 595-609.

femininity, religious duty, and utopic sublimation to attract female recruitment⁵².

For example, in Swat, a combination of local political and historical factors combined with general patriarchal negotiations led to women supporting Mullah Fazlullah⁵³ during his rise to prominence. Thus, both Sufi Muhammad and later Fazlullah articulated their extremist politics in the name of “Sharia”. This played on historical memories of the era of the State of Swat before its merger into Pakistan, when the legal code was called “Shariat” and was perceived to be more efficient than the Pakistani judicial system. On the other hand, in his early days, Fazlullah strongly advocated for women’s rights under Sharia law through his radio program. He took up issues of domestic abuse against women while also promising his women supporters that he would provide their sons with an education and social mobility⁵⁴. Although ironically, Fazlullah and his group would eventually turn to extreme patriarchal violence himself, initially they garnered much support from women who donated generously to his cause.

In some areas of Pakistan, women have little or no participation in the public domain as they are often restricted to their homes, increasing their vulnerability to violence and exploitation⁵⁵. In Swat, this was capitalized on as the message of Mullah Fazlullah directly reached women in their homes

⁵² Zakaria, Rafia. 2015, March 24. ISIL’s feminine mystique. Al-Jazeera America, <http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/3/isils-feminine-mystique.html>

⁵³ Mullah Fazlullah referred to as “Radio Mullah” was the leader of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) who was killed in 2018 by a US drone attack. Fazlullah was the son-in-law of Sufi Muhammad, the erstwhile leader of the religious fundamentalist Tehreek-e-Nifaz-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNFZ) movement in Swat, Pakistan. Fazlullah rose to prominence as a fiery radio preacher in the and soon went onto form his own TTP faction, eventually becoming the organisation’s leader in 2013 (BBC report: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24847165>).

⁵⁴ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/12/23/the-rise-of-radio-mullah/>

⁵⁵ <https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/02/women-peace-and-security-pakistan>

through media such as radio. However, the lack of mobility of women, which has also been created by violent extremism for example Taliban restrictions on women in Swat, has impacted household income and access to facilities, such as health care and education⁵⁶. Thus, both localized political-historical factors in Swat and generalized patriarchal oppression contributed to women’s active involvement in Fazlullah’s rise. In other areas of KP or FATA/Newly Merged Districts, local social and political factors might interact differently with women’s roles in society.

An environment of a general “*gendered suppression*” within familial structures can make women amenable to extremist narratives and actions. Many examples can be provided in this regard. The case of women’s support to Mullah Fazlullah and his fundamentalist movement in Swat is perhaps most famous. Here, there was already a historical memory of the Swat state whose legal code was called “Shariat” and was generally considered to be more efficient than the subsequent criminal justice system of the Pakistani state. However, Fazlullah specifically targeted women through his popular radio broadcasts through, initially, taking up issues of domestic violence, asking men to desist from domestic suppression, and following the “true” teachings of Islam. Women not only actively gave support and material resources (such as their own jewellery) to the Fazlullah movement but also encouraged their children to join the movement. In this regard, women’s quest for identity and prestige combined with more prosaic concerns regarding their sons’ economic prospects. Thus, support of conflict among women combined ideological support and aspirations to material advancement in light of prevailing social and economic situation.

⁵⁶ ibid

Similarly, women who have become ideologues of violent extremism are often those who, while in a subaltern state within familial structure, have demonstrable leadership qualities. These women with a desire to prove themselves in the world, find in extremist narratives of religion a two-fold purpose. On one hand, demonstration of religious expertise and public piety becomes a medium for asserting their authority and increasing their prestige within familial and community structures. On the other hand, resort to religion as a medium of mobility also, paradoxically, reinforces gendered roles and causes minimal disturbance in prevailing norms/values of gender hierarchy. As such, the “prestige” and “identity” gained through resort to fundamentalist narratives of religion and public piety/religious expertise works both to debunk and reinforce prevailing social/gendered hierarchies in the same moment.

In the case of women who move from mere propagation of extremism narrative to becoming part of militant organizations, the issues of identity, family, and prestige can be seen with even greater intensity. Thus, for example, an expert who has worked in the Pakistani state’s deradicalization program narrated how actively taking up the extremist cause and/or joining a militant network is often a case of rebellion against family norms.

This can take a number of forms. It can manifest itself as an avenue for proving one’s mettle for leadership and autonomy. Another main avenue is that of freedom of choice, especially with regards to choosing of partners. In this case, the position offered by groups such as ISIS to females is crucial. Female adherents are offered a chance not only at heavenly redemption, but for becoming a very building bloc of a utopia on this earth: the Islamic State. Their status as wives of current fighters and mothers of future “pure” generations of the Islamic state thus offers the promise of a utopic (and

fascistic) sublimation within the larger body politics of the Islamic state. As one respondent aptly summarized when asked about women’s motivations for joining violent conflict: “*girls feel that they are unwanted.*”

Violent organizations and terrorist groups also consciously target the most vulnerable groups in any social structure with the promise of “political emancipation”. This includes women and various lumpen groups in society such as unemployed youth, criminal elements etc. The promise of social prestige and personal – including, sexual – agency is a large part of these organizations’ appeal, and women’s participation in these conflicts.

Often, it is also these parts of society which are not versed in the more traditional lineages of religious/Islamic thought. As several scholars (such as Shahab Ahmed) have pointed out, violent Islamists’ organizations’ modernist interpretations of faith in fact go against the grain of much traditional Islamic thinking about authority, rule, and rebellion. Inter-generational and intra-familial fault-lines find an avenue for expression through regressive and violent interpretations of religion.

Thus, suppression within prevailing familial structures, being misfit in reigning social hierarchies, opportunities for gaining identity and prestige, and a break from more “traditional” and hierarchy-cantered interpretations of religion, opens the avenue towards reactionary and violent assertions of the same. As Olivier Roy points out, this must be understood less of a “Radicalization of Islam” and more as the “Islamisation of Radicalism⁵⁷”.

⁵⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/apr/13/who-are-the-new-jihadis>

The Role of Madrassas:

In order to better elucidate the linkages between social cohesion and women’s leadership, it is also important to investigate religious educational centres specifically targeting women; most importantly, how women are attracted towards and exposed to religious narratives which can potentially manifest into violent extremism. The number of madrassas (religious schools) in Pakistan has had a mushroomed growth since the 1970s, with three million students currently enrolled in around 32,000⁵⁸ madrassas run by boards of different religious sects/orientations. In the last two decades, there has been a concerted effort by the state to register and regularize madrassas, through identifying funding streams, modernizing curricula, and incorporating them into the mainstream/public educational system. Conversely, the number of madrassas for female students has also increased.

According to a study, it is often believed that middle income families choose the education of madrassas, because of poverty or lack of educational opportunities and economic opportunities for girls. However, this explanation is not cogent. Most of the middle-income families choose madrassa education as a complement to – rather than to substitute for – secular education. The aim is often to preserve the customary values through women in the family, through encouraging piety and “family-oriented” values⁵⁹. Moreover, madrassa education for girls also serves to increase their social status through expanding sphere of Islamic knowledge, community contacts, and even possible opportunities for employment. However, the promotion of customary values hinging on patriarchal codes can also hinder

⁵⁸<https://www.npr.org/2019/01/10/682917845/pakistan-wants-to-reform-madrassas-experts-advise-fixing-public-education-first>

⁵⁹ <http://www.iefpedia.com/english/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Masooda-Bano.pdf>

women’s agency, choice, decision making and access to and control over resources. Modernity and globalization have also played a fundamental role in creating an intense sense of consternation within the middle-income families with regards to their customary values and ‘Muslim’ identities. The education of madrassa allows girls to raise their statuses, reproduce their identities within the social patriarchal expectations and gain access to economic opportunities such as performing the role of religious teachers within their communities⁶⁰. The emphasis on young girls being conscripted as religious teachers comfortably maintains patriarchal privilege through private domain, reproducing private roles of low-income and middle-income families as charity workers or teachers⁶¹.

Furthermore, Al-Huda, which is popular amongst urbanized middle- and upper-class women, has utilized the religion-nationalist discourse (above) to create two binary spheres, in which subjects are either submerged within the realm of this discourse or completely outside of it. The processing of ‘otherizing’ those who do not subscribe to the religion-nationalist discourse forms the basis of potential manifestations of violent extremism. The ideology of the institution “Al-Huda” mostly coincides with that of the conventional clerics as they advocate for a patriarchal system by arguing that gender roles are natural. They put forward the idea that it is a favour from God that women have been granted the responsibility of the household

⁶⁰ Kirmani, N. (2011) Interactions between Religion, the State and Civil Society in Pakistan: Some Implications for Development. Working Paper 65. Religions and Development Research Programme. University of Birmingham, Birmingham. UK. [online] Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08ae7e5274a31e0000842/working_paper_65.pdf

⁶¹https://read.dukeupress.edu/cssaame/article-abstract/8/1_and_2/54/34190/Women-Religion-and-the-State

as working outside is a strenuous task. Interestingly, the mission statement of Al-Huda reveals the same stating that the Centre seeks to ‘prepare them (women) for their future roles as wives, mothers, sisters and beneficial members of society,’ thereby strengthening patriarchal privilege and restricting women to the private domain.

A prominent scholar Rex Hudson⁶² explained the phenomenon of women radicalization through Erikson’s theory of negative identity which focuses of individuals who are “oppressed” “disappointed” by the failure of their own hopes, dreams and aspirations assume a “negative identity” which is a rejection of any role which they are expected to fulfil by their society, family or community. Terrorists engage in terrorism as a result of feelings of rage and helplessness over the lack of alternatives. Applying this theory to women’s radicalization it explains the Lal Masjid/Jamia Hafsa uprising and the subsequent standoff between the government and Jamia Hafsa in Islamabad in 2007.

The Role of Radical Publications:

In line with latest trends in international Jihadi recruitment TTP released *Sunnat-e-KhauLa*, a 45-page, English-language magazine (named after a historical Muslim female fighter). First of its kind this English magazine’s target audience were women. The magazine urged women to wage Jihad and distribute the groups propaganda⁶³.

⁶² Rex Hudson, “The sociology and psychology of terrorism: who becomes a terrorist and why?”, Federal Research Division, Washington 1999, p. 58.

⁶³ Sara Mahmood. “Pakistan’s Women Jihadis: Understanding the nexus between women and terrorism in Pakistan”. The Diplomat. April 06, 2017 <https://thediplomat.com/2017/04/pakistanswomen-jihadis/>.

The launch of exclusively English “*Sunnat-e-KhauLa*⁶⁴”, is in line with TTP’s latest social media strategy which bolsters its presence on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter to effectively disseminate its message and develop an enhanced following. The magazine taps into the “pop culture” and targets educated English speaking urbanized women from the civil society and urging them to adopt a jihadi way of life.

The first issue of the publication opens with an editorial featuring the interview of the unnamed wife of TTP leader Fazlullah, in which she propagates underage marriages as a way to fight the evils of society, and extols the virtues of being married to the militant leader at the age of 14. The magazine also features a story by a female doctor about her journey from “ignorance to guidance” in which she traces her decision to shun her western education, and embrace the Islamic way of life. The magazine urges women to jihad by pen, organize secret religious gatherings at home, and learn to operate weapons and grenades. It also includes an advice column for would-be “*lady* jihadists”.

Conclusion:

The conflict landscape in Pakistan is replete with examples of increasing number of groups that use women as weapons to carry out their nefarious activities. The increasing number of women in combat roles indicates militant organizations see a tactical, strategic and operational advantage in employing women to achieving their targets. This necessitates equivalent counter-terrorism responses and measures from law enforcement agencies

⁶⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1349061/jihadi-glamour-ttp-launches-womens-magazine>

as the tactical level and a strategic shift at the policy level. Prevention responses and interventions from the state need adequate adaptation as well.

These varied examples and responses therefore necessitate a Pakistan-wide approach towards further targeted research on security, social cohesion, violent extremism, and women’s leadership. Such a project can usefully illuminate the effects of conflict especially with regards to women, the opportunities this has presented for the emergence of women’s leadership, and the specific regional, social, and conflict histories which have produced outcomes varied according to class, ethnicity, and region.

The hyper-masculinized vision of counterterrorism in our country is not equipped to respond to the evolving and ever-changing strategies employed by terrorist organizations and will not ensure security to Pakistan’s citizenry. Hard intervention alone against terrorist actors will not lead to a just and violence-free society unless structural inequalities are addressed in parallel.

Identifying a single pathway to women’s radicalization and terrorism is not possible and would be reductive. Each and every case needs to be analysed to develop a holistic framework which takes in account a combination of factors which include indicators like identity, world view, personal ambitions and trajectory, psychology, the wider societal and cultural contexts, and an enabling environment.

- The government of Pakistan should develop and promote a WPS framework, especially resolution 2242 which motivates women to take a leadership role in countering violent extremism.
- For sustainable peace and security, the government of Pakistan should prioritize women’s empowerment centered around Pakistan's

- P/CVE initiatives. Moreover, special effort should be made in including women in security-related policy making decision-making as they are underrepresented in national and regional security institutions limiting their input in strategies, approaches and policy.
- The role of women in prevention of radicalization cannot be stressed enough. It is important to understand the multiple ways in which conflict affects women and the resultant variety of roles that they can play in countering or preventing violent extremism, playing a part in or supporting militant outfits and their life altering experiences as victims of terrorism or conflict.
 - There is a dire need to look beyond women’s role in conflict in a traditional and narrow focus on their role as “victims” or “peacemakers”, recognizing their agency that they routinely practice reflected in diverse role they play in supporting, mobilizing, and actively participating in violent extremist organizations and conflict.
 - Pakistan needs a comprehensive, inclusive, and integrated prevention policy which caters to the changing dynamics of militant landscape in the region which is gender responsive. A well-integrated state level program is the need of the hour which investigates in depth, drivers of female radicalization and creates framework which promotes and encourages participation of women in these programs resulting in effectiveness, sustainability, and protecting/upholding women’s rights.
 - Unless the enabling environment which provides a breeding ground for recruitment is not addressed achieving “peace and security” will remain an elusive goal.

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Gender Responsive Preventive and Remedial Measures to Prevent Violent Extremism: A Practitioner's Perspective

Mossarat Qadeem

Abstract

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and tribal districts witnessed the worst forms of violent extremism for nearly two decades. While considering the fact that violent extremism necessarily requires intervention mechanisms, it is essential to go beyond the traditional security measures in order to address the root-causes of the phenomenon. This paper develops a four-pillar model (based on-field experience) which provides an indigenous, innovative and comprehensive framework for an effective contextualized implementation of Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE). The article also elucidates the possibilities and limitations related to communities' response to violent extremism with evidence of success and verifiable cases of trend setting initiatives in the field of PVE.

In this community-based approach youth and women play a vital role in analysing the root causes of growing polarization, feelings of alienation and enhancing social cohesion. The paper aims to disseminate a better understanding of ways in which policymakers and practitioners can help further community-based preventive and remedial measures.

Keywords: PVE, Empowering communities, cultural narratives, internal community mechanism for building social cohesion

Introduction

The KPK I grew up in believed in pluralism, tolerance, accommodation and interfaith harmony where people of all faiths and sects had since generations lived peacefully and respectfully, celebrating each other's festivals, and

standing with each other in times of both sorrow and joy. But in the last two decades the same soil has witnessed suicidal attacks, bomb blast, brutal killings, abduction for ransom, displacement and destruction. What happened that transformed the outlook, and the thinking pattern of these communities?

Ignorance and emotional extremism prevail in some areas of Pakistan. Sectarianism and other forms of intolerance have gone well beyond the political realm, and are now becoming the norm. The movements launched from across the border were met with resilience. The implications of instability in Afghanistan also add to the insecurity and polarization of society in Pakistan particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa¹. Intolerance prevails in the society today and it is becoming one where people label, despise and even attack that which is deemed to be variant.

The culture of Violent Extremism (VE) introduced in these communities through various extremist groups and individuals, greatly influenced the hearts and minds of the local people. If the majority was not explicitly supporting or following these extremists' groups commonly known as Taliban, they were not condoning their acts of extremism either. For these communities, acts of VE became a normal routine as the extremist groups justified these acts in the name of religion. For instance, once while carrying out some interviews in Swat, Dilshad² a participant said to me, 'the Taliban are justified in attacking the military personnel because the military is fighting for America'. Many women like Dilshad sympathized or supported

¹Pakhtunkhwa be read as Pakhtunkhwa and the tribal districts.

² The names of individuals in all case studies are not the real name due to the sensitivity of the issues. We can furnish further information to anyone for the purpose of academic research

the extremist groups because they were convinced of the religious cause of the extremists. This propaganda was not limited to Swat only but infiltrated into the comparatively moderate and educated communities of cities like Charsadda, Peshawar and Mardan.

The communities in KPK may be characterized as facing social, economic and political vulnerabilities caused by compounding factors such as structural unemployment, inadequate social services manifested by poor educational and health facilities, weak integration of ethnic, sectarian groups, social problems at the family level, and structural violence against the female Gender.

There is a presence of criminal and terrorist networks/recruiters active in motivating the youth to join them, a high incidence of everyday crime and violent extremism, the inadequate or intrusive presence and actions of security actors, and general neglect. The weak and crumbling legal system was used as an excuse for delayed justice system and the first step by Taliban in every area was to establish a parallel justice system gaining the sympathy of the people.

The Drivers of Violent Extremism in Pakistan.

The growth of extremist tendencies across KPK in particular and Pakistan in general is not linked with only one factor. The fertile ground for VE was growing in many of the areas in KPK and erstwhile FATA, augmented by a number of drivers, both internal and external. Religion, economic degradation, loosening the cultural ties, weakening of state institutions., fading national unity, lack of social justice and corruption paved the way for the extremists. Therefore, it is an overstatement to solely explain the motivation for endorsing or adopting VE in the communities as a result of

theological factors. There are many other factors besides religion and theological reasoning contributing to the phenomenon.

The tendency to seek a universal formula to explain and detect drivers of VE has led to the lack of serious consideration of the impact and uniqueness of local contexts and local actors in shaping the dynamics of the drivers. Many studies emphasize the push rather than pull factors in their diagnosis of the drivers³ hence many externally imposed Countering or Preventing Violent Extremism programs and designs sometimes ignore the deep-rooted factors driving VE.

Most existing research focusing on the Pakistani context, mainly quote poverty, poor access to quality education, socio-political marginalization, lawlessness, or weak governance apparatus as the root causes of violent extremism. However, from my experience of working with radicalized and vulnerable young people and communities, in most cases, the push factors are people's rigid worldview, misinterpretation of their socio-economic situation, belief in conspiracy theories, lack of critical thinking, and limited knowledge of religion. Excluded from mainstream society, the majority of young people desperately seek a sense of belonging and find it rewarding to associate with those who share similar worldviews, needs, and grievances. Taking advantage of this, extremist movements prey on young people's vulnerabilities and grievances to channel recruits into their groups through persuasion, pressure, coercion and manipulation, and selective use of text from religious scriptures to influence the minds and hearts of the target group.

³Mohammed Abu Nimmer, *Alternative Approaches to Transforming Violent Extremism The Case of Islamic Peace and Interreligious Peace building in Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 13*. 2018

This is particularly relevant when examining the narratives that VE movements propagate. While they may seem to be strengthened by fact-based stories, their compelling draw is more about the overarching emotional attraction. Similarly, by understanding the emotional draw of VE groups in any given context, we can identify the social patterns and challenges that are driving recruitment. This requires listening more than speaking and staying rooted to our relationships in the community.

*PAIMAN*⁴ has been working on C/PVE in universities and communities since 2009 and our latest finding⁵ is that radicalization and extremist tendencies within youth in communities and education institutions in particular is on the rise as compared to the past few years. While conducting training with students of Abdul Wali Kahn University Mardan, who had witnessed the lynching of Mashal Khan by a mob of students, I asked if they regretted not doing something to save him at the time. To my surprise, they all responded negatively. I realized that this extremist tendency among educated young people is more dangerous than violence itself⁶. It is an outcome of living within an environment of VE for years. There are multiple reasons for this state of affairs but the most crucial one is that the ideological dimension of extremist propaganda is taken lightly and attempts to mitigate and nullify it are limited.

⁴PAIMAN Alumni Trust, a pioneer organization in P/CVE in Pakistan which has received international recognition and applauds for its innovative model of neutralizing extremist tendencies through community mobilization, active citizenship and community empowerment for building social cohesion and has prevented thousands of youth and women from becoming extremists

⁵ In July 2019, PAIMAN conducted a survey on “attitude, behaviour and perception of students towards violent extremism.

⁶Mossarat Qadeem, ‘Beyond Violence: The Impact of Extremism on Communities’ Jan 31st, 2020. Pg1 <https://institute.global/policy/beyond-violence-impact-extremism-communities>

Some of the causes that led to multiplication of communities' grievances are:

- The lack of communication between state institutions and communities has encouraged groups to seek violence as a legitimate alternative and disrupt peace and social cohesion. The communities have experienced VE for two decades along with violent extremist groups trying to win their support.
- The decline in acts of terrorism was unimaginable without the use of military force but an inclusive and consistent approach is required for preventing and countering violent extremism effectively⁷. The prevalent weak social cohesion in these communities provide grounds for the extremist groups to exploit peoples feeling of deprivation and non-fulfilment of their basic human needs⁸ to seek their support. The three Ss⁹ of social cohesion are totally missing from these communities and no effort has been undertaken to strengthen social cohesion in these areas.
- In addition, fear, insecurity and feelings of powerlessness and marginalization due to conflict have also weakened the sense of individual civic agency. The operations of extremist groups have so

⁷ Operation Zarb-e-Azb, launched in June 2014, and Radd-ui-Fassad, launched in tribal areas in February 2017, proved to be successful in debasing and dismantling organisational structure of militant outfits active not only in FATA but in different parts of the country

⁸ Dr. Zahid Yaseen and Dr. Muhammad Muzaffar, 'Extremism in Pakistan: Issues and Challenges, Journal of Politics and International Studies Vol. 4, No. 1, January–June 2018, pg no:38

- ⁹social inclusion: inequalities, polarization and poverty levels
- social capital: levels of trust and civic engagement
- social mobility: the degree to which people can or believe they can change their position in society.

far mostly been followed by militarized counter-terrorism response which have halted the most radical manifestations, but it has to be supported by other state institutions and civil society to sustain the successes achieved. The displacement of tribal elders and communities provided ground for the extremists to penetrate and spread their ideologies in those communities.

- Our education institutions lack the ability to develop critical thinking among youth or provide means of understanding pluralism or discussions about the similarities and differences across faiths and cultures to broaden their worldview.
- There was no national security strategy till 2014 to address the menace of VE at various levels.

Violent Extremism and Communities

Majority communities did not consider the dangerous impact of VE on themselves or their families and communities. Extremist movements have a goal to justify their acts, and in a country where religion plays a central role in everyday lives of many, these extremist movements exploited people's emotional attachment to religion. Women, youth and other community members bought in the extremist propaganda and remained silent for years.

While the extremist groups were busy in strengthening their influence in these communities through various religion based narratives, there was no alternative narrative yet developed by the state or anyone else. Majority of the members of these extremist groups were locally rooted, thus easily making inroads into these communities. They have been deriving their aspirations, strategies and mobilization skills from other extremist groups. They strategically developed an inner circle of followers, recruits and

established strong bonds with larger aims. VE operate in erstwhile FATA in two ways: a direct, indirect engagement and recruitment of individuals using multiple tactics; influencing the mindset of the communities in general through their propaganda and religious narratives. The extremist group can be identified through its association with other extremist groups but identification of the silent sympathizers, facilitators and supporters is the most difficult task. It is this silent group that needs to be engaged and transformed through a process. At the same time majority of youth, women and other community members are not engaged in or attracted to the extremist ideologues. There are some active and vocal members against extremism in their own communities and beyond, unheard by state and policy makers. It is these specific groups that require attention of state and other interested in PVE. The violence-condoning ideologies and terrorizing violence of the few should never make us forget the openness and non-violence of many.

The issue of VE was there in the communities where *PAIMAN* has been working. Many male family members had either joined extremist groups or were their supporters and facilitators along with some female members. Other families had either lost their loved ones to the acts of VE or were missing. The socio-economic and psychological impact was immeasurable but people were reluctant to speak due to the fear of unknown. It was neither discussed nor debated. We realized that a strategic commitment was needed to develop a community-led response to the challenging of hateful extremism.

PVE/Counterterrorism (CT) laws, strategies and practices around the world often lead to human rights violations, making it challenging specially for women thus creating more problems than solutions. “Terrorism” and

“extremism” are ambiguous terms and have been abused politically, generating biases against certain groups and communities. We observe that current PVE/CT strategies tend to be “reactive”, favouring militarized criminal justice approaches. A human-rights-based response at the core of any PVE/CT strategy is needed. Pakistan, as a constitutional state is under obligation for the safety of life and property of its every citizen.

PVE/CT laws, strategies and practices need to be inclusive enough to include. Strategies and programs designed for PVE if developed in a non-participatory manner may offer insufficient legal protection mechanisms. Current approaches often do not allow for effective participation of civil society, and women in particular, although they represent a significant percentage of both the victims as well as actors in supporting VE. Issues such as women’s rights, justice, education, employment, as well as the need to confront structural social injustices and discrimination should be at the core of any PVE/CT approach. There cannot be sustainable peace without the meaningful participation of half of the population.

Understanding Violent Extremism (VE) from a gendered perspective

VE groups in KPK province of Pakistan have been garnering support of women and youth by appealing to them through their messianic messages to join their so-called jihad. These groups have capitalized and weaponized the illiterate and semi-literate women of Swat who were lacking in religious knowledge¹⁰. Previously, no one in Pakistan could have imagined the radicalization of women and utilization of their skills to stitch suicidal jackets, preach extremist narratives or radicalize and build networks of other

¹⁰ Most of the women can recite the Quran without understanding the meaning of the text.

women. The VE groups cleverly exploited gender stereotypes, avoided detection, influenced other women.

Matters concerning the links between women, gender, terrorism, and VE are a relatively recent endeavour in the field of national and international security.¹¹ While women's participation in violent political movements is not unique to the twenty-first century, documentation of group membership, specifically women's involvement, remains inconsistent and unreliable¹². While SCR 2242 and the focus on women in combating VE does, for the first time, shift the prevailing discourse of the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda from one of protection to one of participation, the scope for participation is restricted¹³ due to lack of research on women's multiple roles in VE and PVE. In addition, Western perspectives and stereotypes dominate discourse on the topic, drowning out a range of alternative assessments of matters concerning sex, gender, and violent extremism and women's role in P/CVE¹⁴.

Terrorism and VE also have a gendered perspective because they are experienced differently by women than men, as victims, perpetrators, and those working to prevent it. Understanding the myriad roles women play in preventing, countering, and supporting VE is important. To counter

¹¹See, for example, Jaques, Karen and Paul Taylor. 2009. "Female Terrorism: A Review," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 21:3; NíAoláin, Fionnuala, and Jayne Huckerby. 2018. "Gendering Counterterrorism: How to, and How Not to – Part I." *Just Security*. May 1, 2018. <https://www.justsecurity.org/55522/gendering-counterterrorism-to/>.

¹² As one example, Alexis Henshaw points to the ways in which movements depreciate and deny the official status of women. Henshaw, Alexis. 2015. "Where Women Rebel." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 18 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2015.1007729>.

¹³Sara Meger, 'Instrumentalizing Women's Security in the Counterterrorism Agenda' July 17, 2018. www.Genderandwar.com

¹⁴Darden, Jessica Trisko, Alexis Henshaw, and Ora Szekely. 2019. *Insurgent Women: Female Combatants in Civil Wars*. Georgetown University Press

extremist tactics and avoid blind spots it is imperative to integrate gender analysis into policies¹⁵ aimed at addressing the drivers of radicalization, to have a gender responsive, inclusive security and preventive policy frameworks. This includes promoting the participation of women into these efforts to ensure that they are effective and sustainable which protect and promote women's rights.

Involvement of women as 'policy shapers, educators, peacemakers, community members and activists' are essential to PVE. The state needs to recognize and appreciate the role of these women as partners in prevention and response frameworks, as well as change makers.

Recognizing that the role of women varies greatly from perpetrators or victims of violence, to their role as peacebuilders, is an important first step by the state and security actors to take into account in the national security and peace-making process.

Transforming Violent extremism

Pakistan, like many other countries, adopted the traditional security-military-oriented approach based on counterintelligence, surveillance and military operations. The military tactics used, aimed to isolate terrorists and prevent them from gaining access to recruits, supplies, targets and finance. With the use of kinetic force one can kill the militants or disrupt their movements but it cannot eradicate the ideology of VE within an individual or community as a whole. It requires a comprehensive multipronged

¹⁵ For details on this subject see, Mossarat Qadeem, *Engendering Extremism: Women Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Pakistan*, Centre for Women Peace and Security, London School of Economics. November, 2018

response involving civil society organizations, media, private sector and the community.

However, it is clear that civil society actors alone are not able to transform a wider sphere of VE. Yet it is very difficult, if not impossible, for governments to foster a durable ‘positive peace’ without the engagement of the civil society and community members. One of the greatest strengths of this approach is their capacity to support changes in how people respond to VE and to direct attention to the underlying causes of it, necessary for sustainable peace. Furthermore, civil society actors have the potential to play an important role in raising awareness, creating opportunities and means to address VE.

PVE requires actions on multiple fronts, including socio economic development, social justice and accountable governance. Government should develop an all embracing and integrated approach to PVE involving civil society and communities to provide “credible and authentic voices” in PVE.

Dealing with violent extremism at the community level: Best practice from the field

PAIMAN Trust started its movement “Lets Live in Peace” in 2007 at a time when public awareness of the destructive socio-cultural impact of violent extremism on Pakistani society was not yet developed and understood.

PAIMAN built an effective strategy for PVE on a broad base of religious and secular actors within the communities focusing on shared values, social cohesion, and principles of non-violence, minority rights and gender equality. *PAIMAN* learned that approaches to PVE require methods and processes akin to those developed for conflict transformation. Some of the

characteristics of this approach include the inclusion of different stakeholders, local ownership in defining problems and seeking solutions, the building of trusted relationships, the mentoring of young women and men as peer-role models, and the development of innovative small-scale community activities that can be taken up by the wider community. *PAIMAN* then connected these local community initiatives to policymakers at sub-national, national and international¹⁶ levels.

Interventions, that *PAIMAN* employ, are meant to achieve tangible results in terms of cohesion among young persons, their peers, extended families, neighbourhoods and communities. This increased integration into the wider society, advocate for maximum involvement of women and youth in decision making at community and local levels. The process of achieving this is as important as the activities through a constant self-monitoring of the change and results achieved.

PAIMAN's approach to building resilient communities focuses on the relationship within communities (social bonding), between communities (social bridging), and between communities and institutions (social linking)¹⁷. We strengthened these relationships through trust building, collective community activities and networks among community members, and civil society groups including media and local administration. In some of the places like Charsadda and Mardan where local administration partnered with local communities provided systems for early intervention

¹⁶*PAIMAN* has been projecting and promoting positive image of Pakistan through its successful local initiative at UN General Assembly, UNCTED, UNDP New York, Other international forum like GCTF, Hedaya, EU, OIC, Club De Madrid, Carter Centre, Common Wealth Forums etc

¹⁷B. Heidi Ellis and Saida Abdi, 'Building community resilience to violent extremism through genuine partnerships' American Psychologist pg. 292, April 2017

through bonding and bridging social networks. In Charsadda one of *PAIMAN*'s members, Fahmida¹⁸, while visiting a house on a routine visit to the community found a number of male dresses on the washing line. She knew that there were only two women and men living in that house. She asked the woman washing clothes why so many male clothes were on the washing line. The woman could not give her a satisfactory answer. Fahmida kept a watch on that house and found out that few strangers visited the house regularly. She informed the local police through a friend and when the house was raided, a cache of weapons was unearthed, hidden under a muddy floor in the room. Here an effective relationship between state agencies and vigilant CSOs group helped secure and stabilize the community.

As a first step *PAIMAN* built its trust by providing health and other social services within target communities of selected districts of KPK and tribal districts. We engaged the local imams, local political leaders, community influentials and provided the space with opportunities to local communities to talk about the contentious issues that were the root causes of VE. For the first time, communities openly discussed VE, its impact and learned about the ways of addressing it. This provided an opportunity for them to engage in dialogue and show resilience.

Analysing the on-the-ground realities in the areas hardest hit by VE further strengthened *PAIMAN*'s belief that there can be no effective prevention of VE and radicalization without active participation of women in their families, communities and broader society. In a traditional and conservative

¹⁸ The names of individuals in all case studies are not the real name due to the sensitivity of the issues. We can furnish further information to anyone for the purpose of academic research.

Pashtun society, it was a huge challenge to bring women out from their homes¹⁹ and involve them in our PVE initiative. We started building relationships with women within each community and attracted them to learn livelihood skills to start earning some money for their families. Dialogues were held to build trust with community elders as well as influential and male relatives of women thus paving the way for them to come out of their houses. The approach was based on political economic context of PVE. Focusing on concepts of self-confidence, competence and empowerment, we started our ambitious program of engaging women in the community.

PAIMAN's integrated approach to empower women socially, economically and psychologically strengthened women's leadership ability to prevent and counter violent extremism at home and in their communities by:

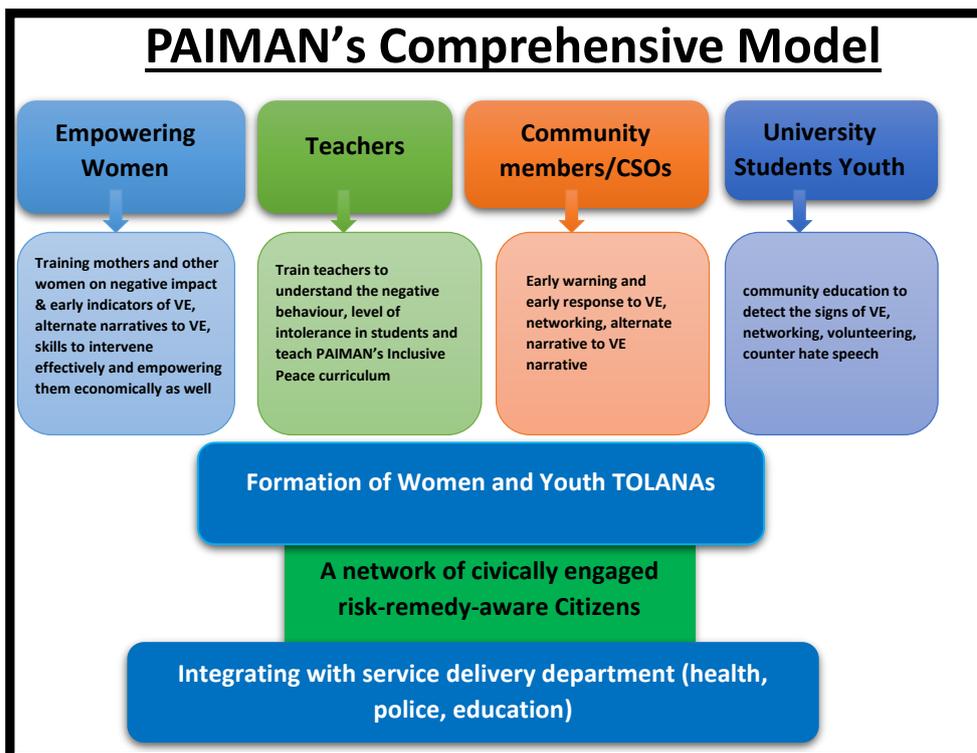
- a) Building the capacity of women in the community in critical thinking, community peacebuilding, early signs of extremism in an individual and community, alternate narratives to extremist narratives, mediation and networking skills and also making them aware of their potential in building social cohesion and PVE;
- b) Providing them with livelihood skills, thereby raising their status and voice in their families and communities and reducing their vulnerability to VE;
- c) Building the capacity of school and Madrassa teachers, women police²⁰, women activists, political leaders of all faiths and women Parliamentarians

¹⁹Mossarat Qadeem, *Engendering Extremism: Women Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Pakistan*, Centre for Women Peace and Security, London School of Economics. November, 2018

²⁰*PAIMAN* trained police women and men in PVE and community policing and as first respondents.

to actively participate in the P/CVE, peace and security agendas of the country at multiple levels. All these women who underwent PAIMAN’s trainings then become members of PAIMAN Peace Group called Women “*Tolana*”, a Pashto word meaning “group”.

PAIMAN based its initiatives within Islamic framework, took guidance from Quran and the *sunnah* to reach out to vulnerable women, youth and to help transform their mindset²¹ to become active citizens with positive attitude. To counter extremist strategy, it was crucial to educate women in Islamic teachings and texts that promote tolerance and gender equality and help them in understanding their role in promoting a culture of tolerance and peace encouraging resilient communities.



²¹ ‘Islamic Perspective: Muslim Women Building Peace in Pakistan, in a book ‘On the Significance of Religion in Conflict and Conflict Resolution’, by Christine Schliesser, Pauline Kollontai, and S. AyseKadayifci-Orellana, Routledge 2020.

TOLANA

PAIMAN's Peace Groups TOLANA, is an internal community mechanism which helps promote practices of peace and prevent VE through cohesive bonding and information sharing. *Tolana* is an innovative model of empowering women, men and youth in the communities to build social cohesion through mediation, interfaith/intra-faith dialogue, and building understanding amongst divergent groups. Both Women and Youth TOLANAs together teach and preach non-violent ways of addressing the menace of extremism in their respective communities. Applying their knowledge of early signs of extremism at individual and community levels, *Tolana*, have played an incredible role in preventing youth from joining extremists group, identified groups distributing radical propaganda material, effectively engaged radical women in positive community work, convinced local imams to speak about value of tolerance and peace in Friday prayers, and are further promoting social cohesion and pluralism by providing alternative community activities for youth and other members of the community to express their grievances and envisage a productive and constructive future. A group of five radical women in Qanbar, Swat were transformed through *PAIMAN's* positive engagement program. These women who were the informers, facilitators and fundraisers of Molana Fazlullah became active women peacemakers in their community and would share their own stories of ignorance and working with extremist groups and its negative impact to sensitize and educate other women regarding harmful impact of VE. These personal narrations of success paved the way for *PAIMAN* to engage women in the patriarchal communities to prevent VE. The role these women played in resolving conflict within pro-and anti-Taliban families, helping communities to reject Taliban's propaganda and

build social cohesion in a fragmented community. needs to be acknowledged to derive the lessons for policy formulation and implementation.

Each *Tolana* creates awareness through interactive theatres, posters, pamphlets, text messaging, radio talk shows and peace poetry, poster competitions in schools and madrassas.

PAIMAN Women *Tolana* contributed immensely to community reconciliation, trauma healing and stabilization during the most difficult and uncertain time in our area because of the trust that they built within their communities. They worked with school management committees, teachers and parents in disseminating peace messages and organizing student peace groups in madrassa and schools.

Tolana members keep an eye on their surroundings ; look after early signs of VE within the family and in the community. One such story is the exemplary courageous deed of *PAIMAN*'s Women *Tolana* member Shagul²² in Swabi. She noticed that her younger brother Gul Zareef had started coming home late and had become very silent. She inquired repeatedly about his late coming and noticeable silence but he refused to respond. Remembering early signs of behavioural changes in youth from her *PAIMAN*'s training she started observing his movements and behaviour. She followed him one night and found that he visited a house in the nearby street. She discussed the situation with members of Women and Youth *Tolana*. Some members of Youth *Tolana* started visiting the same house and found out about strangers coming and delivering lectures, luring in the youth to

²²The names of individuals in all case studies are not the real name due to the sensitivity of the issues. We can furnish further information to anyone for the purpose of academic research.

join their mission. Shagul along with other Mothers of *Tolana* reported this to community elders. They approached the owner of the house who was initially reluctant to speak but after looking at the crowd, he let the elders in and handed over negative extremist propaganda material and three strangers who had already lured five young men from that community. This case was then handed over to the local police. An invisible women community peace group's early warning helped in saving many boys of that area from becoming prey to extremist group. These examples of family and community-level interventions are a call to give local women and youth leaders a greater role in pushing back against VE in their communities.

This holistic community approach for building social harmony has received international recognition and applauds for its cost-effectiveness, adaptability in any context and sustainability as the community takes the ownership of the initiatives. It is being replicated now in Bangladesh, Iraq, Afghanistan and Nigeria.

From the concept and vision, today *Tolana* has become a movement and is working against all odds in a non-violent manner to address violent extremism in vulnerable and affected regions of Pakistan.

PAIMAN's initiative itself is a sustainable long-term solution and can be adapted in other locations worldwide. *Tolana* youth members become role models, have a positive impact on young people in particular persuading them to work on voluntary basis within their community for building social cohesion. The establishment of a community structure like *Tolana* consisting of women and youth members, mentors, multipliers, local influential and the whole social environment has lasting effects.

Our Challenges:

- In most of the areas where we work, civic space is limited. The narrative of western-based scholars and NGOs that claim women are being ‘instrumentalized’ further exacerbates the situation as it denigrates the expertise, innovation and courage of women at the frontlines of the struggle against violent extremism, that offer critical lessons and solutions.
- ▶ Many organizations working in the realm of PVE remain ‘**under the radar**’ of extremist groups and many face threats from them.

Recommendations:

- With the support of CSOs “safe spaces” should be created where people from different backgrounds and with different interests are able to meet and exchange practices and policies. Policies will be validated by lived realities and citizens will become aware how policies that influence local security are developed and executed. These dialogues will lead to mutual understanding between communities and the authorities and improvement of security-related policies.
- A coordination body of the CSO organizations working on PVE needs to be established at national and sub national levels under the leadership of the government, which will provide a forum where policy dialogue and implementation strategies can be discussed and developed. This can be further taken down to district levels and participation of elected representatives at different levels should also be ensured. Such an arrangement can provide direction for policy,

integration of efforts and a single cohesive narrative as national policy.

- Dialogues between security forces and communities is crucial in the context of Pakistan as it will help build confidence, demonstrate the promise of what is possible and work with communities and civil society groups as trusted partners.
- Governments can help by ending stifling regulations on CSOs and allowing citizen groups to peacefully speak and organize around sensitive topics. They can give them a real seat at the table in policy development and ensure they have access to the resources and information they need to fully contribute. That is fundamental to the “whole of society” PVE approach. They can go a step further by proactively reaching out to build ties with communities targeted by VE.
- Civil society actors are desperate for the implementation of a preventive agenda that they are both a part of and which recognizes their daily realities where the struggle against extremism is one of several societal challenges. With this in mind, civil society should be part of an agenda that focuses not on what we are against, but what are we for²³—peace, prosperity, equality and resilience.
- For the state of Pakistan, it is vital to merit the importance of youth and women groups as a soft approach to engaging communities in PVE and to avoid the securitization and essentialization of youth and

²³ SanamNaraghi, ‘Challenging Conventional Wisdom, Transforming Current Practices A Gendered Lens on PVE’ in Beatrix Austin and Hans J. Giessmann edited Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 13. Pg 31

women and the collective solution they develop to build social cohesion in their communities.

- Donors funded many of the CVE specific or CVE relevant initiatives in Pakistan are usually for short duration. If we seriously want to prevent VE then long-term integrated programs coordinated through a result and evidence-based strategy are needed.

Mossarat Qadeem is a renowned practitioner in the field and Executive Director of PAIMAN Alumni Trust.

Household Consumption Behaviour in Pakistan under the Shadow of Personal Insecurity

Hafsa Hina*

Abstract

Terrorism in Pakistan has become a main and highly critical phenomenon in last decade. It is affecting the economy significantly. This study aims to determine the effect of personal sense of insecurity on household consumption pattern both at provincial level (Punjab, Sindh, KPK and Balochistan) and for overall Pakistan. To serve this purpose his study estimates the Engle expenditure function, by incorporating personal sense of insecurity as an explanatory variable. Pakistan Panel Household Survey (PPHS) 2010, conducted by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics and World Bank are used for the analysis. The empirical results suggest that personal sense of insecurity alters the households' consumption expenditure significantly. Households adjust their consumption expenditure when they sense insecurity by increasing the expenditure on food items and cut their expenditure on non-food durable and non-food non-durable commodities.

JEL classification: B21; E2.

Keywords: Terrorism, Personal sense of insecurity, Consumption Pattern.

Introduction

Household consumption plays a significant role in the economic growth of a nation. Household consumption is very critical component of gross domestic product (GDP). Government stimulate spending to boost production and to prevent recession. Businesses would only increase production if there is a corresponding increase in demand. Therefore, a downturn in consumer spending slows down the economic growth and

contracts the economy. Consumers normally change their consumption patterns whenever there is change in consumer expectations. These expectations are linked to future income, inflation and more importantly any threat either in the form of pandemic disease or terrorist attacks alters the consumer preferences. Terrorism significantly shifts the spending from recreation and travel activities toward commodities that might help to handle with the consequences of terrorism materially or psychologically.

Terrorist attacks are unpredictable and beyond the control of economic agents. They damage the economy adversely both at the macro and the micro level. Economic theory holds that political instability, war and terrorism significantly damage the economies in which they take place¹. Recent economic literature has probed the consequences of terrorism on different macroeconomic variables. For example, Drakos and Kutan (2003)² have established negative effects of terrorist attacks on tourism, Enders and Sandler (1996)³ on foreign direct investment and Nitsch and Schumacher (2004)⁴ on foreign trade. Becker and Rubinstein (2004)⁵ have inspected the adverse effects of terrorism on Israeli's labour supply and wages. Eckstein and Tsiddon (2004)⁶ found that terrorist activity has significant negative

¹ Persitz, Dotan. "The economic effects of terrorism: counterfactual analysis of the case of Israel." *Work. Pap., Dep. Econ., Tel Aviv Univ., Tel Aviv, Israel* (2007).

² Drakos, Konstantinos, and Ali M. Kutan. *Regional effects of terrorism on tourism: evidence from three Mediterranean countries*. No. B 26-2001. ZEI working paper, 2001.

³ Enders, Walter, and Todd Sandler. "Terrorism and foreign direct investment in Spain and Greece." *Kyklos* 49, no. 3 (1996): 331-352.

⁴ Nitsch, Volker, and Dieter Schumacher. "Terrorism and international trade: an empirical investigation." *European Journal of Political Economy* 20, no. 2 (2004): 423-433.

⁵ Becker, Gary S., and Yona Rubinstein. "Fear and the response to terrorism: an economic analysis." *University of Chicago mimeo* 93, no. 1 (2004).

⁶ Eckstein, Zvi, and Daniel Tsiddon. "Macroeconomic consequences of terror: theory and the case of Israel." *Journal of monetary economics* 51, no. 5 (2004): 971-1002.

impact on GDP, investment, consumption and exports. Mahmood (2014)⁷ has studied the impact of terrorism on the macro economy of Pakistan and reported that terrorism has cost Pakistan around 33.02% of its real national income from 1973 to 2010.

Economic impact of terrorism at household level can have important implications at macro level. Household consumption expenditures plays a significant role in economic booms and recessions. It contributes more than 60 percent of aggregate demand⁸. It also plays an important role in formulating the macroeconomic indicators such as saving rate, investment and the level of economic well-being. The need for investigating the determinants of consumption pattern is, therefore, necessary. Consumer behaviour is very complex, it is not only determined by the self -related deterministic factors such as personal income, family size, education level, age etc., but also responsive to social influences i.e., what is happening in consumers' surroundings. Specially, when consumers are living in the community which is suffering from crime and terrorism, it prompts them to undertake measures to protect themselves. Therefore, personal insecurity is an important factor to determine the consumption patterns at individual level and alters the pattern of aggregate consumption, asset demands and asset pricing at macro level.

Christelis and Georgarakos (2009)⁹ have investigated the effects of 9/11 terrorist attack on the household stock investment and spending patterns.

⁷ Mahmood, Sultan. "Terrorism and the macroeconomy: Evidence from Pakistan." *Defence and Peace Economics* 25, no. 5 (2014): 509-534.

⁸ Dornbusch, Rudiger, and Stanley Fischer. *Macroeconomics*. McGraw-Hill Education, 2005.

⁹ Christelis, Dimitris, and Dimitris Georgarakos. *Household economic decisions under the shadow of terrorism*. No. 2008/56. CFS Working Paper, 2009.

The results of their analysis suggest that insecurity due to terrorism has significant negative effects on household stock investment and individuals have shifted their spending from recreation and travel activities toward commodities that might help to handle with the consequences of terrorism materially (car and house) or psychologically (personal care products). Haj-Yehia (2003)¹⁰ has conducted a comprehensive study on the same subject. He segregates the effects of temporary and permanent terrorist casualties on the durables, nondurables and irreversible investment. He has considered a database on Israeli consumption and terror casualties for the period 1980-2002. The results suggest that temporary increase in the number of terror fatalities decreases the durables and irreversible investment due to hoarding of purchases in future periods, however, the consumption of non-durables remain the same. A permanent increase in the number of terror casualties causes a one-time drop in consumption.

The analysis of household's consumption pattern in Pakistan is not new. A lot of studies have analyzed the consumer behaviors both at micro as well as at macro level. They include studies such as Ali (1981, 1986)¹¹; Siddiqui (1982)¹²; Malik (1982¹³, 1985¹⁴, 1988¹⁵); Burney and Khan (1991)¹⁶; Begum

¹⁰ Haj-Yehia, Samer. "Terrorizing the consumers and investors." *Unpublished paper, Massachusetts Institute of Technology* (2003).

¹² Ali, M. Shaukat. "Rural urban consumption patterns in Pakistan." *Pakistan Economic and social review* 19, no. 2 (1981): 85-94.

¹³ Ali, M. Shaukat. "Household consumption and saving behaviour in Pakistan: an application of the extended linear expenditure system." *The Pakistan Development Review* 22, no.1 (1985): 23-37.

¹⁴ Malik, Shahnawaz. "Analysis of consumption patterns in Pakistan." *Pakistan Economic and Social Review* 20, no. 2 (1982): 108-122.

¹⁵ Malik, Shahnawaz, and R. Ahmad. "Analysis of household consumption in Pakistan." *Government College Economic Journal* 18, no. 1-2 (1985): 97-106.

¹⁶ Malik, Sohail J., Naeem Sarwar, and Rehana Siddiqui. "Some Tests for Differences in Consumption Patterns: The Impact of Remittances Using Household Income and

et al. (2012)¹⁷; Amir and Bilal (2012)¹⁸ and Safdar and Ahmed (2012)¹⁹ among others. Most of these studies are based on the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) data. The main focus of these studies was to explore the validity of Engel's Law on different commodities across different regions in a single year. Engel's Law describes that with an increase in income the proportion of expenditure on food in total household expenditure tends to decrease, while that on clothing, fuel and lighting remains same and spending on luxury goods increases²⁰.

Unfortunately, Pakistan has been facing a high and volatile level of terrorism. However, no significant effort has been made to test the effects of personal sense of insecurity due to terrorism on household consumption patterns. This study will attempt to fill that gap in. For this, the study is undertaken with following specific objectives: Firstly, it develops an econometric model of the consumption function in Pakistan that includes the personal sense of insecurity variable along the conventional variables of consumption function determination. Secondly, it examines the impact of personal insecurity on food and non-food durable and non-food non-durable consumption expenditure for Pakistan and across its provinces.

Expenditure Survey Data of Pakistan 1987-88 [with Comments]." *The Pakistan Development Review* 32, no. 4 (1993): 699-711.

¹⁷ Burney, Nadeem A., and Ashfaq H. Khan. "Household consumption patterns in Pakistan: an urban-rural comparison using micro data." *The Pakistan Development Review* (1991): 145-171.

¹⁸ Begum, Safia, Munir Khan, Muhammad Farooq, Nasiha Begum, and Irfan Ullah Shah. "Socio-economic factors affecting food consumption pattern in rural area of district Nowshera, Pakistan." *Sarhad J. Agric* 26, no. 4 (2010): 649-653

¹⁹ Safdar, Shireen, Nisar Ahmad, and Falak Sher. "Estimation of Urban-Rural expenditure and size elasticities of food items in Pakistan: Evidence from PSLM Data." *Academic Research International* 3, no. 2 (2012): 474-481.

²⁰ Siddiqui, Rehana. "An analysis of consumption pattern in Pakistan." *The Pakistan Development Review* (1982): 275-296.

Following this introduction, the rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides the economic framework. Section 3 and 4 are devoted to describe the data and construction of variable and present the scenario of personal sense of insecurity in Pakistan. Results and findings of the study are reported in section 5. A final section provides some concluding remarks.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study estimates the Engle expenditure function, which was first formulated by Engle in (1973) to analyse the relationship between household's expenditure on particular commodity and total household income. It is also known as Engle curve, which explains the household's behaviour when there is change in income level. Accordingly, household tends to fulfil their basic needs when they have a low income. They spend more on food items and gradually they change their consumption pattern with the increase in income. Therefore, it can be used to classify the commodities into luxuries, necessities and inferior goods. It is applicable to point out that there are better and more flexible demand systems available for analysing household consumption decisions such as, the Linear Expenditure System (LES) given by Samuelson (1949)²¹ and the Almost Ideal Demand System (AIDS) given by Deaton and Muellbauer (1980)²². The estimation of these systems needs data on commodities' prices which are not available in cross sectional data from household survey. Then it is reasonable to assume that in a region at a given time period all consumers

²¹ Samuelson, Paul A. "Foundations of Economic Analysis, Harvard University Press." *Cambridge, Massachusetts* (1947).

²² Deaton, Angus, and John Muellbauer. *Economics and consumer behaviour*. Cambridge university press, 1980.

pay same prices for same commodity, in this case LES reduce to Engle expenditure function. Engle expenditure function can be written as

$$E_{ih} = \alpha_i + \beta_i Y_h + \varepsilon_{ih} \quad (1)$$

where, $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ commodities, $h = 1, 2, \dots, H$ households, E_{ih} is households' expenditure on commodity i , Y_h is households' income and ε_{ih} is the residual with usual classical properties. The β_i shows the effect of household income on the expenditure of i^{th} commodity. If $\beta_i > 0$ then the commodity is considered as normal good otherwise inferior good.

In order to analyse the effect of personal sense of insecurity (T) on the expenditure of commodities which is the core of this study and to control the omitted variable bias in model (1), the important factors of households' expenditure on commodity i are introduced from the literature these are wealth (W), family size (S), age (A) and regional dummy (DMU) to capture the consumption differences across regions. Therefore, to capture the effect of these factors on commodity's expenditure the model (1) is modified as

$$E_{ih} = \beta_{0i} + \beta_{1i} Y_h + \beta_{2i} Y_h + \beta_{2i} S_h + \beta_{3i} A_h + \beta_{4i} T_h + \beta_{5i} DMU_h + \varepsilon_{ih} \quad (2)$$

Where β_0 is the intercept coefficient, β_1 to β_5 are the slope coefficient of the respective variables and ε_{ih} are the residual of the model. It is expected that all variables are positively related to consumption except age and personal sense of insecurity. The negative relationship between the age and consumption explains the Life cycle hypothesis, in view of that, when age increases saving of individual raises more rapidly this will tend to decline the consumption. The construction of variables is presented in the following section.

3. Data and Construction of Variables

The data for this study is taken from Pakistan Panel Household Survey (PPHS) 2010²³, conducted by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics and World Bank, consisting of 3243 households. To account the effect of personal sense of insecurity among other determinants on the consumption expenditure, two types of consumption expenditure i.e., consumption expenditure on food and non-food consumption expenditure which is further categorized into non-food expenditure on durables and non-food expenditure on nondurables items are taken. Items in each consumption expenditure group are provided in **Appendix 1**. Frequency of food items data in PPHS 2010 is varying from daily to annual purchases. In order to get the annual data on household total food consumption, all available frequencies of consumption (daily, twice a week, three times a week, weekly, every two weeks, monthly, every two months, quarterly, twice a year) are first converted into annual information and then all these groups are aggregated. Therefore, the dependent variables are the natural log of annual expenditure on food items, non-food durable, non-food non-durable items.

Household annual income is computed by aggregating annual income and annual rental income (bonus, rental income from urban properties, and rental income from fish/poultry). Household annual wealth is calculated by combining present value of inherited land, present value of the residential house, present value of urban property, present value of household savings (deposit with any bank, gold/silver jewellery, national saving schemes, prize bond, others), present value of livestock ownership and present value of

²³ Pakistan Panel Household Survey 2010

farm assets. Household size is taken as the numbers of individuals living in the single house. “Age” is the age of head of household.

3.1 Construction of Personal Sense of Insecurity

The key variable of this study is personal sense of insecurity. It is measured by constructing an index by employing principal component analysis.²⁴ This method allows to express the different dimensions of personal sense of insecurity in term of a single index which is able to capture most of the information from the original data set. The different dimensions (Q3) how much do you feel unsafe with regards to your person or property (Q4) how unsafe do you feel in your community? (3) how secure did you feel in terms of security from terrorism, (Q5) decreased the amount of time spent outside, cancelled or delayed participating in investment opportunities, cancelled or postponed participating in school activities, cancelled or postponed participating in employment/training opportunities (Q6) In terms of security from terrorism, how secure did you feel while driving your personal vehicle, using public transit, going to public offices/government buildings, going to the market place] which have been considered for the construction of index are presented in Appendix 2 and lets call them Q3., Q4., Q5. and Q6. The composition of the overall personal sense of insecurity index can be expressed as

$$T_i = w_1Q3_i + w_2Q4_i + w_3Q5_i + w_4Q6_i \quad (3)$$

Where w_i 's represents the weight of each component given by respective eigenvector of selected principal component. The eigenvalues and

²⁴ Child, Dennis. *The essentials of factor analysis*. Cassell Educational, 1990.

eigenvectors of the correlation matrix of the overall personal sense of insecurity are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Eigenvalues and Eigenvectors of Correlation Matrix of T Variables

Variables	Eigen Vector (λ_k)			
	u_1	u_2	u_3	u_4
$Q3_i$	0.76	-0.06	-0.64	0.15
$Q4_i$	0.47	0.87	0.12	0.03
$Q5_i$	0.83	-0.18	0.13	-0.51
$Q6_i$	0.78	-0.28	0.41	0.38
Eigen values(λ_k)	2.09	0.88	0.60	0.43
Variability %	52.21	21.95	15.05	10.80
Cumulative %	52.21	74.15	89.20	100

Table 1 shows that the first principal component captures almost 52.21 percent variation of the data set as [$\sum \lambda_k = 2.09 + 0.88 + 0.60 + 0.43 = 4$, $\lambda_1 = (2.09/4) * 100 = 52.21$]. It captures the highest correlation as compared to the remaining eigenvectors. Now substitute the normalized components of first Eigen vector for w_i s in Eq. (3) and calculate the overall personal sense of insecurity of head of household index as

$$T_i = 0.27 Q3_i + 0.17 Q4_i + 0.29 Q5_i + 0.27 Q6_i \quad (4)$$

The calculated vales of overall personal sense of insecurity index varying between 1.65 and 4.50. Based on the results, overall personal sense of insecurity is scale as

- 0 – 1 completely secure
- 1 – 2 very secure
- 2 – 3 somewhat secure
- 3 – 4 somewhat insecure
- 4 – 5 very insecure and
- >5 completely insecure

Note for caution, the first and the last scales are deliberately included to show that no one in the society is completely secure when society is at the risk of terrorism. Similarly, no household occur in the last group as if someone is completely insecure, he is in the state of indecision and hesitate to respond to the survey in the approved manner.

4. Overall personal sense of insecurity (OPSIS) across provinces and region of Pakistan

Overall personal sense of insecurity (OPSIS) across provinces is compared by bar chart under Figure 1. Mostly numbers of households are occurring in somewhat secure (2 – 3) and somewhat insecure groups. Among these groups' majority of households in all provinces except KPK have fall into the category of somewhat insecure groups. In the urban rural comparison (see Figure 2), households in Pakistan urban are somewhat secure and household in Pakistan rural are somewhat insecure. In urban group,

households in Punjab urban are somewhat secure as compare to other provinces. Similarly, household in KPK rural is somewhat secure as compare to other provinces.

Figure 1: OPSIS across Provinces

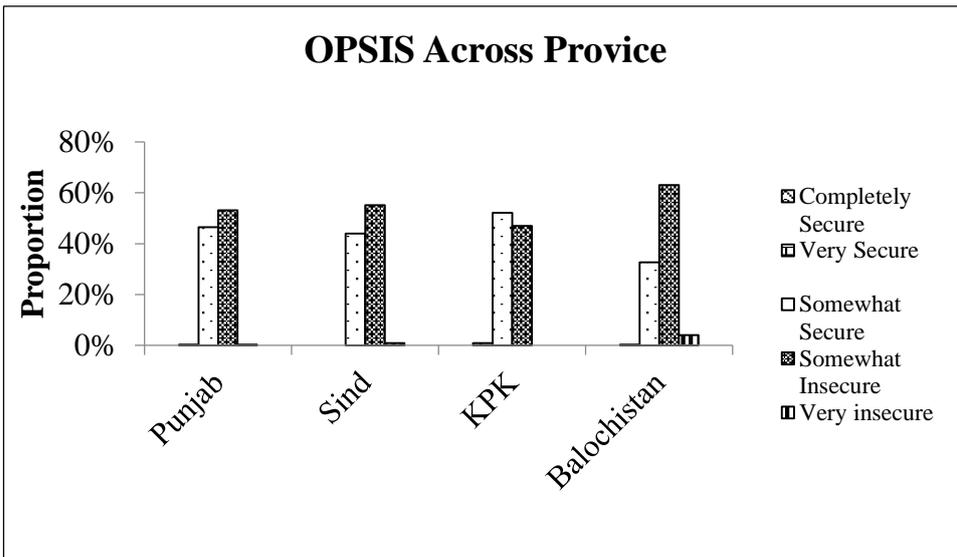
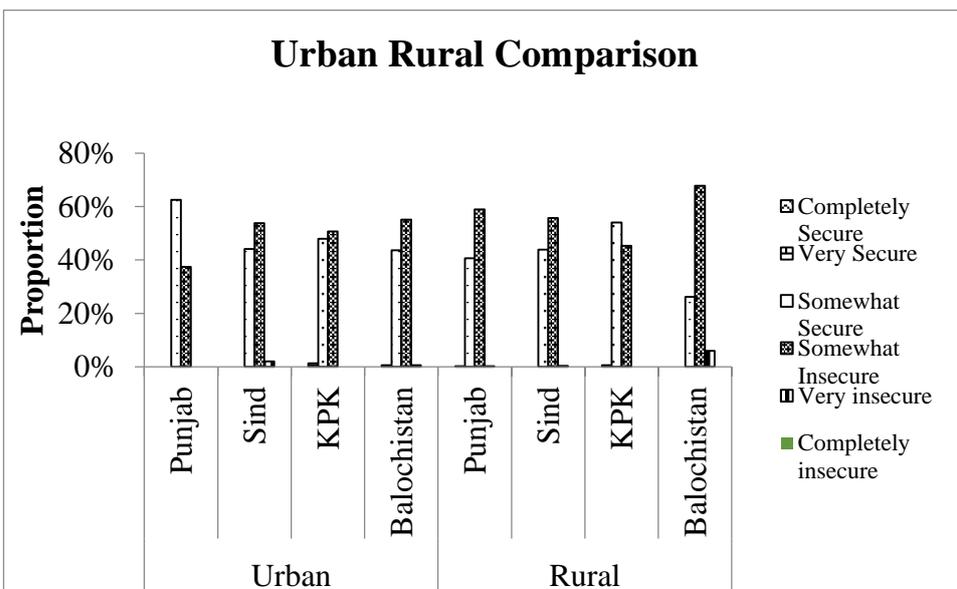


Figure 2: OPSIS across Region



5. Empirical Results and Findings

This section investigates whether or not personal sense of insecurity alters the households' consumption and which type of expenditure among food, non-food durable, non-food durable items are more resistant to personal sense of insecurity. To serve this purpose pooled regression model is estimated by using White heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors and covariance in ordinary least square (OLS) regression. All variables are expressed in log form except the age variable. Regional dummy variable (D_{RU} with rural as base category) is also used as an explanatory variable. Results of the consumption expenditure for overall Pakistan, Punjab, Sindh, KPK and Balochistan province are presented in Table 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The positive and significant coefficient of household size variable is conveying the effect of economies of scale. Economies of scale effect may occur because some the consumption items can be shared within the household. Among the categories of consumption items non-food durable commodities depict higher size elasticities in overall and across the province (except Punjab). Therefore, economies of scale attain more from non-food durable commodities as compare to food commodities and non-food non-durable commodities. In short, we can say that, when the household size increases then expenditures on necessary food items group increases, while on luxury food items groups, it decreases. Farooq and Muhammad (1999)²⁵ and Hayat *et al.* (2016)²⁶ also reported similar findings.

²⁵ Farooq, Umar, Trevor Young, and Muhammad Iqbal. "An investigation into the farm household's consumption patterns in Punjab, Pakistan." *The Pakistan Development Review* (1999): 293-305.

²⁶ Hayat, Naveed, Anwar Hussain, and Hazrat Yousaf. "Food demand in Pakistan: Analysis and projections." *South Asia Economic Journal* 17, no. 1 (2016): 94-113

The results of age variable represent that as age of household increases, they are more inclined toward the consumption of non-food durable commodities and non-durable commodities against the food commodities (which is negative and insignificant). These results also confirm the life cycle hypothesis for overall Pakistan and across the province (except Balochistan). The similar results are found by Farooq and Muhammad (1999) and Eatzaz and Arshad (2007).²⁷ They found the change in the age composition of head of households are the main determinate of household expenditure. The positive significant coefficient of dummy variable indicates that households belonging to urban region experiencing more consumption expenditure as compare to rural region. It may be due to higher cost of commodities in urban area. This result is consistent with Siddiqui (1982)²⁸ and Khan *et al.* (2015).²⁹ Accordingly, the comparative shares of various commodities in total expenditure in urban regions are not very distinct from rural ones. However, spending on urban housing exceeds that in rural regions significantly.

Results of income and wealth variables show that it is more responsive to increase the non-food expenditure. It confirms that Engle laws hold, which states that at the lower level of income consumer demand the necessities like food is high but later on spend large proportion of income on luxury

²⁷ Eatzaz, Ahmad, and Muhammad Arshad. *Household budget analysis for Pakistan under varying the parameter approach*. No. 2007: 41. Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, 2007

²⁸ Siddiqui, Rehana. "An analysis of consumption pattern in Pakistan." *The Pakistan Development Review* (1982): 275-296.

²⁹ Khan, Ashfaque Hasan, Umer Khalid, and Lubna Shahnaz. "Energy Demand Elasticity in Pakistan: An Inter-temporal Analysis from Household Survey Data of PIHS 2001-02 and PSLM 2010-11." *Energy* 1 (2015): 1-25.

commodities as income increases. Ahmad *et al.* (2012)³⁰ and Hayat *et al.* (2016)³¹ concluded the same in their study.

The effect of overall personal sense of insecurity on consumption expenditure is come out negative. It confirms that household adjusts their consumption expenditure when they sense insecurity. Interestingly, results show that as personal sense of insecurity raises households induce to increase the expenditure on food items and cut their expenditure on non-food durable and non-food non-durable commodities significantly. The elasticity of food consumption is more or less unit elastic, indicates perfect responsiveness to changes in personal sense of insecurity. The negative and high (small) size elasticities of non-food durables (non- durable) commodities make them elastic (inelastic) with respect to personal sense of insecurity. In Balochistan province the consumption behaviour of households is slightly different as compare to other provinces. They increase the consumption expenditure on non-food non-durable commodities when personal sense of insecurity increases and expenditure on food commodities is irresponsive to insecurity.

³⁰ Ahmad, N., A. R. Cheema, and A. Saleem. "Food consumption analysis in Pakistan: expenditure elasticities approach using HIES data." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business* 4, no. 4 (2012): 466-475.

³¹ . Hayat, Naveed, Anwar Hussain, and Hazrat Yousaf. "Food demand in Pakistan: Analysis and projections." *South Asia Economic Journal* 17, no. 1 (2016)

Table 2: Consumption Expenditure of Overall Pakistan

Variables	Total Consumption Expenditure (a+b+c)	Consumption Expenditure on			
		Food and Non- Durables (b+c)	Durables (a)	Food (b)	Non-durables (c)
<i>C</i>	12.130*** (127.78)	12.012*** (144.998)	5.019*** (6.443)	11.496*** (65.427)	10.127*** (67.541)
<i>S</i>	0.372*** (15.254)	0.316*** (15.739)	1.287*** (8.471)	0.419*** (6.620)	0.449*** (18.246)
<i>A</i>	0.004*** (5.545)	0.004*** (5.208)	0.033*** (6.292)	-0.001 (-0.067)	0.007*** (6.546)
<i>T</i>	-0.209** (-2.270)	-0.076 (-1.073)	-4.561*** (-6.287)	0.337** (2.439)	-0.343*** (-3.369)
<i>Y</i>	0.106*** (7.615)	0.081*** (6.95)	0.821*** (8.714)	0.009 (0.310)	0.238*** (11.010)
<i>W</i>	0.001 (0.480)	0.001 (0.282)	0.032** (2.092)	-0.007* (-1.602)	0.016*** (5.630)
<i>Adj-R²</i>	0.10	0.093	0.055	0.016	0.161
F-Stat	71.172*** [0.000]	69.269*** [0.000]	39.487*** [0.000]	12.036*** [0.000]	128.469*** [0.000]
Sample	3243	3243	3247	3243	3247

***, ** and * represents the significant at 1%, 5% and 10%. t-stat is reported in the round brackets and P-values in the square brackets.

Table 3: Consumption Expenditure of Punjab

Variables	Total Consumption Expenditure (a+b+c)	Consumption Expenditure on			
		Food and Non- Durables (b+c)	Durables (a)	Food (b)	Non-durables (c)
<i>C</i>	9.872*** (24.830)	9.903*** (26.616)	8.015*** (3.097)	10.521*** (21.209)	6.359*** (11.318)
<i>S</i>	0.367*** (4.919)	0.361*** (6.005)	0.355 (1.451)	0.622*** (4.257)	0.419*** (6.103)
<i>A</i>	0.003** (2.163)	0.003*** (2.345)	0.015** (1.953)	-0.004 (-1.414)	0.005*** (2.494)
<i>T</i>	-0.219 (-1.239)	0.060 (0.883)	-3.898*** (-2.990)	0.994*** (3.109)	-0.807*** (-3.805)
<i>Y</i>	0.118*** (4.816)	0.096*** (4.534)	0.088** (2.316)	0.038 (0.686)	0.225*** (5.982)
<i>DRU</i>	0.428*** (6.927)	0.349*** (8.221)	1.847*** (5.669)	0.544*** (11.238)	0.296*** (3.863)
<i>W</i>	0.058*** (4.387)	0.043*** (3.639)	0.128*** (5.748)	0.015* (1.582)	0.136*** (7.024)
<i>Adj-R²</i>	0.174	0.160	0.019	0.06	0.323
F-Stat	29.811*** [0.000]	27.025*** [0.000]	19.927*** [0.000]	10.410*** [0.000]	66.04*** [0.000]
Sample	1137	1137	532	1133	1137

***, ** and * represents the significant at 1%, 5% and 10%. t-stat is reported in the round brackets and P-values in the square brackets.

Table 4: Consumption Expenditure of Sindh

Variables	Total Consumption Expenditure (a+b+c)	Consumption Expenditure on			
		Food and Non- Durables (b+c)	Durables (a)	Food (b)	Non-durables (c)
<i>C</i>	11.298*** (53.232)	11.324*** (58.635)	-1.071 (-0.684)	10.247*** (28.794)	9.789*** (36.395)
<i>S</i>	0.390*** (10.227)	0.385*** (10.041)	0.908*** (4.56)	0.428* (4.630)	0.548* (15.114)
<i>A</i>	0.003*** (2.644)	0.003*** (2.489)	0.018** (1.987)	0.002 (0.913)	0.003** (2.040)
<i>T</i>	0.165 (0.839)	0.267 (1.379)	0.585 (0.386)	0.937*** (2.485)	-0.511** (-2.105)
<i>Y</i>	0.090*** (4.006)	0.055*** (2.975)	0.496*** (3.103)	-0.016 (-0.368)	0.219*** (7.257)
<i>DRU</i>	0.421*** (12.156)	0.426*** (12.611)	0.230 (0.696)	0.599*** (7.520)	0.401*** (7.051)
<i>W</i>	0.007** (1.965)	0.003 (0.959)	0.130*** (4.635)	-0.007 (-0.885)	0.033*** (6.163)
<i>Adj-R²</i>	0.160	0.157	0.052	0.07	0.271
F-Stat	38.163*** [0.000]	37.239*** [0.000]	11.737*** [0.000]	14.257*** [0.000]	73.361*** [0.000]
Sample	1176	1176	1178	1176	1177

***, ** and * represents the significant at 1%, 5% and 10%. t-stat is reported in the round brackets and P-values in the square brackets.

Table 5: Consumption Expenditure of KPK

Variables	Total Consumption Expenditure (a+b+c)	Consumption Expenditure on			
		Food and Non- Durables (b+c)	Durables (a)	Food (b)	Non-durables (c)
<i>C</i>	11.556*** (85.283)	11.660*** (95.536)	2.617** (1.967)	11.996*** (41.166)	8.540*** (41.207)
<i>S</i>	0.416*** (8.681)	0.413*** (8.847)	1.021*** (4.243)	0.461** (2.216)	0.506*** (9.624)
<i>A</i>	0.003** (2.204)	0.003*** (2.483)	0.022** (2.208)	-0.001 (-0.229)	0.006*** (2.784)
<i>T</i>	-0.069 (-0.151)	0.199 (0.454)	-0.296 (-0.102)	1.344* (1.683)	-1.944*** (-1.89)
<i>Y</i>	0.109*** (2.670)	0.072** (1.904)	0.637** (2.316)	-0.052 (-0.694)	0.231*** (4.953)
<i>DRU</i>	0.225*** (3.365)	0.206*** (4.986)	1.046* (1.688)	0.427*** (5.500)	0.114 (1.235)
<i>W</i>	0.027** (2.236)	0.023*** (1.907)	0.021 (0.569)	0.035 (1.533)	0.056*** (4.319)
<i>Adj-R²</i>	0.188	0.191	0.06	0.03	0.374
F-Stat	20.047*** [0.000]	20.467*** [0.000]	6.578*** [0.000]	3.469*** [0.002]	51.160*** [0.000]
Sample	483	483	483	483	483

***, ** and * represents the significant at 1%, 5% and 10%. t-stat is reported in the round brackets and P-values in the square brackets.

Table 6: Consumption Expenditure of Balochistan

Variables	Total Consumption Expenditure (a+b+c)	Consumption Expenditure on			
		Food and Non- Durables (b+c)	Durables (a)	Food (b)	Non-durables (c)
<i>C</i>	11.951*** (71.151)	11.929*** (71.310)	2.438 (1.409)	11.784*** (55.58)	8.252*** (9.086)
<i>S</i>	0.226** (6.097)	0.216*** (5.795)	1.008*** (3.122)	0.138* (1.625)	0.337*** (4.196)
<i>A</i>	0.004*** (3.954)	0.004*** (3.934)	0.010 (0.796)	0.006*** (4.693)	0.001 (0.284)
<i>T</i>	-0.044 (-0.315)	-0.010 (-0.072)	-2.707* (-1.633)	-0.029 (-0.161)	0.825* (1.775)
<i>Y</i>	0.010 (0.569)	0.009 (0.528)	0.028 (0.133)	-0.035* (-1.658)	0.221*** (3.074)
<i>DRU</i>	0.171*** (4.880)	0.174*** (5.025)	-0.416 (-1.081)	0.170*** (3.838)	0.495*** (4.296)
<i>W</i>	0.006** (2.06)	0.006** (2.110)	-0.043 (-1.291)	0.006 (1.585)	0.014** (1.975)
<i>Adj-R²</i>	0.206	0.196	0.030	0.07	0.133
F-Stat	20.536*** [0.000]	19.354*** [0.000]	3.337*** [0.003]	7.021*** [0.000]	12.525*** [0.000]
Sample	447	447	447	447	447

***, ** and * represents the significant at 1%, 5% and 10%. t-stat is reported in the round brackets and P-values in the square brackets.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study estimates the effect of personal sense of insecurity among the other determinants of consumption on the consumption expenditure of the households of Pakistan. The data for this purpose is taken from Pakistan Panel Household Survey (2010). The analysis is performed for overall Pakistan and across province also. The consumption expenditure is divided into three categories that is consumption expenditure on food item, non-food durable and non-food non-durable items. The household size analysis confirms the presence of economies of scale for non- food durable commodities. Life cycle hypothesis stand true from the coefficient of age variable, as age increases households are disinclined toward the consumption of food items. Households are more responsive to increase the non-food expenditure when there is rise in their income and wealth. Urban households are doing more consumption expenditure as compare to rural; households. And Lastly personal sense of insecurity resulting from terrorism alters the consumer behaviour significantly. Increase in personal sense of insecurity due to terrorism induces the households to increase the expenditure on food items and cut their expenditure on non-food durable and non-food non-durable commodities.

Appendix 1:

Items of food consumption expenditure:

49 food items are considered under food consumption expenditure; these are:

Atta, Wheat grain (not used as Atta), Maida, Maize flour, Basmati Rice, Other Rice, Other Grains, Chick peas Dal, Masoor Dal, Mung dal, Mash dal, Other dal, Vegetable Oil, Dalda, Ghee, Fresh Milk, Yoghurt, Lassi,

Cheese, Butter, Milk Powder, Other Milk Products, Baby Formula, Sugar, Gur, Mutton, Beef/Buffalo, Chicken, Eggs, Other poultry birds (ducks, quail, etc.), Fish, Onion, Potatoes, Sag, Other Vegetables, Bananas, Other Fruits, Bottled & Canned Prod., Biscuits & Cakes, Spices, Tea, Bread, buns, Other baked products, Soft Drinks, Kerosene, Charcoal, Firewood, Dung Cakes, Match box.

Items of Non-food consumption expenditure:

Non-food consumption expenditure on durables

Items under this group are:

Urban Property/Urban investment, Household appliances, Purchase/repair of furniture, Construction/Repair of dwelling, Planting trees, Purchase/repair of Agriculture Tools and Implements.

Non-food consumption expenditure on Non-durables

Items under this group are:

Electricity, Gas/Cylinder, Telephone, Travelling, Can/Cigarettes/Tobacco, Cloths/ Shoes/ cloth material, Soap/ Laundry/ hygiene and cosmetics, Education/ Books/ Newspapers, Cinema/ Sports/ Entertainment, Medical care/ Medicines, cash wages (for staff/ servants), Taxes/ Water rates, Permit/ Visa travelling (abroad), Purchase of Fodder, Expenditure on other non-food items.

Appendix 2: The different dimensions of personal sense of insecurity.

Q3. Compared with the last 12 months, have you felt more unsafe with regards to your person or property?

1. More unsafe

2. Less unsafe

3. As safe as 12 months ago

Q4. On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least unsafe and 10 being the most, how unsafe do you feel in your community?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Q5.

In the past 12 months have you ...	1 = Yes 2 = No 3 = Did not feel unsafe 4 = NA
5.1) ... decreased the amount of time spent outside of the household because you felt unsafe?	
5.2)... cancelled or postponed travel outside of your community because you felt unsafe?	
5.3)... cancelled or postponed participating in employment/training opportunities because you felt unsafe?	
5.4)... cancelled or delayed participating in investment opportunities because you felt unsafe or worried about the safety of your investment?	
5.5)... cancelled or postponed participating in school activities, on average day when school was open, because you felt unsafe?	

Q6.

In terms of security from crime or terrorism, how secure did you feel while...	1 = Very insecure 2 = Somewhat insecure 3 = Somewhat secure 4 = Very secure 5 = N/A
6.1)... driving or riding in a personal vehicle/motorcycle/cycle in the last 12 months?	
6.2)... using public transit (bus/wagon/rickshaw) in the last 12 months?	
6.3)... going to the market place in the last 12 months?	
6.4)... going to public offices/government buildings in the last 12 months?	

In order to bring the coherence among the scale of above questions (except question 4), scales are redefined with the lower scale being the least unsafe and the higher scale being the most unsafe. The new scales for question 3 are 0 for as safe as 12 months ago, 1 for less unsafe and 2 for more unsafe. For question 5 rescaling is done as 1 for -no, did not feel unsafe and NA- and 2 for yes responses. Question 6 responses are rescaled as 0 for N/A, 1 for Very secure, 2 for somewhat secure, 3 for somewhat insecure and 4 for very insecure. Once rescaling is done then averages the responses for subparts of question 5 and question 6.

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Terrorism in Balochistan: issues, Causes, Consequences and Cures.

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Abstract

Balochistan is one of the provinces of Pakistan which is most affected by post 9/11 terrorism. Data were collected from 880 respondents of the province through part convenience, part purposive sampling since the population is relatively large and no sampling frame was available. A 26-item, self-administered questionnaire was developed on 7-point Likert scale of agreement having four sections: nature, causes, social effects and economic effects. The result of study suggests that terrorism has drastically affected the socio-economic fabric of the society in family, communal, business and political spheres. The major cures could include improved incentives for business activity, government spending on education, health care and development of infrastructure. Bringing all political forces on board can help improve the situation in the province.

Keywords: Balochistan, Nature of terrorism, socio-economic consequences of terrorism

Introduction

The world has suffered drastically after 9/11. There is not a single part of the world which has not been affected by the acts of terrorism. However, there are some countries where the impact of the event has been greater than the others. Pakistan is one of those countries where the effects of terrorism

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has in fact shown its real influence. Given that is engulfed by problems such as poverty, corruption, bad governance, religious vendettas, illiteracy, low level of infrastructure and so on; the impact of terrorism becomes manifold. Though the country, at large, has faced the effects of terrorism, there are some parts of the country that have felt those effects far more than the others. Balochistan is one of those areas where terrorism has hit the hardest not only in terms of the death toll and the destruction of infrastructure but also in terms of the composition of elements that result in terrorism: religion, ethnolinguistic differences, internal and international politics and so on. Further, the geo-political position of the province is of even greater importance as the province shares its border with two countries, Afghanistan and Iran, any activity taking place in Afghanistan in turn, affects Balochistan also. An example of this is the huge investment of China in the Pak-China Economic Corridor. Therefore, a study that offers insights and gives lessons relating to the factors causing terrorism is of immense significance.

Terrorism in Balochistan

The actual roots of terrorism were planted in Pakistan in the late 70s right after the USSR invasion of Afghanistan⁴. The USA funded the Mujahedeen generously in terms of training and weapons, the weapon then found their way into Pakistan through the long porous border⁵.

Some call it the economic front of Pakistan, Balochistan, is a vast piece of land with rich natural resources, oil, and a long coastal line. Geographically, Balochistan is a very important place; it has immediate borders with two

⁴ Husain, A. (2003). *Terrorism, development and democracy*. India. Shapira Publications.

⁵ Kronstadt, K.,A. (2007). *Pakistan and Terrorism*. Congressional Research Service. The Library of Congress.

countries. Not only this, the borders with those two countries are not only long but also extremely difficult to manage or control. The province also has huge agricultural land where people cultivate many cash crops⁶⁷ Despite this richness, the province has not been fruitful for the people who are in it. Majority of the population is extremely poor and the major sources of earnings are animal herding and Agriculture. Consequently, there are often acts of terrorism including target killing, bomb blasts, destruction of government installations, kidnapping and other crimes.

Despite having an academic orientation, it has been difficult to conceptualize the exact meaning of terrorism⁸. The definitions of terrorism differs from its use in academic, economic, political and military senses^{9, 10}. There is no universal definition of Terrorism, its meaning changes from context to context.¹¹. Hence, the actual meaning of terrorism changes from political situations to geographical locations¹². Therefore, terrorism is native to the context in which is taking place. As a consequence, studies about terrorism in different places may not truly represent the actual scenario in

⁶ Zaman, N. U. & Marri, S. K., (Aug 2011). Determinants of increased real prices of the livestock in Balochistan. *MPRA Paper* No. 321608. [online] Available at <http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/32608/1/MPRA_paper_32608.pdf>

⁷ Sabri, R., (May 04, 2009). Balochistan: AF-Pak's Forgotten Frontiers. [online] Available at <<http://www.sais-jhu.edu/academics/regional-studies/southasia/pdf/Rabeah%20Sabri%20Balochistan.pdf>> [accessed March 03, 2012]

⁸ Schmid, A.P. and Jongman, A.J. (2005). *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literature*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

⁹ Jackson, R. & Sinclair, S.J. (2012). *Contemporary Debating on Terrorism*. New York: Routledge Chapman & Hall.

¹⁰ Maleckova, J. (2005). Improvised Terrorists: Stereotype or Reality? In Bjorgo T (ed). *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Ways Forward*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 32-43.

¹¹ Weinberg, L., Pedahzur, A., & Hirsch-Hoefler, S., (2004). The Challenges of Conceptualizing Terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16(4): 777-794.

¹² Moten, A.R. (2010). Understanding Terrorism: Contested Concept, Conflicting Perspectives and Shattering Consequences. *Intellectual Discourse* 18(1): 35-63.

Balochistan. This gives rise to an overemphasized need for studying the nature, root causes and the consequences of terrorism in Balochistan.

As far as conceptualizing terrorism is considered, a vast array of different ways can be used to conceptualize the nature of terrorism including the study of terrorism from the perspective of cultural anthropology and is understood as a human nature¹³. On the other hand, terrorism can be understood as a display of political power that create its equilibrium in the fabric of social life. Furthermore, there are studies that have conceptualized terrorism as an outcome of the surrounding context¹⁴ Notwithstanding, the nature of terrorism would be defined differently under different fields of studies.

As discussed earlier, it is very difficult to give a one-fit-for-all meaning to terrorism; there are, however, some of the ways in which the nature of terrorism can be classified. In line with this distinction, we have attempted to get the perceptions and opinion of the people living it to form the social construct of terrorism in Balochistan in this study.

On the other hand, as a legal construct the idea of terrorism may differ across ideologies of the states¹⁵. Though, the same person may be labelled as a terrorist or a freedom fighter from different political perspectives¹⁶. This, nevertheless, is not the major objective of the study because it is extremely difficult to personify someone into different frames meaningfully at the

¹³ Hulsse R & Spencer, A., (2008). The Metaphor of Terror: Terrorism Studies and the Constructivist Turn. *Security Dialogue*, 39(6), 571, 573

¹⁴ ibid

¹⁵ Greene, A., (2017) Defining Terrorism: One size fit all. *ICLQ* 66, 411–440]

¹⁶ Friedrichs, J., (2006). Defining the International Public Enemy: The Political Struggle behind the Legal Debate on International Terrorism. *LJIL* 69(76).

same time. Therefore, the main focus of the study would remain on defining and explaining the nature of terrorism in Balochistan as a social construct.

The literature indicates that the nature of terrorism is peculiar to the context in which it is taking place. No single definition of explanation can be found for the nature of terrorism in different contexts. As we discussed that the geopolitical situation of Balochistan is a highly typical or exceptional one, we expect that a peculiar nature of terrorism could be highlighted from the responses and described accordingly. We, therefore, hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: A nature of terrorism can be highlighted as peculiar to the province.

Causes of Terrorism

There is a multitude of causes that can be attributed to terrorism. Studies such as Crenshaw¹⁷, Aziz¹⁸ and Ali¹⁹ (have pointed out some of those factors that have resulted in terrorism in Pakistan. Some of those include illiteracy, lack of employment, poverty, weak governance, fast growing population, poor health facilities, costly access to justice, easy access to weapons, lack of access to social services and the scarcity of public goods. In addition to these, Political unrest in the country and the deterioration of socio-economic elements are also some of the causes of terrorism in Pakistan^{20 21 22}

¹⁷ Crenshaw, M. (1981). The Causes of Terrorism. *Comparative Politics*, 13(4), 379-399

¹⁸ Aziz, H. (1995). Understanding attacks on tourists in Egypt. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 91-95.

¹⁹ Ali, A. (2010). Militancy and socioeconomic problems. Islamabad, *institute of strategic studies*.

²⁰ Berman, E. & Laitin, D., (2005). Hard targets: theory and evidence on suicide attacks. *NBER Working Paper* 11740. Cambridge, MA: NBER

²¹ Shor, E. (2008). *Conflict terrorism and the socialization of human rights norms; the spiral model revisited*. New York. State University of New York at Stony Brook.

²² Syed, S.H., Saeed, L., & Martin, R.P., (2015). Causes and Incentives for Terrorism in Pakistan. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 10, 181–206.

Lack of economic activities has also been pointed out as an important source of terrorism in any geographical location. For instance, Blomberg, Hess and Weer Apana have suggested that the lack of economic activity might result in violence and terrorism²³. The case seems to be true in Balochistan also. Majority of the youth are unemployed, poor and illiterate who may look for the escape in the form of violence and terrorism. The problem gets exaggerated due to the fact that the government of Balochistan has no concrete policies that can improve the economic conditions of the province²⁴. Furthermore, there are vested interest of foreign hands in the province of Balochistan also mostly with negative intentions. One of the major enemies is India which would always be happy to disturb peace in Pakistan and promote acts that could challenge sovereignty of the country. In all, the major reason for terrorism in Balochistan may be traced to underdevelopment, poverty and low literacy in the province^{25 26 27}

Hypothesis 2: Lack of economic activity, education and sound policies are major causes of terrorism in Balochistan.

Impact of Terrorism on Socio-economic Conditions

Terrorism has far reaching Impact on the overall fabric of the society and deteriorates every aspect of life. It effects economic conditions of a place by affecting the consumption patterns, investment spirit, employment levels,

²³ Bird, G., Blomberg, B., & Hess, G.D., (2008). International Terrorism: Causes, Consequences and Cures. *The World Economy* (2008), 255-274

²⁴ Lapan, H.E. & Sandler, T., (1993). Terrorism and signalling. *European Journal of Political Economy*, 9, 383-397.

²⁵ Krueger, A.B. & Maleckova, J., (2003). Education, Poverty, and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection? *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17(4), 119-144.

²⁶ Krueger, A. B., (2007). *What Makes a Terrorist: Economics and the Roots of Terrorism?* Princeton: Princeton University Press

²⁷ Berrebi, C., (2003). Evidence about the link between education, poverty and terrorism among Palestinians. *Princeton University Industrial Relations Section Working Paper #477*

inflation and overall economic wellbeing²⁸. Negative correlation has been found between investment and terrorism.^{29 30} Terrorism has also been associated with reduced government spending, lower foreign domestic investments and crowding-out effects in the policy making efforts.³¹ Furthermore, there are the studies that have also found the effect of terrorism on productivity, infrastructure and economic growth³²

In addition to the economic deterioration of a country caused by terrorism, there are certain indirect effects of terrorism on the economy also. Among those effects, studies have included devaluation of currency, loss of time and efficiency, situations of law and order, stock market crashes and other deadweight economic losses. Besides, due to terrorism countries are forced to allocate their valuable economic resources to uses which are not very productive; in fact, much valuable resources are lost in fighting against terrorism

The GDP of a country is the worst affected element that faces the toil of terrorism. In fact, a negatively significant correlation has been found between Terrorism and GDP growth³³. Different comparative studies have noticed that during the times of terrorism, the GDP of a country falls

²⁸ Eckstein, Z. & Tsiddon, D., (2004). Macroeconomic consequences of terror: theory and the case of Israel. *Journal of Monetary Economics* 51(5):971–1002

²⁹ Fielding, D. (2003). Modelling political instability and economic performance: Israeli investment during the intifada. *Economica*, 70(277), 159-186

³⁰ Drakos, K. & Gofas, A., (2006). In search of the average transnational terrorist attack venue. *Defence and Peace Economics* 17(2), 73–93

³² Hall, R., (2005). Assessment guideline for counter terrorism, Los Angeles. *University of southern California*

³³ Eckstein, Z. & Tsiddon, D., (2004). Macroeconomic consequences of terror: theory and the case of Israel. *Journal of Monetary Economics* 51(5):971–1002

sharply; whereas, in normal periods the overall economic growth tends to rise and improve³⁴.

As the literature clearly shows that terrorism has a negative effect on the economic and social life of people, we theorize:

Hypothesis: Terrorism has negatively affected the socio-economic life of people of Balochistan.

Methodology

Participants

The study was quantitative with an exploratory design. The data collected from 880 respondents from different ethnicities and fields of life. As the population was extremely large and accurate sampling frame could not be designed, the study made use of convenience sampling. However, care was taken to try to include people from every ethnic groups residing in the province. This made the sample really representative of the overall population. Thus, a sense of judgment/ purposiveness was also used in the distribution of the questionnaire.

Materials

Using the variables mentioned in the literature, a questionnaire was developed to obtain the opinions of respondents on the nature, root-causes and socio-economic impact of terrorism on Balochistan. The questionnaire contained two major sections, the first included the demographic profiles of the respondents including their age, sex, ethnicity, education level and

³⁴ Enders, W., Sandler, T. & Parise, G. F., (1992). An econometric analysis of the impact of terrorism on tourism. *Kyklos* 45(4):531–554

profession. The second set of items asked 26 questions on 7-point Likert scale of agreement.

The section for obtaining data on the nature of terrorism included 5 items and a sample item was “Terrorists intend to evoke fear among the people through organized violence”³⁵. The ‘causes’ section had 9 items, a sample item was, the section of ‘social effects’ had 8 items and a sample item was, “Terrorists make people afraid to enjoy outdoor family life in parks and other picnic and refreshments points.” Lastly, the ‘economic effects’ section included 4 items and a sample item was, “Terrorists have the target to negatively affect country’s internal investment, FDI and business spirit.”

Data Cleaning and Transformation

The data cleaning started with looking for the missing values in the data. KNN approach was used to replace the missing values in the dataset. This approach allows to replace values keeping in view what the other responses of the respondent were. Questionnaires with more than 50% missing values were removed from the final analysis. Secondly, the unengaged responses were removed by calculating the standard deviation for each case and replacing the cases with standard deviation that were below 0.5.

Test of normality including Shapiro-Wilk and q-q plots were used to test normality of the data. Two-steps transformation was used to transform non-normal data. Furthermore, bootstrapping was used to improve the strengths of the estimates. Outliers were traded using Grubb’s test for the detection of outliers.

³⁵ Ersun N. Kurtulus (2017) Terrorism and fear: do terrorists really want to scare? *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 10:3, 501-522, DOI: 10.1080/17539153.2017.1329080

Analysis

The percentages obtained from the respondents were used to discuss the results. As four aspects were theorized in the data, to explore the underlying structure within the responses, we first ran an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using Varimax Rotation. This is because the factors were theoretically uncorrelated to one another and required an orthogonal rotation. The values for loadings were suppressed below 0.4 for a cleaner report. Further, CFA was also run so that the convergent and discriminant validity of the structure could also be established using the plugin for Amos developed by James Gaskin. In order to establish the reliability of the structure highlighted, Cronbach's alpha was used for each factor independently as highlighted in the EFA. SPSS 25, Amos 24 were used to analyse the data.

Results

Descriptive statistics

The overall sample was fairly distributed among both male and female respondents (Male=52.1% & Female= 48.8%). As far as the profession was concerned, most of the respondents were either had the proportions of the unemployed and students were low (WCJ= 45.6%; BCJ=50%; Unemployed=4%; Students= 4%). Most of the respondents belonged to the Pashtun ethnicity (54%); followed by Balochis (23.3%); Hazaras (11.4%); Punjabis (6.8%); Muhajirs (2%) and others (2.5%). Our sample somehow fairly represents the overall ethno-linguistic composition of the population in the province³⁶.

³⁶ Balochistan Economic Report (2008). *Balochistan Economic Report: From Periphery to Core*, Volume 1. World Bank Group

Correlations among the factors

The correlation analysis shows that the four factors were not very strongly correlated with one another. The correlation coefficients for all the factors were less than 0.251. Table 1 gives the correlation coefficient matrix for all the factors.

		Nature	Social Effects	Economic Effects	Causes
Nature	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.064	.109**	.228**
Social Effects	Pearson Correlation	-0.064	1	.250**	-.074*
Economic Effects	Pearson Correlation	.109**	.250**	1	.154**
Causes	Pearson Correlation	.228**	-.074*	.154**	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

Factor Analysis

The exploratory factor analysis resulted in the determination of four primary factors in the data. The results of the EFA are given as under. No items were deleted.

The adequacy of data for factor analysis.

The KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to test the adequacy of the data in order to run the factor analysis. The overall results were satisfactory³⁷³⁸. The test indicated that factor analysis is appropriate for this

³⁷ Denis, D.J., (2019). *SPSS Data Analysis for Univariate, Bivariate, and Multivariate Statistics*. USA, Wiley.

³⁸ Field, A (2017). *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics*. Sage

data and could give useful results³⁹ The cut off value of KMO need to be greater than 0.5 for data adequacy and that for the Bartlett's test needs to be significant at less than 0.05. Both these cut-offs were met and thus the data was adequate for factor analysis. Our KMO and Bartlett's Tests indicated that the data are adequate to model into a factor analysis (KMO=0.881; Bartlett's Test: Chi-square=18003.976; $df=325$; sig.0.000).

Exploratory factor analysis.

The exploratory factor analysis reduced the 26-item Likert scale data into four factors. These four factors could be divided into four categories based on the contents of the items. The four categories include: the social effects of terrorism in Balochistan, the root-causes of terrorism, the nature of terrorism and the economic effects of terrorism in Balochistan. The total variance explained by this data amounted to 68.811% of the variation within the dataset and is thus in acceptable range for the EFA, also all communalities exceed .5 except for item N2: the overall solution is acceptable⁴⁰. Moreover, there is excellent internal consistencies among all the items in the factors as the Cronbach's alphas exceed .8 for all the factors ($\alpha_{\text{social effects}}=.938$; $\alpha_{\text{causes}}=.899$; $\alpha_{\text{nature}}.911$; $\alpha_{\text{economic effects}}=.914$). The overall item loadings in the respective factors, the communalities are given in table 2.

⁴⁰ Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B., & Anderson, R. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis* (7th ed.), Upper Saddle River, NJ, USA, Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Table 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis

Items	Social Effects	Root-Causes	Nature	Economic Effects	Communalities
S4	0.914				0.793
S2	0.905				0.779
S3	0.892				0.738
S1	0.886				0.747
S6	0.875				0.654
S7	0.867				0.801
S5	0.806				0.830
S8	0.477				0.825
C8		0.826			0.861
C6		0.795			0.655
C9		0.778			0.803
C7		0.761			0.754
C1		0.739			0.320
C4		0.720			0.733
C5		0.709			0.783
C2		0.667			0.836
C3		0.665			0.823
N1			0.877		0.555
N2			0.870		0.448
N3			0.847		0.507
N4			0.846		0.563
N5			0.799		0.531
E3				0.900	0.651
E4				0.894	0.583
E2				0.868	0.686
E1				0.837	0.636
Cronbach's' Alpha	.938	.899	.911	.914	

Confirmatory factor analysis.

Results of the exploratory factor analysis were used to construct the structural model diagram for the CFA as given in the appendixes. The CFA confirmed the latent structure for four factors as reported in the EFA. The overall model fit indexes were excellent (CMIN/DF=3.628; GFI=.916; TLI=.952; CFI=.96; RMSEA=.055) (Hair et al., 2010). This confirmed the overall structure's validity as proposed by the EFA. The path diagram for the CFA and the path coefficients are given in figure 1. For a one factor model the CFA is not satisfactorily acceptable (CMIN/DF=.961; GFI=.844; TLI=.837; CFI=.882; RMSEA=.101). This suggest that four factor solution is more appropriate.

The overall confirmatory analysis gives both convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted (AVE)>0.5: Economic Effects=.693; Nature=.693; Social Effect=.673; Causes=.502) and discriminant validities (MSV(Maximum Shared Variance)<AVE) in all factors: Economic Effects (AVE=.693>MSV=0.059), Nature (AVE=.693> MSV=.006), Social Effects (AVE=.673>MSV=.059), Causes (AVE=.502> MSV=.066) also the square root of AVE is greater than inter-construct correlation as given in table 4⁴¹ The overall factorial structure is reliable (CR>.7) for every factor (Economic Effect=.898; Nature=.918; Social Effects=.941; Causes=.900)

Discussion

We intended to study if the respondents of Balochistan were able to highlight the intentions terrorists had in their minds regarding what they

⁴¹ Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B., & Anderson, R. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis* (7th ed.), Upper Saddle River, NJ, USA, Prentice-Hall, Inc.

wanted to achieve through their acts. Four factors were obtained through the factor analysis including nature, causes, social and economic effects of terrorism in Balochistan in the data. In this section we would discuss each of those factors separately.

Nature of Terrorism

As hypothesized, Balochistan has a peculiar nature of terrorism. We accept the hypothesis as our respondents highlighted certain peculiar aspects of the origin and type of terrorism in the province. Terrorism is a composite actuality containing several aspects from geographic location to internal and international politics, from ethno-lingual orientation to sectarianism, and from economic resources to a sense of deprivation among the indigenous people. The nature of terrorism in thus peculiar to Balochistan. However, by peculiar we do not mean one of its kind; what we suggest is that this is an uncommon case that would rarely exist elsewhere in its entirety.

The respondents claimed that the acts of terrorism in Balochistan are an organized crime that has the primary motive of evoking fear among the residents of the province. This would result in people yearning for action from the government. In turn, the terrorists intend to pressurize the government in considering them as vital forces and their demands must be considered seriously. The terrorist also wants to disunite the people into ethnic groups and religious sects to manoeuvre their heinous motives even more easily.

The terrorists also have an awareness of the geo-political rhetoric in the province and have a strong reflection of this in their operatives. The politics in the neighboring regions, Afghanistan especially, have a direct effect on

the political arena in Balochistan⁴². Further, the politics of Balochistan revolves around the ethnic deprivation of government's attention and policy incentives. Hussain⁴³ suggests that people of Balochistan believe that the province of Punjab gets unfair share of resources and thus the politics in the province has a strong focus on this issue. The militants also strongly highlight this point and try to justify their acts of terrorism in this philosophy. Unfortunately, some ethnic groups tend to find conciliation of their opinion in this philosophy.

The terrorists tend to focus their activities mostly in the urban areas particularly Quetta, the capital of the province. This point is also noticed by the respondents and has support for our conclusion in the previous literature. The main purpose of the terrorists in striking the most developed parts of an area is to cause the maximum damage. Fundamentally, this is because most of the economic and social activity takes place in the developed area compared to the rural and undeveloped parts⁴⁴. Further, most of the economic activity in the rural area is directly related to the developed parts.

In Balochistan, terrorism is fundamentally an ethno-religious centered activity. The terrorists give either an ethnic or a religious orientation to their acts⁴⁵. Therefore, two ethnic groups- Settlers and Hazaras- are more affected by terrorism than the others. The settlers are affected as a consequence of the prejudice against them for their origin from a different part of the country

⁴² Husain, A. (2003). *Terrorism, development and democracy*. India. Shapira Publications

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Drakos, K. & Gofas, A., (2006). In search of the average transnational terrorist attack venue. *Defence and Peace Economics* 17(2), 73–93

⁴⁵ Siddiqui, F.H., (2012). Security Dynamics in Pakistani Balochistan: Religious Activism and Ethnic Conflict in the War on Terror. *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, 39(3), 157-175

and for their use of resources of the province⁴⁶ (Samad, 2014). However, whatever the case, there is some foreign involvement and support in terrorism⁴⁷

Causes of Terrorism

A majority of our respondents suggested that the root cause of terrorism in Balochistan can be traced back to the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and the support of Pakistan for USA. This point is supported by the study of Hussain⁴⁸.

Another very important cause of terrorism in Balochistan, as highlighted by our respondents, was the lack of economic activity in the province. The unemployment, on the other hand, is high. This gives rise to less productive activities and crimes in the province. Some of the youth resort to terrorism as they easily get brainwashed by either politicians or extremists. Similar conclusion has been drawn by syed and martin⁴⁹. We also find good support for these arguments in other literature where the lack of government support and economic activity are considered the sources of crime, violence and terrorism

Another important source of terrorism reported by our respondents was the ease of transportation and movement across border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. There is a strong reason to believe in this point. The border

⁴⁶⁴⁶ Samad, Y., (2014). Understanding the insurgency in Balochistan. *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 52(2), 7-50

⁴⁷ ibid

⁴⁸ Husain, A. (2003). *Terrorism, development and democracy*. India. Shapira Publications

⁴⁹ Syed, S.H., Saeed, L., & Martin, R.P., (2015). Causes and Incentives for Terrorism in Pakistan. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 10,181–206

between the two countries is very large, stretching 2640 km⁵⁰. The vastness and openness of the border gives easy access to the terrorists to move across border and find safe havens in remote areas. Recently, however, the government of Pakistan has taken the humongous task of fencing the border so that the trouble can be reduced.

This discussion of the results of our respondents' claims, we can suggest that there is sufficient evidence that the theorized hypothesis, "Lack of economic activity, education and sound policies are major causes of terrorism in Balochistan" is acceptable. The lack of economic activity, low literacy rate and poor governance have been highlighted as important causes of terrorism in our data. Thus, we retain our second hypothesis.

The Socio-economic Consequences

Our results indicate that the respondents have clearly articulated the negative effects of the acts of terrorism on their socio-economic life. In the economic matters, terrorism has resulted in lack of entrepreneurial activity, shortages of routine products and slower economic growth. We, thus accept the hypothesis that terrorism has negatively affected the socio-economic life of people in Balochistan.

Among the most drastic effects of terrorism is that the youth, particularly in ethnically minor groups, has been deprived of education and learning. The fear has made parents worried about the children so much so that they do not want to risk the lives of their children in the pursuit of education. The effect, in fact, is manifold. The lower trends towards education to youth

⁵⁰ Fair, C. C., Howenstein, N., & Their, J. A., (2006). *Trouble on the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border*. United States Institute for Peace, December 2006, Retrieved Feb, 2019 from <http://www.usip.org/publications/troubles-pakistan-afghanistan-border>

create further caveat in the public efforts towards improvements in the condition. The fear among people is a motivational drive for the terrorists⁵¹ (Berman & Latin, 2008). Moreover, the fear also extends towards the teachers and consequently results in even lower quality of education.

Also, the social life of the people of Balochistan has been severely affected in Balochistan. Our respondents reported that they fear going out for picnics, eating in restaurants, going to parks and even meeting relatives. The crime level has also risen in the wake of the acts of terrorism as the government is primarily focused on curtailing terrorism, the caveat thus created results in motivation for the criminals. Overall, the society is severely disturbed directly and indirectly by terrorism.

Though terrorism also has a religious orientation, respondents claimed that terrorism has severely affected the religious activities in the province. People are afraid of observing public religious ceremonies. They are even afraid to attend prayers in mosques. Even the prayers of Eids and the Mahafils of Ashora are among the occasions of greater fears. The impact of these is that there is greater hatred developed for the opposite sects and thus a greater disunity among people. This brings people closer to animosity and distrust for the others. Situation might result in greater sectarian conflicts among different religious groups⁵².

As far the economic downturn, there was great agreement among our respondents that the worst hit area by terrorism is the impact on the economic affairs of the province. Among the worst hit economic factors the

⁵¹ Berman, E. & Laitin, D., (2005). Hard targets: theory and evidence on suicide attacks. *NBER Working Paper* 11740. Cambridge, MA: NBER

⁵² Nawaz, S., (2016). *Countering Militancy and Terrorism in Pakistan: The Civil-Military Nexus*. United State Institute of Peace

reduction of business activity was on top. This, in turn, has a sort of ripple effect in the economy. The first and the foremost effect of reduced business in the province is on the standard of living of the inhabitants and the overall GDP of the province and the worst effect group in the community is the low-income members of the society.

Other than fall in income and earnings, the respondents also reported shortages of daily-use items and utilities. Often times, the terrorists attack and destroy power lines and gas pipelines in remote area. It takes time to repair those breakages and people face difficulty in the daily works. The shortage of power and gas affects every sphere of public life from the household chores to the professional works. Overall, the economy is badly affected and fuels the already existing economic crises. This results in further economic slowdown and lower growth (Hyder, Akram & Padda, 2015).

Policy Recommendations: The Cures

Our study gives rise to several aspects that affect the socio-economic fabric of the province of Balochistan. Several points raised by our respondents have strong reinforcement of the finding made by Syed and Martin⁵³ in their work. As such, we recommend that the government needs to improve the investment spirit among people for curbing terrorism and nurturing of future terrorist. This is because increased business will result in higher income and employment and will thus give the youth some activity to work positive in the development of the province and the country⁵⁴

⁵³ Syed, S.H., Saeed, L., & Martin, R.P., (2015). Causes and Incentives for Terrorism in Pakistan. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 10,181–206

⁵⁴ Berman, E. & Laitin, D., (2005). Hard targets: theory and evidence on suicide attacks. *NBER Working Paper* 11740. Cambridge, MA: NBER

In addition, the government should also work to improve the current psychology of deprivation among the youth of Balochistan for resources and share of the overall findings. The mainstream politicians must be brought on board and their just demands be met. They should also be logically and politically convinced for the reasons of differences in budgetary matters and their reservation be seriously addressed. As the points were highlighted in our data, the arguments also have theoretical relevance. The government should not consider the service sector being non-important in this regard. Syed and Martin⁵⁵ have found out a strong correlation between greater spending on service sector and reduction in terrorism. Among the service sector, the most important sector is the provision of health services. Improved health services have good effect on people in winning their favors. Good governance is yet another important cure for improved counter-terrorism efforts⁵⁶

Cross border terrorism can be curtailed by developing better relationship with the neighboring countries and through greater collaborations and cooperation. The governments can enter into security agreements with its immediate neighbors and supports their initiatives on counter-terrorism activities. A greater focus on non-military solutions is also an effective way to reduce terrorism in addition, the inclusion of the civil society in counter-terrorism efforts can further ameliorate the intuitive (Nawaz, 2016)⁵⁷. The curbing of terrorism, in deed, is a combined effort where all segments of the

⁵⁵ Syed, S.H., Saeed, L., & Martin, R.P., (2015). Causes and Incentives for Terrorism in Pakistan. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 10,181–206

⁵⁶ Nawaz, S., (2016). *Countering Militancy and Terrorism in Pakistan: The Civil-Military Nexus*. United State Institute of Peace

⁵⁷ Ibid

society can play vital roles and should thus be engaged in the efforts and supported for their work.

Conclusion

In this study, we attempted to highlight the nature, causes, consequences and the cure of terrorism in Balochistan. The area was chosen on the grounds as this province of Pakistan is one of the worst hit areas by the acts of terrorists. Besides, this province has extreme geopolitical importance. The area directly neighbors two countries; Iran and Afghanistan and dynamics of terrorism are many folds here. Much, in fact, could be learnt from this area. Thus, using a self-administered questionnaire data were collected from the residents of the province, the instrument duly tested for its validity and reliability. The percentages in the data were used to report the findings.

Several important forces are playing their roles in supporting terrorism in Balochistan including the lack of education, poor infrastructure, low business/ economic activity and a sense of political deprivation especially by the youth of the province. The immediate border with Afghanistan, a country that is in war has drastic effect on the peace in the province. The terrorism in the province is thus part of a global, political situation besides the internal political crises within the province.

The socio-economic effects of terrorism are felt in every sphere of life including family like, professional life and social activities. Religious activities are also greatly affected by terrorism. Government can reduce the act of terrorism by developing a multiple faceted policy and by including all important stakeholders. Good governance, provision of better education, improved services- especially health care- and developed infrastructure would dampen the current restless in the area. The government should look

for non-military option rather for a long-lasting improvement or distrust in the province.

The study primarily focuses on four elements of terrorism in Balochistan and thus only limited information could be obtained for each. It is recommended that studies that could explore all those areas in depth could be undertaken for improved understanding of the issue. A study of the cross-border relationship can also help in better understanding and solution to the problem. Improved international relationship could further improve the situation.

Appendices

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.881
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	18003.976
	df	325
	Sig.	0.000

Table 4: Discriminant and Convergent Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR (H)	EE	Nat	SE	Cs
Econ_Effect	0.898	0.693	0.059	0.968	0.833			
Nature	0.918	0.693	0.066	0.930	0.069†	0.832		
Socio_Effects	0.941	0.673	0.059	0.959	0.243***	-0.145***	0.820	
Causes	0.900	0.502	0.066	0.905	0.144***	0.256***	-0.081*	0.708

In table 3: CR(Composite Ratio); AVE(Average Variance Extracted); MSV (Maximum Shared Variance); EE(Economic Effects); Nat(Nature); SE(Social Effects) and Cs(Causes)

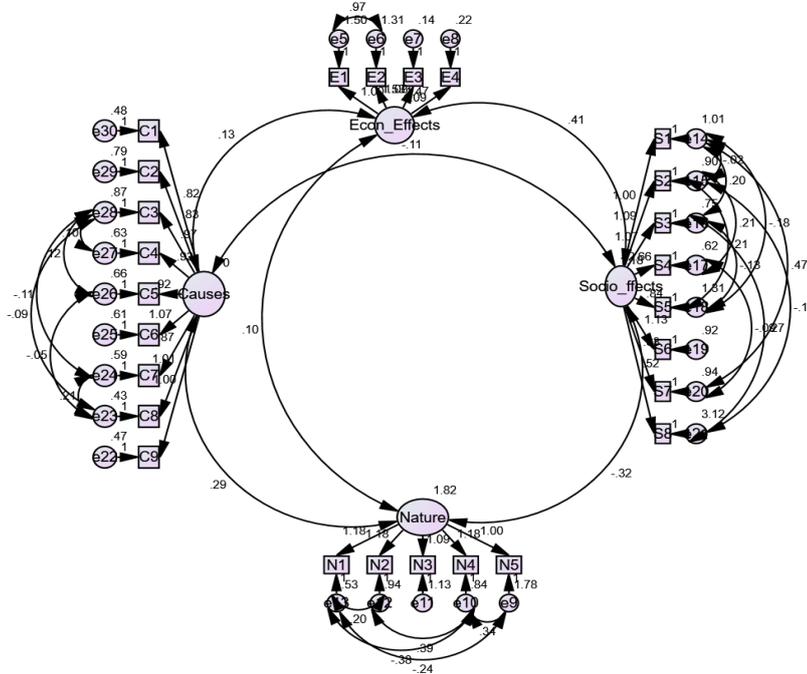


Figure 1: CFA Path Diagram

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Extremism as a Transnational Threat: Comparative study of White supremacy and Hindutva

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Abstract:

Extremism is the underlying cause of domestic and international terrorism. The ever-increasing threat of extremism has shaped a geo political discourse which has given rise to politics of hatred and exclusion. The latter manifests itself as hyper nationalism. The objective of the study is to compare the common denominators between the extremist ideologies of 'White Supremacism' (engulfing the West) and 'Hindutva' (infecting the South Asian region). The paper yields a comparative analysis of ideological operationalization of white racism and Hindutva fascism in the West and India respectively. The paper highlights the characteristics of white supremacy and Hindutva and discovers the common denominators between these two ideologies such as fundamentalist extremism, exclusionary politics, Islamophobia and perverted nationalism.

Key words: Extremism, Hyper nationalism, White supremacy, Hindutva

Extremism: A Phenomenon

Extremism as a concept is used to describe religious, social or political belief systems that exist outside of (mainstream) belief systems which are broadly accepted in society. Extremism rejects the existing institutional framework of governance, socio-economic structure and means that involves political participation. It attempts to craft incipient narratives and ideologies to engender structural changes in all the facets of life – economic, religious, social and political – by challenging and actively opposing the legitimacy

and legality of existing systems. Therefore, extremists seek to impose their values, beliefs and ideology through coercion or indoctrination, while preaching intolerance towards other belief systems and perspectives.

According to the Counter Extremism Strategy of the UK, “*Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs*”.¹ Extremists seek to impose their values, beliefs and ideology through coercion or indoctrination, while preaching intolerance towards other belief systems and perspectives.

Modern day extremists not only leave a trail of blood, but also a list of creative ways to kill: Agro-terrorism, aircraft hijacking, bio-terrorism, car bombing, hostage taking, insurgency, kidnapping, letter bombing, Illegal nuclear proliferation, piracy, propaganda of the deed, redemption movements, school shootings and suicide bombing are only a few. The goals of these extremist groups are absolute, and they show no room for tolerance or negotiations. Violent extremists have many concocted views that they use to justify violence and hateful attacks, such as extremists of white supremacy believing that inferior race members should be killed; environmental extremists believe that it is necessary to damage property and even harm people to protect the environment; religious extremists believe that violent attacks are necessary to protect their beliefs and anarchist extremists believe that society does not require any government or legislation; thus, violence is needed to create such a society.

¹ Counter Extremism Strategy, London: Counter-Extremism Directorate, October 2015. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf

An increasing threat of extremism shaped the global political discourse, giving rise to extreme right-wing politics of hatred and hyper-nationalism. Contemporary Western and South Asian countries have also experienced a marked upturn in extremism and heightened terrorist activities, resulting in the highest annual number of fatalities. Due to which, states face multiple and pressing concerns, ranging from fanaticism, fundamentalism and religious intolerance to ethno-political violence and exclusionary politics creating an unstable environment regionally and internationally.

Extremism as a Transnational Threat – An Overview of 21st Century

The fallout of extremism has constituted a transitional character igniting a global security crisis threatening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an existing nation-state system. It has challenged the legitimacy of political regimes and the security of citizens. The tectonic geo-political shifts are moving towards a new normal, rapidly shifting environment with an interconnected, globalized world that has unfolded far-reaching threatening dividends. No country is now immune to the contagiousness of extremism, which has struck fear across the globe.

The wars of the 21st century would be fought against the spread of extremism, which have been gradually capturing the minds and administering territories. The intensification in globalization has already hastened the process.² The like-minded groups or Lone-actors all over the world are recruited with no hinges, as the information technology is successfully used for dissemination of extreme ideological manifestations.³

² Shaukat Aziz, "The Geopolitical New Normal." *Horizons: Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development*, no. 8 (2016): 42-55, DOI:10.2307/48573686.

³ Ibid.

Extremism has globally constituted dire threats to national security of countries and human existence overall. According to some experts, the World Trade Centre attack on September 11, 2001 was a triggering point. Within the same period of time and following years witnessed spike in the terrorism and extremism. However, the notion of extremism is as old, but with transformational orders, its characteristics evolved into a transnational one. The repercussions since the twentieth century until now are immense – lives lost, cities devastated, empires crumbled and nation-states were outrightly devastated. This also had an adverse and long-lasting impact on national economies, national security and stability.

According to the U.S Central Intelligence Agency forecast in a report on Global Trends identified categorically that the second epoch of Globalization will unbridle more complexities than the previous one.⁴ As the evolution of the contemporary era will be marked by financial instability and increasing socio-economic divide, consequently, regional countries will bear the brunt of economic stagnation, religious and cultural alienations. Amidst such evolution political, ethnic, ideological, nationalist and religious extremism will witness a remarkable spike.

To the West, terrorism and terrorist acts are widely affiliated and tagged with Islamist militant organisations such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS). However, according to The Soufan Centre, the threat emanating from white supremacist terrorist have surpassed them and is now becoming an uphill task to defeat in long term. Centre also points out that 73% of deadly

⁴ Richard Sandbrook and David Romano, Globalization, extremism and violence in poor countries, *Third World Quarterly* 25, no.6 (2004):1007-1030, DOI: [10.1080/0143659042000256869](https://doi.org/10.1080/0143659042000256869)

violent extremist incidents in the United States between 2001 and 2016 were perpetrated by white supremacist extremists, whereas, radical Islamists were responsible for only 23%.⁵ It is pertinent to mention here that the significant portion of these terrorism related concerns are mainly backed by right-wing extremist, where the lone actors or lone-wolf poses threat.⁶

The development in 20th and 21st century right wing extremism has strong connection with emergence and launching of these lone-actors.⁷ If we trace the recent trends of terrorism, far-right terrorism in Europe is mainly decentralized having extremists with international connections. These extremist individuals operate in such political ecosystems which have more acceptances towards extremism. The terrorist acts today are carried out by individual actors rather than groups. The individuals like Eric Rudolph, David Copeland and Anders Breivik, Brenton Tarrant have similar backgrounds with right-wing extremism.⁸

The inexorably upward trends in the South Asian region towards violence and extremism is because of the regional and extra regional states' growing interest in the region have a deep impact on the geopolitics of the region. As a result, highly charged environment has drawn religious, ethnic and

⁵ White Supremacy Extremism: *The Transnational Rise of the Violent White Supremacist Movement*, The Soufan Center, September 2019.

<https://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Report-by-The-Soufan-Center-White-Supremacy-Extremism-The-Transnational-Rise-of-The-Violent-White-Supremacist-Movement.pdf>

⁶ Mark S. Hamm and Ramon Spaaij, *The Age of Lone Wolf Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017)

⁷ Daniel Koehler, *Right-Wing Terrorism in the 21st Century: the 'National Socialist Underground' and the History of Terror from the Far right in Germany* (London New York: Routledge, 2017)

⁸ Cato Hemmingby and Tore Bjørgo, "Terrorist Target Selection: The Case of Anders Behring Breivik." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12, No. 6, (2018)

nationalistic lines giving rise to extremism.⁹ India being one of the strongest democracies is the breeding ground and venue for extremism having catastrophic reverberation in the whole region.

White Supremacy: Dark Side of Enlightenment

Historically, white supremacy is perpetuated institutionally by a system of exploitation and oppression of people of colour by none other than white people and European nations, in order to maintain and defend their system of power, wealth and privilege.¹⁰ They hold ideas and beliefs about the superiority of the “white” human races over other groups. In the present times, white supremacy is to describe such groups which advocate ultra-nationalism, racism and hold fascist doctrines. The utter reliance of such groups is violence in order to achieve their goals.

Professor Frances Lee Ansley is of the opinion, “*A political, economic and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources and in which white dominance and non-white subordination exists across a broad array of institutions and social settings*”.¹¹ In the United States, Legal apartheid during the Jim Crow era, white supremacism had political support and acceptance, which is happening precisely in today's Europe. White supremacy witnessed a revival in the United States in the late 1950's and 1960's, where it gradually manifested itself into a

⁹ Ion Marin, “The Geopolitics of Religion and Ethnicity,” *Geopolitics, History and International Relations 1*,” No.2, (2009): 134-138
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/e26803990>

¹⁰ “What is White Supremacy?” Elizabeth Betita Martinez, http://www.pym.org/annual-sessions/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2017/06/What_Is_White_Supremacy_Martinez.pdf

¹¹ Frances Lee Ansley, “Stirring the Ashes: Race, Class and the Future of Civil Rights,” *Scholarship*, 74 CORNELL L., 1024 n. 129 (1989)
<https://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3431&context=clr>

white movement. The ideas of white supremacist were expressed mainly in programs like anti-immigrant policies such as the National Front (France), The Republicans (*Die Republikaner*, Germany), Freedom Party (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, Austria), lately the then President Donald J. Trump echoed the same white supremacist agenda which disavowed racism and outrightly supported the white identity. This also make a strong case for *Herrenvolk democracy* of Frederickson, “*Herrenvolk democratic society is a society that pushes the principle of differentiation by race to its logical outcome and people of colour, however numerous or acculturated they may be, are treated as permanent aliens or outsiders*”.¹²

Elements of the Alt-Right movement can be viewed in the United States as an American version of ethno-nationalism. However, many Alt-Right activists are widely associated with the culture of white supremacy. They identify themselves as “white nationalists”. Alt-Right and the Identitarian movements fall under ethno-nationalism, the European Identitarians tend to be drawn towards cultural nationalism, whereas the American Alt-Right/white nationalists towards the racial nationalism.

White Supremacy is perceived as an overtly transnational threat in the 21st century. The dangerous propagation of their beliefs that white people are racially superiors, and should always remain ascendant is alarming for the rest of the world. This is demonstrated by slogans such as, the so-called Fourteen Words: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”¹³ The white supremacist threat is growing

¹² George M. Frederickson, *White supremacy: A comparative study in American and South African history* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1981) doi:10.1086/ahr/86.5.1139-a

¹³ Adam Serwer, “White Nationalism’s Deep American Roots,” *The Atlantic*, April 2019,

extraordinarily due to which the West is itself acknowledging this extremist phenomenon having a transnational character. The extremist tendencies become vile when members of white supremacists claim that a ‘racially sovereign nation’ should be established which is only governed by whites, in which self-determination is exercised and is free of other minorities which they term as “mud races”. Moreover, they claim that the white race is the only pure and master race of the earth. Steadily, the noticeable influence in policy making related to issues like poverty, crime, civil rights and immigration is growing throughout the West.

Hindutva: An Extremist Ideology

Initially, Hindutva appeared in the mid-1880s in an Indian fiction novel. However, the term ‘Hindutva’ was espoused by V.D.Savarkar in an essay he wrote in 1923 titled ‘Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?’.¹⁴ Hindutva is often synonymously confused with Hinduism although it is not identical in its nuances and connotations. It promotes the concept of “India for Hindus only” and is adopted by ultra nationalist Hindu organisations like Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Hindu Sena and Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP).¹⁵ As the ideology of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Hindutva is also reflected from the electoral manifesto of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Moreover, its national identity is based on Hindu religion whereas it excludes monotheistic religions like Islam and Christianity.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/04/adam-serwer-madison-grant-white-nationalism/583258/>

¹⁴ A.G. Noorani, “What is Hindutva?”, *Dawn*, December 10, 2016,

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1301496>

¹⁵ Inam Ul Haque, “Where would Hindutva steer 21st century India?,” *The Express Tribune*, August 27, 2019, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2042782/hindutva-steer-21st-century-india>

It is quite ironic that in the 21st century, today's so-called secular India has degenerated to such a narrow exclusivity that the political discourse is thriving by fermenting ultra nationalist and religious based xenophobia. Hindu supremacism plays a central role in Modi's political ideology and is also portrayed as the 'unfinished business of partition'.¹⁶ The political landscape of India has become treacherous where communities find themselves engulfed in "us versus them" dilemma. Modi and his administration is acting antithetical to democratic and secular principles enshrined in the Constitution of India. Revocation of Article 370 and 35(A) through unconstitutional means also highlights BJP's aggressive posture which is neither secular nor democratic in its outlook.

Moreover, the South Asian region has witnessed an upsurge in violence and extremism during the last two decades. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) coming into power has unleashed a series of unfortunate events in the form of growing militancy, religious extremism, terrorism and violence against the country's religious minorities i.e., Muslims. The practical manifestation of BJP's policies is evident from instances like carrying out attacks on the places of worship, delegitimization of interfaith marriages, privileging of Hindu symbolism, equating of Hindu identity as national identity and conversion of Muslim and Christian families back to Hinduism. The imposition of Hindu culture on religious minorities and the enactment of legislation against Muslims in the form of Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 and National Register of Citizens (NRC) also sheds light on India's exclusionary politics.

¹⁶ Talat Shabbir, "Modi's Hindu Supremacism," *The Express Tribune*, September 2, 2020, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2262166/modis-hindu-supremacism>

The reluctant and ignorant attitude of BJP is reflected by the fact that the government does not condemn such violent incidents. The demonstrators of Hindutva roam free without facing any serious charges. To quote a few violent incidents, Malegaon blasts of 2006 and 2008, the Mecca Masjid bombing of 2007, bomb attacks in Maharashtra in 2008 and Goa in 2009, and the killing of rationalist leaders in the past few years have intensified BJP's reluctance to rein in the Hindu extremists. Thus, inaction of the government encourages and boosts extremists to act with impunity.

Hence, India is further pushing its Hindutva agenda in Indian Occupied Kashmir by taking advantage of COVID-19 and diverting the attention of global community from Indian instigated state terrorism and human rights violations.¹⁷ Thus, India needs to be cautious of its status as a sick man of South Asia¹⁸ and realize that divisive rhetoric will have far reaching consequences not only for India's international repute but also for the regional security.

Ideological Operationalization of White Supremacy and Hindutva

The origins of Christian fundamentalism lay inside the North American society which bore the burden of exterminating the Native American and enslaving the Negro. In this milieu, the teachings of Christ which were meant for all races and colours were narrowly understood by those Europeans who settled in America. Hence, their fundamentalism became mixed with racism, the biggest proof of which is the prevalence of black churches throughout the plantations.

¹⁷ Naveed Siddiqui, "India taking advantage of Covid-19 crisis to push 'Hindutva' agenda in occupied Kashmir: FO," *Dawn*, July 17, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1552954>

¹⁸ Sanjay Kumar, "India has now become the sick man of South Asia," *Dawn*, October 26, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1587096>

In India on the other hand, the Hindu fundamentalism rooted in the RSS ideology was the work of mischief by the British colonizers who reformed traditional Hinduism according to their own ideas, so that they can offer greater resistance against Islam which came to be perceived as the common enemy of both the British colonizers and the Hindu community. In India, the Muslim went from being rulers to being ruled whereas for Hindus was change of rule from Muslim to British. While Muslims accepted the Hindu tradition for the sake of Hindus, the modernism struck British were hell-bent on reforming Hinduism and Savarkar who was an atheist was commissioned to do this job.

In North America, evangelism led to the exponential growth of Christian fundamentalism as an ideological bulwark against the atheist Soviet Union, but in India RSS mentality had to wait for 60 more years to precipitate into the Hindutva demand. But it is interesting to know that even during early secular pre partition years, RSS continued to grow but made steady gains of radicalizing the Hindu society using the Pakistan as a bogeyman.

Common Denominators – Unifying White Supremacy and Hindutva

The two extremist ideologies i.e. Hindutva engulfing the South Asian region and White Supremacy in the West are closely linked in its ideological operationalization. The philosophical foundation of Hindutva is similar as Italy's Fascist Party (IFP) and Germany's Nazi Party of instituting ultra-nationalism. An ideological likeness could be traced to Adolf Hitler's vision regarding the nexus between the state and race.¹⁹ Both Hindutva and White

¹⁹ Aparna Priyadarshi, "Bigotry unifies Hindutva and white supremacy," *Asia Times*, December 20, 2019, <https://asiatimes.com/2019/12/bigotry-unifies-hindutva-and-white-supremacy/>

Supremacy are unified by the belief secularism and cross-border migration disrupts the dominant and 'pure' groups in society. This is associated with the "The Great Replacement Theory", put forward by Renaud Camus is an ethno-nationalistic theory focusing on the replacement of an indigenous European i.e., white population with non-European immigrants.²⁰

The renowned Hindu nationalist groups like Hindu Sena and Republican Hindu Coalition endorsed Donald Trump when he talked about imposing a Muslim ban and waging fight against radical Islamic terrorism.²¹ Hindu Sena, also known as Army of Hindus has been linked with series of inter-communal incidents in India has been found throwing parties to mark Trump's birthday.²² Modi and Trump both advocate exclusivism. Hindutva believes in the creation of Akhand Bharat that aims at the colonization of its South Asian neighbouring states and conversion of these states to Hinduism.²³ Similarly, Trump has time and again reiterated to 'Make America Great Again'. The hard-line policies regarding minorities, migrants and Muslims exhibit how Modi and Trump have remained on the same page. The protests and aggravations of Hindu nationalists and the Western far right are also similar. Therefore, these similar underlying displacement fears are reverberated in both ideologies.

The common denominators between the far-right groups in the West and Hindu nationalists are discussed below.

²⁰ The Great Replacement Theory, Counter Extremism Project, <https://www.counterextremism.com/content/great-replacement-theory>

²¹ Priyadarshi, "Bigotry unifies Hindutva."

²² Aadita Chaudhary, "Why white supremacists and Hindu nationalists are so alike," *Al Jazeera*, December 13, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2018/12/13/why-white-supremacists-and-hindu-nationalists-are-so-alike/>

²³ Farrukh Khan Pitafi, "Modi unleashed," *The Express Tribune*, August 7, 2020, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2258469/modi-unleashed>

A. Religious Fundamentalism

Religious Fundamentalism; evolved from the Evangelical Christians' attempt to address theological concerns regarding Protestants in a series of pamphlets titled "The Fundamentals" during 1910-1915 has been morphed in to a unique form in the modern world.²⁴ Beyond its generally notorious image of barbarians and terrorists ready to attack anyone refuting their beliefs is a group of people that believe in advocacy of strict conformity to sacred text/religious teachings. Moreover, they are also known to believe in superiority of their own religious scriptures and propose a crude division between righteous individuals and evildoers. Furthermore, the transnational nature of religion facilitates in universalizing individual grievances as part of the global struggle.

The occidental spread and origin of fundamentalism has a deep-rooted prejudice when it comes to its modern interpretation, unknown to many, religious fundamentalism exists and flourishes in the West as much as it does so in the Orient. Christian fundamentalism considered to be the strongest predictor of hostility against Muslims and Jews and re-emerged with new zeal and zest in the 1970s under political patronage from the Republican Party in the United States.²⁵ Along with this, the existence of fundamentalist religious cults like the Westboro Baptist Church, widely known for its message of vengeance and for engaging in pickets with

²⁴ Alex Fry, "Religious Fundamentalism: The Origin of a Dubious Category," *LSE*, July 6, 2020, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionglobalsociety/2020/07/religious-fundamentalism-the-origins-of-a-dubious-category/>

²⁵ Zahid Shahab Ahmed and Galib Bashirov, "Religious Fundamentalism and Violent Extremism," *The Difficult Task of Peace*, (2020), pp.245-260, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335663357_Religious_Fundamentalism_and_Violent_Extremism

inflammatory anti-American, anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic, anti-Mormon and Islamophobic hate speech is proof enough of the entrenchment of religious fundamentalism in the West.²⁶ The recent wide spread Islamophobia and political actions like ban on Muslim immigration at the governmental level by so called liberal states of the West also reveal a dangerous pattern in the spread of religious fundamentalism in the occident.

Hindu fundamentalism or Hindutva (Hindu-ness) can be described as a mix of majoritarian and ultra-nationalist attitude propagated by a chauvinistic urge to enforce it. This image of ultra-nationalism primarily focuses to threaten and challenge a minority that is usually a Muslim with key consideration to the historical and demographic contiguity of Hindustan. Incidences like the Gujrat riots where 254 Hindus & 790 Muslims were killed and the almost daily cases of mob lynching, forced conversions, communal violence based upon issues like cow protection have revealed a dangerous scheme of how Hindutva has antagonized the Hindu youth against the Muslims and other minorities. The rise of cow vigilantism and Brahmin initiated violence against lower caste individuals has also led to societal disruption as well as the killing of Muslims and Dalits.²⁷ The most recent implementation of NRC to ethnically cleanse the land off Muslims is yet another practical manifestation of how BJP a political face of Hindutva spearheaded by organizations like the “Shiv Saina” is employing its exclusionary tactics. Due to the failure of not providing evidence of their

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Aparna Priyadarshi, Hindutva's stark parallels with White Supremacy," *Asia Times*, December 21, 2019, <https://asiatimes.com/2019/12/hindutvas-stark-parallels-with-white-supremacy/>

citizenship, the Indian government has established detention centres to settle the stateless persons until they provide evidence.

Moreover, the inauguration of Ram Mandir at Ayodhya at the very spot of Babri Mosque after its demolition in Uttar Pradesh on August 5, 2020 depicts Modi's political ownership and symbolism in a way that marks one year since the revocation of semi-autonomous status of occupied Jammu Kashmir.²⁸ Also, Amit Shah, Indian Minister of Home Affairs, has called Muslims termites who are eating away India and in Uttar Pradesh, removal of symbols associated with Muslims have also been carried out by Yogi Adityanath, the current Chief Minister of UP.²⁹

B. Exclusionary Politics

The "Us versus them" approach divides communities along the communal lines through the enforcement of violence. Exclusion of minorities from public life by discrimination, fomenting hatred or through violent acts has become a recurrent phenomenon reflected in Hindutva as well as White Supremacy. Exclusionary politics of Trump is visible by instances like Trump's anti Mexican rhetoric, his growing populism, unleashing of xenophobia (tirade against Ilhan Omar), travel restrictions specifically exclusionary immigration policies of Trump and views about refugees. Trump's assault on refugees has been multidimensional as he has issued an executive order to veto the resettlement of refugees.³⁰ Furthermore, Trump's

²⁸ "Modi to lay foundation of Ayodhya temple on Aug 5," *Dawn*, July 27, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1571379>

²⁹ Shahid Javed Burki, "How an aggressively Hindu India poses a problem for Islamabad," *The Express Tribune*, May 11, 2020, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2218509/aggressively-hindu-india-poses-problem-islamabad>

³⁰ Zolan Kanno Youngs and Michael D. Shear, "Trump Virtually Cuts Off Refugees as He Unleashes a Tirade on Immigrants," *The New York Times*, October 1, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/01/us/politics/trump-refugees.html>

anti-Asian remarks about COVID-19, calling it a “Chinese virus” have seen a surge in Anti-Asian hate incidents. The outbreak of coronavirus has sparked the rising tide of xenophobia globally.³¹ Moreover, from Western perspective, Hungarian Prime Minister and Austrian chancellor have imposed strict immigration policies to shut down the Balkan route used by migrants and refugees to gain access to Central and Western European countries.³²

As an ultra-extremist ideology, Hindutva aims to wipe out the Muslims and non-Hindus of India. The exclusionary tactics of Hindutva are indicated by instances such as stripping of Indian citizenship from Muslims, mob lynching, rapes, mass murders and genocide of Kashmiris.³³ RSS being BJP’s ideological patent, does not view Muslims as true Indians. Muslims have been pushed to the borderline of society as Nehruvian/Gandhian secularism has been scrapped in favor of a muscular and toxic Hindutva narrative.³⁴ The boycott of Muslim traders and denied access of Muslims to hospitals depicts how Indians are disenfranchised by a violent majoritarian narrative.³⁵ The non-Indian Muslims who amplify their voice are often silenced by the Hindutva establishment. Moreover, from a legal perspective, exclusionary legislation is aimed at disenfranchising Muslims. The labelling of Hindus as ‘insiders’ and other religious groups as ‘outsiders’ sheds light

³¹ Angela Giuffrida and Kim Willsher, “Outbreaks of xenophobia in west as coronavirus spreads,” *The Guardian*, January 31, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/31/spate-of-anti-chinese-incidents-in-italy-amid-coronavirus-panic>

³² Aparna Priyadarshi, Hindutva’s stark parallels with White Supremacy,” *Asia Times*, December 21, 2019, <https://asiatimes.com/2019/12/hindutvas-stark-parallels-with-white-supremacy/>

³³ “Barbaric Hindutva,” *Dawn*, August 17, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1499980>

³⁴ India’s Muslims, *Dawn*, April 27, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1552548>

³⁵ Ibid

on the exclusivist trends prevalent in Modi's India. The Ghar wapsi (return to your home) campaign of Hindutva, is the deceptive euphemism used in secular India to convert Indian Muslims and Christians to Hinduism. The conversion from one religion to another religion and becoming idol worshipers signifies 'welcoming them home'. Also, a book titled as "The RSS: A View to the Inside" by Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle reveals that Christians are not the problem but Muslims are.³⁶ Hence, Modi-Trumpian "us versus them" approach has affected marginalized communities severely giving birth to religious animosity and intolerance worldwide.

C. Islamophobia

The definitions of Islamophobia tend to contribute to fear or hatred of Muslims to their politics or culture, and to Islam and the religiosity of Muslims.³⁷ As per the definition of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims, "Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness".³⁸ The term Islamophobia was popularized during the 1990s, referring neither to labour nor to capital but a global arena without a politics of its own.³⁹

³⁶ Muhammad Ali Siddiqi, Non-Fiction: The Evolution of Hindutva," *Dawn*, November 18, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1446323>

³⁷ "Islamophobia: Understanding Anti-Muslim Sentiment in the West," *GALLUP*, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentiment-west.aspx>

³⁸ Amina Easat-Daas, "Islamophobia is on the rise. This is how we can tackle it," *World Economic Forum*, February 27, 2019, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/02/how-to-tackle-islamophobia-the-best-strategies-from-around-europe/>

³⁹ Faisal Devji, "From Xinjiang to Germany: how did Islamophobia become a global phenomenon," *The Guardian*, March 27, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/mar/27/xinjiang-germany-islamophobia-global-phenomenon>

The frequency of Islamophobic incidents and anti-Muslim bigotry has intensified during the past decade. From the street to the state, Islamophobic elements are deeply baked into European political setup. Muslims are treated as legitimate objects of suspicion. According to the European Islamophobia Report 2018, in 2018, France witnessed an increase of 52% in Islamophobic incidents. In Austria 74% increase was observed with 540 reported cases whereas 62% in Finland, 53% in Italy and 44% in Germany.⁴⁰ Islamophobic street movements and political parties have gained prominence in Europe. European nations have also wrestled with the issue of Muslim veil and have generated multidimensional debate in terms of religious freedom, gender equality, multiculturalism, secular traditions and fears of terrorism.⁴¹ Recently, French President, Emmanuel Macron described Islam as a religion “in crisis” which has accelerated tensions between France and Muslim majority nations.⁴² The fallout got further deepened when Macron defended the publication of caricatures depicting the Prophet on free speech grounds.⁴³ Thus, protests are being carried out globally by condemning Macron’s defense of the caricatures, chanting anti-France slogans and banning of French products. Moreover, the Christchurch mosque attack of 2019 carried out by Brenton Tarrant also depicts how Muslims are being dehumanized globally.

⁴⁰ Narzanin Massoumi, “Why is Europe so Islamophobic,” *The New York Times*, March 6, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/opinion/europe-islamophobia-attacks.html>

⁴¹ “The Islamic veil across Europe,” *BBC News*, May 31, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13038095>

⁴² “Tens of thousands of Muslims protest France’s Islamophobia,” *Al Jazeera*, October 30, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/30/as-anger-rises-thousands-of-muslims-protest-french-cartoons>

⁴³ “UN official expresses ‘deep concern’ over Prophet cartoon row,” *Al Jazeera*, October 29, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/29/un-official-expresses-deep-concern-over-prophet-cartoon-row>

Analysing the narrative of Islamophobia in Hindu nationalism, it is evident from Narendra Modi's political discourse. Islamophobia and BJP's Hindutva steered ideology are considered as the two sides of the same coin. It is used as a strategic weapon by BJP to push its ultra-nationalist policies and legitimize its struggle for Kashmir by associating it with 'Islamic terrorism'. Moreover, Hindu nationalist groups have time and again labelled Muslim migrants as 'infiltrators' that threaten the peace of the Hindu community. Likewise, Trump has reiterated the word 'invaders' for migrants and asylum seekers present at the US Southern border.⁴⁴ In Hindutva's context, the revocation of Article 370 of Indian constitution is also regarded as a long-cherished Hindu nationalist dream. A report released by Human Rights Watch indicates how human rights violations have been observed in Jammu and Kashmir that includes restrictions on freedom of movement, ban on public gatherings, shut down of internet and other network facilities, closure of educational institutions, detainment of political leaders and deployment of large numbers of troops.⁴⁵

D. Radical Nationalism

Radical Nationalism emerged after WWI when Fascism and Nazism gained prominence. It aims at altering the regional and international order in your country's favour.⁴⁶ Being an exclusionary form of nationalism, it opposes the interference of the international community and does not tolerate minorities i.e., it does not view them as part of the nation. Radical

⁴⁴ Priyadarshi, "Bigotry unifies Hindutva."

⁴⁵ India: Basic Freedoms at Risk in Kashmir, *Human Rights Watch*, August 6, 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/08/06/india-basic-freedoms-risk-kashmir>

⁴⁶ Farid Zulfugarli, "Nationalism: Its Conservative, Liberal and Radical Conceptions," *Baku Research Institute*, <https://bakuresearchinstitute.org/nationalism-its-conservative-liberal-and-radical-conceptions/>

nationalism has also become one of dominant features of US politics as well as Indian Hindutva. The characterization of radical nationalism is based on racial and ethnic grounds as discussed below.

I. Ethnic Nationalism

Since the French Revolution, nationalism has constituted the core source of political legitimacy globally. In the nineteenth century, nationalism became increasingly ethnic in nature. It led to the disruption of political borders as seen in the case of Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian empires.⁴⁷ Ethnic nationalism, today, is identitarian in nature that helps in shaping ideas and influences public discourse. In the West, Trump has ignited the flames of ethnic nationalism along with deteriorating the norms and institutions aimed at saving humanity from such forces. Such a phenomenon has targeted migrants and other foreigners who have had violent consequences i.e., paving the way for civil war or interstate war. In Spain, the rise of the new right-wing populist party i.e., Vox has pressurized the two centre right parties, orchestrating the chances for an enduring standoff. However, in Eastern Europe, so-called frozen conflicts have been reawakened due to the return of ethnic nationalism.⁴⁸ Ethnic nationalism is prevalent at domestic level in the United States. For example, the US military is considered one of the most ethnically diverse institutions that have promoted racial equality. In 2012, Wade Michael Page, an army personnel opened fire at a Sikh

⁴⁷ Lars-Erik Cederman, "The Fatal Temptations of Ethnic Politics," *Foreign Affairs*, March 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2019-02-12/blood-soil>

⁴⁸ Ibid

temple located in Wisconsin which reflects how white supremacy exists in the ranks.⁴⁹

Analysing the ideological beliefs of VD Savarkar, often called as the father of Hindutva, was clearly influenced by European ethno nationalism which he also incorporated in Hindutva's policy towards India's Muslim residents. Furthermore, the senior leadership of RSS like MS Golwalkar was also influenced by Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler.⁵⁰ Therefore in the present scenario, BJP has been successfully implementing changes in citizenship laws that are identical to Nuremberg Laws. Inspired by the US immigration policy, laws such as India's new Citizenship Amendment Act is designed to favour Hindus in the citizenship laws. Hence, ethnic nationalism exerts more influence today than it has ever before since WW2 and is deeply rooted in extremist ideologies of White Supremacy and Hindutva.

II. Racial Nationalism

Racially motivated nationalism is dominant in Trump and Modi led politics. According to a report issued by the Southern Poverty Law Centre (SPLC), in Trump's era, white nationalist hate groups have increased by 55%.⁵¹ Some of the famous racial networks are Nordic Resistance Movement of Sweden and Ku Klux Klan (KKK). KKK is known for its long history of

⁴⁹ Dave Philipps, "White Supremacy in the U.S. Military, Explained," *The New York Times*, February 27, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/27/us/military-white-nationalists-extremists.html>

⁵⁰ Jason Stanley, "For Trump and Modi, ethnic purity is the purpose of power," *The Guardian*, February 24, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/feb/24/trump-modi-citizenship-politics-fascism>

⁵¹ Jason Wilson, "White nationalist hate groups have grown 55% in Trump era, report finds," *The Guardian*, March 18, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/18/white-nationalist-hate-groups-southern-poverty-law-center>

violence and employing terror to achieve its white supremacist agenda. The recent 'Black Lives Matter' campaign also depicts rising racial nationalism in the West and at the same time it has raised awareness regarding racism faced by African Americans. Similarly, Modi has trampled the founding of India evident by his racist manifesto. Golwalkar, the second leader of RSS has promoted race as being fundamental to the Hindu nation due to his inspiration by Hitler's actions in Austria.⁵² Moreover, he emphasized on 'race pride at its highest' and stressed that it was a good lesson for use in India.⁵³

Conclusion

This paper has defined extremism as a pervasive but worrying phenomenon around the world. It gave an overview of the 21st Century extremist threats and focused on a comparison between extremism in the West and the East. In the quest, white supremacy was analysed in cohorts with Christian fundamentalism and in the East the focus was on the fascist politics of Hindutva and how the ideological extremism of both East and the West are operationalized in their respective domains. Some of the common denominators between white supremacist and Hindutva were religious fundamentalism, exclusionary politics, a common assault on Islam and Islamic identities and finally perverted nationalism of two types, racial and ethnic. In both cases, it was found that extremism of the mind incubated for nearly a century in order to manifest itself within the framework of democratic politics. The oldest and the largest democracies around the

⁵² Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood Defined*, quoted in Goodrick-Clarke, *Hitler's Priestess*, 60.

⁵³ Mehdi Hasan, "How the White Nationalists who love Trump found inspiration in the group that gave us Narendra Modi," *The Intercept*, September 21, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/09/21/howdy-modi-trump-anders-brevik/>

world have succumbed to extremist thinking which is now visible despite a thin veneer of democratism.

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Afghan Peace Process and Security Implications for Pakistan

Tughral Yameen

Abstract

On 29 February 2020, the Trump Administration signed a landmark peace agreement with the Taliban office in Doha, Qatar, signalling a clear-cut plan to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan in a phased manner. So far, the peace process has not progressed as planned and there may be more snags on the way before a complete withdrawal takes place. Scenarios that can develop after the foreign troops depart from Afghanistan can range from chaos and anarchy, civil war, and limited peace. The return to normalcy in Afghanistan will entirely depend on the future political dispensation in the country and the attitude of the neighbours and competing interests in the region.

The future situation in Afghanistan, will have direct security implications for Pakistan. A peaceful Afghanistan will lend to peace and stability in Pakistan and a restive one will add to its problems. Under the circumstances, it is imperative that the government of Pakistan should be prepared for all kinds of eventualities and not be caught unaware like the last time the foreign forces withdrew from Afghanistan.

This paper argues that whereas, it is of utmost importance for the government of Pakistan to continue to facilitate and support the current peace process in Afghanistan, keeping in mind its legitimate national interests; it should review its internal and external security policy in anticipation of all kind of situations.

Keywords: Trump Administration, Afghan Peace Process, American Troops Withdrawal, Pak-Afghan Relations, Civil War, Resurgence of Terrorism.

Introduction

Pak Afghan relations have been testy at the best of times. There are ample reasons for this unsatisfactory state of affairs. Afghanistan was the only country that voted against the admission of Pakistan into the UNO in September 1947.¹ It refused to accept Pakistan as a genuine successor state to the British Raj and laid irredentist claims over a sizeable portion of its North Western territories. Not only this, the Afghan government sponsored the creation of Pashtunistan – a separatist entity. This hostile attitude from its western neighbours has caused understandable unease for Pakistan.² India exploited the situation by supporting the Afghan governments in their anti-Pakistan policies.

Historically, the instability within Afghanistan has also enhanced Pakistan's security concerns. In 1973, King Zahir Shah, the long serving monarch of Afghanistan was deposed in a palace coup by his cousin Muhammed Daoud Khan. In 1978 President Daoud was killed and replaced by a communist regime. The instability created by the infighting among the *Khalq* and *Parcham* factions of the communist party gave the Soviets a chance to intervene in December 1979. While the world condemned the Soviet

¹ Barnett R. Rubin and Abubakar Siddique, "Resolving the Pakistan-Afghanistan Stalemate," USIP Special Report, October 1, 2006, www.usip.org (Accessed September 16, 2020).

² Feisal Khan, "Why borrow trouble for yourself and lend it to your neighbors? Understanding the historical roots of Pakistan's Afghan Policy," *Asian Affairs: An American Review* Vol. 37, No. 4, Obama's Af-Pak Strategy and Its Impact in South Asia, Part 2 (October-December 2010): 171-189.

invasion of Afghanistan, India supported it. India was also among the very few nations to send their team to attend the Moscow Olympics of 1980 that was boycotted by international community.

The Soviet invasion triggered an insurrection and displacement within Afghanistan. This affected peace and stability in Pakistan, in the shape of a huge influx of refugees and a phenomenal increase in terrorist activities. The Soviet forces withdrew in 1989. After their withdrawal, a civil war broke out in Afghanistan. In 1996, the Taliban were able to subdue the warring factions and assume power in Kabul. In October 2001, in the wake of 9/11 attacks, the Americans invaded Afghanistan to punish the Taliban for giving refuge to the Al-Qaeda. The aim was to defeat the masterminds behind the attacks. The American invasion of Afghanistan will be completing two decades next year. The long war has taken its toll. There is a palpable battle fatigue in the American camp and the Trump administration is now negotiating a peace agreement with the Taliban before they leave Afghanistan. Clearly, the situation after American withdrawal from Afghanistan would have security implications for Pakistan. It was observed, when the Soviets departed, they left behind an unsettled Afghanistan.

Peace in Afghanistan is important for peace and stability in Pakistan because there is a security connection that is hard to ignore. There are three reasons for the Pak Afghan 'security interdependence': One, Afghanistan is a landlocked country and its traditional access to the sea is through Pakistan under Afghan Transit Trade Agreement (ATTA 1965) has been misused for smuggling and other illicit activities.³ Two, both countries share a porous 2500 km border straddling a rugged mountainous terrain. Torkham and Spin

³ US AID Trade Project, Analysis of Afghanistan Pakistan Trade Agreement (APPTA): 3, https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00K24B.pdf (Accessed 5 August 5, 2020)

Boldak are the main entry points on Pak Afghan border. Five more crossing places are used for movement of goods and people i.e., Ghulam Khan in North Waziristan, Angoor Ada in South Waziristan, Arandu in Chitral, Nawa Pass in Mohmand, Gursul in Bajaur, and Kharlachi in Kurram districts of newly merged FATA into KP. There are nearly seven hundred lesser-known entries and exits through mountain gullies and minor passes.⁴ Three, the divided tribes freely move across the Durand Line to visit relatives on a *rahdari* or a border permit. There is no legal basis for this concession, but this is the accepted norm to provide easement rights to tribesmen because Durand Line literally cuts across border villages and divides the tribes.⁵ This free tribal movement has often been used for illegal activity. After the 2014 attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar, the government of Pakistan decided upon a 20-point National Action Plan to curb terrorism.⁶ Though the decision to fence the border was not part of NAP but it was an outcome of extreme measures to control and to stop infiltration by terrorists.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the security threats emerging from Afghanistan imbroglio and the prospects of instability in the region. Experience tells us that withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan without first establishing peace can destabilize the entire region. Pakistan needs to be prepared for all eventualities.

⁴ Amina Khan, Issues in Pak Afghan Border Management, Issue Brief ISSI (2016): 4, <http://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Final-Issue-brief-dated-26-9-2016.pdf> (Accessed July 28, 2020).

⁵ Ahmar Bilal Soofi, "Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Management: A Legal Perspective," PILDAT Report (2015), 13, <https://rsilpak.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Pakistan-Afghanistan-Border-Management-A-Legal-Perspective.pdf> (Accessed 28 July 2020).

⁶ Nation Action Plan 2014, <https://nacta.gov.pk/nap-2014/> (Accessed August 18, 2020).

Security Issues resulting from the Soviet Invasion

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the last quarter of the twentieth century had long term regional security implications for the region. Afghanistan was not unfamiliar territory for the Russians. It was the buffer state between its Central Asian possessions and the British India. They had been eyeing it for a long time. For the Russians it was the key to the Indian subcontinent and for the British, the gateway to Central Asia. Both imperial powers of the nineteenth century wanted to have influence in Afghanistan and they did so by trying to install rulers of their own choice in Kabul.⁷ This interplay of competing interests defined the rules of the Great Game (1830-1895). During most part of the twentieth century, Afghanistan remained on the periphery of world affairs. It remained unaffected by the two world wars. The Cold War also did not change the stasis until it became the venue for the showdown between the two superpowers of that time, the US and Soviet Union.

The Soviets intervened in Afghanistan and got embroiled in a losing war against the Mujahideen. President Reagan grasped this heaven-sent opportunity to settle scores with the Soviet 'evil empire.'⁸ Owing to its geographical location, Pakistan became a convenient conduit for the US military aid and resources to the Afghan Mujahideen groups fighting the Soviet forces. All kinds of arms and equipment, including the deadly

⁷ For the British plans to install a king of their choice in Afghanistan in the middle of the nineteenth century read William Darlymple, *Return of the King: The Battle for Afghanistan* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012).

⁸ On March 1983, President Ronald Reagan described the Soviet Union as the 'evil empire,' in a speech delivered to the National Center for Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida. This speech became the moral plinth for the so-called Reagan doctrine of fighting evil (communism). The audio recording of the speech is available at <https://www.reaganfoundation.org/programs-events/webcasts-and-podcasts/podcasts/words-to-live-by/evil-empire-speech/>.

accurate Stinger man portable ant aircraft missiles were provided to the Mujahideen. Pakistani intelligence agencies distributed the arms and equipment and arranged for the military training of the Mujahideen. The Afghan jihad became internationally popular and young men from all over the Islamic world flocked to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. It found generous sponsors like the Saudi philanthropist Osama bin Laden also known as OBL. In later years OBL would acquire notoriety as the founder of Al-Qaeda and the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks.⁹

The Soviet Union suffered a death blow on the desolate plains of Afghanistan. It unravelled and the Warsaw pact dissolved in 1991. A flagging economy and imperial overreach proved to be the last straws that broke the Soviet back. Another great power was buried in the ‘Graveyard of Empires.’¹⁰ As the West rejoiced the end of Communism and the Fall of Berlin Wall, Afghanistan was quickly forgotten. No post-conflict strategy had been worked out and the wound was left to fester. To add further insult to this injury, the US imposed nuclear related sanctions on Pakistan.

After the departure of international actors from the scene, Pakistan was left to singlehandedly fend for itself, and to manage and contain the radioactive residue of the war next door. One lasting impact of the Soviet invasion of

⁹ The US Government sponsored *9/11 Commission Report* (2004) squarely blames bin Laden for the attacks on mainland USA on September 11, 2001. Chapter 2 (p. 57 to 63) of the Report is devoted exclusively to the rise of Al-Qaeda and OBL’s role in founding it. The report is available as a Pdf file at <https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report.pdf>. OBL was killed on May 2, 2001 in a raid by a US Navy SEAL team in his compound in the Pakistani city of Abbottabad. He was buried at sea. An alternate version of history is currently not available.

¹⁰ The term ‘Graveyard of Empires’ has been used regularly to highlight the futility of occupying Afghanistan by force. The British learnt the lesson the hard way after two disastrous Afghan Wars in the nineteenth century. Gen Elphinstone Army in 1842, was massacred to the man, less Surgeon Major Brydon in Jalalabad, as it retreated from Kabul. This lends credence to the adage that ‘we never learn from history.’

Afghanistan was that it made the domestic situation extremely volatile. There were 3.5 million Afghan refugees on Pakistani soil, who were not willing to go back to a war-ravaged country. During their prolonged stay in Pakistan, some Afghan refugee camps had become breeding grounds for discontent and criminality. Drugs and Kalashnikov culture struck roots in the society. The foreign fighters from all over the world, who had married and settled in the tribal areas suddenly became jobless. Their own countries were not willing to accept them back. Some became part of the disparate warlords waging their own wars to expand turf, others looked for opportunities with the non-state actors proliferating at that time.

Within Afghanistan, the warlords fought for the spoils. The infighting and lack of a central authority in Afghanistan completely destabilized the country. Pakistan tried its best to resolve the lingering conflict, but the Afghan leaders proved too headstrong and reneged on all promises, even those made in the holy Kaaba. The chaos created by civil war created space for the Taliban. The Taliban were able to bring about a modicum of peace in Afghanistan. After the Taliban government was established in Kabul, Pakistan and two other countries recognized it. The other two being the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and UAE. Taliban proved to be harsh and intolerant rulers. They meted out rough justice, were ruthless misogynist and played host to Al-Qaeda. They were not open to reason and destroyed the Bamiyan Buddhas despite the best efforts of the government of Pakistan. They were also not willing to hand-over Al-Qaeda members on the pretext of hospitality. After the 9/11, Pakistan severed diplomatic ties with them and experienced a severe reaction. The Taliban operating inside Pakistan turned against the state. Several entities under a motley crowd of warlords started waging their private wars. The most serious trend that emerged from

their activities was their operations against the Pakistani state. After a while, these disparate groups coalesced under an umbrella group that identified itself as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan or TTP. This Pakistani chapter of the Taliban became a nuisance. A number of military operations were to be launched to purge and sanitize the areas.

Security Issues after the US Invasion

The 9/11 attacks on mainland America became a defining moment in world history. A group of hijackers on the behest of the Al-Qaeda, crashed their commandeered aero planes into the symbols of American might. The entire event was broadcast live by CNN for the world to see. The Bush administration took no time in launching a punitive strike against the Al-Qaeda cohorts and their hosts, the Taliban in Afghanistan. To give the offensive, a multinational colour, the US government assembled a ‘coalition of the willing,’ including its NATO and non-NATO allies under the banner head of Operation Enduring Freedom.¹¹

After occupying Afghanistan, the US along with its NATO partners and other allied nations tried to stabilize it through the mechanism of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission. This mission concluded in December 2014.¹² During this time an effort was made to reconstruct Afghanistan through Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). This reconstruction effort was led by major US allies like the British, German and French militaries but it failed to bring about any real change in

¹¹ Operation Enduring Freedom, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/60083.htm> (Accessed July 28, 2020).

¹² ISAF’s mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014), https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm (Accessed September 15, 2020).

this war wrecked country.¹³ In 2015, the NATO led mission to train and assist the nascent Afghan forces was given the title Resolute Mission Support or RSM. Its current commander is US Gen Austin Miller.¹⁴

When the US decided to attack Afghanistan, the Musharraf regime realized that it had no choice. So, it was quickly decided to part ways with the Taliban and agreeing to all seven US demands. The major concessions that the government of Pakistan conceded included Intel-sharing, unrestricted use of its air space, ports, and communication infrastructure.¹⁵ In return the Americans declared Pakistan the dubious recognition of a major non-NATO ally. This did bring temporary relief and reintegration into the international community but long-term benefits have been questionable. In fact, the U-turn on Taliban cost Pakistan dearly in terms of a severe internal backlash.

On October 7, 2001, the Americans launched Operation Enduring Freedom to dismantle and defeat the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. By December 17, the Taliban had been removed from power. Its cadres disappeared into the countryside to fight another day. Many, including OBL were allowed to escape into neighbouring Pakistan. The theatre of war was extended into the tribal areas of Pakistan and armed predator drones were regularly used to target the compounds of alleged Taliban and Al-Qaeda commanders. The

¹³ Jaroslav Petřík, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: Securitizing Aid through Developmentalizing the Military," In: S. Brown and J. Grävingholt (eds) *The Securitization of Foreign Aid. Rethinking International Development Series* (London: Palgrave Macmillan), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-56882-38>.

¹⁴ Resolute Mission Support in Afghanistan, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_113694.htm (Accessed September 15, 2020).

¹⁵ Tughral Yamin, "Examining Pakistan's Strategic Decision to Support the US War on Terror," *Strategic Studies* (Spring 2016): 113-135, <http://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Tughral-Yamin-35-No.2.pdf> (Accessed September 15, 2020).

drone approach was indiscriminate, and ham handed. It traumatized the population however it killed only a few alleged militants.¹⁶

A few months into the invasion of Afghanistan, Bush deviated from his main aim of defeating the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban and went off to finish Saddam Hussain in Iraq. The superficial pretext to invade was to destroy Saddam's mythical weapons of mass destruction. Actually, it was meant to showcase the American military might and occupy the oil reservoirs of the Middle East in the absence of a credible international opposition. As the military effort got divided on two fronts, the US efforts to stabilize Afghanistan faltered. Despite gross technological and military superiority, the two-term US presidents could not defeat the Taliban. Instead, they steadily regrouped to become a dominant group in Afghanistan, fighting both the NATO troops under the US command and the Kabul government. Obama tried to extricate from Afghanistan but could not because his generals did not allow him to do so. Now Trump, in his bid to win a second term elections, wants to leave Afghanistan expeditiously.¹⁷ His points-man on Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad signed a peace deal with the Taliban Qatar office February 29, 2020 signalling a clear intent to withdraw forces from Afghanistan. The complete withdrawal is contingent on conditions like the release of prisoners, an intra-Afghan dialogue and decrease the levels of violence.¹⁸ The intra-Afghan dialogue finally began in Doha on September

¹⁶ Peter Bergen & Katherine Tiedemann, "Washington's Phantom War: The Effects of the U.S. Drone Program in Pakistan," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 90, No. 4 (JULY/AUGUST 2011): 12-18.

¹⁷ Aamna Khan, "Intra-Afghan Dialogue a peace effort or election campaign strategy?" *CGTN*, September 15, 2020, 2020, <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-09-15/Intra-Afghan-Dialogue-a-peace-effort-or-election-campaign-strategy--TNITjejoJi/index.html> (Accessed September 15, 2020).

¹⁸ Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan which is not recognized by the United States as a state and is known as the

12, 2020, after the last of the Taliban prisoners were released by the Afghan government. The government in Kabul wants an immediate ceasefire but there is little hope for that at the moment.

On the eve of the talks the foreign minister of Pakistan Shah Mahmood Qureshi reiterated Pakistan's position on the Afghan peace process i.e.

1. To continue to support the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process while respecting the consensus that emerges from intra-Afghan negotiations.
2. To ensure that Afghanistan neither witnesses the violent days of the past nor becomes a space for elements who would harm others beyond its borders.
3. To deepen and sustain economic engagement with Afghanistan for its reconstruction and economic development.
4. To ensure a well-resourced, time-bound return of Afghan refugees to their homeland with dignity, and honour.¹⁹

Pakistan has been preparing for peace in Afghanistan for a long time now. It has taken certain long-term measures that it believes will help stabilize the situation on its own side of the international border. This includes merging the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) into

Taliban and the United States of America, February 29, 2020 which corresponds to Rajab 5, 1441 on the Hijri Lunar calendar and Hoot 10, 1398 on the Hijri Solar calendar, <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Agreement-For-Bringing-Peace-to-Afghanistan-02.29.20.pdf> (accessed August 18, 2020)

¹⁹ "Pakistan proposes 4-point way forward as intra-Afghan talks begin in Qatar, Express Tribune, September 12, 2020, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2263705/pakistan-proposes-4-point-way-forward-as-intra-afghan-talks-begin-in-qatar> (Accessed September 15, 2020)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province,²⁰ and fencing the Pak Afghan border.²¹ The levies have been made part of the police and the system of policing has been overhauled and improved. The fighting capacity of the Frontier Corps (FC), the main law enforcing agency responsible for guarding the border and maintaining law and order has been expanded and enhanced.²² The military led counter insurgency campaign in the former tribal areas has successfully purged the malcontent from most parts of the tribal districts but there are still pockets from where anti state elements can operate. All measures are being taken to curtail the activities of leadership of the Tehreek Taliban Pakistan operating from their sanctuaries in Afghanistan. To complicate the situation, security forces often exchange fire causing casualties to each other troops and souring bilateral relations.

Likely Scenarios

As the Americans prepare to withdraw from Afghanistan, it is important to conjecture possible scenarios that can emerge. Some of these possibilities will depend upon the speed of the American evacuation such as:

- **Swift Withdrawal**

In case the Americans and the other foreign countries with a presence in Afghanistan withdraw quickly without a formal agreement between all Afghan parties, the entire area can descend into chaos. The Afghan National

²⁰ Sartaj Aziz, *Between Dreams and Realities: Some Milestones in Pakistan's History* (Second Edition, Karachi: OUP, 2020), 414; Presentation of the Committee on FATA Reforms 2016, <https://pmo.gov.pk/documents/PresentationFATAReformCommittee.pdf> (Accessed August 18, 2020).

²¹ Mushtaq Yusufzai, Francis Whittaker, Wajahat S. Khan and Ahmed Mengli, "Pakistan is building a fence along border with Afghanistan," *NBC News*, May 17, 2018, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/pakistan-building-fence-along-border-afghanistan-n873291> (Accessed August 18, 2020)

²² Information about FC is available at <http://frontiercorpspk.com/>.

Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) may disappear along with their weapons. There would be lawlessness and Afghanistan may fracture on ethnic lines. This would unleash forces that would be difficult to control. A fresh wave of refugees could flee to Pakistan, to escape the fighting and mayhem in their own country. The Taliban may return to power, but it will take them time to make peace with their rivals.

- **Steady Short-Term Withdrawal**

The US forces withdraw as per plan leaving behind some residual elements to oversee the transition. The local forces opposed to the government in Kabul will wait out for the American withdrawal, while keeping the pressure on the Afghan state forces.

- **Long-Term Phased Withdrawal**

Although a long-term phased withdrawal would be ideal, but this may not be possible. President Trump does not have the patience to continue financing a dead deal. His administration and other donor agencies will have to provide billions of dollars to the government in Kabul to remain afloat.

Probably, under all kinds of evacuation eventualities, there can be brief or prolonged period of turmoil, depending on who finally takes control of the government in Kabul. The size and shape of external involvement can exacerbate the situation in Afghanistan. The odds are that ultimately the Taliban will form a central government. Irrespective of who are the new rulers in Kabul, it will be necessary for all stakeholders to show flexibility and accommodation in their dealings. Although there is a visible donor fatigue; countries, or consortia of countries might still be willing to invest to repair the damaged and wrecked administrative and physical infrastructure of Afghanistan.

There can be several political possibilities of a post-conflict Afghanistan, a few of these are listed below:

- **Independent Power Groups:** Currently there are three to four power groups in Afghanistan, namely the government in Kabul, the Taliban, the Khurasan franchise of the Islamic State (IS) and independent warlords. Given the power that each group wields, a tussle for the ultimate control can result in the fracturing of Afghanistan along ethnic or ideological grounds.
- **A hybrid system of government:** If all Afghan stakeholders agree on a compromise formula, there can be a hybrid form of government, in which everyone is given its due share. Of course, there would be problems regarding the form of government (traditional, Islamic, parliamentary, presidential etc.), position of the head of state (the head of state is currently the President of the country but the Taliban prefer to call their leader the Emir) and share of powerful ministries (interior, foreign affairs, defence etc.)
- **A Taliban Government:** If the Taliban are able to form a government by themselves, they will have to give major concessions to other claimants. This would be necessary to keep them in good humour, so that they do not create problems.

Possible Preventive Measures

For Pakistan, the worst-case scenario would be a complete chaos, if the Americans withdraw Afghanistan without a proper transition. The last helicopter leaving the Saigon embassy rooftop scenario could result in bitter infighting among the Afghans. A peaceful change in Afghanistan is in the best interest of Pakistan. This is quite well understood in Islamabad and that's the reason the government of Pakistan is doing its best to facilitate the

peace talks between the Taliban and the US government. Pakistan is also meaningfully engaging with the government of President Ashraf Ghani.

There is a need that the government of Pakistan should prepare contingency plans for the post withdrawal situations. This should include a meaningful engagement with all internal and external stakeholders in the following areas:

- **Afghan Refugees**

The government of Pakistan should prepare a detailed program regarding the honourable return of the Afghan refugees already present in Pakistan. The government should also give citizenship to third and fourth generation Afghan refugees, who have proven themselves to be loyal and law-abiding citizens of Pakistan. In case there is another exodus from Afghanistan, the government should be prepared to handle it.

- **Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of Afghanistan**

Pakistan must become part of the reconstruction and rehabilitation program of Afghanistan. This will be a meaningful activity not only for those in the business of building and construction but also for specialists who can help rebuild the broken systems in Afghanistan in the health, education, judicial and administrative organizations to name a few.

- **Restoring Trade Ties**

Pakistan had a very favourable trade relationship with Afghanistan. The landlocked status of Afghanistan helped Pakistan in this regard. A fraying relationship and Indian efforts to help Afghanistan circumvent Pakistan has reduced the Pak Afghan trade to a trickle. Although Iran is now wanting to limit Indian influence in the Chabahar port, the Indian investments cannot

be ignored.²³ The Indian Border Roads Organization (BRO) constructed the Zaranj-Dilaram road to connect the Afghan ring road with the Chabahar port.²⁴ Pakistan needs to rebuild trade ties with Afghanistan after the foreign forces leave. According to a conservative estimate there is a potential of at least 5 billion in trade with Afghanistan.²⁵ Good trade relations would be a win-win for all and would reduce the tendencies of indulging in terrorism.

- **International Border**

Government of Pakistan is fencing the border but this should not be an end towards demarcating the international border. Political means must be adopted to once and for all settle the issue of the Durand Line with those, who are about to assume the levers of power in Kabul. An unrecognized border can sour relations between nations.

Conclusion

The remote inaccessible border region of Pakistan's former tribal areas and the adjoining areas in Afghanistan had in the past provided an ideal hiding place for criminals on the run. During the jihad against the Soviet Union, it was used as launching pad for the Mujahideen. After the Soviet withdrawal,

²³ Dipanjan Roy Chaudhry, Iran's Chabahar port exports cargo to India and Southeast Asia, notwithstanding slowdown, *The Economic Times*, August 2, 2020, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/irans-chabahar-port-exports-cargo-to-india-and-southeast-asia-notwithstanding-slowdown/articleshow/77313124.cms?from=mdr> (Accessed September 15, 2020).

²⁴ Ajay Kaul, "India hands over strategic Zaranj-Delaram highway to Afghan," *Hindustan Times*, January 22, 2009, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/india-hands-over-strategic-zaranj-delaram-highway-to-afghan/story-WSbFNMguMWjvY39V7fR46H.html> (Accessed September 15, 2020).

²⁵ Ishrat Hussain and Muhammad Ather Elahi, "The Future of Afghanistan-Pakistan Trade Relations," *USIP Paper*, August 17, 2015, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2015/08/future-afghanistan-pakistan-trade-relations> (Accessed September 15, 2020).

the Mujahedeen dispersed or joined warring factions under independent warlords, fighting for their exclusive turf and influence. Their activities spilled into Pakistan. The porous Pak Afghan border allowed for easy logistics to support effective guerrilla campaigns against foreign forces and state authorities. Irregular militias outside the state control could plant explosive devices with impunity, engage in hit and run tactics before exfiltrating through the gaps in the check posts to disappear into Afghanistan. Only to return when environment was safe.

This situation must change for the good. Neither Afghanistan nor Pakistan can afford to return to anarchy in the future. All efforts must be made to remove the prevailing environment of mistrust and distrust between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Close collaboration and cooperation based on goodwill will help in bringing in peace and stability in the region. No stone should be left unturned to prevent a return to violence. Proper plans must be made to be prepared for all kinds of eventualities including a peaceful and not so peaceful return to normalcy. All levers including economic, diplomatic and military handles must be used to ensure that Pakistan does not suffer from upheaval and violence in Afghanistan and that it benefits from peace and prosperity in the region.

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NACTA was established in 2008. Since then, it has played an important role to understand the dynamics of terrorism and extremism in Pakistan. It has spurred formulation of different policies for countering terrorism and violent extremism. NACTA has also taken substantial measures to advise the government in devising strategies to counter terrorist activities in the country. NACTA is based in Islamabad, Pakistan. Pakistan Journal of Terrorism Research is a peer reviewed bi-annual journal published by National Counter Terrorism Authority. The Journal provides a forum to the leading scholars and professionals in the field of counter- terrorism and security studies. NACTA has the sole copyrights to all the contributions and distribution of Pakistan Journal of Terrorism Research. Authors and contributors are responsible for the content of their submissions



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