

War on Terror: The Impact of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan on the Education in South Waziristan

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Abstract

This paper measures the deconstructive effects of the Global War on Terror (GWOt) in general and particularly the impact of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) on South Waziristan's educational system. In such pursuit, it also notices the positive contribution of the reconstructive steps led by the armed force of Pakistan for the improvement of the education system in South Waziristan. In this context, this study's central thesis is that South Waziristan's educational system has suffered as a result of the GWOt and TTP's hard-line campaign against schooling. However, when the armed forces drove out the extremist and terrorist organizations from the region, good changes were brought about in South Waziristan, including the growth and establishment of advance educational institutions as well as the building of neighborhood markets, roads, and bridges. This study makes it clear that the anti-state activities of TTP are what caused the regional's educational infrastructure to be destroyed. Considering this background,

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the paper proposes that it was the TTP's rigid stance that compelled the government to take military action against them, causing millions of people to flee to safer areas. It concludes that the only way forward is to implement specific plans to relocate Waziristan's dispersed population, build advance educational facilities, and allay their fears of experiencing a repeat of the previous disaster.

Key Words: Global War on Terror, Taliban, South Waziristan, Impact on Education.

1. Introduction

The United States of America (USA) declared war on terrorism in response to the 9/11 attacks. Pakistan assisted the US in the campaign against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda who crossed the Pakistan-Afghanistan border near the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). In order to regroup, plan new attacks against the US and its coalition partners in Afghanistan and the state of Pakistan, the Taliban and the defeated Al-Qaeda militants by default opted for South Waziristan. Post 9/11, the US influenced Pakistani government to retaliate against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda fugitives, particularly the recently founded Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Among others, Naik Muhammad Wazir, Abdullah Mehsud, and Baitullah Mehsud were key Taliban commanders and members of Al-Qaeda who lived in South Waziristan and directed their followers to attack US forces in Afghanistan and Pakistani security personals in Pakistan.

The Taliban opposed public education, particularly the education of girls, which they outlawed. In order to instil Taliban ideology in the local youth and to employ them as a combat force and suicide attack force, they preferred to enrol them in religious seminaries. People were afraid to send their kids to school because of radical Taliban. They also used explosives to blow up a few government-run schools. According to news reports, more than 900 educational institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) were closed and remained non-functional till the eradication of the TTP.¹

¹ Asad Zia, "K-P govt reopens 561 non-function schools," *The Express Tribune*, October 29, 2017. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1544074/k-p-govt-reopens-561-non-functional-schools>

The Pakistani government eventually launched several operations against the terrorist groups in South Waziristan, but Operation Rah-e-Nijat (ORN) ended up being the most successful.² The Taliban stronghold were destroyed during this operation, and many of its important leaders and commanders were either killed or captured alive. As a result, South Waziristan served as a battleground where only the TTP and Pakistani forces engaged in ground-combat, assisted by the US airpower particularly drone attacks. Therefore, it is argued that Waziristan's educational institutions, apart from other private and government infrastructure, were either destroyed or remained non-functional for a decade because the local residents were forced to leave the area and shifted to safer places. At least some 4,28,000 people moved to safer areas around Pakistan and became Internally Displaced Persons (IDP).³

2. Significance of the Study

This study is significant because the researcher did not find any relevant studies on schooling in South Waziristan or the effects of GWOT and TTP even after analysing the pertinent literature. Although there have been other study papers like Khattak (2018), Zeb's (2014), Khan et al (2019) and Mohammad and Bibi (2020), none of them have focused on the topic that this one would.⁴ However, these study articles and many are valuable in terms of specific data, as to how interviewees were quoted, along with the research methodology. The GWOT and

² Khan and Zahid Ali, "Military operations in FATA and PATA," *Strategic Studies* 31 (2011): 129-146.

³ Ahmad and Manzoor, "Implications of the War on Terror for Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, Pakistan," *Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies* 3, (2010).

⁴ Nawab et al., "The Effect of Militancy on Education and Its Socio-Economic Consequences:(A Case Study of Tehsil Safi and Halimzai of Mohmand Agency)" *Journal of Education Culture and Society* 12, no. 2 (2021): 613-630.

TTP's role in the destruction of South Waziristan's educational infrastructure are the subject of this study. This study can be cited by other academics in the future when they need primary information about how South Waziristan's educational infrastructure was destroyed. Further, understanding the status of South Waziristan's education system would help the provincial government prepare to make improvements there in the upcoming years. It will also shed light on how the military helped South Waziristan and other tribal areas to develop better educational institutions that will help wipe out the extremist mindset of the next generation.

3. Limitations of the Study

The researcher encountered a few limitations when doing this research. It was observed that some potential interviewees declined to be interviewed because of inter-tribal disputes and fear of the Taliban, South Waziristan being a combat zone since the entry of Al-Qaeda fighters and its close allies. Some of them expressed the opinion that they couldn't speak the truth about Waziristan's educational system. If they dare to do this, neither the school's owner would spare them from being exposed for their corruption nor the Taliban would want to be blamed for destroying the educational infrastructure. As a result of cultural limitations and the male-dominated nature of Waziristan's society, the researcher was unable to interview any females, with the exception of a small number of elderly ladies. It was found that several respondents' perspectives and replies were skewed as a result of their losses and hardships during the procedure. However, such objectivity was reduced by incisive inquiries. The relevant offices were also hesitant to offer the information after searching for it in the appropriate

places, such as the Federally Administrated Tribal Area (FATA) secretariat, the FATA education department, and the political administration office in Tank. One of the main causes was that these departments didn't keep accurate records of the educational facilities and workers.

4. Brief Introduction of South Waziristan Education

When it comes to education, South Waziristan ranks last for both male and female students.⁵ Moreover, the conditions of female students are particularly alarming. Despite the fact that the 18th amendment to the constitution of Pakistan entails that: “the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to 16 years in such manner as may be determined by law”.⁶ According to the Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–17, the province of Baluchistan has the highest percentage of children who are not in school at 70%, followed by FATA at 57%, the province of Sindh at 52%, the province of Punjab at 40%, the province of KP at 34% and the capital territory of Islamabad at about 12%.⁷ Furthermore, the female literacy rates in KP (2018-19) are 55.3%, 55.5% in Balochistan, 64.7 % in Punjab and 62.2% in Sindh.⁸ Female literacy rates in FATA and South Waziristan are 7.8% and 4.3%, respectively.⁹ As per FATA Annual School Census Report, 2009-10, prepared by Education Management Information

⁵ Zeb and Khan, "Promoting Education in War Zone-Waziristan," *Australian Journal of Biology and Environment Research*.

⁶ National assembly, “Constitution of Pakistan, 1973”, <https://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/part2.ch1.html#:~:text=25A.,may%20be%20determined%20by%20law/>.

⁷ Mr. Abdus Sattar, “State of Education in Pakistan,” <https://pide.org.pk/blog/state-of-education-in-pakistan-2/>

⁸ Yousafzai and Amin, “Latest Economic Survey Shows a Higher Literacy Rate and Education Expenditure”, <https://propakistani.pk/2019/06/10/latest-economic-survey-shows-a-higher-literacy-rate-and-educational-expenditure/>

⁹ Salman Ali, “Women Literacy in FATA” *Daily Times*, April 17, 2017.

System (EMIS), before the Operation Rah-e-Nijat (ORN), there were 638 educational institutions, male and female, in South Waziristan. There was no girls higher secondary school and degree college in the entire South Waziristan. The report also shows that during the academic year 2008–9, out of 638 educational institutions 245 of them lacked boundary walls, 400 lacked water facilities, 343 lacked electricity, and 323 lacked toilets.¹⁰

5. Literature Review

In general, much has been written on the various aspects of terrorism and military operations against terrorists, as well as their effects on Pakistan and FATA since the event of 9/11 (see Estrada et al 2019¹¹, Khan 2011¹², Zakaria et al 2019¹³, Abbasi 2013¹⁴, Chughtai 2013¹⁵, Khan & Ahmed 2017¹⁶, Ullah & Khalil, 2019¹⁷). These studies shed light on various aspects of Pakistan, FATA, and Waziristan in relation to GWOT and the TTP, demonstrating that GWOT and the Taliban

¹⁰ EMIS, Directorate of Education, "FATA Annual School Census Report of Govt. Educational Institutions" (2009-10).

¹¹ Estrada et al., "The economic impact of terrorism: a new model and its application to Pakistan" *Journal of Policy Modelling* 37, no. 6 (2015): 1065-1080.

¹² Khan and Zahid Ali, "Military operations in FATA and PATA" *Strategic Studies* 31 (2011): 129-146.

¹³ Zakaria et al., "Effect of terrorism on economic growth in Pakistan: an empirical analysis" *Economic research-Ekonomska istraživanja* 32, no. 1 (2019): 1794-1812.

¹⁴ Abbasi and Nadia Mushtaq, "Impact of terrorism on Pakistan" *Strategic Studies* 33, no. 2 (2013): 33-68.

¹⁵ Chughtai and Muhammad Waqas, "The Impact of Rising Terrorism and Military Operations on Socio Economic Culture of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan" *A Journal of Peace and Development* 3, no. 1 (2013): 18-32.

¹⁶ Khan, Gulawar and Manzoor Ahmed, "Socioeconomic Deprivation, Fanaticism and Terrorism: A Case of Waziristan, Pakistan" *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture* 38, no. 2 (2017): 65-83.

¹⁷ Ullah, Habib and Muhammad Hanif Khalil, "The impact of US invasion in Afghanistan on the tribal culture of Waziristan" *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture* 40, no. 1 (2019): 123-142.

harm the country's socio-economic development and left millions of people homeless.

There are some studies on the impact of the GWOT and military operations on the Pakistan's educational system (See for instance Khattak, 2018¹⁸ Hussain, 2016¹⁹ Naqvi et al, 2012,²⁰ Saqib & Ahmad, 2014).²¹ However, there is hardly any authentic research available when it comes to South Waziristan except Khan Zeb's paper "Prompting Education in War Zone-Waziristan".²² To the best of our knowledge, no pertinent research was found to examine the effects of GWOT and the TTP on education in South Waziristan, which has remained a hotbed of terrorist elements since 9/11. Thus, the goal of this research is to highlight the effects of GWOT and the TTP on education in South Waziristan. In this regard, the following few sources are used as literature review which could prove to be beneficial for the future researchers on subjects related to education, GWOT and the military operations in Pakistan. Khattak's paper relies on primary as well as secondary data, but her paper is focused on Swat (a district in northern KP). The paper argues that the war against terrorism in a way is also war against women's education in the district of Swat. Khattak et.al, field work is of particular importance.²³ We follow her style of

¹⁸ Khattak et al., "The War on Terror is a War on Women: The Impact of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism on Women's Education in Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan)" *Journal of International Women's Studies* 19, no. 6 (2018): 157-177.

¹⁹ Hussain and Ameer, "Impact of Terrorism on Education in Pakistan" *Journal of Professional Research in Social Sciences* 3, no. 01 (2016): 1.

²⁰ Naqvi et al., "The impact of militancy on education in FATA" *TIGAH: A Journal of Peace and Development* 2, no. 1 (2012): 22-40.

²¹ Saqib, Muhammad and Syed Mudasir Ahmad, "Root causes of low female literacy in FATA Pakistan:(a case study of Jalozaï camp)" *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 4, no. 3 (2014): 457.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 18:39.

giving narrations of the interviewees. Another study conducted by Khan et al. (2019) wherein the main objectives of their study are to investigate the reasons behind terrorism in KP, how it affects students' behaviour, and how it affects students' academic performance. However, this study has not mentioned South Waziristan and the repercussions of GWOT and armed operations on education there.²⁴

The research by Mohammad and Bibi (2020) focuses on the psychological challenges that educational administrators encounter when schools reopen in terrorism-affected areas following Internally Displaced People (IDPs) rehabilitation. They also came up with educational data for Waziristan, which remained useful for the statistical side, but not for the qualitative aspect of this paper. The main argument of their paper revolves around student-teacher behaviours and security issues, wherein they conclude that the behaviours of students as well as teachers are changed and are non-cooperative. Furthermore, they also concluded that the presence of military forces in the area is a kind of threat of future calamity and that the element of fear remains quite visible amongst the respondents. Out of 90 respondents, 70% to 80% of them came up with a different kind of threat feeling, such as unknown mining bomb blasts and further terrorist incidents including threats of starting the conflict again respectively. They opined that, owing to different kinds of fear, parents do not send their children to school. Overall, the paper gave us insight

²⁴ Khan et al., "The effects of militancy and military operations on Pashtun culture and traditions in FATA" *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)* 3, no. 1 (2019): 74-84.

regarding the selection of interviewees, which we have utilized during our fieldwork.²⁵

Similarly, Zeb's paper spotlights educational progress during the conflict period in Waziristan. It is well written and full of statistics vis-a-vis educational institutions in North and South Waziristan. His argument that education has been ignored in FATA and Waziristan is linked to our argument as well. He also appreciates the role played by the government and security forces because they established certain new educational institutions to keep the new generation away from fanatic ideologues like the Taliban. He also comes up with contradictory views. For instance, on the one hand, he claims that the expansion of new institutions in Waziristan, which was made possible by the Pakistani government's working with international donors, is the reason for the growth of the educational sector. Whereas, on the other hand, he states that a decline in enrolment rates at the elementary, middle, and high school levels has coincided with an escalation in conflict. He rightly pointed out certain factors that affected the education sector badly, such as ghost schools, the roles played by the Taliban, military operations, and drone attacks. However, his paper is mostly based on secondary sources and lacks the use of primary sources. He does not cover the impact of GWOT and the role played by the Taliban in destroying Waziristan's education.²⁶

²⁵ Muhammad, Niaz, and Shabnam Bibi. "Psychological Problems Faced by Educational Managers of Public Schools after Rehabilitation in South Waziristan Tribal District (SWTD)" *Responsible Education, Learning and Teaching in Emerging Economies* 2, no. 1 (2020): 37-48.

²⁶ Zeb, Khan and Zahid Shahab Ahmed, "Structural violence and terrorism in the federally administered tribal areas of Pakistan" *Civil Wars* 21, no. 1 (2019): 1-24.

Significant economic, educational, and human losses were caused by the GWOT and subsequent security operations against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in South Waziristan. It is estimated that during the war against terror, more than 56,000 fatalities and 42,000 injuries are recorded. Furthermore, due to the Taliban actions against government and military forces, more than 428,000 Waziristanis were internally displaced. As a result of the GWOT and the security forces' operations against the TTP'S terrorists, about 449 educational institutions in the Mahsud dominated area were either closed or destroyed.²⁷ It is claimed that during the engagement of the armed forces with the terrorist elements in Waziristan only 13 of the 105 government-run primary schools in Waziristan's WANA sub-division were operational; the remaining 92 were essentially closed and were being used as male guesthouses, and cattle farms.²⁸ The situation is same throughout the remaining tehsils and subdivisions of South Waziristan.

Zahid Ali Khan, in his paper, discusses military operations conducted by the armed forces against militants based in former tribal areas. His paper seeks to comprehend the costs of operations and their impact on people's relationships with the state. Furthermore, Khan's paper attempts to analyse the political, economic, and social implications of Pakistan's military operations. It is a detailed report on various military operations and peace treaties signed by the army with militant commanders in South Waziristan. The paper, however, doesn't

²⁷ Ibid., 26:41.

²⁸ Ibid.

discuss implications for Waziristan's education sector.²⁹ Similarly, Husain's paper revolves around three objectives which are a) to know the consequences of growing terrorism in Pakistan, b) to build up an efficient understanding of violent extremism and terrorism that will help policymakers to implement an effective national policy to eliminate terrorism and reduce military operations, and c) to understand the effects of terrorism on education. He focuses on terrorist acts committed in educational institutions in Balochistan, KP, FATA, and Islamabad. However, he too does not discuss the impact on Waziristan's education sector.³⁰

Further, Ahmed Ali Naqvi et al. presents detailed but comparative data on educational institutions and the number of teaching staff from 2004 to 2008 in erstwhile FATA's region including Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA). According to them, there are 674567 educational institutions and 22,404 teachers (male and female) in the former FATA. Their study blames the Taliban for the destruction of educational institutions in FATA and PATA. According to them, around 27 educational institutions are fully damaged by heavy explosives by the Taliban's militants while 8 are partially impacted by the Taliban's militants.³¹ However, the figures with which Naqvi et al. come up are very low because during field work, we observed many more educational institutions that were destroyed during the period from 2008 to 2022. At some places, the paper shows that 447 schools in South Waziristan remained non-functional on account of security

²⁹Ali, Khan and Zahid, "Military operations in FATA and PATA: implications for Pakistan" *Strategic Studies* 32, no. 1 (2012): 129.

³⁰ Hussain and Ameer, "Impact of Terrorism on Education in Pakistan" *Journal of Professional Research in Social Sciences* 3, no. 01 (2016): 1.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 20:39.

concerns while at others they claim that only 35 institutions are destroyed by militants.³² It may be noted that in South Waziristan, especially the two sub-divisions inhabited by the Mahsud tribe, the armed forces and the Taliban were in combat until the former declared the area safe for the residents to return to their homes in December 2016. Based on first-hand information gathered from interviewees, the following part explores and assesses: how the GWOT and the Taliban's presence in that area affected South Waziristan's educational system? The aforementioned gap would be filled as a result, and subsequent researchers might utilize it in their work. However, on the basis of existing literature review, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

- i. How and why South Waziristan became a hub for terrorism and extremism?
- ii. Why did it turn into GWOT battleground? So why, in addition to other targets, do the Taliban militants attack educational institutions?
- iii. What motivates the government, in particular the armed forces, to restore the crumbling public facilities like public markets, highways, and bridges?

6. Research Methodology

This study applies a qualitative approach in research. This study thoroughly explains the effects of terrorism on education in Waziristan as well as the Taliban's stance toward education in South Waziristan. It is difficult to describe the opinions of the residents of the impacted area

³² Ibid., 31:43.

by exclusively relying on the quantitative method. Therefore, to explain the case in hand, the research employs qualitative method rather than a quantitative method.

Primary and secondary data were both used in this research. A sample of 30 people who are either from the research area or who served there during the GWOT and following armed operations are chosen for the collection of primary data. Based on an open-ended questionnaire, interviews with important stakeholders in South Waziristan's education are chosen as a data collection method. Principals, social workers, parents of the students, representatives from the education department, and former TTP members who have surrendered to the military are among those who have been interviewed. The secondary data source consists of written works such as books, essays, published and un-published theses, working papers, news reports, newspaper articles, and various internet websites. It should be mentioned that none of the interviewees were prepared to reveal their identities due to the TTP and its allies' perceived danger. Consequently, this research report did not use their names. It is also crucial to note that the existing literature is insufficient and, rather, fails to adequately account for the influence of GWOT and the TTP on South Waziristan's educational sector. Therefore, gathering primary data proved to be crucial for assessing the effects of GWOT and the TTP's alleged rule on South Waziristan's educational system.

7. Discussion and Analysis

Post 9/11, the US declared war on Al-Qaeda and its Taliban associates. George W. Bush, the president of the United States, said in September 2001 that each country must choose whether to support us or the terrorists.³³ Due to its internal and regional problems, Pakistan was forced by Bush's pronouncement to join the US as a front-line state in the GWOT.³⁴ South Waziristan received widespread media attention after the US's triumph in Afghanistan over the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. The Taliban left South Waziristan first for protection before moving to FATA to regroup and plot attacks against the US forces in Afghanistan. The 2560-kilometer border with Afghanistan was not fenced and there was little regulatory mechanism in place to control cross-border infiltration. As a result, the Taliban and the Al-Qaeda militants revived.³⁵

Consequently, South Waziristan rose to prominence as one of Pakistan's most dangerous and violent areas. The TTP turned against Pakistan and started targeting security forces and innocent civilians under a variety of pretexts, in addition to US pressure on Pakistan to take action against terrorists on its own. Therefore, Pakistan's security forces launched a number of operations against both internal and international terrorist organisations, with operation Rah-e-Nijat (2009

³³ Murphy, and John M, "Our mission and our moment: George W. Bush and September 11th" *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 6, no. 4 (2003): 607-632.

³⁴ The Bush declaration basically was meant for Pakistan only because Bush Administration was of the opinion that without the support of Pakistan it is not possible for them to eradicate terrorism from Afghanistan owing to the later role during the cold war era.

³⁵ Williams and Matthew W, "The British colonial experience in Waziristan and its applicability to current operations" *Army Command and General Staff Coll Fort Leavenworth Ks School of Advanced Military Studies*, 2005.

to 2010) serving as the final and conclusive operation to exterminate the forces of TTP and Al-Qaeda.³⁶

Taking into account everything said above, Waziristan turned into a hotbed of terrorist activity and a battleground for military operations, severely harming the region's educational system. The administration requested the residents to evacuate the area and seek refuge in safer parts of the neighbouring districts as a result of the Taliban's attitude. To avoid military action, the Taliban used local population as a scapegoat. According to one estimate, 428,000 people were internally displaced, while the Waziristani population estimates that more than 150,000 homes, including 8 mosques, have been destroyed since military operations against the terrorist groups began.³⁷

Since there are no reliable statistics to cite due to the Taliban's and GWOT's destructive activities, it has been reported in various ways regarding educational institutions. For instance, South Waziristan is one of the most devastated areas in Pakistan's North-Western region, with media estimates stating that more than 600 educational institutions were shut down and remained non-functional for more than a decade. More than 449 educational institutions were either closed and non-functional in South Waziristan alone, or they have suffered partial or whole damage.³⁸ Similar to this, Muhammad and Bibi claimed that out of a total of 741 schools, 296 of them—including elementary, middle, and high schools—were functional in South Waziristan in 2016.

³⁶ Jones, Seth G., and C. Christine Fair, "Counterinsurgency in Pakistan" *RAND Corp Arlington VA National Security Research Div*, 2010.

³⁷ Khan and Zahir, "Socio-economic Impact of war against terror on the people of South Waziristan" *MS dissertation, Lasbela University Uthal, Balochistan*, 2021.

³⁸ Ahmed, Zahid Shahab and Khan Zeb, "Impacts of terrorism-related violence on Pakistan and its youth" *Journal of People's Studies*-Volume 1, no. 2 (2015): 40.

Meanwhile, 445 of them—including community schools—were not. One of the parents of a girl in the eighth grade made the following remarks regarding females' education:

Soon as they gained control of society, they began interfering in people's personal matters and altering the sociocultural, economic, and educational systems in the area. They ordered the managers and teachers of the institutes for girls' education to stop attending classes, and they outlawed girls' education in South Waziristan. There would be serious repercussions, the parents of the students were also told.³⁹

It can be inferred that extremist elements were first responsible for brainwashing young people to instill militant values. Additionally, they opposed the government-run educational system and worked to sway young people's opinions against it by pressuring them to enroll in religious seminaries. They forbade girls from attending school and threatened their parents with dire repercussions.⁴⁰ However, the overall objective was successful because the Taliban bases were taken out and the military deemed the region safe for the local population. He continues by saying that while the forces made an effort to avoid attacking both public and private property, the Taliban blew up these structures after they had vacated them as a result of the forces' advancement because they were using public and private buildings, particularly schools and colleges, as bunkers and living quarters.

Regarding the destruction of government buildings, including schools, one of the TTP members who had surrendered stated that the Taliban had "purposefully exploited government structures, particularly Frontier Constabulary (FC) forts and educational institutions, in order for the armed forces to demolish them while targeting the Taliban." Because the majority of houses are constructed

³⁹ WhatsApp communication with a parent of a student by the authors, June 16, 2022.

⁴⁰ Personal communication with a chairman of local bodies at Makeen, June 18, 2022.

with watchtowers, from which one can readily view the movement of soldiers, the Taliban also utilised civilians' homes as cover and locations for attacks on army convoys.⁴¹ In American military history, peace has been defined as the absence of fighting in a society. As a result, the military holds that using force to maintain peace is necessary. From a military standpoint, peace is seen as the ultimate goal rather than merely a means to an end. Peace also requires the presence of a legitimate administration that is in place in addition to the absence of conflict. This is what happened in Waziristan, where hundreds of educational institutions, health centres, bridges, Frontier Constabulary forts, and millions of people's homes were destroyed in order to eliminate the evil forces of the TTP. Ultimately, the area was declared free of the extremists' forces and declared to be under the control of the government.

Although the government provided compensation money at the rate of Rs. 400,000 for entirely destroyed houses and Rs. 200,000 for partially damaged houses, it would take time for the residents of the region to relocate because the damaged houses need time to be rebuilt. Numerous families are still awaiting their settlement amounts. All of the local marketplaces have been demolished as well. However, the government built new markets in the same places where the old ones had been, under the supervision of the military troops. The army has started a number of road improvements that link South Waziristan to the North Waziristan districts of Tank, Wana, and Miranshah, as well as other neighbouring locations. For instance, the army built the 72-kilometer-long dual-carriageway Miranshah-Razmak-Makeen road,

⁴¹ WhatsApp communication with a surrendered TTP member by the authors, July 28, 2022.

which is a component of the 705-kilometer Central Trade Corridor.⁴² Additionally, it built structures like Tank-Jandola-Makeen, Tank-Gomal Zam-Tanai-Wana, and others that would impact the socioeconomic climate of the area and the manner of life of the locals.⁴³

Along with the aforementioned initiatives, the military forces also started a number of development projects, particularly with regard to hospitals and schools. It is commendable that the Cadet College Wana, the Cadet College Spinkai, the Technical College/centre at Molay Khan Serai, the Army Public School and girls high school at Chagmalai, the Army Public School at Kanigurram, the Army Public School Wana, the Model School Sultan Kot Makeen, and others have been established.⁴⁴ Around 2,027 graduates of the five cadet colleges, as well as students from engineering and medical schools and other prestigious Pakistani universities, have been recruited as officers in the armed forces over the past five years.⁴⁵ Sixty students from the Wana Cadet College in South Waziristan were commissioned into the military as officers, 57 were enrolled in medical schools, 69 in engineering schools and 197 in other esteemed educational institutions across the country. In a similar vein, Cadet College Spinkai in South Waziristan also sent 46 of its cadets to other esteemed educational institutions of the country, as well as 21 of its cadets to the armed forces as commissioned officers and five to medical schools and nine to engineering universities. Regarding the military's control over South

⁴² ISPR, press release on June, 14, 2016.

<https://ispr.gov.pk/press-release-detail.php?id=3362>

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Personal communication, an ex-Vice Principal cadet college, Spinkai at Karachi, July 28, 2022.

⁴⁵ Rahimullah Yosufzai, "KP's conflict-hit areas benefit from army-run institutions," *The News*, February 21, 2021.

Waziristan's educational advancement, a respondent made the following comments.

The military has established cadet colleges, army public schools, technical colleges, upgraded various primary, middle, and high schools in an effort to help the people of Waziristan, who have been denied access to such educational institutions for decades. These schools, especially the cadet colleges, would provide many pupils with a high-quality education, and the students who attend these colleges would act as peacekeepers and educational ambassadors in their local tehsils.

He also asserts that with the establishment of cadet colleges and the military's interest in education, there has been some parental competition over who will be able to enrol their children in these institutions.⁴⁶ The information on the total number, demolished, renovated, newly constructed, and upgraded schools and colleges that is shown in the table below is from an in-service employee of the South Waziristan Education Department, situated in District Tank.

Total School	Destroyed	Renovated	Newly Est.	Est. by Army	up-graded
814	410	100	19	13	13

Table No. 1: Total number, destroyed, renovated, newly established, established by army, and up-graded – 2016 to 2022.

It is important to highlight that, as the respondent acknowledged, not even a staff member of the relevant department is aware of the precise figures for the aforementioned categories. In conclusion, it might be claimed that the GWOT, the Taliban, and the military operation have an impact on the region in multiple ways. The

⁴⁶ WhatsApp communication, an overseas Pakistan basically belonging to South Waziristan, July 28, 2022.

good news is that things have started to improve. The building of roads, educational facilities (such as cadet colleges and army public schools), and the renovation and upgrading of hospitals and government schools are a symbol of change and development in the years to come, which is reducing the fear of the population of another catastrophe.

8. Conclusion

There is no denying that South Waziristan suffered greatly during the War on Terror as a result of the Taliban's presence and anti-state activities. Taliban elements targeted education as their main objective, particularly the education of girls. As the government requested that residents relocate to a safer place, it is clear from the discussion above that all educational institutions in the two sub-divisions, Ladha and Sarwaikai, remained closed to students. All of this takes place as a result of crossfire between the TTP and the military. More than 500,000 individuals have been internally displaced due to Taliban's anti-state operations and their obstinate attitude against a peaceful resolution in accordance with the Pakistani constitution. Without a doubt, South Waziristan has served as a buffer zone for Pakistan's succeeding governments since the colonial era. Due to a lack of appropriate educational institutions and facilities including roads, hospitals, and police, ultimately drove the entire erstwhile FATA towards extremism. Additionally, the federal government, the government of the KP, and the armed forces must continue the development process and provide additional funding for the rehabilitation of the people, the building of their homes, and the removal of their fear that the region will be subjected to further disaster. Moreover, it is advised and suggested that the provincial

government set up a robust system in the heart of South Waziristan to oversee the process of rehabilitating the schools, the necessity of opening new schools and colleges where necessary, the upgrading of the current ones, and the termination of funding to the owners of ghost schools and colleges.