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1. Taliban Insurgency: A Counterinsurgency Perspective
2. Inequality and the Militant Threat in Pakistan
3. Deradicalization: Approaches and Models
4. Crisis of Political Development and Human Rights Violations
5. Tablighi Jamaat: Discourse and Challenges



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Contents

Abstracts	5
Papers	
Taliban Insurgency: A Counterinsurgency Perspective <i>Muhammad Amir Rana</i>	9
Inequality and the Militant Threat in Pakistan <i>Muhammad Azam and Safiya Aftab</i>	33
Deradicalization: Approaches and Models <i>Saba Noor and Shagufta Hayat</i>	47
Crisis of Political Development and Human Rights Violations <i>Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi</i>	57
Tablighi Jamaat: Discourse and Challenges <i>Muhammad Amir Rana</i>	71
Note on Contributors	85
Guidelines for Contributors	87

Abstracts

Taliban Insurgency in Pakistan: A Counterinsurgency Perspective

Muhammad Amir Rana

Pakistan Army launched a massive offensive against Taliban in Malakand region of NWFP in the last week of April 2009. The operation was chosen as a last resort after two agreements by the provincial government with non-state actors failed to ensure peace in the region. However, the counterinsurgents have not benefited fully from insurgents' weaknesses nor built on their own strengths. To understand the factors that allowed the Taliban a foothold in the areas that they now control would go a long way in identifying ways to counter them. How counterinsurgents manipulate insurgents' disadvantage in their own favor would ultimately prove crucial. The task requires vision, will and capacity, but so far the state seems to lack effective strategy on this tactical front. The Taliban insurgency in the tribal areas has regional dimensions as well, with regional and global actors trying to secure their own interests in the area. But ignoring Pakistan's concerns and regional interests would frustrate the counterinsurgency effort. Pakistan cannot snuff out the insurgency alone. The international community asking Pakistan to do more must show its commitment to doing more itself on these counts.

Inequality and the Militant Threat in Pakistan

Muhammad Azam and Safiya Aftab

Growing attacks point to militancy gaining ground in Pakistan. A combination of factors pushes young people into the embrace of militant groups. This paper examines inequality as one of the key factors influencing recruitment into militant organizations. Various forms of inequality and their link to militancy have been considered, with the main focus being on economic and income inequality. Most studies suggest a positive correlation between militancy and inequality. Differences in income, disparities in the education system, inequality of opportunity and gender are considered as possible factors behind militancy. In light of the cited empirical and non-empirical research, it is argued that inequality is a strong contributing factor towards militancy in Pakistan.

Deradicalization: Approaches and Models

Saba Noor and Shagufta Hayat

Several terms are used to explain the phenomenon of deradicalization the world over. The war against terror, being a war of ideas as well, cannot be won solely through use of military force, and collecting intelligence and securing borders. Efforts are needed to eliminate hatred, intolerance and extreme interpretations of religion. Deradicalization and rehabilitation programs aimed at weaning away radicalized individuals from extreme ideologies are an important component of the strategy to defeat terrorism and extremism. This paper reviews multiple approaches to and models of deradicalization initiatives in place in various countries. Many of these approaches implemented by different states converge at some points, but also differ in crucial respects. The effectiveness and advantages of various models are discussed to facilitate distinction between successful and unsuccessful deradicalization strategies.

Crisis of Political Development and Human Rights Violations

Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi

There is a deep correlation between the crises of political development and human rights violations; the more acute the crises, the higher the incidence of human rights violation. Thus the hypothesis is that the absence of the crises of political development is tantamount to human happiness. The five major crisis of political development are those of identity, legitimacy, participation, representation and penetration. The growth of these crises can lead to disequilibrium in society and pushes it towards disintegration. The crisis of identity can lead to violence against minorities. The crisis of legitimacy, a conspicuous phenomenon in non-representative societies, results in bloodshed and destruction. Rule without public support leads to restrictions on public debate and political participation, which ends up in the crisis of participation. Mass revolution, insurgencies and clandestine struggles are largely witnessed in societies where curbs are placed on channels of public debate and people are not allowed to participate or popular leaders are harassed or killed. Army's role in politics akin to a praetorian ruler has resulted in civil war, internal displacement and human miseries. The growth of pseudo politicians and undemocratic forces are a result of the crisis of political development and leads to infringement of human rights. Factors of

instability are associated with the crisis of political development which ultimately infringes upon the promotion of human rights.

Tablighi Jamaat: Discourse and Challenges

Muhammad Amir Rana

The role and impact of Tablighi Jamaat (TJ) have been under discussion for a long time. It has been a topic of discussion not only for the religious circles in the Muslim world, but for western scholars as well. Salafites not only object to the approach adopted by the TJ but also reject it, labeling it as an unlawful innovation (*bid'ah*).

The range of the TJ's activities, however, continues to expand. This paper looks at the TJ in the context of South Asia, particularly Pakistan, where it originated and expanded. The Jamaat's main emphasis is on making a man an example of a good character. It has deeply penetrated into South Asia's Muslim society.

Criticism against the TJ is leveled on two counts—its belief system, and, the method of its operations. In addition, objections are raised regarding the duration of visits, schedules, and the method of administering the oath of allegiance. Reservations and concerns are expressed in the West with reference to the TJ and its potential link to jihad, terrorism and political Islam.

Taliban Insurgency in Pakistan: A Counterinsurgency Perspective

Muhammad Amir Rana

Introduction

Pakistan military launched a massive offensive against Taliban groups in Malakand region of NWFP in the last week of April 2009. The operation was chosen as a last resort after the failure of two agreements of the provincial government, first with the local Taliban group, led by Mullah Fazlullah, and second with defunct Tehrik Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM) headed by Sufi Muhammad. Taliban had refused, in violation of the agreement, to lay down their weapons even after the promulgation of the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation in the restive region. Taliban attacks on security forces including Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps (FC) and police did not stop either. Before the launch of the security operation and while the peace agreement was still intact, militants carried out 18 terrorist attacks in Swat, Dir and Buner districts of Malakand region in the month of April alone. Eight of these attacks targeted security forces, including the army and police. That was a clear indication that the militants had no respect for the peace agreement and wanted to pursue their own agenda. Indeed it was Taliban's advance into adjacent areas of Swat, mainly Buner and Shangla, which forced the government to launch an operation.

The operation in Malakand is the 15th major military operation against Taliban in NWFP and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. Almost all previous operations had eventually ended with the government reaching a peace agreement or truce with Taliban. After every agreement, the government declared its victory. Taliban, nonetheless, used these agreements strategically to their advantage. These deals had not only consolidated their control in certain areas but also helped them make new recruitments, vital for making further advances.

The state response has been called in question throughout this counterinsurgency drive against Taliban in the country's northwestern parts. Reservations have been expressed about the state's will, capacity and the military capabilities to defeat the militants. Very few attempts, however, have been made so far at the state or non-state level to see the Taliban uprising in the counterinsurgency perspective, which is fundamental to understanding the dynamics and mechanisms of the phenomenon. Initially the Taliban were regarded as a reactionary, temporary movement, motivated and inspired by the events in Afghanistan. The Pakistani state and society were hesitant to

declare it a terrorist movement despite Taliban's links with Al Qaeda. It was also seen as a religious, social reformist and political movement at different times and the state took measures accordingly. Taliban's potential to threaten and challenge the Pakistani state and society was not assessed appropriately until the situation transformed into a full-fledged insurgency, which alarmingly linked itself to regional and global violent movements.

This paper is an attempt to view the Taliban movement as an insurgent movement and analyze it within the available counterinsurgency perspectives to explore the best counterinsurgency options in the situation. Which factors shaped the movement and how the state responded to this challenge will be key questions for analysis. The paper will also examine the opportunities for the state and the inherent disadvantages and threats the Taliban pose to it. The state's capacity to take on the insurgents will also be explored in terms of optimization of its strengths and overcoming its weaknesses. Comprehension of possible future scenarios of eventual success or failure of the counterinsurgency and its impact on the state and society will be another underlying theme.

Background

After the fall of the Taliban and dislodgement of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan in 2001, members of both sneaked into Pakistan's tribal areas bordering Afghanistan. Initially they concentrated on the South Waziristan tribal region and expanded their support base among the local tribes on ideological basis, and through money and marriages in tribal families.¹ They waged extensive guerrilla operations against the coalition troops in Afghanistan until Pakistani forces launched the Wana operation, in February 2004. The first clashes between Taliban and security forces started when Al Qaeda and the Taliban started kidnapping Americans troops and Afghan government officials. They used these captives as bargaining chips to seek the release of Taliban and Al Qaeda detainees held in Afghan prisons. The US started pressing Pakistan to stop the tribal people from helping Taliban and Al Qaeda. It also threatened to use force in Pakistan's tribal areas if the residents there were not refrained from supporting Al Qaeda and Taliban.² The Pakistani government apprised the tribal leaders of the gravity of the situation and asked them to hand over foreign militants living in their area. The demand escalated the already simmering tension.

Soon, incidents of exchange of fire started between government forces and militants/tribesmen. On September 5, 2002, a tribe in Bannu district of NWFP forced Pakistan Army to release six prisoners arrested over alleged links to Al Qaeda.³ This rang alarm bells for Pakistan Army. When a Wazir sub-tribe from Akakhel, in North Waziristan, helped Al-Qaeda fighters attack a camp

of US forces across the border in Afghanistan and kidnap five US troops in July 2003, Pakistan Army launched the first major military operation against the tribes. This operation, which continued for three days, was described as a “routine military exercise” by the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR). According to tribesmen, Bannu was only used as headquarters while the real operation was carried out in Akakhel Pass against Waziri tribes who had provided shelter to the Taliban and Al-Qaeda terrorists involved in abducting US troops. The Pakistani forces secured the release of the abducted troops and sent them to Afghanistan through Bannu Airport.

At the same time, Pakistan tried to bar tribes’ support for Al Qaeda and Taliban through traditional tribal means like holding jirgas and forming tribal lashkars. The first such jirga was held in August 2002 and the first armed lashkar to expel the foreigners was raised in October 2002.⁴ But the tribes made these attempts half-heartedly with a view to protect their own financial and political interests. In fact, they were inclined towards the militants and perceived them as holy warriors fighting against the infidel forces in Afghanistan. When all these efforts failed to achieve the desired results the government imposed economic sanctions on the tribes. The first response to the sanctions was very negative and militants expanded their operations to urban areas of NWFP. They launched several attacks in Peshawar and Bannu districts. But with the passage of time the sanctions started to bite and tribal militants agreed to reconcile with the government.

The government also tried other options to resolve the issue, and at one stage it was willing to accept the foreign militants in the area by enlisting them under fake registration. When the militants intensified their activities in the tribal areas, the political administration and Pakistan Army looked for a way of rapprochement and struck several deals with them, as military operations against them had not yielded results until then. In one such agreement, reached on June 27, 2002 between the tribal chiefs and Pakistan Army, it was agreed that the houses and property of a person giving refuge to a foreigner shall be destroyed. Pakistan Army and the political administration of the tribal areas settled all the issues with tribal militants by paying huge amounts of money to them.⁵

Jirgas, lashkars, economic sanctions, registration, payment of money, use of force and even peace agreements failed to resolve the issue. Nonetheless, the primary issue of the presence of foreign militants in the tribal areas had gone in the background with the passage of time. Pakistani or local Taliban, as they are called, and who were created, sponsored and trained by Al Qaeda and Afghan Taliban, came to the forefront and emerged as the biggest challenge for the government. They also strengthened cooperation with Pakistani and Kashmir-based jihad groups and established strongholds in Bajaur,

Waziristan, Mohmand, Khyber and Orakzai tribal agencies in FATA, and in Swat, Darra Adam Khel, Tank, Bannu, Mardan, Lakki Marwat and Dera Ismail Khan in NWFP. Their next destination can be Punjab and Karachi as many assessments and media reports indicate.

Taliban: An Insurgent Movement

An insurgency is usually described as “the pursuit of the policy of a party, inside a country, by every means.”⁶ The Taliban movement in Pakistani tribal areas was pursuing its agenda in a similar way. Taliban is not a distinct organization but an alliance of different groups, which have common goals but different agendas, making it a more complex phenomenon. When troops from the US and its coalition partners toppled the Taliban government in Afghanistan, there was a wave of sympathy for Taliban, especially in Pakistan’s tribal areas because of the region’s proximity with Afghanistan and ethnic and religious links. When Taliban and Al-Qaeda militants fled Afghanistan to Pakistan’s tribal areas, the local tribes provided them shelter. Militants cleverly took full advantage of the traditional tribal hospitality. As discussed earlier, confrontation between tribes and the state had started on the issue of presence of foreign militants in the tribal areas. To safeguard and justify their presence, foreign militants had encouraged the local tribes to form groups to wage jihad in Afghanistan and against those who stopped or disapproved of jihad. Religious parties, jihad groups and former “mujahideen” who had fought against Soviet troops and also served in the Taliban regime in Afghanistan from 1994 to 2001 were encouraged to form or join the local Taliban militant groups.

During the past eight years, Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan have moved strategically to gain increasing control of the frontier regions at both sides of the Pak-Afghan border. There is no credible evidence to suggest that the local (Pakistani) Taliban movement had the potential to transform into an insurgent movement until a peace deal was reached between commander Nek Muhammad and the military on March 27, 2004 which encouraged the local Taliban to enforce their ‘writ’ in the area. There is however sufficient evidence that the Taliban were not keen on the imposition of *Shariah* and their primary purpose was to use the slogan of jihad to recruit human resource and collect funds.⁷ Baitullah Mehsud first drew the features of his own system in the tribal areas when he first reached an agreement with the government on February 22, 2005.⁸ He had been successful in seeking assurances from the government that he would be allowed to enforce *Shariah* in the area in exchange for not sending his militants to Afghanistan. He did not abide by the agreement. At the same time, the pact helped the Taliban move forward to establish their control in some of the areas. Other Taliban groups followed in his footsteps and formulated a four-point strategy to gain control over an

area. It was a milestone for the movement, which provided it an ideological, moral and social 'cause'. The cause is always considered vital for an insurgent movement. It provides an identity to the movement and separates it from criminal syndicates.

Under Baitullah's four-point strategy, his fighters took steps against criminals and started collecting "taxes" to speed up their operations. Secondly, they killed or forced out influential tribal elders, who they knew could challenge their authority. Thirdly, they created a parallel justice system as a dispute resolution mechanism dispensing prompt justice.⁹ Only in Bajaur Agency, one Taliban court had registered 1,400 cases until August 2008 and decided 1,000 out of them.¹⁰ Finally, they organized their administration where they appointed their trusted men.¹¹ The Taliban also contributed to the welfare of the local population to gain their sympathies. In June 2008, Taliban in South Waziristan established a fund to help the victims of the military operation and distributed 15 million rupees among the locals.¹²

Their strategy eroded the traditional concept of collective responsibility, which adversely affected the political administration. Other actors who could create any ideological or tactical challenge for the Taliban were treated harshly, especially non-governmental organizations and formal and modern educational institutions. Taliban groups imposed a ban on NGOs, targeted CD shops and attacked educational institutions, especially girls' schools. From January to May 2008, they attacked 29 schools, of which 17 were girls' educational institutions.¹³ Until February 2007, the Taliban had killed 61 teachers¹⁴ and 25 local and foreign NGOs had been forced to return to Islamabad halting their operations.¹⁵ Dozens of alleged US and Pakistan government spies had been killed.¹⁶

The process of Talibanization in the tribal areas was gradual and they were successful in establishing parallel justice and administrative systems. Taliban leaders' statements suggested that their agenda was to enforce their system not only in FATA or NWFP but all over the country. The Taliban matured into a full-fledged insurgent movement within four to five years.

The span, pattern and movement of the Taliban insurgency have characteristics similar to a civil war or a revolutionary struggle. It has been as explosive upheaval, spontaneous as the revolutionary movements of China in 1911, and Hungary in 1956 and divisive as the civil war of the America, which split the nation into two blocks.

The Taliban insurgency remained violent, organized and structured on tribal basis. That was the reason that Taliban failed to manipulate its cause in urban areas.

Advantages to Taliban

A range of diverse factors shaped the contours of Taliban insurgency and helped them expand their networks and influence.

Militancy Landscape

The tribal areas demonstrated strong resistance against the British in the 18th century and provided strong basis for radical movements of Syed Ahmed Shaheed in India. Syed's armed movement against Sikh rule in Punjab was aimed at establishing an Islamic state on the principles of Sheikh Abdul Wahhab Najdi, and got remarkable momentum in the tribal areas. After the British occupation of India, it changed into a movement against British rule and remained active until the British rule ended in 1947. Bajaur, Khyber and Mohmand agencies were the strongholds of the Syed movement at that time.¹⁷ The Taliban claim the same legacy and manipulate tribesmen for their cause.

At the same time overall jihad atmosphere in Pakistan was favorable for them. There were 104 violent jihadi and 82 sectarian groups of varying strength operating in Pakistan before September 9, 2001.¹⁸ All of them had come into being in the 1980s and 1990s. The Afghan-Soviet war and the insurgency in Indian-held Kashmir had further nurtured these groups. These groups had ties with regional and international terrorist organizations and shared multiple agendas and ideologies. After 9/11, the number of these organizations shrank in mainland Pakistan and Kashmir to 21 jihad and 39 sectarian groups.¹⁹ But the number of militant groups grew in FATA and NWFP where more than 50 local Taliban and many other violent religious groups came into being within just six years.²⁰

Many of these organizations had networks in the tribal areas and, as the local Taliban movement emerged, members of these groups joined its ranks or formed their own Taliban groups. Maulana Masood Azhar, head of banned Jaish-e-Muhammad considers this phenomenon was the outcome of banning of jihad groups. He wrote in a weekly publication:²¹

Many [Taliban] commanders fighting in Swat today were once affiliated with the faithful, spiritual and ethical system of Jaish-e-Muhammad and they were not allowed to hurt any Muslim but when the government banned Jaish they parted ways with the organization and became local and regional militant commanders. It is a fallout of banning the jihad groups in Pakistan.

The existing militant landscape made Taliban's job of setting up new groups easy. Local Taliban groups adopted similar structures and followed tactics of jihad groups for recruitments, fund-raising and spreading influence through

propaganda and media campaign. Existing militant networks across the country provided them not only the support base but also resources and logistics to spread their terrorist operations across the country. Al Qaeda and other foreign terrorist groups, especially comprising the Uzbeks and Tajiks, proved to be tactical and strategic assets for Taliban to enhance their operational capabilities.

Cross-Tribal Characteristics

The Taliban encouraged different tribes to form their own Taliban-affiliated militias. Initially, groups joining the Taliban were mostly from the Wazir sub-tribes, which made other tribes reluctant to join the Taliban ranks since they feared Wazir domination. The Taliban, however, changed their strategy and gave other tribes equal status. As a result, now most tribes in FATA have their own Taliban-affiliated militias. It allows Taliban to base their movement in the masses and establish separate local Taliban cells, thus reducing the organizational burden and creating strategic problems for the Pakistani military establishment in launching operations where they are forced to target their “own” people.

The Taliban’s initial success across the Pak-Afghan border rested mainly on two basic ingredients of support—Pashtun ethnicity and religious ethos. Being Pashtun they had the convenience of a common language, Pashtun human force, *Hanafi* Islam, fundamentalist sympathizers, and well-established financial and educational institutions already at hand. In addition to the popular perceptions of the Taliban as the religious movement driven by the zeal of Islamic fundamentalism, the ethnic undertones of the movement cannot be dismissed as irrelevant to the analysis of its social support base. For the ethnic minorities, the Taliban was both a symbol of Islamic conservatism as well as a reflection of Pashtun chauvinism.²²

The Cause

The basic need for an insurgent is an attractive cause.²³ Through the cause he can transform his formidable asset into concrete strength. Without an attractive cause an insurgent is little more than part of a criminal syndicate. Galula argues that the 1945-50 Communist insurgency in Greece failed because of the lack of a cause. The cause provides a support base for an insurgent movement and Taliban successfully manipulated their ‘cause’. If we look deep into Taliban movement different shades of ideologies, mainly sectarian and political, can easily be traced. But the main ‘cause’ of Taliban groups is based on the teachings of the Deobandi school of thought in Islam. Initially, they gained the sympathies of the public without sectarian discrimination. The short-term cause of the Taliban was to liberate

Afghanistan from US-led occupation forces through jihad and to enforce a new social, political and economic order based on their ideology or interpretation of Islam. The long-term cause is to drive out the “infidel forces” from all Muslim lands. They associate their identity with the various Islamic movements across the world and disapprove of geographical barriers.

An average Muslim cannot disagree with this diversified cause and especially when they include anti-imperialism in it, the people conceive it as a revolutionary movement. The Taliban tactically manipulated that agenda. The religious political parties who are part of the mainstream electoral process and also the moderate Islamic scholars encounter difficulty in countering Taliban on the ideological front.

Political/ Structural Milieu

The Taliban had effectively taken advantage of the lack of governance and political participation in the tribal areas. The political, administrative and structural flaws present in the tribal areas provided the justification for and sustainability to the Taliban movement and allowed them to introduce a system similar to Afghan Taliban’s.

According to Article 247 of the Constitution of Pakistan, FATA comes under the executive authority of the Federation. FATA has been divided administratively into seven political units or agencies – Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, and North and South Waziristan – and into four Frontier Regions (FRs), Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, and D.I. Khan, the last one further divided into FR D.I. Khan and FR Tank. Likewise, FR Bannu has been reconstituted as FR Bannu and FR Lakki. The administrative and judicial business of the tribal areas is run through Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR), which were introduced by the British in 1901. Most of the political parties, tribal people and experts see the FCR as a mass of black laws denying fundamental rights to the tribal people. Some of the draconian provisions in the FCR include seizure/confiscation of property and arrest and detention of an individual without due process, barring a person in the tribal areas from entering the settled districts (Section 21); removing a person from his residence/locality (Section 36); imposition of fine on the entire community for crimes of an individual (sections 22, 23); prohibition on erecting village, walled enclosures and their demolition (sections 31-33);²⁴ demolition of a house or building on suspicion of being used or populated by thieves or dacoits (Section 34); fines on relatives of a criminal and realization of fines by selling his property (Section 56); and, no right to go to courts against the political agent’s decision (Section 60), etc.²⁵

The administrative structure in FATA has broken down, as has the institutional structure. A 'political agent' (civil servant) manages administration in each agency of FATA, and is answerable to the NWFP Governor. He keeps links with the tribes through Maliks, who are influential tribal elders. The Taliban have now made this administrative system ineffective by killing several Maliks and threatening the political agents. As a result no one seems 'responsible' for the security situation. Swat is an interesting example in this regard. Former Ambassador Dr Humayun Khan mentions:²⁶

In 1997 there was no court system in Malakand, and Shariah-cum-Riwaj (a blend of Islamic and customary laws) system existed there. It took 5-10 years for the government to establish district courts. The recent agreement with Sufi Muhammad has again made those district courts irrelevant. People are forced to think that the government cannot control and safeguard its institutions and is simply surrendering to extremists.

The security operations by army and paramilitary forces in FATA and parts of NWFP against Taliban since 2004, nonetheless, have raised many questions regarding the significance of ensuring the transitional judicial system for the civilian population affected by the security operations and clashes between security forces and the militants. The tribal people have continuously demanded compensation for the casualties they suffered and damages to their properties. The government has been unable to secure people's lives and properties, and provide them expeditious justice. At the same time, many criminal groups also operate in these areas, who remain at large after looting, robbing, kidnapping and even killing people. There have been little by way of rehabilitation efforts after the collapse of the state's capacity to provide security and justice to its people. These structural flaws created space for Taliban who were offering parallel security and judicial systems to the people by establishing parallel "courts" in almost all parts of FATA and some areas of settled districts in NWFP.

Tribal people in FATA remain deprived of their political rights. The sense of political deprivation and lack of participation has also created the feeling among the tribal people that they do not have a stake in the state and has resulted in a weak state-society relationship.

In this perspective Taliban were clever enough to not only exploit inherent structural weaknesses in the tribal political and administrative system but also erode it further. It further proved productive for Taliban to provoke the deep-rooted class divisions in the tribal society where many people started perceiving Taliban as their saviors.

Tactical/Strategic Edge

The Taliban insurgency is an asymmetric conflict. The movement has a well-defined ideological inspiration, logistic support from international terrorist groups and uses terrorism to achieve objectives which can be summarized as follows:

1. To destabilize state's security apparatus so that people should look towards the Taliban for protection.
2. To force the government not to interfere in Taliban-controlled areas so that they can continue their activities unhindered.
3. To force the government to bring some structural changes in laws or the constitution, or to bring a new system according to the Taliban agenda.

Some of the Taliban groups have sectarian agendas especially against *Shias* and Sufi followers. They are also well connected with global terrorist groups, like Al Qaeda, which have even more dangerous agendas of destabilizing or toppling the government to capture territory.

Until 2004, the main focus of Pakistani Taliban was on protecting foreign militants, recruiting for the war in Afghanistan, training them, and securing their position against security operations. Their main strategic victory that made them the major player in the area, however, came after a tactical change in their operations: they began kidnapping security and state officials. Although suicide attacks on security forces played a role in demoralizing the security forces, the kidnapping strategy elevated the Taliban to a position where they could negotiate with the government on their terms and could bargain for the release of arrested militants as well. Independent sources estimate that the Taliban kidnapped more than 1,000 security force personnel and state officials during 2007, and in return more than 500 militants were released. Kidnappings were a major factor behind the peace talks between the government and the Taliban.

Dynamic leadership was another strategic advantage for the Taliban; especially leaders like slain Nek Muhammad, Abdullah Mehsud and now Baitullah Mehsud and Maulana Fazlullah. Baitullah, whose leadership qualities were once questioned by the supreme Taliban leadership, has succeeded in forming an umbrella organization of all Taliban groups, which is known as the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).²⁷

The TTP has provided shelter to smaller groups, which are working under the command of Baitullah. He is trying to bond all of these groups under the

banner of Mullah Omar, the Afghan Taliban's supreme leader. Every group that wishes to join the TTP must take an oath of commitment to *Shariah* enforcement and loyalty to Omar.²⁸

The TTP has imposed conditions on all affiliated groups to contribute 50% of their income (through "taxes" and donations) to a major "jihad fund." The fund is used to sustain Taliban activities in the tribal areas and in Afghanistan.²⁹ These small groups, which are mostly operating in Mohmand and Orakzai agencies in FATA and Tank, Bannu and other settled areas of NWFP, are getting involved in criminal activities, especially killings, kidnapping for ransom and taxes on transport and trade to achieve their financial targets. Mehsud's opponents—both outside and inside Taliban circles—fear his increasing influence and are too weak to challenge him. Even the political administration and tribal elders cannot afford to deny his authority in North and South Waziristan. The same situation is prevailing in other agencies of FATA, where Baitullah's allies enjoy the same powers.

Taliban have remained resolute enough in pursuing their strategy of propaganda and ideological propagation. They have well-defined targets in pursuance of imposition of their "Islamic code of life." And they are trying to convince people in the name of religion and ethnicity, offering temptations and deterring them from standing by the 'enemy'. They are not willing to tolerate their self-perceived 'ideological enemies' which can be put into two broad categories: first, people following and supporting "un-Islamic practices," and secondly "infidels and their friends".

Counterinsurgency Perspective

An insurgent movement cannot grow without some sort of protection. David Galula, an expert on counterinsurgent strategies raises a question: who protects the insurgent? While analyzing the factors he finds in many cases that counterinsurgent himself protects the insurgent.³⁰ Although Galula mainly focuses on the communist insurgencies but his study is also worthwhile with reference to the Taliban insurgency and similar factors can be traced in counterinsurgent policies. He pins down some of the major factors, which nurture the insurgent movements and which are very relevant to the Taliban insurgency:

- i) **Absence of problem:** When an insurgency starts taking shape, states fail to access the potential of the threat and try to ignore it or misjudge the problem.

That happened in the case of Taliban also. When the movement was emerging in the tribal areas, the state continued pretending it was not a major issue and

could be overcome anytime. The state always assumes that 'small violent groups' cannot undermine and/or challenge its authority. But when a movement or group has a cause it should be considered a serious issue.

- ii) **National consensus:** Not only the state but also the people live in a fallacy that the writ of state cannot be challenged. The other related problem arises when the state wants to take measures to overcome the insurgency in its initial stage and lacks an undecided public's backing. But the solidity of a regime is primarily based upon this factor and without national consensus no counterinsurgent strategy can be successful. Sri Lanka is a recent example of a state's plans to overcome the insurgents not taking off until it managed to build a national consensus to defeat them.
- iii) **Resoluteness of the counterinsurgent leadership:** Determination of the counterinsurgent leadership is considered to be a major factor in any conflict because: a) the insurgent has the initial benefit of a dynamic cause; and, b) an insurgency does not emerge suddenly as a national danger and the people's reaction against it is slow. Consequently, the role of the counterinsurgent leaders is paramount.³¹ This factor was very visible in the Taliban case and the political and military leadership were not as resolute as they should have been and very few attempts were made to develop a national consensus on the issue.
- iv) **Counterinsurgent leaders' knowledge of counterinsurgency warfare:** Galula argues that "it is not enough for the counterinsurgent leaders to be resolute; they must also be aware of the strategy and tactics required in fighting an insurgency." Initially, the Pakistani armed forces lacked the resolve and fighting capability. They had religious and ethnic considerations and were fighting under great psychological stress. Apart from this constraint, the armed forces were mainly trained in conventional warfare and the fight against rebels required a different strategy.
- v) **Cost and benefit:** The insurgent has more warfare and tactical advantages compared to the counterinsurgent. Since the insurgent alone can initiate the conflict, he is free to choose his hour, to wait safely for a favorable situation, unless external factors force him to accelerate his move.³² The insurgency is inexpensive to create but very costly to prevent³³. The insurgent is fluid because he has neither responsibility nor concrete assets. He also benefits from propaganda and has a strategic advantage over counterinsurgents (*See comparison chart*).

A comparison of Cost and Benefit between Insurgents and Counterinsurgents

No	Insurgent: Taliban	Counterinsurgent: State
1	Cost Inexpensive	Costly
2	Fluidity Has no responsibility & no concrete assets	Rigidity The state has both
3	Power of Ideology	Ideological handicap
4	Propaganda Free to use every trick Not obliged to prove claims Primary agenda	Tied to responsibilities Judged on action not words Secondary agenda
5	Strategic Free to choose time and place Free to choose target Initiate civil war when strength acquired Operate in small guerrilla groups	Bound Answerable for collateral damage Try to avoid civil war Trained in conventional warfare

vi) **The counterinsurgency tools:** The political structure, the administrative bureaucracy, the police and the armed forces are the key instruments to control an insurgency. The Taliban took advantage of lack of political mainstreaming and weak and ruthless administration in the tribal areas. The police or local security forces like Khasadars, Levies and Frontier Constabulary could not help evolve a security mechanism until there was political resoluteness and an effective administrative system. The lack of the first security cover of the police makes the job of the armed forces difficult and most of their energies are consumed to develop alternative apparatus in the insurgency-hit areas. This was the reason why the state applied the traditional tactics of jirgas, lashkars, selective operations and peace agreements, but these attempts did not prove fruitful. The peace deals strengthened the hands of Taliban and writ of the state weakened further. Military operations have resulted in the expansion of Taliban and produced a bigger pool of militants.³⁴ On the other hand, the Taliban know exactly how to target and weaken the domestic opposition against them. The state has also used a strategy to support some Taliban groups, such as those led by Mullah Nazir and Hafiz Gul Bahadar in South Waziristan, to divide them but that was based on a shaky rationale.

- vii) **Geographic conditions:** “Geography can weaken the strongest political regime or strengthen the weakest one.”³⁵ In the tribal areas, Taliban hold geographical advantages, as they are familiar with the mountainous terrain and the climate. The large pool of insurgents and their presence among the civilian population makes counterinsurgency operations difficult. But counterinsurgency becomes more complex if it erupts in the border areas and gets external moral or political support. In Taliban’s case, they have no moral or political support from neighboring states. But the insurgents get connected with smugglers and mafias in the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan and have support from international terrorist networks, which makes the situation as difficult as that of an insurgency that is getting external help. Significantly, when an insurgency becomes the field of covert wars of different international and regional spy agencies and players, it distracts the counterinsurgent and the focus shifts from countering the insurgency to countering covert wars. Pakistan has reservation over the presence of Indian consulates in Afghanistan near the Pakistani border and the hostile attitude of Kabul towards Islamabad. The issue is linked to geo-strategic interests in the region.
- viii) **Geo-strategic perspective and ‘strategic assets’:** Another important and unique factor in the counterinsurgency in the tribal areas is the geo-strategic perspective of Pakistan and neighboring states. This is another factor which has been undermining the state’s counterinsurgency efforts, and insurgents and counterinsurgents have remained unclear on how long the security operations would continue. Indeed insurgents have mostly remained consistent and inflexible in advancement of their cause but counterinsurgents have got confused in evaluating the geo-strategic disadvantages of eliminating the insurgents. Before 9/11, Pakistani policy-makers considered the Taliban a strategic asset and even after 9/11 they were reluctant to dispose off these assets. There were many arguments and perceptions to sustain this option: a) The US was not serious in eliminating resistance in Afghanistan and wanted to prolong its stay in that country; b) the Pakistani government also found that the trouble in Balochistan was being sponsored by India on US encouragement. It was in this context that the Taliban became assets for the Pakistani establishment; c) There is a perception that the US, India, Afghanistan and other countries are also using many Taliban groups as strategic assets to destabilize Pakistan. Barrent Rubin and Ahmed Rasheed argue:³⁶

Pakistani security establishment believes that it faces a US-Indian-Afghan alliance and a separate Iranian-Russia alliance, each aimed at undermining Pakistani influence in Afghanistan and even dismembering the Pakistani state. Some, but not all, in the establishment see armed militants within Pakistan as a threat but they largely consider it one that is ultimately controllable.

Despite these arguments the US focus in the region remained on the elimination of Al Qaeda, from whom it perceived internal threat, and largely ignored the broader insurgency, which remained marginal until 2005.³⁷

Counterinsurgents' Challenges and Options

- 1) **Built-in disadvantages in Taliban insurgency:** The Taliban have four major disadvantages, which the counterinsurgent can exploit. At the same time these disadvantages are barring the Taliban movement from getting converted into a revolutionary movement.
 - a) Taliban have failed to establish any political agenda in line with the mainstream political system. They are against democratic system and there are few chances that the Taliban would morph into a populist political movement. Even the religious political parties denounce Taliban's anti-democratic agenda, which has kept them alienated from the urban population.
 - b) Sectarian differences among Taliban ranks and the Deobandi tag on the movement are significant factor isolating the insurgency from the mainstream religious community and keeping it confined to specific areas.
 - c) Taliban are also divided on ethnic lines and attempts by some Taliban leaders to bind them into 'Islamic brotherhood' have not been successful so far. Tribal differences cause mistrust, and further divisions occur at clan level. At the same time, Taliban do not represent all the tribes. In fact, they have cut themselves off from the main tribes and values.
 - d) The system that they want to impose in the areas under their control or in the country lacks wide appeal. It is not supported even by the prominent religious scholars and religious political parties. This factor undermines Taliban efforts to win popular support for their system.
 - e) Their involvement in terrorist activities is making them unpopular.

It depends on the counterinsurgent or the state how it manipulates insurgents' disadvantage in its favor. But the task requires vision, will and capacity and so far there are no signs that the state is successfully playing on this tactical front.

2) Strategic level: Galula suggests a few general principles for the counterinsurgent in a selected area.³⁸ Many of these are already in practice and some need attention of the policy-makers.

- a. Concentrate enough armed forces to destroy the main body of armed insurgents.
- b. Detach for the area sufficient troops to oppose an insurgent network in strength, install these troops in hamlets, villages and towns where the population lives.
- c. Establish contact with the population and control its movements in order to cut off its links with the guerrillas.
- d. To undermine the political influence of insurgents, empower local political forces, make administrative and judicial mechanisms smooth and effective.
- e. Engage the local authorities by assigning them various concrete tasks. Replace the soft and the incompetent; give full support to the active leader. Organize self-defense units, such as lashkars, in the tribal areas.
- f. The operation should be irreversible and should continue until the last insurgent element is won over or suppressed.
- g. "An insurgent war is 20 percent military action and 80 percent political is a formula that reflect the truth."³⁹ In this perspective, the political leadership (not only the government but also the opposition) needs to show commitment and should realize the gravity of the situation. Due to the lack of continuity of elected governments and military dictatorships, the military leadership has obligations to help and strengthen the political government's efforts.
- h. Ideological response is important but the most important factor is winning the hearts and minds of the people in the insurgency-hit areas. This can be done through the collaborative efforts of the state and civil society.

3) Terrorism front: The international and local terrorist groups, who have association with Taliban insurgents and use their terrorist cells, are changing their targets and tactics rapidly. As has been observed in the first quarter of 2009, terrorists have applied different new tactics in their terrorist operations in Pakistan, especially in attacks carried out in Lahore, provincial headquarters of the Punjab province.

It is imperative to develop improved counter-terrorism strategies not only at the level of enhancing the security forces' capacity, but also a coordinated intelligence surveillance system. Incoherent efforts by various intelligence agencies not only badly impact the security situation, they also spoil their efficiency, effectiveness and impact on their capabilities. There is a need to build Pakistani intelligence agencies' capacity and ensure better coordination among various agencies and law enforcement departments.

4) Regional and global perspective

As discussed earlier, the insurgency in the tribal areas has a regional dimension as well. Not only are Pakistan's strategic interests at stake but regional and global powers also want to secure their interests in the area. In short, the key issues of conflict are:

- a. Pakistan wants a friendly government in Kabul because Afghanistan had created a lot of trouble for Pakistan in the past. Kabul directly remained involved in provoking separatist and nationalist movements in Balochistan and NWFP until the 1980s. At that time India was on the same page with Afghanistan and had good intelligence and strategic coordination with Kabul. Afghanistan again seems more committed to strategic cooperation with India. The Indian and Afghan involvement in Balochistan and in Pakistan's tribal areas has Islamabad perplexed on whether to treat the insurgents as enemies or assets.
- b. Pakistan had not made comprehensive diplomatic efforts to take the international community into confidence to secure its strategic interests and depended on non-conventional tactics.
- c. The nature of US-Iran, US-China, Central Asian and the Russia-West interests is very complex. These conflicting interests have a direct bearing on stability in Afghanistan and Pakistan and both states are perplexed on how to secure their strategic, internal security and economic interests. This also creates bilateral misunderstandings, which leads to further confrontation.

- d. The international community, particularly the United States views the situation through its internal security threat prism, but Pakistan wants the US to see the issue in its regional context and fix the problem on a permanent basis.
- e. Pakistan faces double-edged media propaganda; internally and externally. The popular national press is very critical of Pakistan's counterinsurgency collaboration with the US and the West. On the other hand, the international press is skeptical about Islamabad's operational efforts. The national and international media are oversimplifying the complex nature of the insurgency and its regional dimensions. This is fueling misperceptions among the international community about the issue and hurts Pakistan's diplomatic efforts to find a comprehensive solution.

Pakistan was hopeful that US President Barak Obama would address the issue in the broader regional perspective in his new AfPak policy. But the US put further liabilities on Pakistan while not taking any concrete step except the announcement of a regional contact group. The central purpose of the contact group as suggested and agreed by many American and Pakistani think tanks includes reassuring Pakistan that all international stakeholders will show their commitment to its territorial integrity and to help resolve Afghan and Kashmir border issues to better define Pakistan's territory.⁴⁰ It was also expected that India would be urged to become more transparent about its activities in Afghanistan, especially regarding the role of its intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).⁴¹

The world is demanding more from Pakistan and not showing any commitment to safeguarding Pakistan's interests. Pakistan must continue its counterinsurgency efforts, not least because its internal security and stability is at stake but because of diplomatic and regional strategic and economic interests as well. The political leadership should make sincere and more coordinated efforts to build a consensus on the issue. The real test would be for the diplomatic corps to convince the international community on regional conflicts, which are hurting global interests. The best strategic, operational and political counterinsurgency measures can throw the ball in the international community's court to also 'do more' for its part.

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Annex

Taliban Groups in Tribal Areas

No	Name	Sect	Tribe	Head	Area of Concentration
1	Baitullah Group	Deobandi	Mehsud	Baitullah Mehsud	SWA ¹
2	Shehryar Group	Deobandi	Mehsud	Shehryar Mehsud	SWA
3	Said Alam Group		Mehsud	Said Alam	SWA
4	Mullah Nazir Group	Deobandi	Ahmadzai Wazir	Mullah Nazir	SWA
5	Abbas Group	Deobandi	Ahmadzai Wazir	Commander Abbas	SWA
6	Noor Islam Group	Deobandi	Ahmadzai Wazir	Noor Islam	SWA
7	Haji Sharif Group	Deobandi	Ahmadzai Wazir	Haji Sharif	SWA
8	Haji Omer Group	Deobandi	Ahmadzai Wazir	Haji Omer	SWA
9	Ghulam Jan Group	Deobandi	Ahmadzai Wazir	Ghulam Jan	SWA
10	Javed Group	Deobandi	Karmazkhel Wazir	Commander Javed	SWA
11	Awal Khan Group	Deobandi	Bhittani	Commander Awal Khan	Jandola, SWA
10	Angaar Group	Deobandi			
11	Bhittani Group	Deobandi	Bhittani	Asmaatullah Saheen	Jundola, SWA
12	Gul Bahadar Group	Deobandi	Utmanzai Wazir	Qari Gul Bahadar	NWA ²
13	Daur Group	Deobandi	Daur	Sadiq Noor	NWA
14	Khaliq Haqani	Deobandi	Daur	Abdul Khaliq Haqani	NWA

¹ South Waziristan Agency

² North Waziristan Agency

Taliban Insurgency in Pakistan: A Counterinsurgency Perspective

15	Wahidullah	Deobandi	Utmanzai Wazir	Wahidullah	Spalga, NWA
16	Saifullah Group	Deobandi	Turi khel, Utmanzai Wazir	Commander Saifullah	NWA
17	Abdul Rehman Group	Deobandi	Daur	Abdul Rehman	Mirali, NWA
18	Manzoor Group	Deobandi	Daur	Commander Manzoor	Eidaq, NWA
19	Haleem Group	Deobandi	Daur	Haleem Khan	Mirali, NWA
20	Maulvi Faqir Group of TSNM	Deobandi	Mamond	Maulvi Faqir	Bajaur
21	Tehrik Jaish Islami Pakistan	Deobandi	Bajaur	Commander Waliur Rehman	Bajaur Agency
22	Karawan Naimatullah	Deobandi	Bajaur	Haji Naimatullah	Bajaur Agency
23	Dr. Ismail Group	Jamaat-i-Islami	Bajaur	Dr Ismail	Bajaur Agency
24	Maulana Abdullah Group	Deobandi	Bajaur	Maulana Abdullah	Utamzai, sub-District Bajaur
25	Omer Group	Deobandi	Qandhari sub tribe of Safi Tribe	Omer Khalid Group	Mohmand Agency
26	Sha Sahib Group	Ahle Hadiath	Mohmand		Lakaro area, Mohmand Agency

Inequality and the Militant Threat in Pakistan

Muhammad Azam and Safiya Aftab

Militancy seems to be gaining ground in Pakistan, judging by the perceptible increase in the frequency of terrorist attacks. The nature of the attacks is also changing, and reflects a newfound confidence amongst militant groups who are graduating from ambushes to suicide bombings and, as demonstrated in the March 29 attack on the Manawan police training school in Lahore, attempts to seize government buildings and public spaces and even take hostages.

The causes of militancy are complex, and usually a combination of factors, rather than any one single feature, pushes mainly young people into the embrace of militant groups. Poverty and inequality are frequently cited as key causes. Poverty is a contributing factor pushing people towards militancy, provided an enabling environment already exists.¹ This enabling environment is characterized by the local economy lacking employment opportunities, the presence of members of militant groups in a community, proximity to a conflict zone, and/or persistent exposure to extremist literature and media. Most of these factors are often present in areas where militancy is strongest. This paper examines inequality, one of the possible factors influencing recruitment into militant organizations.

A number of studies from all over the world have been followed to understand the link between militancy and inequality in Pakistan in particular and elsewhere in general. Although evidences from history have been furnished, the paper does not take an inclusive look at the historical background of the topic under discussion.

A recent study by the Islamabad-based Center for Research on Poverty Reduction and Income Distribution (CRPRID) provides a historical overview of how income inequality has evolved in Pakistan.² Anwar reviews estimates of Gini coefficients derived in different studies based on successive Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (HIES) by the Federal Bureau of Statistics. In 2003, the World Bank assessed data from HIES for 1998-99 and found that the value of the Gini coefficient for rural areas was 0.25, while it was estimated at 0.35 for urban areas.³ Estimates from the Federal Bureau of Statistics of Pakistan on the same data set were very similar – 0.36 for urban areas and 0.25 for rural areas. Anwar's own estimates for inequality are based on the HIES data for 2001-02, and show that the Gini coefficient has remained stable over the years in question. He estimates that the coefficient for urban

areas is 0.36, while for rural areas it is 0.25 – exactly the same as the World Bank estimates for 1998-99.

Anwar acknowledges that the Gini coefficient has some shortcomings as a measure of income inequality, in that it does not capture small changes at extreme ends of the income distribution spectrum. He therefore looks at income inequality also as a share of total income accruing to the poorest 20 percent, middle 60 percent and richest 20 percent of the population. The income share analysis shows a worsening of income inequality in Pakistan over the 1990s. (see Table 1)

Table 1: Income Share Accruing to Different Groups⁴

Year	Income Share of Pakistan's Population (Percent)		
	Poorest 20 percent	Middle 60 percent	Richest 20 percent
1990-91	6.07	46.40	47.53
1992-93	6.59	46.97	46.44
1993-94	6.57	47.75	45.69
1996-97	7.11	49.38	43.51
1998-99	6.57	44.76	48.67
2001-02	6.66	45.26	48.08
<i>Rural</i>			
1990-91	6.00	45.35	48.65
1992-93	7.12	48.65	44.23
1993-94	7.14	48.82	44.04
1996-97	7.24	49.99	42.77
1998-99	7.14	47.41	45.45
2001-02	7.21	47.69	45.11
<i>Urban</i>			
1990-91	6.76	48.20	45.05
1992-93	6.59	46.71	46.70
1993-94	7.04	48.67	44.29
1996-97	7.52	47.82	44.66
1998-99	6.62	41.73	51.65
2001-02	6.77	40.42	52.81

Urban inequality shows the most obvious negative trend, with over half of total income accruing to the richest 20 percent of the population by 2001-02. The data shows disturbing trends across groups also. The erosion of the share of income accruing to the middle 60 percent of the population was very sharp

in urban areas, where the share of this income group went from 48.2 percent of total income to 40.4 percent over the decade in question. The data points to the fact that the poorest 20 percent got a meager share of total income, and their holdings remained largely unchanged. However, the income loss of the middle classes was acute, particularly in urban areas.

Another recent study by Kemal concentrates on policy actions to reduce income inequality.⁵ Kemal reviews the literature on income inequality to identify four factors that govern the distribution of income. These are: asset distribution – mainly the inequality in distribution of agricultural land; functional income distribution – inequality in wage income in urban areas and the disparity in farm and non-farm income in rural areas; income transfers – both domestic and international; and, the tax and expenditure structure of the government – particularly the reliance on indirect taxes which are essentially regressive. Kemal advocates four major policy areas to deal with rising income inequality – greater investment in basic infrastructure and in the provision of basic social services, employment creation and cash and food transfers.

Current studies on income inequality in Pakistan do not provide a breakdown of the Gini coefficient or household income shares by district or region. However, a number of studies have been carried out on land distribution in rural Pakistan, which provide some indication of income distribution patterns by region. A recent paper by Anwar et al. used data from the Pakistan Integrated Household Survey (PIHS) 2001-02 to explore the link between landlessness and rural poverty in Pakistan.⁶ The paper found that 75 percent of households in the country do not hold any land. A further 23.9 percent hold less than 1 hectare. Only 0.02 percent of households own more than 5 hectares of land.

The study further found that poverty levels were exceptionally high amongst landless households. In Punjab, poverty incidence amongst landless households was 44.4 percent, while the same estimate for households owning less than 1 hectare was 26.2 percent. The situation was worse in Sindh and NWFP. In the former, poverty incidence amongst landless households was 58.6 percent, while in NWFP it was 65.4 percent.

Further breakdowns by province showed that in Sindh, 85 percent of households did not own any land, while this proportion was 78 percent in Balochistan, 74 percent in Punjab and 65.4 in NWFP. The Gini coefficient was also calculated for both landholdings and income in Punjab and yielded the following results.

Table 2: Gini Coefficients by Region⁷

	<i>Punjab</i>	<i>Sindh</i>	<i>NWFP</i>	<i>Balochistan</i>	<i>Pakistan</i>
Gini (Land owned)	0.64	0.51	0.59	0.38	0.61
Gini (Expenditure)	0.31	0.31	0.27	0.23	0.31

Thus the Gini for land ownership showed significantly greater inequality in all three provinces other than Balochistan, compared to the Gini for income/expenditure. The authors concluded that this may point to under-reporting of income by higher-income households, which skewed the value of the Gini coefficient for income/expenditure downwards. As the data shows, the Gini for land ownership was highest in Punjab, followed by NWFP, Sindh and Balochistan.

The literature explicitly states that income inequality has increased in Pakistan over the 1990s, and was at the highest recorded level in urban areas in 2001-02. Although more recent estimates are not available, the service sector-oriented growth of the years since 2002 has probably served to perpetuate, if not worsen, inequality. What effects could that have had on the growing terrorist threat in Pakistan?

Growth and inequality in Pakistan has been discussed by Griffin and Khan. They highlight that inequality in per capita income between West Pakistan and East Pakistan and in the different rates of economic development were a factor in the militant revolt of East Pakistan against the West.⁸ The ratio of true capital inflow was only 16% of true investment for East Pakistan for the period 1964-5 to 1967-8, whereas the corresponding ratio for West Pakistan was 75%. In the early 1970s, Parkinson observed that the scope for increasing the real income of wage earners in Pakistan is limited.⁹ Rashida Patel discusses judicio-legal inequality, i.e., how laws have been misinterpreted and distorted.¹⁰

Inequality may be defined as “the unfair difference between groups of people in society, when some have more wealth, status or opportunities than others.”¹¹ Such unfair differences may potentially lead to polarization, a sense of relative deprivation, bias, prejudices and discrimination in a society. It has been argued that “discontent, or relative deprivation, is a major determinant of political protest and violence.”¹²

When discussing poverty, inequality often refers to the income gap between the rich and poor of society.¹³ But, inequality is not confined only to the income gap among individuals, families and groups in a society. It has many other dimensions.

While the literature on the subject lists a number of forms of inequality, a simple classification of the term divides it into two forms, i.e., inequality between persons (e.g. income inequality) and inequality between subgroups (e.g. racial inequality).¹⁴

Which form of inequality is most prevalent when it comes to the causes of militancy in a society is a difficult question to answer. Theorists following the Marxist line of argument would place economic inequality at the top, and the liberals would assert the importance of political inequality. But, one thing is clear that in Pakistan political as well as economic disparities have contributed to bringing the whole society to a stage where militancy and insecurity among the citizens are at an all-time high.

Various forms of inequality and their link to militancy have been discussed in this paper. A priority, however, has been given to 'economic and income inequality.' That is why, in literature review, empirical and quantitative studies regarding economic and income inequality have been mentioned in comparatively greater detail.

The regional breakdown of inequality in Pakistan does not enable us to make a definitive judgment about its connection with militancy. Inequality in land ownership is high in NWFP and Punjab, both provinces with significant militant activity; but inequality in income/expenditure distribution is highest in Punjab and Sindh, of which the latter province has not yet figured prominently as a recruiting ground for militants.

Nevertheless, more subtle links cannot be ruled out. Militant agendas appeal to disaffected youth, and inequality breeds resentment and anger. The few studies of profiles of militants¹⁵ point to a high degree of representation of educated, lower middle class youth, who are disillusioned with the system of governance in Pakistan. The fall in the income share of the middle 60 percent of households, as documented by Anwar, is telling in this regard.

But perhaps the most important way in which inequality may contribute to militancy, given the presence of other circumstances, is in terms of the possibilities for exercise of power and control over resources that joining a militant organization can generate. In economic systems like Pakistan's, where land distribution is highly unequal, and access to quality education is

limited, social mobility is highly restricted. In the absence of wealth, or opportunities for personal growth through better education and health care, the lure of an organization that provides a livelihood, opportunities to wield economic power, and even forms of insurance coverage for the larger family, becomes ever stronger. Thus inequality in the initial distribution of assets may lead to the emergence of a rigid class structure, which in turn may be a breeding ground for militancy. The Gini coefficient for land distribution in Pakistan certainly suggests that such rigid systems exist and are perpetuated in Pakistan's rural areas.

Most studies on the subject suggest a positive relationship between militancy and inequality. In the 1970s, Sigelman and Simpson also noted: "A remarkably diverse literature, both ancient and modern, both ideological and theoretical, has coalesced on the proposition that political violence is a function of economic inequality."¹⁶ They cite Aristotle, Madison, Engels, Coser and Davis from this diverse literature. To Aristotle, inequality is the "universal and chief cause" of revolutions. "Inferiors revolt in order that they may be equal, and equals that they may be superior," argued Aristotle in *The Politics*. In Madison's view, inequality in the distribution of property is the "most common and durable" source of political violence. Engel was of the view that if political structures do not conform to imperatives of socioeconomic conditions, political violence results. Coser argued, "Conflict is largely the product of persisting socioeconomic inequalities." To Davis, who drew on Aristotle's theory of revolution, unequal distribution of incomes spurs mass resentment and paves the path of resolution.

Blau and Blau and Harer and Steffensmeier also argued that "greater economic inequality is the mechanism whereby conflict and hostilities are reflected in...violence."¹⁷ Martinez studied patterns and causes of lethal violence among Latinos in the United States. He examined data collected from 111 US cities and found that regression analysis supports economic inequality interpretation of violence.¹⁸ In a study, after reviewing theory and research, Kramer concludes that economic inequality is one of the three causal agents in producing violence by young people in the US.¹⁹ 'Predatory economic' form of violence, he argues,²⁰

occurs in the pursuit of monetary or materialistic goals by any means necessary. Given the intense cultural pressures for monetary success in America, economically disadvantaged youths who are blocked from less effective, legitimate means are often inclined to select more effective, illegitimate means to pursue the American Dream.

The argument can easily be extended to a society where economic inequality is profound. Militant criminal gangs in different parts of Pakistan, particularly in Karachi, indicate that the above does hold in Pakistan as well.

In Weede's view, income inequality "presumably is one of the background conditions of relative deprivation."²¹ Previous research shows that violence-reducing impact of high average incomes is fairly strong, he observed. Weede concluded that "high average income is strongly related to less violence, in particular to less deaths from such violence." He further writes, "While my results cannot add support to a relative deprivation explanation of violence, they certainly cannot falsify it, either." In another study, on the other hand, Weede analyzed a compilation of data collected during the mid-1960s, which covered 47 nations, and concluded that inequality does not contribute to violence.²²

Differences in per capita income or household income across populations within a country or across countries can be taken among the factors for militancy. It is true both at national and international levels. Profound disparities exist between the global South and North. Kegley and Wittkopf point out that these disparities pose huge problems for international community and are a major issue on the global agenda. Many of the theoreticians hold rich countries responsible for the plight of the Third World countries. Dependency Theory is one such theory.²³ World System Theory is another.²⁴

Unequal and uneven land distribution represents a key determinant of rural income inequality in the Third World.²⁵ According to Russett, "there is positive correlation between inequality of land ownership and some measures of political violence."²⁶

Political inequality refers to "structured differences in the distribution and acquisition of political resources."²⁷ Although, constitutionally, all citizens enjoy equal political opportunities, that is not the case in practice.²⁸ Only the rich and influential can get into power. This informal but deep-rooted inequality in Pakistan's political system and structure keeps the majority of the people disempowered.

In Pakistan, members of religious minorities are victims of social inequality in general. The majority sees and treats them as inferior. At times, such feelings have led to intolerance and violence. It is a phenomenon which is also found in neighboring India where communal clashes are a common occurrence. Taliban actions against the Sikh community in the Tribal Areas are the most recent example of a religious minority becoming a victim of inequality in Pakistan. Many a time such

victims come to the conclusion that they cannot survive if they remain peaceful; hence, they are forced to think that militancy and violence are the only ways to ensure their survival.

Disparity in education systems in Pakistan immediately comes to mind in context of inequality of opportunity. The most intelligent students coming from a poor background have no option for education except going to public sector education institutions where the medium of instruction is Urdu or a regional language. English medium education institutions are expensive and beyond the reach of the poor. These institutions cater to the wealthy and the elite. Graduates of these English medium institutions are far better equipped to do well in competition exams for senior positions in the bureaucracy. All of the competition exams favor the candidates with higher capacity for expressing and communicating in English. Thus, practically, there is no equality of opportunity at all for those educated from institutions where English is not the medium of instruction.

Inequality of opportunity is also linked to another type of inequality – the rural-urban one. The rural and urban life in Pakistan is worlds apart. In rural areas, education, health and other facilities are either non-existent or in shambles. Rural areas provide a huge portion (around 80%) of the labor force. The rural population sees the urban population as enjoying the fruits of their labor and at their expense. All aspects of life in rural areas suffer from a huge level of inequality. Many of the villagers resent the wealth, attitudes and lifestyles of those living in cities. Unemployed or underemployed youths in rural areas can easily be drawn to militant groups.

Amartya Sen enumerates seven types of gender inequality, including basic facility inequality, special opportunity inequality, professional inequality, ownership inequality, and household inequality.²⁹ He points out that inequalities of different kinds can, often enough, feed each other. Like most of the developing countries, extensive gender asymmetry exists in Pakistan. The ratio of male students' enrolment in primary schools is 30 percent higher than that of females'.³⁰ Feminists see the 1979 Hudood Ordinances as the most "discriminatory piece of legislation that Pakistani women have ever seen."³¹

Women do not enjoy equal status in Pakistani society in any area, be that education, occupation, business, politics, or cultures. They do not have much opportunity of interaction with society and social agents. The result is that, due to a virtual lack of being influenced by the agents of social change, Pakistani women, in general, tend to be more conservative compared to men. Their conservatism becomes a source for amplifying conservatism in men who remain in contact with them. Conservatism directly leads individuals

towards violence and militancy. It is not uncommon that mothers, sisters and wives of killed militants feel pride in their killed relatives and hail them as heroes.

The causes or factors of inequality are not discussed in this paper and it remains mainly concerned with the relationship between forms of inequality and militancy. However, it is irresistible not to touch upon international dimension of the relationship between the two variables in Pakistani context. The militants, who pose the most serious challenge to the state, have a very 'strong' worldview in terms of Western powers' conspiracies against Muslims as well as "the Muslim world". They see these conspiracies working at all levels - political, economic, cultural, etc. Their perception of inequality between Muslim and non-Muslim countries as a consequence of the anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic policies of developed nations has largely contributed to the spread of militancy and violence within Pakistan and beyond. Such militants view 'anti-Islamic' policies of Western powers as the most important source of inequality between rich and poor states.

In addition to their policies, Western transnational corporations are seen as exploiting and disturbing the economic structures of developing states. London and Robinson, citing Bornschieer and Chase-Dunn, also agree that corporate penetration adds to income inequality in developing states "by altering certain structural conditions." Transnational corporations, located in the developing world, pay "well above the going rate." It leads to "a large income gap between those citizens who are employed by transnational firms and those who are not."³² This is the reason that almost all militant leaders who criticize Western powers do so in part because of the international economic and political system shaped by these powers that they deem exploitative. How can this exploitation be responded to? By harming those and their interests who have harmed us, argue the militant leaders and ideologues. So, they ask their activists to target the interests and citizens of Western powers.

Conclusion

In light of the cited arguments and empirical researches, one can safely argue that inequality is a strong contributing factor towards militancy in Pakistan. Furthermore, it is causing further increase in militancy in the country. Pakistani state and society have badly failed to address various forms of inequality which are responsible for feelings of estrangement and resentment among the worst-off. Frequent demands of speedy justice and complaints about the decay in the judicio-legal system of the country led the government to concede to Taliban's demand, accompanied by an armed campaign, of Nizam-i-Adl Regulation in Swat.

Victims of inequality – whether economic, social, political, legal or in any other form – at a later stage, start viewing the sociopolitical, economic and legal system as flawed and favoring a part of society while disfavoring another. It makes them think about revolting against the system, leading to militancy. Peaceful societies are peaceful largely because they have achieved political, legal and civic equality.

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Deradicalization: Approaches and Models

Saba Noor and Shagufta Hayat

Introduction

Several terms are used to refer to the phenomenon of deradicalization, including 'desertion,' 'demobilization,' 'defection,' 'rehabilitation,' 'reconciliation,' 'dialogue,' and 'disengagement.' The main reason for the use of different terms in different societies seems to be a realization of the socio-political activities attached to each term. But two of these terms, deradicalization and disengagement, are used more frequently. The former is mainly used in Asian societies, and the latter in European ones. Deradicalization and disengagement can be defined as the process of individual and collective withdrawal. Disengagement refers to a behavioral change, whereas deradicalization implies a cognitive shift, i.e. a fundamental change in understanding.¹

The 9/11 terrorist attacks triggered the global war on terror led by the United States. A large number of terrorists were killed, captured and imprisoned. But, ironically, prisons themselves became centers of radicalization and recruitment. Imprisoned terrorist leaders and activists successfully used their interaction with other prisoners to motivate and bring them into the fold of their respective groups.

This led to the recognition that the war against terror is a war of ideas as well, which cannot be won solely through killing and arresting terrorists, collecting intelligence or securing borders. It was realized that efforts were needed to eliminate hatred, intolerance and extreme interpretations of religion.

In that context, deradicalization and rehabilitation programs have been launched in many parts of the world. A deradicalization or rehabilitation program is generally seen as "an important and effective strategy to combat terrorism and extremism." Several countries have developed such programs to win the hearts and change the minds of the radicals.²

This paper is aimed at reviewing the various approaches and models of deradicalization practiced by different states and societies.

Distinguishing between successful and unsuccessful strategies of deradicalization is not easy. Various countries have developed their own deradicalization models according to their own circumstances. So far there has been no consensus on the effectiveness of any single deradicalization program, mainly because of diverse conceptual contexts.

All of these programs, however, converge at least at one point – they are focused on changing the views of the detainees and other radicalized individuals. Furthermore, all these models are based on the assumption that radicalization is a matter of ideology originating from a misinterpretation of religion and leading to deviant social and psychological behaviors.

Middle Eastern countries, including Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Morocco, and Iraq, and European states, including Norway, Germany, and the United Kingdom have launched deradicalization and rehabilitation programs. The United States, Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia are also among the countries that have their own deradicalization programs. Through such programs some Western countries keep an eye on involvement of diasporas in radical movements. A closer look at such programs launched by different states reveals diverse approaches and models.

Singapore

A deradicalization program, called the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), was launched in Singapore in 2003, when the country was facing internal threats from Jemaah Islamiyah, a Southeast Asian militant organization also accused of the 2002 bombings on the Indonesian island of Bali.

Counseling for detained militants is the main plank of the RRG strategy. In group discussions, Muslim clerics try to rebut the extreme views about Islam held by the detained militants. The success of this program is indicated by the fact that many of the detainees, who had been members of the Jemaah Islamiyah, have been released. It demonstrated that a well-structured rehabilitation program can be fruitful in neutralizing the effects of extremist indoctrination and bringing extremists back into the mainstream of society.³

A group of 30 Muslim clerics was engaged for re-educating the radicals. These clerics strive to prove the violence-oriented interpretation of Islam as incorrect and illegitimate. Ustaz Muhammad bin Ali, who is among the group of clerics engaged for rehabilitating the detained extremists, argues that Jihad has several meanings – one is “to fight, but fighting on a legitimate battlefield.

So what these guys are doing is not Jihad.”⁴ Families of the detainees were also engaged in the process.⁵

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has the best-known deradicalization program in the Middle East. The program aims at bringing the radicalized individuals, who have not taken part in any violent activity, back into the mainstream. Its “soft” approach has three components:⁶

- a) Prevention: to deter individuals from getting involved in violent extremism.
- b) Rehabilitation: to encourage supporters and sympathizers to renounce violence.
- c) After Care: To prevent recidivism and to reintegrate people into society.

‘Social support’ initiatives for the prisoners are the main strength of the program. Rehabilitation helps the individuals find jobs, housing and spouses. Members of various committees working under the program travel to different parts of the country, to visit prisons and meet the detainees.⁷ The religious subcommittee is the largest and most prominent component of the program’s Advisory Committee.⁸

Religious scholars re-educate the detainees in the light of Quran and other religious teachings. Detainees’ families are warned that they would be held accountable if the individuals rejoined the terrorist cause.⁹

Around 2,000 prisoners were enrolled in the religious counseling program in 2004. Around 700 of the 2,000 had been released by 2007. However, nine had been rearrested.¹⁰ Proponents of the program argue that releasing the rehabilitated detainees effectively counters militant propaganda.

Yemen

A deradicalization program launched in Yemen in 2002 comprised a committee made up of Yemeni clerics and judges. The committee focused its attention on intellectual debate and dialogue, with religious scholars trying to change the ideologies of Jihadists.¹¹

Dialogue is the first step in the program. The next is reintegrating former militants into society. A one-page manual, resembling a social contract of sorts, is the real strength of the program. Based on the principles of equality and respect, the manual is quite different from western manuals used for interrogation. Voluntary participation is a prerequisite. Under the deradicalization program, 364 suspects had been released until June 2005.¹²

Morocco and Egypt

In 2008, Search for Common Ground (SFCG), an NGO, launched a deradicalization program in Morocco. It engaged youth and prisoners in Maghreb prisons in a constructive dialogue and capacity-building strategies. The SFCG aims to promote moderation and engages prisoners in positive civic participation.¹³

A group of religious clerics has been assigned the task of deradicalizing young Moroccans and preventing them from being radicalized. The efforts on part of these clerics also involve a spiritual dimension for rehabilitating jailed Islamists.

Extraordinary efforts have been made for training the trainers. Study tours across the UK were planned for cross-fertilization. Holding of monthly discussions and dialogues, and systematic monitoring of the program's achievements was also planned. The SFCG plans to offer a separate training program for prison staff so that they build a sustainable relationship with the prisoners who are at risk of being radicalized.¹⁴

Deradicalization in Egypt refers essentially to the renunciation of violence by Egyptian jihadi organizations, mainly the Gama'a al-Islamiya and the Jihad. Their reconsideration involves "a rereading of the ideas propagated by the two groups in the past and a rereading of that past itself."¹⁵

Indonesia

The deradicalization program in Indonesia aims to neutralize the ideological fundamentals of the militants. The program is based on the belief among deradicalizers that the police can change the Jihadists' assumption that government officials are anti-Islamic. The police not only treat Jihadist prisoners kindly but also support them financially.¹⁶ The program focuses on moulding the Jihadists' mindset on two fundamental issues: (a) killing of civilians; and, (b) the need for an Islamic state.

The police keep in contact with the prisoners' families and the communities they used to live in. The police also acquire information through ex-prisoners.¹⁷

Malaysia

The main Malaysian deradicalization initiative, the Religious Rehabilitation Program, is guided by the Internal Security Act (ISA) of 1960.¹⁸ The program relies on re-education and rehabilitation. Re-education focuses on correcting political and religious misconceptions of the militants, while the strategy of rehabilitation is adopted for thorough monitoring of the militants after their release. Family members of the detainees are also engaged in the process. Families are supported financially when the militants are in detention. After their release, militants are also assisted with reintegration into society.¹⁹

The program also has another dimension. Coercion and threats are also resorted to in order to deter the militants from reengaging in militancy and terrorism. Fear and threats of harsh punishments are a key component of the Malaysian deradicalization program. The militants are beaten, tortured and subjected to long periods of solitary confinement in addition to other punishments.²⁰

United States

A number of initiatives have been taken in the United States to address the problem of radicalization. The US Bureau of Prisons has designed a rehabilitation program, which is based on traditional methods of supporting radicals in developing skills necessary for successful reintegration into society.²¹

Additionally, police are provided training in areas related to particular dimensions of religion and cultural traits of the country's main communities. Prison Radicalization Task Force and US Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism are among the bodies aimed at countering radicalization.

The US also launched a deradicalization program in Iraq at a large scale in 2007.²² Under the program, detainees are engaged in religious discussions as well as imparted occupational skills like carpentry, art and farming, allowing them alternative sources of income and social support. As with programs in other countries, the US deradicalization program in Iraq also engages families of extremists.

Norway

Norway's deradicalization program is administered through local agencies. Around 700 people have been trained successfully so far. Families of the activists are also involved in the process. The Norwegian program has been ranked among the most successful in the world.²³

Germany

Germany's disengagement program is based on multiple initiatives. A high level of cooperation and coordination among various agencies like police, municipal corporations and NGOs is deemed the program's basic strength and the basis of its success.²⁴

Online Deradicalization

In addition to conventional deradicalization means, the Saudi Arabia-based Al-Sakinah (tranquility) Campaign is one of the initiatives, which focuses on the Internet as the avenue to deradicalize those who surf the Web and indulge in radical chats.²⁵ Initiated by volunteers, the campaign was subsequently adopted by the Saudi Ministry of Religious Endowments after it proved successful in persuading extremists to renounce their views.

Trained scholars engage extremists in online dialogues to persuade them to change their radical views. The campaign's target audience is the individuals who use the Internet to learn more about Islam, not the extremists, states one of the campaign's founders.²⁶

Al-Sakinah launched its own website to give a boost to its activities. The website is designed to serve as a source of learning for *imams*, *mashaikh* and others. Noticing the popularity of the Al-Sakinah, other countries, including Algeria, the US, and the UK have also launched web-based counter-radicalization programs.

In UK, the Internet is used as an avenue to support mainstream voices and to promote an understanding among the followers of various religions in the country. Radical Middle Way project in the UK has a website, Islam-online (www.islamonline.net/), where a wide range of views and opinions from all major Muslim schools of thought can be accessed. Under the project, seminars are also organized on the subject of combating terrorism and radicalization

through the Internet. One of the aims of the project is to undermine the capacity of extremists to propagate their ideologies through the Internet.²⁷

Conclusion

It is quite clear that the approaches adopted and the models implemented in various countries converge at some points and diverge at others. Many of these approaches have received considerable success. However, they cannot be termed as successful or unsuccessful in isolation and without reference to context.

Some of the programs, which have not been that successful, might have delivered better had they had been financed appropriately. Though, the models practiced in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Singapore have been widely praised, it does not mean that they have no shortcomings? However, much can be learnt from the success of these programs and the lessons used to improve their impact.

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Crisis of Political Development and Human Rights Violations

Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi

Introduction

There is a deep correlation between the crisis of political development — multidimensional in definition — and violations of human rights in a state or society. Key research at micro and macro level supports the hypothesis that a country suffering from the former is prone to the latter. The higher the intensity of the crisis, the greater the incidence of rights violations are, as is evident in the case of many underdeveloped and third world countries. The crisis of political development, an unfortunate phenomenon present in many underdeveloped and developing countries, has direct implications for the realization, or denial, of human rights in those societies. The pursuit of human rights being indispensable to mankind, as they pledge happiness, dignity and development of mankind, faces a setback in societies where the crises exist.

This paper is an attempt to highlight the co-relation between the crisis and its impact on human rights and, based on the theoretical framework, focuses on how the political development syndrome undermines human rights. The paper is divided into three parts – the first section analyzes human rights and their indispensability to a happy society; the second succinctly defines the five crises of political development; and the third examines how human rights are jeopardized by the crisis. The nature of the study is qualitative as well as theoretical.

i) Importance of Human Rights

Human rights are indispensable to human beings as they assure their happiness, dignity and development. The realization of the importance of human rights emerged as early as human beings started living in societies and the question of mine and thine emerged. The social contract which led human beings to form a society based on government was the pursuit of the safeguard of human rights – regarding life, property and honor – they all were entitled to. The struggle between war and peace has been a witness to uncountable scenes of human misery in the midst of which existed human beings who raised their voices, at the cost of their lives, to condemn violations of rights and for a caring and humane society where human dignity and values could flourish. They included prophets, philosophers, scholars, *sufis*, jurists, preachers, writers and even warriors for whom human dignity and

values came first. They were the pioneers and promoters of a struggle now advocated by so many forums, including the United Nations, nation-states, IGOs/NGOs. The term 'human rights' is nonetheless comparative.

As Graebner discusses, the idea of modern human rights took form in the 17th and 18th century Europe and America by the thinkers of the Enlightenment such as Locke, Bentham and Rousseau without a concrete definition.¹ The establishment of the UN as an important forum for the promotion of security and peace heralded the advancement of human rights badly devastated by the miseries of the two World Wars. On December 10, 1948 the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which advocates the doctrine of human/fundamental rights globally. The Declaration, containing a preamble and 30 articles, advocates the dignity of the human person without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status; freedom of speech, belief, movement and freedom from fear and want; treatment in accordance with law, and the right to education, work and to own property as inalienable rights. The Declaration also asserts individuals' right to take part in the government of their country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

The Declaration was followed by a number of UN and international conventions and declarations – including the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam – that focus on the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms.²

Human rights can be broadly classified into five categories of socio-cultural, economic, political, legal and religious rights. The difference between human and fundamental rights is that fundamental rights are rights incorporated into countries' constitutions and their implementation can be enforced through the judiciary. Such incorporation serves as an additional guarantee of human rights.³ How far human rights can be secured in states functioning under an unconstitutional and unrepresentative dispensation, emerges as a crucial question.

ii) Crisis of Political Development

The five crises of political development – of identity, legitimacy, participation, representation/distribution and penetration – may exist in one form or other in all societies, with varying degrees of intensity. Montesquieu said centuries ago that they may result in societies where separation of powers is not fixed,

which are run without defined constitutional modes of actions of government and where powers are concentrated in one or few.⁴

The term 'Crises Syndrome', coined in 1971 by Leonard Binder in his book *Crises and Sequences of Political Development*, serves one of the paradigms of research in comparative politics on the basis of which numerous hypotheses have been developed by political scientists since – explaining good and bad governance responsible for the integration and disintegration of societies.⁵

The crisis of identity, being one of the five crises of political development, is one of the leading factors for the unrest and instability in a large number of underdeveloped countries. The crisis of identity may exist in Canada, one of the most economically and politically developed nation-states, but the ratio may be miniscule, whereas states such as Nigeria or the pre-1991 USSR have experienced considerably higher ratios. The higher the ratio of the crisis is, the more alienation occurs in a society.⁶

According to Binder's analysis, the crisis of identity in the post-World War II period after the collapse of colonial empires and emergence of nation-states is a serious crisis for a political system. The crisis of identity can simply be defined in the context of how far residents of a nation-state identify themselves with the basis of identification of that particular state and its societal structure. The major basis of identification can be historical, linguistic, ethnic, religious, symbolic, socio-cultural, economic and political. For example, in case of many Arab countries, the crises of legitimacy, representation and participation are on account of the crisis of identity due to strong historical/linguistic bonds of identification with Arab nationalism. The same is true of Iran and Turkey where the roots of nationalism are stronger.⁷ Despite having faced militancy/insurgency, both countries are overall free of the crisis of disintegration because the ratio of identification with the state-societal structure as a unified nation is strong. Afghanistan can be a similar example with its people having been in the grip of a prolonged and brutal foreign invasion/civil war under a series of repressive regimes, yet the people still predominantly and proudly identify themselves as Afghans without any sign of the state's disintegration. The developed countries such as the United States, Canada, and members of the European Union enjoy the established basis of economic, political and social support as melting pots without a crisis of identity. The people in countries with a high level of homogeneity such as Japan and Korea have strong linguistic and socio-cultural basis for identification with the established structure of governance.

The crisis of legitimacy is a serious predicament of a political system. It paves the way for other crises in a political order, which, in the long run, may end up in chaos and disintegration of the state.

In political science jargon, legitimacy is defined as the “quality of being justified or willingly accepted by subordinates that converts the exercise of political power into rightful authority.”⁸ In layman’s terms the crisis of legitimacy is a situation in which those who rule do so without consensus and consent of citizens and through unconstitutional means. The initial source of their being in power comes from undemocratic, unrepresentative and illegitimate norms and practices. The rulers coming to power through unfair means may later try to secure constitutional means and supportive function of a political group to legitimize their actions in order to continue in power. Their immediate concern remains the pseudo basis of power support. In order to secure legitimacy they are under pressure to adopt measures contrary to the spirit of good governance and established democracy – not necessarily the British, American or French models but a system which enshrines the participation of masses in important public decisions/policies at macro and micro level through their representatives (parliament/local bodies) under constitutional means.

The crisis of legitimacy thrives on account of lack of public participation and building of important state institutions such as independent judiciary, with permeation of volatile and opportunist forces with weaker foundations denying public trust - building and potentially leading to internal chaos and instability.⁹

The nature of the crises of participation can be better explained under the framework of public participation at the micro and macro level in different scenarios: when no channels of participation are allowed in a country following a military takeover/martial law or a dictator usurping power; or when the channels are allowed but they are pseudo in nature.

The crisis of participation is found in societies that lack a representative system based on an electoral process, essentially where factors such as denial of the right to vote, purge or banning of political parties, and a non-representative regime supporting pseudo public participation in its favor are prevalent. The tactics may include the involvement of incumbent government in holding of elections on non-party basis, supporting a particular party and rigging elections. Pressure groups which are social aggregates with some level of cohesion and shared aims that attempt to influence the political decision-making process are not genuinely found in a society facing the participation crisis. Their existence is essential to the promotion of human rights.¹⁰ Instability and violence is more pronounced in a society suffering

from the two crises. Jerrold Green, who carried out extensive research into the Iranian Revolution, claims that the broader mobilization of the masses against the established order of the Shah was due to the crises of legitimacy and participation.¹¹

The crisis of representation largely emerges under an elected rule when the pledges of the elected class for the establishment of a true representative system are not honored. Representation is a process through which attitudes, preferences, viewpoints and desires of the whole or majority of the citizenry, are shaped into governmental actions with their expressed approval, by those elected to national and state/provincial legislature. Representation, a concept of social interest, largely in the context of power relations among leaders and followers, entails pivotal importance in a democratic system where the elected representatives are to serve the interests of those they represent. Absolute satisfaction of representing the interests of a community by its representatives may not be possible, either in a developed or a developing democracy, yet the principles of a representative system demand that those representing the electorate pay heed to the interests of the represented.¹²

The crisis of representation occurs when the main interests of the represented classes are ignored by the representatives. The major factor for this crisis in third world countries is the lack of a responsible representative system where the majority of representatives thrive on voters' blind support for their political ambitions. The largest percentage of them, having been elected repeatedly to the federal and state/provincial assemblies, belongs to the upper/ landlord/feudal class of society – still an invincible force. Their major claim for support rests on the social status and privileges they enjoy and utilize to mobilize people's support in elections. Their continuous appearance on the political scene is due to the entrenched tribal, ethnic and feudal setup where chances of broader participation even by political parties are dim without the support of the feudal lords. They are strong in rural areas where the challenge to their authority comes mainly from fellow family or tribal members, rather than a popular force of common men and women. The major political parties allot party tickets to echelons showing more bases of social and financial support in their respective domains. The parties seldom allot tickets to poor candidates, however popular they may be. In some rural areas, political parties with an ideological or ethnic base of support may have secured public support by backing the party-supported non-feudal candidates to victory; however, such cases are an exception to the general rule.

The crisis of penetration primarily refers to the effectiveness of government penetration against lawlessness and disorder. The less effective the

government in the protection of its citizens, the more intense the crisis is. The exceeding ratio of the crisis disturbs the equilibrium of the state and leads to anarchy.¹³ As the crisis grows, a state becomes more quasi or rouge at the cost of equilibrium of state and society by threatening life and property of citizens.

iii) Development Crisis versus Human Rights

The political history of the decline and rise of nation-states since the end of World War II shows that states suffering from the crises of political development witness a higher incidence of human rights violations. A recent study by US-based CATO Institute, titled 'Trading Tyranny for Freedom', claims that countries that are politically developed and open to the global economy respect civil and political liberties more than those who are not.¹⁴

The crisis of identity may or may not directly undermine human rights except where it involves ethnic violence or suffering of a small ethnic minority at the hands of the majority. It also has linkages with other crises. According to Edward Mortimer, a stable state "remains the instrument of first resort for the protection of minority (religious, ethnic)" and can protect them through legislation. To him, a democratic state without other political development crises is liable to produce benign nationalism which can present the world as enlightened, tolerant, reflective, inclusive, and rights-based.¹⁵ In his analysis, benign nationalism replaces conventional nationalism based on ethnic homogeneity, racial purity, blood and language. Relating the crisis of identity to participation, Michael Ignatieff's analysis claims that states with participation guarantee that ethnic groups will live "side-by-side in peace in shared loyalty to a state, strong enough, fair enough, equitable enough to command their obedience."¹⁶ Relating the issue to the crisis of legitimacy, he blames the Gulf States where the autocratic rulers are liable to give rise to discriminations against the Shia minority.

The crisis of legitimacy leads to undermining of human rights. It is said that countries suffering from the crisis of participation on the basis of public participation in politics – both internally and externally – are politically less sovereign. Out of the 192 UN members, 29 control the world's largest share of GDP with greater influence and say in world politics. They all are constitutional representative systems without a crisis of legitimacy. The principles of statehood are built on four strong pillars, which were dealt with in detail by the International Law Commission in 1933, better known as the Montevideo Convention (named after Uruguay's capital where the treaty was signed) on the Rights and Duties of States. The convention was attended by 23 states and recognized by the League of Nations as well as the United Nations as an important landmark to understand the concepts of nation-state building. The Convention asked for Good Neighbor Policy with

each participant country entitled to rights and duties and respect of its sovereignty at the hands of others. The Good Neighbor Policy is a treaty and principle the UN members are party to. Many important principles of international law regarding the recognition, territorial sovereignty, collective security, diplomatic entities, and international humanitarian law are based on the Montevideo Convention.¹⁷

Unrepresentative systems are the root cause of legitimacy crises. They can broadly be divided into two categories. First, where there are no constitutional boundaries and those in power rule without any formal constitutional setup as happens after a military takeover in a coup and the country is run in praetorian manner. To better understand the involvement of the military in politics in countries where army plays a dominant role and takes over power, one must read the first chapter of Eric Nordlinger's *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments*, a rudimentary lesson to understand the role of the army in politics. Finer asserts that praetorian rulers suffer from two weaknesses: they lack legitimacy and are unable to administer societies other than the most primitive communities.¹⁸

The second category is when a formal constitutional setup is established but the ultimate power belongs to a person or group. Those in power can be the coup-makers-turned-politicians or an individual having emerged as a leader out of a revolutionary struggle.¹⁹ Pakistan can be an example where army chief General Pervez Musharraf having seized power through a military coup became the President in military fatigues and painted himself as an enlightened moderate. The constitutional setup was gradually restored with crucial changes enabling the ruler to remain in power and a band of politicians that chose to be identified with him, generally referred to in Pakistan as the king's party.

The legitimacy crisis thrives at judicial order where courts are essentially not free, and rule of law is absent or weakened. The Human Rights Watch record shows that states with the crisis of legitimacy have both poor constitutional and human rights record.²⁰ In terms of human rights protection among the UN member countries – with Finland, Denmark and New Zealand topping the list of states where rights are most protected – Cuba is at a lowly 140th place, Pakistan at 112th and Guatemala at 91st.²¹

The nature of the crisis of participation is the third major crisis of political development. It can better be explained under the framework of public participation at the micro and macro level of a society with three different situations. First, when no channels of participation are allowed in a country, often following a military takeover / martial law or a dictator usurping power; Second, public participation is allowed but in a non-

competitive manner or on non-party basis without political parties' representation. In such circumstances, participation of the political parties is either banned or silenced in favor of the political grouping formed by the dictator, often proclaiming himself as the Head of the State without any public support, to legitimize his rule. The situation can include a state where channels of public participation are ultimately designed to support or oppose selective representation, i.e., communist/socialist, Nazi and fascist, Nazi parties, etc. Third, where political parties/groups are allowed to operate but not encouraged to cross the power-holding line actually meant for a political group enjoying special patronage of the dictator. The state media backs the group with all possible efforts of political, financial and moral support, in addition to manipulation of election results to the group's advantage. The constitutional arrangements may vary in any given situation but they are all aimed at popular public participation for the continuity of a selective power elite. Longer the stint of the king's party in power, lesser the chances of a healthy and viable political order.²²

Participation is a process which grows with continuity of electoral rule and public institutions. Citizens lack adequate human rights in countries with a crisis of participation. Where the infrastructure of the state is weak, there is often a lower rate of literacy and insufficient economic development. The restoration of democracy and existence of political parties, which are liable to promote participation, is marred by pseudo politics of volatile interests and intrigues. It is a negation of the right of self-determination contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966, the 1977 Geneva Accord, and the Declaration of the 1993 World Conference in Vienna, among others.²³ Participation reduces public resentment and opens safety valves for releasing public pressure as Daniel L Byman and Jerrold D. Green discuss in their research focusing on Kuwait. With comparatively more political freedom and accountability of government there is more support for debates inside and outside legislature on sensitive issues in Kuwait.²⁴

The crisis of representation emerges either under a political dispensation where there is no representative system or where such a system exists but there is no representation of the rights or interests of the represented class.

The political development as David Easton argues is the product of a system where there is a process of inputs and outputs. The representatives (members of legislatures) should take care of the represented.²⁵ The elected class largely fails to cater to the interests of the represented class on two grounds. Firstly, the rulers are preoccupied with advancement of their own interests at the cost of those they were bound to represent. Secondly, they are not accountable for

their actions. Vociferous electoral promises are discarded soon after polling is over. The major share of funds allotted for the advancement of public well-being goes into the personal accounts of those supposedly elected ones, in the name of looking after the electorate's interests. The situation is particularly so where an individual secures the legitimacy of being elected from his constituency without any challenge to his candidature. In places where the hold of a family for securing an electoral victory was countered by another group/party or candidate mobilizing support, it was observed that funds or moral support were afforded for the interests of voters of the constituency in a bid to raise the profile of the elected individual for future prospects of winning against opponents, but still such challenges lack sufficient mass participation. In urban areas, where political groups are more successful in polarizing public opinion against one another through media, the elected class is comparatively less inclined to disregard the interests of the represented. The level of crisis is higher in controlled democracies or ideologically-motivated polities wherein principally one party is encouraged to function.²⁶

The crisis of penetration, the fifth crisis of political development, directly affects human rights – be they political, economic or social. Robert Jackson, who examines the birth and survival of third world nations after the Second World War and refers to a large number of third world states as “quasi-states”, claims that the international normative framework that lack good governance and viable political order upholds sovereign statehood in the third world as “negative sovereignty”, contrasting it with what he calls “positive sovereignty” that emerged in Europe and now in Latin American and South East Asian States of Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia.²⁷ Quasi states are those states which are not fully developed politically and economically and have a loose sense of nationalism. They suffer from the crisis of political and economic development along with a major penetration crisis.

Conclusion

Human rights are instruments meant to ensure the well being of citizens. There is a positive correlation between the crises of political development and human rights violations. The higher the intensity of the political development syndrome is, the more frequent the incidences of violation of human rights are.

The promotion of human rights in society - as an essential component of a welfare state - is negated by bad governance which ultimately results into crises of political development. Research proves that human rights violations are frequent in the states marred by crises of legitimacy and participation. A

close study of the division of international system into three kinds of states: developed or core, developing or semi-periphery and underdeveloped or periphery shows that political, economic, social and cultural development essential to furthering human rights emerges amid an established political order devoid of any major political development crises—largely associated with developed countries. The improvement of democratic order in developing and even in some underdeveloped countries can lead to a reduction in violation of human rights.

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Tablighi Jamaat: Discourse and Challenges

Muhammad Amir Rana

Introduction

Tablighi Jamaat has been widely discussed for some time now in the religious circles of the Muslim ecumene. It has been of particular interest to scholars in South Asia. Western scholars have written about it too. But none has succeeded in getting into the depth of a religious group that is fast gaining popularity among mostly poor Muslims of the subcontinent. It has received bouquets and brickbats but controversy remains on what it is.

Salafis or Saudi Hanbalis are generally dubbed as Wahabis who have their origin in the Saudi society. They outrightly reject the Tablighi Jamaat as heretic and have questioned the content and form of its preaching. For instance, a well-known Saudi scholar, Sheikh Ibn Baaz, goes as far as to forbid joining the Jamaat because of some *bidaat* (Innovations in religious beliefs or practices).¹

Similar objections were raised by an old member of the Tablighi Jamaat, Dr Mohammed Saleem who lamented, "Ideally, Tablighi Jamaat should have been publicized puritan Islam, but they have laid so much emphasis on sufi traditions that the real Islam has gone into oblivion."²

Western researchers have fundamental reservations regarding the Tablighi Jamaat. First, it preaches a traditional version of religion, which promotes a conservative way of life to the youth. Second, its loose organizational structure helps terrorists conceal their identity. Some of the Pakistani and other South Asian intellectuals share these reservations.

In 2005, the Center for Policing Terrorism, an American research institute, analyzed the threats posed to the American security by the Jamaat. It remarked that there is a minimal possibility of any threat to the American security from Tablighi Jamaat; however, a possibility of recruitment of terrorists under its cover is quite high.³

However, Tablighi Jamaat's activities are expanding. Millions participate in the Jamaat congregations in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. The growth of participants in its annual congregation is but exponential. This makes it instrumental to look into its policy, discipline, impact, and more importantly, why are people attracted towards it.

In Pakistan, not much research has been done on Tablighi Jamaat; just a few remarks, here and there, by religious leaders. A lot has been written in India though. On top of the list is Yoginder Sikand's PhD thesis on Tablighi Jamaat. Western thinkers, Olivier Roy and Mariam Abu Zahab are considerably an authority in this regard. A doctoral dissertation by a Spanish researcher, Eva Borreguero, is another worthwhile study. In addition, some other researchers have written on the subject both in the East and the West, including Barbara D. Metcalf, who is associated with the history department of the University of California. Barbara's work is of great significance. But, again, Western thinkers have looked at the Tablighi Jamaat from their own set of lenses. The pivotal point of their research has always been the challenges posed by the Tablighi Jamaat to the society, civilization, culture, and security of the West.

In this paper, an effort is made to look at the Tablighi Jamaat from a South Asian perspective, particularly Pakistan, where it grew. One is humbled by the studies conducted by Western thinkers as well as the Indian researcher, Sikand (2002), who threw light on the erstwhile oblivious parts of Jamaat's story.

The author had opportunity to participate in three of its annual congregations and five three-day preaching visits to observe the activities and functioning of the Tablighi Jamaat from close quarters. This also gave an opportunity to interact and discuss the subject with leading lights of the Jamaat. The understanding gained through these observations and interactions most probably outweigh the wisdom offered by secondary sources. It may be said at the outset that the Tablighi Jamaat leadership is, wittingly or unwittingly, taking the Jamaat forward on the sufi mystical tradition of South Asia. Some even view it as an alternative. The leadership does not seem to be much concerned with the reservations expressed by the religious scholars and Western thinkers.

Origin

Sikand identifies Tablighi Jamaat as part of the Sufi Reformist Project launched by Darul Uloom Deoband, which was established in 1867 in Saharanpur, India.⁴ Tablighi Jamaat is part of the third element of the Deoband Project, Tassawuf-o-Ehsan (spiritualism and beneficence). The other three elements are: Tawheed or Oneness of God and the Sunnah; following the Hanafi school of thought; and finally, jihad.⁵

There is a general misconception that the Deobandi school of thought is void of mysticism. On the contrary, Deobandis not only agree on mysticism but most of the scholars associated with sufi Naqshbandi school of thought are Deobandis. It is because of the deep roots of mysticism among the people that

some of the Deobandi jihadi organizations show their commitment towards mysticism. For instance, the outlawed Jaish-e-Mohammad's chief, Masood Azhar, has emphasized on mysticism in his writings and has his own disciples.

Most of the Deobandi scholars identify mysticism as the essence of Shariah but oppose the "un-Islamic" rituals performed at the shrines. There is a strong relationship between first and third elements of Deobandi school of thought. The relationship indicates that, in the context of the Muslim community in the sub-continent, the Oneness of God can take hold only if the relationship between the shrine and the individual remains within the Islamic boundaries. Mufti Abul Ata comments, that "un-Islamic" and Shariah by force had made meditation and daily worships the most important component of mysticism. Beyond that, some of the ignorant people readily accepted that mysticism was not bound to follow Shariah, he says. In his view, Deobandi scholars served a serious blow to the unwanted business of infidelity and heresy practiced in the name of sufi mysticism.⁶

Origins of the Tablighi Jamaat are found in the same idea. When Maulana Muhammad Ilyas laid the foundations of this movement in Mewat in 1927, Hindu movements of Shudhi and Sanghtan were on their peak. The objective of Hindu movements was to bring the neo-Muslims back to the fold of their ancestral religion. Sikand (2002) identifies it as the key-factor in launching the movement of Tablighi Jamaat. Darul Uloom Deoband had established a department of "Safeguarding and Proselytizing Islam (*shoba-e-tableegh-o-hifazat-i-Islam*)."

Syed Muhammad Mian, a writer of *Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam* writes that as a result of this initiative, more than 11,000 Hindus re-converted to Islam.⁷ Correcting the religious actions of the common Muslim remained the focal point of the movement started by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas.

Maulana Muhammad Ilyas wished people got back to the religion. But it was not possible through seminaries and convents alone, he thought. Only those who were already close to religion, he argued, would come to such places. Thus, he thought it was necessary to go from door to door and sincerely ask them learn the religion. Since, his movement's target audience was the common Muslims, he organized and structured it accordingly. He based his approach on the convent system thinking it might be helpful in attracting the people towards the Jamaat. He formulated six principles for daily worship on the same lines as a mentor did for his disciples and keeps them connected to the system of daily worship or as it is thought to be necessary for a disciple to demonstrate his association with the mentor or the convent by attending the weekly, monthly and yearly gatherings.

In sufi, mystical, schools of thought, there is an order but sometimes it is not. But, in Tablighi Jamaat, meetings were pretty disciplined. Taking cue from the convent system, the Maulana did not impose strict conditions and rules on participants to make it simple. The level of the syllabus for preaching was kept according to a common man's understanding level.

The aim was to make the common people understand the principles through parables from the lives of the Prophet's companions and sufi mystics. That is how the Tablighi Jamaat spread. It is interesting to note that Maulana Mohammed Ilyas established educational institutions in Mewat on the lines of the convents, where common people would come for a limited time. They were provided with basic knowledge about Islam and worshipping. However, as the Jamaat spread, the approach and methods of preaching were altered.

When setting up educational institutions at a large scale to attract Muslims towards religion became difficult, mosques were brought into use as schools and they were affiliated to an educational institution. However, the preaching method remained that of the sufi mystics. Sermons based on scholarly arguments were avoided. The basic principle, named "Taleem" (literal meaning: "on gaining knowledge") was: those who have higher knowledge of Islam should share it with others and those who have little should learn from others.⁸ The method was derived from the one practiced by As'haab-e-Suffa (Companions of Prophet Muhammad dedicated to teaching Islam in the Prophet's mosque in Medina).⁹ Tolerance is a hallmark of Tablighi Jamaat's system of "Taleem" and special attention is paid to promoting it among students at all times. Jestng during classes or showing a reaction to derisory remarks is strictly forbidden.

Tablighi Jamaat has used mosques belonging to Sunni sub-sects for "Taleem" and other activities. Never has a Shia mosque been used. Tablighi Jamaat has never reacted whenever they were not allowed to use a mosque's premise because of their Deobandi identity. Even on such occasions, Tablighi teachers are advised to behave politely. At times, they have faced such problems even in Deobandi mosques.

Tablighi Jamaat does not believe in charismatic leaders. They are to be respected and venerated which again is part of the sufi mystic tradition. The whole emphasis is on bringing out a man good character. That is why members of the Tablighi Jamaat do not approach non-Muslims themselves. The idea is that non-Muslims should feel an urge to emulate their good character and they should approach them. This is the "Method of Proselytizing non-Muslims." When Tablighi Jamaat members visit non-Muslim countries on proselytizing missions they do not get in touch with

non-Muslims but attract them with examples of good character towards Islam. When a non-Muslim shows interest in knowing more, he is informed of the golden principles of Islam and never is he asked to change his religion.¹⁰

Tablighi Jamaat has, undoubtedly, penetrated deep into South Asian Muslim societies, impressing people from all walks of life including rulers, civil and military bureaucracy, businessmen, sportsmen and even members of the showbiz community. Participation of former military generals, rulers and political leaders in Jamaat congregations is sometimes shocking to some although the tradition of rulers and political leaders attending Jamaat congregations is quite old as it gives them an opportunity to gain popularity. Such a trend towards the Jamaat in South Asia should be seen in the South Asian perspective. While political leaders use Jamaat congregations to gain popularity, their presence verily extends legitimacy to Jamaat as well.

And this is the factor that prompted others to initiate such a movement, some from the same school of thought as the Jamaat, namely Deobandi. These movements went on to strengthen the Tabligh Jamaat's idea of proselytizing. All such movements, but, push people towards the traditional religion. Dawat-i-Islami (associated with Barelvi school of thought), Tablighi Jamaat Ahl-i-Hadith (associated with Ahl-i-Hadith school of thought), and Majlis Siyanatul Muslimeen (associated with Deobandi school of thought) are some of the examples of such movements.

An overview of criticism on Tablighi Jamaat

a) Criticisms Leveled by the Religious Circles

As mentioned in the introduction, the Tablighi Jamaat faced criticism from all schools of thought, including the Deobandi. The criticism is leveled on two fronts:

- 1) Belief system
- 2) Preaching Method

On belief system, the most significant objection is that the Tablighi Jamaat pays more attention on good deeds and not on reforming the belief system. The objection is based on the argument that "if the belief system is not right, all other deeds stand rejected in the eyes of God." Sufi mysticism is blamed for this flaw. As the Salafite scholars argue:¹¹

Serious differences exist between *Ahl-i-Tauheed* (the theists) and the Tablighi Jamaat on belief system and approach. Those associated with the Tablighi Jamaat are *Matueedis* and negate the attributes of God. They are sufi in the

matters of worship and morality. They administer the oath of allegiance to their disciples according to the four sufi ways which pushes a man into the dark valleys of perversion.

Salafi and Hanbali scholars, namely, Sheikh Ibn Baaz, Sheikh Abdul Razzaq Afifi, Sheikh Nasirud Din Albani and Salih bin Fauzan issued verdicts against the Tablighi Jamaat along the same lines.¹² Strict Deobandi scholars raise similar kind of objections. Particularly, final part of the Jamaat syllabus, known as “Fazail-i-Amaal” remain the main target of these objections. This part consists of the anecdotes from the lives of the sufi saints. Dr. Muhammad Saleem, who parted his way with Tablighi Jamaat after a long association, writes in his book *Tablighi Jamaat ki ilmi-o-amali kamzorian* (Shortcomings of Tablighi Jamaat in Areas of Knowledge and Action):¹³

I wish the elders of the Tablighi Jamaat had expunged the heretic portions in its syllabus and compiled it in such a way that whatever remains is not apostate. Weak and forged narratives are thrown out to save people’s beliefs.

Elders of the Tablighi Jamaat generally avoid responding to criticism, but, they do respond if a criticism is raised from within the Jamaat. However, they use that part of the syllabus that has never been criticized by Jamaat fellows.¹⁴ Since the Tablighi Jamaat is a reformist movement for Muslims, and not a grand literary or a sectarian movement, objections of this nature carried no value, particularly when the Jamaat follows the sufi order yet remaining within the Deobandi school of thought. For example, Naqshbandis and Awaisis, more or less, follow the sufi traditions in the same way as the Barelvis or other sufi schools of thought.

On the preaching methods of the Tablighi Jamaat, the objection is raised to the sufi-style long visits for the purpose of proselytizing. These visits are rejected as monastic in nature. In the opinion of Dr. Muhammad Saleem:¹⁵

The sufis have always preached monastic way of life by urging disciples to stay away from the material world, which is in fact the centerpiece of mysticism. Tablighi Jamaat has this shade of mysticism. Staying away from their homes for a year and sometimes over a year, these people cut themselves off from their families. They write letters to, or call, their families but they do not tell them about their location so that they cannot find them.

Countless objections are raised about the time-period of the visits, schedules, emphasis on the six principles¹⁶ and the method of administering the oath of allegiance. These acts are labeled as impermissible innovations in religion.

Western scholarship has criticized Tablighi Jamaat for its potential links to jihad, terrorism and political Islam. On the contrary, religious circles in

Pakistan, particularly religious scholars, who are also engaged in politics, criticise Tablighi Jamaat for pushing the people away from jihad and politics. They say:¹⁷

For God's sake, look beyond the three meditations, six [Islamic] principles and the sufi-style wanderings to see what is happening in the world. At least read a newspaper or listen to radio in the convents and centers of proselytizing wherever you are, to know how badly Muslims are treated in this world. Have you ever discussed jihad in your centers? Have you done any preparation for the Third World War? If you haven't, it is time to wake up, lest on the Day of Judgement all sufis and Tablighis find themselves laden on the back of a donkey.

A well-known Deobandi scholar, Zahidur Rashidi expressed his reservations on the Tablighi Jamaat to its elders and described it in his column "Nawa-i-Haq" (Call for Truth), thus:¹⁸

Among the complaints made in their presence of Maulana Saad, Maulana Zubair and Maulana Ibrahim was that some of the statements issued at the Tablighi Jamaat congregations suggest that the activities carried out from the Tablighi Jamaat platform are the only way of preaching and proselytizing. And, that other religious issues, particularly jihad, have lost their significance. Other complaint was that the element of consultation in the process of decision making is weakening and most of the decisions are based on intuition. Appropriate attention is not paid to the syllabi of the seminaries running under the Tablighi Jamaat. In general accounts, coming of the Christ and appearance of Imam Mehdi are mentioned in such a way as if the events are about to take place soon and we must make preparation. Most responsible religious scholars of Pakistan have already termed these points as anti-Shariah and are preparing counter-points. Maulana Saad, representing the Indian elders of Tablighi Jamaat had promised to introduce reforms along these lines, but after so many years nothing has come out. I have kept my silence all these years. But after listening to a group of religious scholars who were discussing a sermon delivered by Maulana Muhammad Ahmed Bahawalpuri, I feel compelled to break my silence. So, I dare to unveil some of the details of my meeting with them. A few days back, I wrote in the same column about the importance of preaching, the contribution made by the Tablighi Jamaat and its impact on the global level. I commend Jamaat's contribution. But negation of parts of the Islamic teaching or ignoring some religious stalwart is unacceptable. So, I exhort you to look into these aspects of the religion: parties, seminaries, mosques, convents, mujahideen, study circles and groups working for implementation of Islamic values and working for the sacredness of the Prophet's Companions, centers of knowledge and Darul Ifta (offices for issuing religious decrees) guiding common Muslims, institutions and personalities that expose the Western onslaught on Islamic thought and culture, that point out the ideological perversion of modernist circles, and the global system of preaching and reformation of the Muslim Ummah. All those working on these aspects serve the cause of religion and God will reward them according to His will and the contribution made by these people. But, if any one school of

thought claims to be the only standard-bearers and negates others, it will be seen as trying to undermine the concept and role of the religion.

Due to the association of hundreds of thousands of people with the Tablighi Jamaat, the Jamaat-e-Islami, and all those affiliated with them, has demanded a political revolution. They argue:

Is it possible for the elders of the Tablighi Jamaat to ask the government to implement Islamic judicial and economic systems? If it is not possible, then, what's the use of these millions of people coming to the congregations? We do not accept this Jewish system.¹⁹

Tablighi Jamaat elders' response was lukewarm who disapproved getting involved in politics.

b) Suspicions and Concerns Raised in the West

Let us now look at the criticism coming from the West. French researcher, Olivier Roy, sees the Tablighi Jamaat as different from other political and violent Islamic movements and identifies it as a "neo-fundamentalist" movement, which only emphasizes on correcting actions, attitudes and habits.²⁰ Roy and Barbara, both see it as distinct from political and violent movements of Islamism too. Barbara's analysis of the impact of this movement on the West shows that this Deobandi movement may not be as relevant in the Western context as generally perceived.²¹

Some writers, however, express their concern about the impact of the Tablighi Jamaat on the Asian and Muslim communities in the West. Such concerns revolve around the point that the association of Muslim populations, particularly of the youth, with religious tradition is leading them towards isolation and that it has the potential of posing diversified types of challenges to the Western societies at social and cultural levels. For instance, Muslim women are taking veil more seriously. The role played by other traditional and modern Muslim movements is also important. Tablighi Jamaat might not be able to pose any serious challenge at a political level, but individuals associated with it may be able to use other organizations' platforms. Therefore, the best response for the West is to take measures on a broader ideological level rather than at the organizational level.

c) Terrorism and the Tablighi Jamaat

Policy-makers in the West are concerned with Tablighi Jamaat's, direct or indirect, linkage with terrorist organizations. According to the Center for Policing Terrorism, an American research organization, people associated with the Tablighi Jamaat in the United States are estimated to be around fifty

thousand. Suspicions about the Tablighi Jamaat were raised when the so-called “American Taliban”—John Walker Lindh and Omer Padilla came to limelight. They had an association with the Tablighi Jamaat and so did the “Australian Taliban”—David Hook—who also had been associated with it. Similarly, one of the terrorists, who carried out the July 7 bombings in London, had been associated with the Jamaat. The British police have arrested 23 suspect terrorists so far, who, one way or the other, had a relationship with the Tablighi Jamaat. But the question arises whether the entire Tablighi Jamaat could be blamed for terrorism because some individuals were suspected of involvement in terrorism?

Following issues have been pointed out so far.²²

- 1) Is Tablighi Jamaat directly involved in terrorism? The answer is negative. But, the possibility of members getting involved in terrorism in their individual capacity has not been ruled out.
- 2) Other than the American and Australian Taliban and British suspects, At-Takfi, who was awarded death sentence in May 2004 blasts in Casablanca, had also been associated with Tablighi Jamaat. In this regard, examples can be quoted from Kazakhstan, India and the United States, which are based on police investigations. This is the reason why the West does not consider Tablighi Jamaat a high risk group. But, the possibility of Jamaat members getting influenced by other violent groups is not discounted.
- 3) Another point under consideration is the possible branching off of a violent group from within the Tablighi Jamaat that may show tendencies to get involved in acts of terrorism. No solid evidence is available though, except for a coup attempt against Benazir Government in 1995, hatched by few military officers, who had been Tablighi Jamaat-associates. And there were individuals from jihad organizations as well, suggesting that the plot was an isolated act.
- 4) The possibility of Jamaat-associated youth moving towards extremism is taken as a serious threat. In this regard, much evidence is available in Pakistan and the West. Most of the people associated with jihad and violent sectarian organizations have also been associated with the Tablighi Jamaat. According to Tariq Pervez, who heads National Counter-Terrorism Authority, Tablighi Jamaat attracts the youth and brings them into the mosque, but, then, cannot control them. In the mosque, people associated with jihad and sectarian groups, and, in some cases, their networks are also present. Most vulnerable are the new entrants to the Tablighi fold. Already

attracted towards religion, they can easily be convinced to take up another agenda in the name of religion.²³ For a young person, who is in need of an identity in the West, Tablighi Jamaat provides an outlet for renewing relationship with the religious tradition. Mosque is always the starting point as discussed in the preceding pages.

The author personally experienced a few cases during his research work²⁴ on jihadi organizations. Many members revealed their earlier association with the Tablighi Jamaat; some of them were still in some sort of a relationship. They said they joined the Tablighi Jamaat to get the basic knowledge about Islam in proselytizing visits, and secondly, to acquire spiritual purity. Interestingly, the out-lawed Jaish-e-Muhammad used to send its recruits to proselytizing visits with the Tablighi Jamaat to get them oriented in a religious environment.

- 5) The loose organizational structure of the Tablighi Jamaat is viewed as the biggest threat as it makes it quite easy for terrorist groups to penetrate ostensibly for recruiting new members and hiding from the law enforcement agencies. Some evidence was found in the US, Europe, Philippines, Indonesia, Yemen and Morocco when members of terrorist organizations traveled for operational and training purposes under the cover of Tablighi Jamaat. This phenomenon has emerged in Pakistan too and is a matter of grave concern. Law enforcement agencies claim that many terrorist organizations, including Lashkar-i-Janghvi, have hid themselves in Tablighi Jamaat to avoid arrests, and, in some cases, to carry out terrorist activities.²⁵

A research report in monthly *Hum Shehri* (We the Citizens!), published in Lahore carried a revealing bit of information: since 1990, important figures, commanders and leaders from terrorist groups, have participated in Tablighi Jamaat congregations in Raiwind and other Pakistani cities, and on occasions held their own meetings during the congregation. For example, according to media reports, important Taliban commanders were spotted in a congregation held in Bannu this February. They distributed provocative and misleading literature, sometimes secretly and sometimes openly. *Hum Shehri* reporters claim to have witnessed Taliban in Tablighi Jamaat congregation themselves and they say the law enforcement agencies have recorded evidence.

Since congregations of the Tablighi Jamaat are held purely for preach Islamic principles, and, they are normally disciplined and peaceful, police vigilance is quite lenient. Clearly, we do not suspect Tablighi Jamaat of terrorist activities or aiding in terrorist activities, but the

reality is that the high-ups of Tablighi Jamaat do know about terrorists amid their congregations. If media reporters can trace such activities taking place in Tablighi Jamaat congregations, it seems pretty unlikely that the high-up of the Tablighi Jamaat are not aware of the fact, remarks the reporter.²⁶

A stark evidence of terrorist groups' infiltration into Tablighi Jamaat is provided by a letter released to newspapers by a rebel Taliban faction in Darra Adam Khel which acknowledges that some sensible boys of Tariq Group have stopped working for Tariq; some have left the organization while others have hid themselves in Tabligh (preaching).²⁷

There are many examples that show how terrorists were exploiting the loose structure of Tablighi Jamaat. And despite the fact that the terrorist threat is increasing, Tablighi Jamaat seems to be unwilling to change its organizational structure partly because some Tablighi Jamaat elders believe that introducing a political party style organization, the Jamaat will lose the image of a preaching group and will look like it had started pursuing the interest of some particular group. Hence negating the Tabligh principle, "Every believer is a preacher."²⁸ When reminded of the issue of terrorists' using Tablighi Jamaat's loose structure, they say, the Jamaat will not discriminate against individuals; we are not concerned about their personal deeds outside the congregation. People need guidance and we simply provide that guidance to whoever seeks it. We provide an opportunity for people to voluntarily tread the right path by providing the right environment, the Tablighi Jamaat elders argue,²⁹ adding that it is after all the state's responsibility to punish terrorists and criminals, even when they are associated with the Tablighi Jamaat. Following this line of argument, Sikand (2002) rules out the possibility of Tablighi Jamaat's involvement in terrorism.³⁰

- 6) Fingers are also pointed at the financial resources of the Tablighi Jamaat. Although the Tablighi Jamaat contends itself by saying "Allah is the provider: human beings are just a means," the fact remains that people associated with preaching, and sometimes governments in South Asia have helped construct preaching centers, and running expenditures are met small donations. Tablighi Jamaat does not fund the preaching visits because participants manage their traveling, board and lodging themselves. However, better-off Tablighi Jamaat members do reach out to poor members, and financial support is flagged quite high in Jamaat, sometimes equal to the act of preaching itself.

Conclusion

One can disagree with Tablighi Jamaat's impact on society or its role in attracting Muslims towards Islam, however, one cannot discount the fact that the Jamaat successfully introduced renovation in the archaic convent system. The question raised in religious circles is where will the Jamaat go from here. A movement that was founded 78 years ago, should have adapted itself to the changing mores of the society, but the elders of Tablighi Jamaat seem least concerned about altering the structure or the method of preaching. Tablighi Jamaat elders need to pay attention to fears about terrorism and security. They need to restrict the radicals from using its platform. Tablighi Jamaat elders may take terrorism as a short-lived trend but the propensity of Tablighi Jamaat members getting attracted to radical movements contradicts its own objective of peaceful reformation. The question remains, what are the chances that the Tablighi Jamaat will continue to be used by criminal networks? The tradition of tolerance and consultation is pretty strong in Tablighi Jamaat. This consultation must not be confined to the arrangements and schedules of the preaching visits. It must be extended to other sensitive issues as well.

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and issue numbers, and, the page number/s referred to. Names of the books and journals cited may be italicized but may not be in quotation marks. Names of the articles cited may be in quotation marks but may not be italicized.

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Last Issue

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LAST ISSUE

Abstracts

Mapping the Madrassa Mindset: Political Attitudes of Pakistani Seminaries

Muhammad Amir Rana

Pakistani madrassas are seen as a catalyst promoting extreme views. Their role in shaping the views of their students and the masses and their affiliation with political, sectarian and militant organizations is viewed as a serious concern.

Based on a survey and interviews with madrassa teachers, this study is aimed at determining the political attitudes of the clergy that controls madrassas. It finds political affiliations among the majority of the madrassas surveyed. It was found that seminaries were reluctant to disclose their sectarian and militant association. There is an overwhelming opposition to the military operations in the tribal areas as well as to the role being played by Pakistan in the international campaign against terrorism. The majority of the madrassas blame the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan for suicide bombings in Pakistan. The majority also backs the democratic process in the country and a peaceful solution of the Kashmir dispute. It considers the departure of foreign troops from Afghanistan would resolve the conflict in the war-ravaged country.

Radicalization in Pakistan: Sociocultural Realities

Muhammad Azam

Radicalization in Pakistan has occupied the center stage in debates and has become a major concern for governments in the region and beyond. This study is an effort to explore sociocultural factors of radicalization in Pakistan. The paper's theme revolves around the idea that Pakistan's sociocultural structure is changing and complex processes of social transformation are underway. However, the primary concern is direction of change, which is negative in general, and positive only partly. It alludes to the point that the

change tends to be more in favor of the radical forces than peaceful sociocultural agents. Increase in the levels of radicalization over the decades shows that the overall social change has been in favor of radicalism.

The paper addresses the process of socialization, sociocultural change, political culture, economic culture, folk culture, culture of education, local culture and monoculture to bring various aspects of the topic to the fore. It is argued that Pakistan's sociocultural realities are a factor, albeit an indirect one, behind radicalization. Direct causes of radicalization in Pakistan are other than sociocultural. Government policies, political expediencies and international actors draw attention more immediately when it comes to defining the factors of the phenomenon of radicalization in Pakistan. Sociocultural factors revolve around the Pakistani culture of education, which is extremely skewed; religious culture, which is polarized and sectarian; and economic culture, which is widely unequal.

Post 9/11 Peace Narrative in Pakistan

Shabana Fayyaz

The article highlights the critical need to formulate a consensus-based counter-terrorism policy in Pakistan. The absence of a holistic vision of peace acceptable to all stakeholders in Pakistan is the biggest challenge to this. The article argues that the post-9/11 peace narrative lacks unity that needs building of trust and harmony based on mutual respect and tolerance. Three competing peace narratives are identified: (a) the view of the government or the establishment, (b) religious perspective and (c) political argument to foster peace at the micro and macro levels in Pakistan. The article concludes that all stakeholders need to work toward a consensus-based sustainable peace that should be indigenous in its outlook and character.

Radicalization in Sri Lanka

Ranga Kalansooriya

If radicalization is defined as “affecting the basic nature or most important features of something”—basically societal in nature in this context—“or holding extreme political or revolutionary views”, Sri Lanka provides ample

evidence of how things can go out of spiral after being affected by a protracted civil war.

The country has been a victim of ethnically motivated extremist nationalistic movements, which resulted in the emergence of brutal terrorism. However, religious fundamentalism and ethnic nationalism have fuelled the situation to a point where a negotiated political settlement seems far from reality given the present context of the conflict. Radicalization is rampant in all segments of religious and political systems in the country. The paper presents arguments about radicalization in Sri Lanka in two main categories – political radicalization and religious radicalization.

Human Rights Reporting in Pakistani Media

Safdar Sial

The print and electronic media journalists in Pakistan do not have the expertise, finances or training to investigate and report on human rights issues. Journalists have to report amid a range of threats, pressures and curbs, including censorship from within their media organizations, as well as external constraints. These capacity gaps and reporting constraints restrict media organizations to keep on pursuing small event-based packages in the electronic media and narrative stories in the print media, which lack thoroughness. There is also a lack of conviction and commitment among most of the journalists covering human rights. However, in some cases, the level of conviction and commitment is remarkable.

There is a considerable indifference among journalists regarding human rights issues and violations, more so in the Urdu media. Many journalists are also skeptical of human rights organizations and view human rights as western agenda. The electronic media's coverage of rights issues is somewhat more investigative, presenting viewpoints of the victims and/or their families. Human rights activists and experts are invited to electronic media programs to talk about human rights issues. The Urdu media relies much on sensationalization and personal bias, and its reporting of human rights issues generally lacks investigation.

VOLUME 1

Contents

Editor's Note

Comments

New Approaches to the War on Terror in Afghanistan and
Pakistani Tribal Areas

What has culture to do with the economy?

Abstracts

Papers

1. Radicalization & Media

Muhammad Azam

2. Jihadi Print Media in Pakistan: An Overview

Muhammad Amir Rana

3. Poverty & Militancy


Safiya Aftab

4. Evolution of Counter-Terrorism Legislation in Pakistan

Saba Noor

5. Exploring the Mindset of the British-Pakistani
Community: The Socio-cultural and Religious Context

Safdar Sial



Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) is an independent think-tank committed to provide an in-depth understanding and objective analyses of regional and global issues. PIPS provides international strategic thinkers a forum to play an active role in understanding and researching real and perceived threats to regional and global peace and security. The objective is to engage leading regional and international strategic thinkers, academicians and media persons in pursuance and production of knowledge of national, regional and global security issues and to promote awareness about the importance of peace and democracy. The goal will be achieved through independent policy analysis, and collection, processing, interpretation and dissemination of information and skills/training.

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PIPS has also developed a vast regional and global network for information sharing and research on some of the key security issues facing Pakistan, which also have a profound impact on regional and global security.