

## Socio-Economic Development as a Mean to Fight Terrorism in Pakistan: Evaluating Performance of Musharraf and PPP Eras

Shabnam Gul\*

### ABSTRACT

*This research paper critically analyses Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategies adopted by two successive government from 2001 to 2013 with one happening to be military government while the other being the democratic setup. The main objectives of the study are to identify underlying causes of terrorism and conduct an ex-post evaluation of the performance of the two governments to see their progress towards socio-economic development of masses as a means to fight terrorism in the society. The study used mixed method and is based on survey as well as interviews. Survey was conducted using non-probability sampling method due to financial and time constraints. Survey data was collected, using a closed-ended questionnaire, from 395 respondents spread over all administrative units of the country with representation of male and female as well as various segments of society. Interviews were conducted, using an open-ended questionnaire, from experts with a range of disciplines. According to the some of the findings of the study, socio-economic development of the masses, or lack thereof, is one of the crucial factors in rating counter-terrorism strategies being effective or otherwise. The study also made specific, doable and pertinent recommendations.*

**Keywords:** Socio-economic, human development, counter-terrorism.

### Introduction

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon in Pakistan. Pakistan has been facing an organised form of terrorism since 1970s and then the country has witnessed one form of terrorism or another due to variety of internal as well external geo-political factors that have had lasting impact on security situation of the this very country. Various external geo-political factors and response of the Pakistani government to those factors sown the seeds of terrorism in Pakistan. While Saudi-Iranian rivalry and attempts to gain influence in Pakistani polity has been causes of sectarian terrorism in Pakistan particularly after Iranian Revolution in 1979, it was Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and subsequent resistance or so-called *Jihad* spearheaded by Pakistan and financed by external powers (like the US and Saudi Arabia) introduced terrorism and extremism in Pakistan. Conflicts first in 1980s and then at the start of 21<sup>st</sup> century in Afghanistan either shaped or aggravated ethnic or religion-based terrorism in Pakistan (Saeed, Syed, & Martin, 2014). The latest wave of terrorism in Pakistan is directly linked to developments post-9/11.

US invasion of Afghanistan after deadly attacks in the US on 11 September 2001 was a watershed development in modern history that re-shaped or impacted to reshape the world order and relations between states. The US under charged psychological environment attacked Afghanistan while Pakistan's participation in global war against terrorism unleashed a wave of terrorism inside Pakistan that seriously damaged social fabrics of the country in addition to causing human and financial losses.

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\*Ph. D. Scholar, Department of Political Science, Lahore College for Women University (LCWU), Lahore

**Table 1.** Yearly Breakup Militant Attacks and their Impact on Human Lives (till November 2018)

Year	Incidents	Killed					Injured					Kdnp
		SFP	PGR	MLT	CIV	Total	SFP	PGR	MLT	CIV	Total	
2001	8	1	0	0	18	19	0	0	0	52	52	0
2002	52	3	0	7	94	104	12	0	5	306	0	0
2003	40	23	0	0	68	91	31	0	0	123	154	2
2004	175	128	13	33	155	329	202	17	3	570	792	21
2005	210	28	2	71	145	246	61	7	3	348	419	10
2006	116	99	0	22	110	231	92	0	4	271	367	24
2007	638	477	7	662	794	1940	981	13	341	1472	2807	900
2008	732	491	59	847	1332	2729	645	38	335	2634	3652	484
2009	1205	827	83	1010	1691	3611	1464	47	277	4537	6325	269
2010	1741	971	125	1946	2691	5733	1550	71	684	6383	8688	647
2011	990	547	4	790	1253	2594	805	34	102	2129	3070	0
2012	1372	536	114	728	1183	2561	824	75	327	2349	3575	0
2013	1144	522	47	607	1392	2568	928	43	173	3889	5033	125
2014	1609	594	80	687	1191	2552	782	61	193	2461	3497	158
2015	706	348	33	325	619	1325	417	14	45	980	1456	89
2016	513	318	22	119	511	970	494	7	10	1333	1844	34
2017	420	225	0	103	584	912	271	0	30	1576	1877	45
2018	218	143	2	62	354	561	243	0	4	683	930	5

**Note:** Extracted from PICSS Militancy Database; SFP = security forces personnel, PGR = Pro-Govt Razakar, MLT= Militants, CIV=Civilians, Kdnp = kidnapping

A close look at the numbers depicts certain phases of militancy in the country (also seen Figure-1). First phase started from 2001 and continued until 2003 in which militant attacks remained low but violence increased in 2004 when military started large scale operations in Pakistan's erstwhile FATA (Federally Administrated Tribal Areas) region that shifted the focus on militants from tribal areas to settled districts in mainland Pakistan, therefore, in 2004 onward, an increase in violence was observed across Pakistan. From 2007 onward a fresh wave of militancy started after Lal Masjid Operation in Islamabad after which violence in the country increased including a phenomenal increase in suicide attacks. This phase continued until 2014 when military started operation Zarb-e-Azb in mid-2014 and violence witnessed a sharp decrease.

There was an insignificant reduction in terrorist attacks in Pakistan during the year 2017 against a trend of significant and continuous reduction in attacks in previous two years while reversal in number of suicide attacks has been witnessed as the number of suicide attacks increased from the previous year (Gul Dad & Khan, 2018). In the first two quarters of 2018, numerous terrorist attacks were witnessed in the country particularly on the eve of General Elections held on 25 July 2018. While the militant attacks in the country have been at all-time high during 2013 and 2014, a substantial decrease in militant attacks was observed in subsequent years. Decisive military action in the form of operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan – started in 2014 after failure of talks and militants carrying out significant attack in the form of Karachi Airport Attack – in June 2014 as well as nation-wide intelligence based operations in addition to National Action Plan (a 20-point broader anti-terrorism and anti-extremism strategy) announced after horrific Army Public School attack in Peshawar in December 2014 brought about this significant reduction in violence in the country in year 2015 onwards.

Despite comparative reduction in violence in Pakistan, the issue has not completely been overcome despite serious efforts from relevant state institutions. This is despite the fact that Pakistan has adopted a broader counter-terrorism strategy in the form of National Action Plan in 2015, which was expected to help the country overcome this menace. The 20-point National Action Plan comprised hard and soft measures including ending capital punishment; establishment of special trial (military) courts; completely banning armed militias; countering hate speech and extremist material; choking financing for terrorists and terrorist organisations; ensuring against re-emergence of proscribed organisations; establishing and deploying a dedicated counter-terrorism force; taking effective steps against religious persecution; registration and regulation of madrassas; ban on glorification of terrorism and terrorist organisations through print and electronic media; FATA reforms; dismantling communication networks of terrorist organisations; measures against abuse of internet and social media for terrorism; reconciliation in Balochistan; dealing firmly with sectarian terrorists; adopting policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees; activating counter terrorism authority; reforming criminal justice system, etc. (M. S. Khan, 2015). In the presence of such a broader counter-terrorism approach, continuing violence in the country suggests that either National Action Plan was flawed or it has not been implemented in true letter and spirit.

With the view to evaluate Pakistan present counter-terrorism strategy and determine its adequacy, it is necessary to first identify the causes of terrorism in the country and critically review the strategies adopted by the respective governments since 2001. While Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategy has evolved over the period of time, it would be worthwhile to make a comprehensive assessment of this evolution and critically review the actions, deeds and approaches adopted by the respective governments that either helped in reducing the menace of terrorism or facilitated it. This research study aims to exactly do that in more systematic and comprehensive manner while learning from the mistakes as well as identifying measures that helped in the past so that our future line of action could be more informed and effective. For this purpose, two successive regimes since 2001 including that of President Musharraf as well as President Zardari led government of PPP have been studied and analysed.

Despite making unprecedented human and financial sacrifices in War against Terrorism, Pakistan is yet to achieve the objective of addressing the issue of terrorism though it has made some notable strides in that direction particularly after adopting a much broader counter-terrorism strategy in 2015 in the form of National Action Plan that comprised both hard and soft measures. With the view to make current and future strategies to be more effective, an understanding of the genesis of the issue and the causes that breed terrorism is required in addition to assessment of the strategies of the past that worked, or that did not work, is needed so that our policies in future could be more informed, rational and evidence-based providing a fair opportunity to address this menace.

Despite being a global issue, the most unfortunate part of the whole story is lack of universally acceptable definition of the term "terrorism" least to talk of a universally acceptable solution to this most daunting issue of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Subjectivity in defining terrorism is one of the possible causes that reaching a broader understanding for dealing with the issue of terrorism is missing in the comity of nations. Essentially, there are two hindrances that restrict at arriving a universally acceptable and consensus definition of terrorism: Firstly, one nation's terrorists are defined as freedom fighters for another (Ganor, 2002). Secondly, the definition of terrorism given by the individuals and organisations is basically contextual in nature. This research study does not aim at providing an objective definition of terrorism but since the study sheds light on issue of terrorism in Pakistan, it will use more generic definition of terrorism for at least

operationalising the concept for this research study. In this background, the term terrorism in this study will imply the systematic use of force for achieving any political or social objective regardless whether the target is combatants, non-combatants or infrastructure. Being more neutral, the word militancy, which has been defined by Oxford Dictionary as “The use of confrontational or violent methods in support of a political or social cause”, will be used interchangeably with the word terrorism. In short, the term terrorism or militancy in this study will imply any illegitimate use of force regardless whether the group or entity is religiously motivated or it has its sectarian, ethnic or political background.

The main objectives of the study are to identify underlying causes of terrorism and conduct an ex-post evaluation of the performance of the two governments to see their progress towards socio-economic development of masses as a means to fight terrorism in the society. The study used mixed method and is based on survey as well as interviews. Survey was conducted using non-probability sampling method due to financial and time constraints. Survey data was collected, using a closed-ended questionnaire, from 395 respondents spread over all administrative units of the country with representation of male and female as well as various segments of society. Interviews were conducted, using an open-ended questionnaire, from experts with a range of disciplines.

With the view to conceptualise the strategies adopted to deal the menace of terrorism by successive regimes from 2001 to 2013, an integrated framework based on two separate models of security was used with one advocated by Barry Buzan (1983) – a model that sees security as an holistic approach encompassing socio-economic as well as both external and internal aspects of security – and the model/ concept of human security proposed by Mahbub-ul Haq (1995) who proposed the idea of human security against the concept of territorial security that comes through human development (Mahbub-ul-Haq’s Human Development was adopted by the UNDP and he was the chief architect of UNDP’s Human Development Program).

## **RESULTS**

### **Survey Results**

Survey for collecting data was basically comprising three parts. In first part, an attempt was made to identify the causes of terrorism as being perceived by the respondents. In second part, respondents were asked to record their responses on Likert Scale (comprising options very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied and very satisfied) to evaluate the performance of governments of Musharraf as well as PPP eras on those 10 variables, which were deemed as possible causes of terrorism. In third part of questionnaire, respondents were asked to record their responses on closed ended questions on various issues that were considered relevant to gauge the performance of governments under review for the purpose of this research. In the following section, all three parts of the questionnaire are being discussed.

### **Part-I: Causes of Terrorism**

From the given list of 10 possible causes, respondents were asked to rank them from zero to 10 with zero means not a cause, one mean minor cause and 10 means major cause. Moreover, respondents were also given an option to add any additional cause if deemed fit. However, none of the respondents added any additional cause to the existing list of 10 causes that included foreign involvement, corruption, ethnic strife, illiteracy, lack of law enforcement, participation in war against terrorism, poverty, ineffective judicial system, separatism and unemployment. Mean and standard deviation of the these 10 causes is given Table-2.

**Table 2:** *Descriptive Statistics – Causes of Terrorism in Pakistan (Surveyed Data)*

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Foreign Involvement	359	0	10	5.97	3.308
Corruption	395	0	10	6.49	3.334
Ethnic Strife	395	0	10	5.06	2.867
Illiteracy	395	0	10	5.44	3.055
Lack of Law Enforcement	395	0	10	6.53	3.203
Participation in War Against Terrorism	395	0	10	7.22	3.068
Poverty	395	0	10	5.37	3.104
Ineffective Judicial System	395	0	10	6.48	3.175
Separatism	395	0	10	4.85	2.929
Unemployment	395	0	10	5.07	3.281

Pakistan's participation in global fight against terrorism was ranked as first major cause of terrorism in Pakistan, followed by separatism, and ethnic strife as shown in Table-3. Notably, foreign involvement, ineffective judicial system and lack of law enforcement received equal ratings as these three variables were jointly ranked 4th among the causes of terrorism in Pakistan. Corruption, poverty, illiteracy and employment were ranked 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th, respectively, as the causes of terrorism in Pakistan.

**Table 3.** *Causes of Terrorism in Pakistan – Ranked*

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Sum Total</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Participation in war on terror	391	1 <sup>st</sup>
Separatism	379	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Ethnic Strife	378	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Foreign Involvement	377	4 <sup>th</sup>
Lack of Law Enforcement	377	4 <sup>th</sup>
Ineffective Judicial System	377	4 <sup>th</sup>
Corruption	375	7 <sup>th</sup>
Poverty	374	8 <sup>th</sup>
Illiteracy	371	9 <sup>th</sup>
Unemployment	363	10 <sup>th</sup>

Rank order for each cause was calculated on the basis of sum of the scores assigned to each cause by the respondents of surveyed data. While Pakistan's participation in war against terrorism, separatism and ethnic strife was ranked first, second and third, respectively, the fourth position was shared jointly by foreign involvement, lack of law enforcement and ineffective judicial system. Corruption, poverty, illiteracy and unemployment were ranked as seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth cause, respectively. Only relevant causes relevant to the scope of this paper are being discussed here.

### **Corruption**

Endemic corruption has been rated as one of the causes of terrorism in the country. While 5.1 percent respondents did not consider it a cause, 103 respondents (the highest; 26.1 percent) termed it as the major cause as they have given the ranking of 10 out of 10. Merely 28.3 percent of the respondents have given corruption a ranking of 1-5. A link between corruption and terrorism is widely accepted (Barron, 2017). While in 2017, Pakistan was ranked 117 out of

180 countries in Corruption Perception Index released by Transparency International, Pakistan's ranking in the past was even abysmal.

**Table 4.** *Corruption as Cause of Terrorism in Pakistan*

Rank	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	20	5.1	5.1	5.1
1	31	7.8	7.8	12.9
2	28	7.1	7.1	20.0
3	17	4.3	4.3	24.3
4	15	3.8	3.8	28.1
5	21	5.3	5.3	33.4
6	32	8.1	8.1	41.5
7	36	9.1	9.1	50.6
8	43	10.9	10.9	61.5
9	49	12.4	12.4	73.9
10	103	26.1	26.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

### Poverty

While overall respondents rated poverty as the eight cause of terrorism, 5.3 percent did not feel that there is any linkages between poverty and terrorism. Merely 43.1 percent of total respondents ranked poverty between 1-5 while 30.4 percent of total respondents ranked the issue of poverty between 7-10. While there is disagreement between researchers about poverty acting as the main cause of respondents joining the ranks of terrorism rather some studies suggested that well-off respondents with more social standing are more prone to joining such groups but it has been intellectually argued that poverty in fact provide an enabling environment in which terrorism is likely to gain ground (Groves, 2016).

**Table 5.** *Poverty as Cause of Terrorism in Pakistan*

Rank	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	21	5.3	5.3	5.3
1	41	10.4	10.4	15.7
2	31	7.8	7.8	23.5
3	37	9.4	9.4	32.9
4	27	6.8	6.8	39.7
5	34	8.6	8.6	48.4
6	38	9.6	9.6	58.0
7	46	11.6	11.6	69.6
8	41	10.4	10.4	80.0
9	39	9.9	9.9	89.9
10	40	10.1	10.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

### Illiteracy

Illiteracy has been ranked as ninth major cause of terrorism in Pakistan. Interestingly, 6.1 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that illiteracy was not cause at all. With a mode of 51 given to rank of five ranking (12.9 percent of total respondents) suggest that illiteracy is not being considered as a major cause of terrorism. 50.1 percent of the total respondents ranked

illiteracy from 6-10 while notably only 11.1 percent of the total respondents considered it the top most cause as they gave 10 ranking to this variable. Due to abject poverty, large number people cannot afford to feed their children properly, neither they are able to send their children to school. Because children remain illiterate, so they are not able to differentiate between the right and wrong and accept the facts and religion in any manner that is taught to them by their religious teachers. Illiteracy both in contemporary studies as well as in religious teachings is a curse that make respondents vulnerable to militants' propaganda. It is not merely the quantity of educated respondents but also the quality of education that is likely to bring about a visible change in the life of people both economically as well as socially.

**Table 6.** *Illiteracy as Cause of Terrorism in Pakistan*

Rank	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	24	6.1	6.1	6.1
1	34	8.6	8.6	14.7
2	26	6.6	6.6	21.3
3	32	8.1	8.1	29.4
4	30	7.6	7.6	37.0
5	51	12.9	12.9	49.9
6	32	8.1	8.1	58.0
7	50	12.7	12.7	70.6
8	38	9.6	9.6	80.3
9	34	8.6	8.6	88.9
10	44	11.1	11.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

### Unemployment

The last but not the least was the issue of unemployment that has been ranked as 10<sup>th</sup> among the 10 possible causes of terrorism. While 8.1 percent of the respondents termed it not a cause – highest among the 10 other causes - a mode of 53 suggest that a larger number of respondents felt that unemployment is the least cause of terrorism in Pakistan.

**Table 7.** *Unemployment as Cause of Terrorism in Pakistan*

Rank	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	32	8.1	8.1	8.1
1	53	13.4	13.4	21.5
2	34	8.6	8.6	30.1
3	30	7.6	7.6	37.7
4	24	6.1	6.1	43.8
5	29	7.3	7.3	51.1
6	35	8.9	8.9	60.0
7	39	9.9	9.9	69.9
8	47	11.9	11.9	81.8
9	30	7.6	7.6	89.4
10	42	10.6	10.6	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

### Performance of Musharraf Government

After discussing survey's results with regards to causes of terrorism, now the performance of Musharraf era on these ten indicators as well as other indicators of relevance, as being

perceived by respondents, will be discussed in this section. The Likert scale was used with five options ranging from very satisfied; satisfied; neutral, dissatisfied; and very dissatisfied to record input from the respondents with regards to performance of Musharraf government on the given 10 causes of terrorism in the country. The results of survey are being shown below:

### **Corruption:**

Response towards Government's measures to curb the menace of corruption was recorded. As per survey results, only seven percent respondents were very satisfied and 21 percent of the respondents were satisfied from the Government's policy to counter the issue of corruption. A huge percentage of 33 percent respondents had no opinion regarding this issue. Almost 25 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied while almost 14 percent of the respondents were very dissatisfied from the Government's policies. This indicates that almost 39% of the respondents were not convinced with the Government's policies to eradicate corruption within the Government's departments as shown in Figure-4 and Table-25. The issue of corruption was one of the major governance challenge that Musharraf promised to tackle while coming to power in 1999. While Musharraf had promulgated National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Ordinance was promulgated by Musharraf in 1999 and hence erected a structure of accountability in the form of National Accountability Bureau, the issue of corruption could not be addressed due to variety of reasons including political expediency and selective use of laws to silence political dissidents.

*Table 8. Musharraf Government's Measures to Address the Issue of Corruption*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	29	7%
Satisfied	83	21%
Neutral	130	33%
Dissatisfied	98	25%
Very Dissatisfied	55	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Illiteracy:**

As per survey data, only nine percent of the respondent were very satisfied while 37 percent of the respondents were satisfied from the measures taken Musharraf government to address the issue of illiteracy. Nineteen percent of the respondents were neutral to this query while 25 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied whereas almost 10 percent of the respondents were very dissatisfied from the Government's policy measures (Figure-6, Table-27). Thus the level of disaffection was higher than the level of satisfaction on this count.

*Table 9. Musharraf's Performance to Address the Issue of Illiteracy*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	36	9%
Satisfied	147	37%
Neutral	74	19%
Dissatisfied	100	25%
Very Dissatisfied	38	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Poverty:**

According to survey, five percent of respondents were very satisfied with Musharraf's performance to eradicate poverty in the country, 23 percent were satisfied, 28 percent were



neutral, 30 percent were dissatisfied and 14 percent were very dissatisfied. Thus, response of the 28 percent of respondents was positive while 34 percent of respondents were not convinced that Musharraf government took practical steps to eradicate poverty in the society.

**Table 10.** *Musharraf's Performance in Eradicating Poverty*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	18	5%
Satisfied	92	23%
Neutral	111	28%
Dissatisfied	117	30%
Very Dissatisfied	57	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Unemployment:**

As much as nine percent of the respondents were very satisfied with performance of Musharraf government to tackle the issue unemployment in the country; 30 percent were satisfied; 25 percent neutral; 23 percent dissatisfied; and 13 percent were very dissatisfied See Figure-12 and Table-33. Hence, almost 39 percent of respondents were seeing Musharraf's government favourably in terms of creating employment opportunities for youth. While the issue of employment is considered to be one of the causes of respondents joining ranks of militants particularly in least developed areas, almost 26 percent of respondents were critical of Musharraf's policies towards addressing issue of unemployment.

**Table 11.** *Musharraf's Efforts for Creating Employment Opportunities*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	34	9%
Satisfied	120	30%
Neutral	100	25%
Dissatisfied	89	23%
Very Dissatisfied	52	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Assessment of Performance of PPP Era**

#### **Corruption:**

Result of this question was quite revealing. Only six percent of the respondents were very satisfied while almost four percent of the respondents were satisfied with the PPP government's measures to tackle the issue of corruption. Almost seven percent of the respondents remained neutral in their response while 21 percent respondents were dissatisfied whereas a whopping 62 percent of the respondents were very dissatisfied with the government's efforts in this regard.

**Table 12.** *PPP Government's Measures to Address the Issue of Corruption*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	23	6%
Satisfied	14	4%
Neutral	27	7%
Dissatisfied	83	21%
Very Dissatisfied	248	62%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Illiteracy:**

Another issue where efforts of the PPP government were wanting was the challenge of illiteracy. As per survey, only five percent of the respondents were very satisfied while almost 13 percent of the respondents were satisfied with government's policies for tackling the issue of illiteracy. Almost 15 percent of the respondents remained neutral and had no views regarding this issue while almost 43 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied whereas 24 percent of the respondents were very dissatisfied with government's measures. Thus almost 67 percent of the total respondents were critical of the policies adopted, if any, by the PPP government led by President Zardari.

**Table 13.** *PPP's Performance to Address the Issue of Illiteracy*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	18	5%
Satisfied	51	13%
Neutral	60	15%
Dissatisfied	171	43%
Very Dissatisfied	95	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Law Enforcement:**

As per survey results, almost 12% of respondents were very satisfied while almost 25% of respondents were satisfied regarding the government's efforts for enforcement of law. Almost 12% of the respondents remained neutral to the issue. As much as 24 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied while almost 27 percent of the respondents were very dissatisfied regarding government's performance on this front. Thus almost 52 percent of total respondents were not seeing positively government track record of effectively enforcing law.

**Table 14.** *Performance of PPP Government Regarding Law Enforcement*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	47	12%
Satisfied	97	25%
Neutral	47	12%
Dissatisfied	95	24%
Very Dissatisfied	109	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Poverty:**

On the issue of poverty, almost nine percent respondents were very satisfied while almost 22 percent respondents were satisfied with the government's efforts to eradicate poverty in the society. Almost 15 percent respondents remained neutral in their response to this question. Almost 27 percent respondents were dissatisfied while almost 27 percent respondents were very dissatisfied regarding the measures of government to address the issue. Thus a majority of people, almost 55 percent, were not happy with the government's efforts of tackling poverty

**Unemployment:**

On the issue of reducing unemployment in the country, almost eight percent of the respondents were very satisfied; almost 29 percent of the respondents were satisfied; almost 15

percent of the respondents remained neutral in their response; almost twenty four percent of the respondents were dissatisfied; and 24 percent of the respondents were very dissatisfied.

**Table 15.** PPP's Performance in Eradicating Poverty

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	34	9%
Satisfied	87	22%
Neutral	60	15%
Dissatisfied	109	27%
Very Dissatisfied	105	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 16.** PPP's Efforts for Creating Employment Opportunities

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% age</b>
Very Satisfied	32	8%
Satisfied	116	29%
Neutral	59	15%
Dissatisfied	93	24%
Very Dissatisfied	95	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Impact of BISP as Poverty Alleviation Programme**

As much as nine percent of the respondents were of the view that Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) was greatly helpful in addressing the issue of poverty; almost 14 percent of the respondents termed it was moderately helpful poverty reduction; almost 37 percent respondents were of the opinion that the programme was slightly helpful while around 32 percent of the respondents were of the view that it was not helpful at all. Eight percent of the respondents didn't know about its impact.

**Table 17.** Impact of BISP on Poverty Alleviation

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%age</b>
Greatly helpful	36	9%
Moderately helpful	57	14%
Slightly helpful	145	37%
Not helpful at all	126	32%
Don't know	31	8%
No Response	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Results - Interviews**

#### **Causes of Terrorism**

With the view to gauge experts' views on causes of terrorism in Pakistan, a question was asked, "What do you think are the most relevant and important causes of terrorism in Pakistan? An earlier study by Haider et al. (2015) identified five major causes of terrorism including lack of law enforcement, poverty, Pakistan's participation in war on terror, foreign involvement and unemployment while four lessor causes of terrorism included corruption, ethnic strife, separatism and unemployment. Do you agree with the findings of this study? How would you rank those causes?"

Responding to this question, interviewees provided a detailed response in which various causes of terrorism in Pakistan were discussed in detail. The top most causes of terrorism identified was Pakistan's participation in war against terrorism, followed (in the given order) by separatism, foreign involvement, illiteracy, ethnic strife, ineffective judicial system, lack of law enforcement, corruption, unemployment, and takfeeri/ takfiri ideology<sup>1</sup> as shown in Table-18.

**Table 18.** *Causes of Terrorism in Pakistan - Interview Data*

Cause	Ranking
Participation in war on terror	1
Separatism	2
Foreign Involvement	3
Illiteracy	4
Poverty	5
Ethnic Strife	6
Ineffective Judicial System	7
Lack of Law Enforcement	8
Corruption	9
Unemployment	10
Takfeeri Ideology	11

Among the causes, participation of Pakistan in war against terrorism had the highest mode of 13 in terms of interviewees ranked it first, separatism mode of 12 was in the third rank, foreign involvement had a highest mode of nine in fourth rank, illiteracy's highest mode of nine in 7<sup>th</sup> rank, ineffective judicial system's highest mode of nine in 8<sup>th</sup> rank, lack of law enforcement highest mode of 12 fell in 9<sup>th</sup> rank, corruption's highest mode of 13 fell in ninth rank, unemployment's highest mode of seven fell in 10<sup>th</sup> rank and takfeeri ideology had only two response whose mode of two remained in the first rank.

**Table 19.** *Ranking of the Causes by Interviewees*

Cause	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Participation in war on terror	13	10	3	8	2	3	1	3	1	1
Separatism	8	9	12	1	6	2	5	2	1	2
Foreign Involvement	7	8	7	9	7	0	4	3	1	4
Illiteracy	1	5	4	7	8	4	9	7	4	0
Poverty	2	4	2	6	9	8	6	4	6	1
Ethnic Strife	2	4	6	5	7	5	2	3	5	0
Ineffective Judicial System	1	0	5	4	6	7	8	9	4	5
Lack of Law Enforcement	6	0	3	2	5	4	7	5	12	0
Corruption	3	2	4	2	1	2	8	9	13	4
Unemployment	3	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	7
Takfeeri Ideology	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

### Evaluation of Musharraf and PPP Government's Strategies – Interview Data

With the view to determine the adequacy as well as effectiveness of the counter-terrorism strategies of Musharraf and PPP governments, interviewees were asked "How do analyse and comment on the strategies adopted by Musharraf and subsequently by the PPP government to

<sup>1</sup> Takfeeri or takfiri ideology is an extremist view point in certain segments of Muslims where its followers consider those having different perception and interpretation of religious sayings or of different sect as infidels deserving to be killed.

fight terrorism? Do you think measures adopted by these two successive governments were adequate to fight terrorism?” Responding to this question, the interviewees provided a detailed answer which was coded into further six sub-variables for analysis including causes identified; clarity of purpose; comprehensiveness of the strategy; capacity of the law enforcement agencies; sincere on ground efforts (practical measures); and adequacy of the strategy given the level of threat. Responding to this question, none of interviewees felt that Musharraf government was able to clearly identify the causes of terrorism in the country while 76 felt that causes were not identified while 24 percent did not consider this aspect during their discussions. With regards to clarity of purpose, response of just 10 percent was affirmative, 60 percent responded it negatively while 30 percent did not touch this aspect. On comprehensiveness of the strategy, 70 percent responded no, 26 percent did not touch while only four percent said yes. In terms of capacity of the law enforcement agencies to deal with the issue of terrorism, only 10 percent felt that forces were having requisite capacity, 72 percent were of the view that forces were lacking this capability while 18 percent preferred not to discuss this aspect. With regards to sincerity of efforts, 56 did not approve Musharraf government, 20 percent viewed his efforts being sincere while 24 percent did not touch. As much as 76 percent of interviewees were sceptical about adequacy of Musharraf’s strategy, six percent felt it adequate while 18 percent did not consider this aspect.

**Table 20.** *Effectiveness of Strategy Adopted by Musharraf Government*

Response	Yes		No		Not Considered		Total
	Freq	Pro	Freq	Pro	Freq	Pro	
Causes Identified	0	0%	38	76%	12	24%	50
Clarity of Purpose	5	10%	30	60%	15	30%	50
Comprehensiveness	2	4%	35	70%	13	26%	50
Capacity of LEAs	5	10%	36	72%	9	18%	50
Sincere Efforts	10	20%	28	56%	12	24%	50
Adequacy of Strategy	3	6%	38	76%	9	18%	50

When interview data was analysed to check effectiveness of the strategy adopted by the PPP government, 80 percent interviewees felt that causes were not identified, four percent felt that causes were identified while 16 percent did not touch. As much as 56 percent interviewees stated that PPP government was lacking clarity of purpose, 14 percent viewed it positively while 30 percent did not touch this aspect. In terms of comprehensiveness of the strategy of PPP government, 64 percent felt it so, 24 percent termed it as not being comprehensive while 26 percent did not discuss this aspect. In terms of capacity of the law enforcement agencies, 60 percent saw negatively, 24 percent positively and 16 percent did not touch upon this aspect. On sincerity of efforts, 52 percent said no, 18 percent said yes and 30 percent of interviewees did not consider it worth discussing. Finally, with regards to adequacy of the strategy, response of 58 percent of negative, 18 percent viewed it positively and 30 percent remained silent. Thus in terms of both the government’s track record on these sub-variables was less than desirable though PPP government seems to have performance slightly better than Musharraf government. Notable, the performance of the civilian government in education and health sectors was deemed comparatively better than that of military dictator as 26 and 30 percent interviewees rated it positively but interestingly the performance of civilian government in these two important sectors got negative response from 38 and 42 percent of interviewees, respectively. In terms of civil liberties, PPP government’s performance received higher praise as 48 percent rated it positively. Government’s performance in creating employment opportunities and infrastructure was not viewed very favourably

**Table 21.** *Effectiveness of Strategy Adopted by PPP Government*

Response	Yes		No		Not Considered		Total
	Freq	Pro	Freq	Pro	Freq	Pro	
Causes Identified	2	4%	40	80%	8	16%	50
Clarity of Purpose	7	14%	28	56%	15	30%	50
Comprehensiveness	5	10%	32	64%	13	26%	50
Capacity of LEAs	12	24%	30	60%	8	16%	50
Sincere Efforts	9	18%	26	52%	15	30%	50
Adequacy of Strategy	4	8%	29	58%	17	34%	50

**Table 22.** *Socio-Economic Development in Musharraf Era*

Response	Yes		No		Not Considered		Total
	Freq	Pro	Freq	Pro	Freq	Pro	
Education	6	12%	25	50%	19	38%	50
Health	4	8%	29	58%	17	34%	50
Civil Liberty	13	26%	20	40%	17	34%	50
Employment Opportunities	15	30%	16	32%	19	38%	50
Infrastructure	14	28%	19	38%	17	34%	50

**Table 23.** *Socio-Economic Development in PPP Era*

Response	Yes		No		Not Considered		Total
	Freq	Pro	Freq	Pro	Freq	Pro	
Education	13	26%	19	38%	18	36%	50
Health	15	30%	21	42%	14	28%	50
Civil Liberty	24	48%	15	30%	11	22%	50
Employment Opportunities	10	20%	24	48%	16	32%	50
Infrastructure	10	20%	18	36%	22	44%	50

Another premise on which this research was based had been the issue of legitimacy of the government. With an objective to understand whether the issue of legitimacy had any impact on policy choices of the respective government, the question was asked, "Do you think legitimacy of a regime could have an impact on its choices for fighting terrorism and extremism? How crucial is public support for dealing with societal issues like that of terrorism?". The response of interviewees was quite interesting and thought-provoking. While an overwhelming majority of respondents (72 percent precisely) were of the view that legitimacy of a regime is an important factor defining policy choices of a regime, 28 percent felt that the issue of legitimacy is irrelevant. Some of the interviewees who stated that the question of legitimacy was irrelevant qualified their answers by stating that it is not merely the issue of legitimacy of appointment or election of government but how much a government remain sensitive to need of its people. So an elected and legitimate government could behave illegitimately by ignoring the needs and aspiration of the masses while an illegitimate government might be more sensitive to such needs. While public support was considered crucial factor for making a counter-terrorism policy effective, a sizable interviewees (48 percent) were of the view that the role of civil society is significant in fighting this societal issue as without the support of civil society, the efforts of the government would not suffice.

**Table 24.** *Legitimacy, Role of Civil Society and Public Support*

Category	Yes		No		Not Considered		Total
	<i>Freq</i>	<i>Pro</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>Pro</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>Pro</i>	
Legitimacy	36	72%	14	28%	0	0%	<b>50</b>
Role of Civil Society	24	48%	0	0%	26	52%	<b>50</b>
Public Support	35	70%	0	0%	15	30%	<b>50</b>

The last question that was asked from interviewees was general in nature in which they were asked to respond to “How Pakistan should and should not fight terrorism and extremism?”. Sub-variables identified from the interview data included civilian control; developing / empowering institutions; capacity building of LEAs; preference for soft measures; develop counter-narrative; more awareness of the religion; addressing sectarianism; quantity and quality of education; regional integration & improving relations; political processes; investing on people and improving governance. Self-explanatory Table-65 sheds light on results of these sub-variables.

**Table 25.** *What to Do and What to Avoid to Fight Terrorism*

Response	Yes		No		Not Considered		Total
	<i>Freq</i>	<i>Pro</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>Pro</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>Pro</i>	
Civilian Control	30	60%	0	0%	20	40%	50
Developing / Empowering Institutions	28	56%	0	0%	22	44%	50
Capacity building of LEAs	27	54%	0	0%	23	46%	50
Prefer Soft Measures	32	64%	0	0%	18	36%	50
Develop Counter-Narrative	19	38%	0	0%	31	62%	50
More Awareness of the Religion	17	34%	0	0%	33	66%	50
Address Sectarianism	28	56%	0	0%	22	44%	50
Quantity and Quality of Education	14	28%	0	0%	36	72%	50
Regional Integration & Improving Relations	19	38%	0	0%	31	62%	50
Political Processes	24	48%	0	0%	26	52%	50
Invest on People	28	56%	0	0%	22	44%	50
Improve Governance	29	58%	0	0%	21	42%	50

## DISCUSSIONS

### Illiteracy

Surprisingly, illiteracy was ranked as the ninth cause of terrorism by the respondents of the survey while interviewees ranked it fourth major cause of terrorism in Pakistan. No causal relationship between education and terrorism could be established rather studies, for example (Berrebi, 2007), and evidence suggested that educated people are more inclined to join terrorist groups. However, the link of illiteracy with poverty (Tierney, 2015) and many other social issues has been duly established. While illiteracy may not be directly linked with terrorism in Pakistan, it does create an environment in which militant groups operate and thrive. Some of the interviewees who were dealing with the issue of terrorism stated that illiterate people were no more attraction for militant groups due to changing dynamics of guerrilla warfare as illiterate people were more than liability than being an asset for such organisations. With the known involvement of various educated people in terrorist incidents suggest that the linkages between madrassah students and terrorism is also

flawed. Rather, some of the interviewees highlighted that a greater understanding of the Islam tend to make people more accommodative and least attractive to militancy as had been proved in the studies (Fair, 2015). Some of the interviewees were of the view that it in terms of education, it is not quantity of education but also the quality of education that matters. Citing World Economic Forum's Global Human Capital Report 2017 where Pakistan ranked 125th spot out of 130 in terms of quality of education and skills, they lamented the state of affairs in Pakistan in terms of quality of education. Unfortunately, quality of education is questionable at the time when there are serious questions on literacy rate in the country. Following table shows abysmal condition of literacy and spending of the governments during the period under view (some figures of earlier years of Musharraf rule were not available) on health as well as education.

**Table 26.** *Investment on Health and Education*

Year	Literacy Rate, Adult - 15 and above (%age)	Expenditure on Education (% of GDP)	Education Index	Health Expenditure (% of GDP)
2004	-	1.948	0.311	2.53
2005	49.9	2.254	0.33	2.919
2006	54.1	2.626	0.335	3.241
2007	-	2.635	0.347	3.343
2008	55.5	2.746	0.349	3.036
2009	54.8	2.591	0.359	2.619
2010	55.4	2.287	0.365	2.597
2011	54.7	2.222	0.37	2.357
2012	56.8	2.136	0.376	2.359

Author's construction, derived from World Bank's figures, UNDP and PIDE reports

### Poverty

Poverty has been ranked the fifth major cause of terrorism in Pakistan by the interviewees while it was ranked eighth by the respondents of the survey. In an earlier study, poverty was identified as the second most important cause of terrorism in Pakistan (Haider, de Pablos Heredero, Ahmed, & Dustgeer, 2015). Where there is almost an agreement that socio-economic issues like poverty, economic deprivation and societal inequality are some of the root causes (Malik, Sandholzer, Khan, & Akbar, 2015) but there causal relationship is yet to be established. In context of militancy in Swat, a relationship between poverty and terrorism was identified where it was believed that people from lower middle class or low-income families join the ranks of terrorist for improving their socio-economic conditions (Aziz & Luras, 2010). It is worthwhile to mention some socio-economic indicators during Musharraf and PPP eras. As shown in Table-82, Musharraf government was not successful in making notable impact human development as social and economic indicate. While some improvement in economic indicators was witnessed in the last years of his power, the genuine economic growth was not possible due to political instability for which a military ruler himself was one of the causes. On the other hand, performance of the politically elected civilian government was not enviable either as not only decline in GDP growth was witnessed but foreign direct investment in the country also witnessed a constant decline as show in Table-83. While one of the most plausible reason could be constantly deteriorating security situation, as has been explained earlier in this chapter, that was favouring upward trajectory in foreign direct investment and economic growth, the PPP government itself cannot be absolved of the blame for lacking an economic policy.



**Table 27.** *Socio-Economic Indicators During Musharraf Era*

Year	GDP per capita In Rs	Real GDP In %	Nominal GDP In Million Rs	FDI (Inflow) US \$ billion	HDI Value
2000-01	32581	3.65	4209873	0.378	0.46
2001-02	34534	2.37	4452654	0.826	0.47
2002-03	37659	5.64	4875648	0.534	0.47
2003-04	42287	7.70	5640580	1.118	0.49
2004-05	47601	7.52	6499782	2.201	0.50
2005-06	53846	5.56	7623205	4.273	0.51
2006-07	59413	5.54	8673007	5.59	0.51

Author's construction, derived from Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Economic Surveys and World Bank

**Table 28.** *Socio-Economic Indicators During PPP Era*

Year	GDP per capita	Real GDP	Nominal GDP	FDI (Inflow) US \$ billion	HDI Value
2007-08	65873	4.99	10242799	5.438	0.51
2008-09	80545	0.36	12723987	2.338	0.52
2009-10	89869	2.58	14803650	2.022	0.53
2010-11	108931	3.62	18032871	1.326	0.53
2011-12	117837	3.84	20653868	0.859	0.54

Author's construction, derived from Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Economic Surveys and World Bank

### Other Unignorable Causes

It is a fact that corruption, poverty, illiteracy and unemployment were ranked seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth, respectively, as cause of terrorism in the country by the respondents of the survey while results of the interviews indicated ethnic strife, ineffective judicial system, lack of law enforcement, corruption, employment and Takfeeri ideology as the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth cause, respectively. Notwithstanding this ranking of these, none could be ignored in fight against terrorism. Importantly, some of the interviewees termed Takfeeri ideology as the main cause of terrorism in Pakistan while a research work indicated that ideology is the root cause of terrorism in Pakistan while other identified factors are merely enablers that facilitate terrorism but do not act as main cause (Gul Dad, 2015). Some of the top most causes of terrorism in Pakistan have been identified as Pakistan's participation in war on terror; separatism; ethnic strife; foreign involvement, lack of law enforcement; ineffective judicial system and illiteracy while other causes like poverty, corruption and lack of rule of law also have their contribution in inflaming terrorism in the country. Thus, there could be no single variable or cause that has overarching relationship with terrorism, therefore, our response to this menace should also be broad based and multi-dimensional.

The study has also shed sufficient light on the issue of legitimacy of the regimes for effectively fighting terrorism as the policy choices made by the then military ruler were also influenced by his personal preference with an attempt to gain legitimacy. On the other hand the

performance of the democratically elected civilian government was also wanting. Though one can argue that continued military interventions have weakened political dispensation and did not allow institution building that could have delivered but it is a reality that political leadership did not focus on addressing problems of the masses and developing them socially, economically as well as politically. Notwithstanding the importance of legitimacy, a continuous, visible and result-oriented struggle for human development is pivotal for restoring the image of the government for an organised order that militant groups try to dismantle.

### **Internal Displacement – Socio-psychological and Economic Considerations**

The military operations conducted by Pakistani security forces in FATA and Swat regions have seriously affected the lives of common people as these operations forced millions of people to migrate from their native places. According to an estimate, around 447,924 families were internally displaced since 2008, while around 391,574 families returned successfully till the end of 2016 (FDMA, 2017). According to FATA Disaster Management Authority, which deals with the issue of Temporarily Displaced People (TDPs), following was the latest update TDPs: **Table 29. Status Update of TDPs**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Total families displaced</b>	<b>Verified Return</b>	<b>Still in Displacement</b>
North Waziristan	104,382	76,196	28,186
South Waziristan	71,124	51,620	19,504
Khyber agency	91,689	89,172	2517
Orakzai agency	35,823	33,217	2606
Kurram agency	33,024	29,487	3537

Notably, around two million people were also displaced due to the military operations in Swat (Faheem & Marwat, 2016). This displacement was considered one of the largest in the human history. It was not surprising that this large scale displacement created and aggravated host of socio-economic issues for the people. Some of the short term issues included immediate relief, food, shelter, clean drinking water, medication as well as sanitation. Long term issues included less economic opportunities, socio-cultural issues, return to their homes and starting their lives from the scratch. Majority of TDPs who migrated from FATA as well as Swat settled in different districts of KPK due to geographical proximity ultimately burdening the provincial government in terms of resources. The displaced population was seriously affected economically due to loss of their houses, sources of earnings, livestock, agriculture and businesses. In terms of socio-economic factors, health and education was the serious issue that had short and long term implications. One of the issue which is normally ignored in analysis and understanding of the problems of the TDPs was psychological impact of not only military operations but also of the displacement. While violence in the surroundings naturally impact human minds, the issue of living in camps for culturally conservative females, who were strictly adhering veil and were living in a protected environment, also created psychological and cultural issues that warrant special attention and remedial measures.

### **Impact of BISP as Poverty Alleviation Programme**

With the view to address the issue of abject poverty, PPP government in line with its election manifesto started Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) in July 2008 as an unconditional cash transfer poverty reduction/ social safety net programme. However, respondents were not convinced that this programme actually brought about a quality change in terms of poverty reduction as only nine percent of the respondents thought that the programme was greatly

helpful in addressing the issue of poverty where as 14 percent of the respondents termed as moderately helpful in poverty reduction while 37 percent respondents were of the opinion that the program was slightly helpful while around 32 percent of the respondents were of the view that it was not helpful at all. Since the program was only a cash transfer programme while no effort was made for creating economic opportunities and providing technical training to make best use of existing opportunities, the impact of the programme in reducing poverty was negligible (Durr e & Farooq, 2014). Moreover, questions were also raised about the coverage of the programme as forms were distributed by concerned members of legislative assemblies and hence they were prone to issuing forms to those who were politically affiliated with them thus making it probable that the form might have not reached to all the people who really deserved such cash transfers.

### **Lessons Learned: Pakistan's Counter-Terrorism Strategy After 2013**

After detailed discussions on root causes of terrorism as well as counter terrorism strategies adopted by successive governments of General Musharraf and President Zardari led Pakistan's Peoples Party, it is worthwhile to shed light as well as evaluate Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategies adopted post 2013. This evaluation is based on the lessons learned regarding previous two eras and to assess whether strategies adopted subsequently by the government were adequate enough to deal with the challenge of terrorism in the country.

Importantly, in 2013 General Elections people voted to power pre-talks governments in the worst affected province of KPK as well as at the Centre in the form of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League- Nawaz (PML-N), respectively. Prior to 2013 General Elections, these two political parties were advocating for peace talks to end militancy and address the issue through political means. During their respective election campaigns, these parties once again sought a political resolution of longstanding problem of terrorism that was badly affecting economic development in the country in addition to causing irreparable human losses. These two parties, then pledged to resolve the issue of terrorism through engaging militant groups like Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in peace talks if they were voted to power. Once they came to power, PTI in KPK and PML-N in the Centre, they pushed for peace talks after a lot of background efforts and hence in late 2013 and early 2014 the prospects for peace talks emerged. In late January 2014, federal government announced opening of peace talks and the prime minister announced a four-member committee for negotiations with the TTP but set a condition that violence should end. Subsequently, days later, in February 2014, TTP also nominated a committee to mediate for its talks with the government formed committee. In addition, TTP also announced a month long ceasefire (Kousary, 2014). But the talks could not make headway despite one round of talks due to variety of known and unknown reasons including continuity of militant attacks in the country albeit at the lesser scale. The hopes for peace talks to succeed dashed when militants carried out strategic Karachi Airport Attack. The attack was claimed by the TTP along with Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).

The Karachi Airport Attack by TTP and its affiliate, the IMU was the last nail in the coffin of peace talks as the military launched a full-fledged operation, code named operation Zarb-e-Azb, in North Waziristan agency of erstwhile Federally Administrated Tribal Areas, FATA (I. Khan, 2014). The operation not only included ground offensive by Army but also included an air component comprising air strikes using gunship helicopters and fighter jets of Pakistan Air Force. As a result of large scale operation, a large number militants were killed or dispersed in various directions within FATA as well as in other settled areas of KPK/ rest of the country in the garb of temporary displaced people. In addition, various local and foreign militants took

shelter in areas across the border into Afghanistan. Contemplating movement of militants into settled areas, Pakistani security forces launched national wide intelligence based operations with the help of other law enforcement agencies (G. Dad, 2014).

Notwithstanding the level of ground offensive and air component of Zarb-e-Azb backed by country wide intelligence based operations, the major difference between the said military operations and operations conducted earlier during Musharraf and Zardari eras was the political ownership that was accorded to operation Zarb-e-Azb as even pro-talks parties started to believe that militants were working on the larger agenda and they are not interested to end militancy. Even PTI who was staunch opponent of use of force, endorsed military's operation in North Waziristan (Sherazi, 2014). The militants continued their violent acts while military also started an operation in Khyber Agency of FATA in October 2014 which was code named Khyber-I which also saw its three other variants in the form of Khyber-II, Khyber-III and Khyber-IV. Similarly, country wide intelligence based operations were also launched to complement military operations in tribal areas as there was fear that militants might relocate to settled areas of the country. Operation Zarb-e-Azb brought about a quality change in security situation of Pakistan as militants strong basis as well as command and control structure was eradicated. Similarly military operation in Khyber Agency of FATA substantially brought down the number of violent attacks in adjoining settled districts of KPK. However, under frustration militants planned and executed one of the worst terrorist attacks in the country in form of attack on Army Public School in Peshawar on 16 December 2014 in which more than 150 people, 143 being school children, were killed. This devastating attack send a shock wave across the nation. While numerous innocent lives including those of school children were lost, the militants remaining support among the masses completely vanished.

In response to this heinous act, Pakistan in January 2015 came up with a 20 point counter-terrorism and counter-extremisms strategy known as National Action Plan (NAP). NAP included implementation of death sentence of those convicted in cases of terrorism; setting up of military courts; militant outfits and armed gangs will not be allowed to operate in the country; NACTA, the anti-terrorism institution will be strengthened; strict action against the literature, newspapers and magazines promoting hatred, extremism, sectarianism and intolerance; choking financing for terrorist and terrorist organizations; ensuring against re-emergence of proscribed organizations; establishing and deploying a dedicated counter-terrorism force; taking effective steps against religious persecution; registration and regulation of religious seminaries; ban on glorification of terrorists and terrorist organizations through print and electronic media; administrative and development reforms in FATA with immediate focus on repatriation of IDPs; communication network of terrorists will be dismantled completely; measures against abuse of internet and social media for terrorism; zero tolerance for militancy in Punjab; ongoing operation in Karachi will be taken to its logical end; Balochistan government to be fully empowered for political reconciliation with complete ownership by all stakeholders; dealing firmly with sectarian terrorists; formulation of a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees; revamping and reforming the criminal justice system.<sup>2</sup> A close look at these twenty points clearly suggest more tradition methods of fighting terrorism were suggested without paying any attention towards improving socio-economic condition of masses as a mean to fighting terrorism.

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<sup>2</sup> National Action Plan was 20 point agenda agreed to between political and military leadership of the country after deadly Army Public School Attack. These 20 points are available at NACTA's website at <https://nacta.gov.pk/nap-2014/>

## Conclusion and Recommendations

While there are other factors that are contributing in terrorism in Pakistan, the relevance of socio-economic deprivation of the masses as one of the contributors in terrorism cannot be ignored, therefore, the government needs to make concerted efforts towards eradicating these problems which will not only help the people come out abject poverty but would also help the country improve economically. Following is recommended:

1. Since fighting terrorism and extremism is a societal process requiring concerted efforts of all institutions of a society including formal and informal; governmental and non-governmental bodies, there is a need that all relevant institutions are encouraged to play their role in fighting this menace.
2. Economic development and poverty alleviation ought to be corner stone of policies adopted by the governments. While ensuring territorial integrity of the state, all resources may be diverted for uplifting lower strata of the society. There is an urgent need for investing on human development and developing human capital. There is no concept of security if people are not properly fed, educated and are immune from diseases.
3. While current focus remains on the issue of fighting terrorism and militancy, there is an urgent need to pay special attention to rising extremism and inter-religious and inter-sectarian intolerance. Not only factors and causes of rising such intolerance and extremism must be identified but efforts be made to address them at priority. In line with dreams of Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal, Pakistan needs to be an inclusive state where various religious and ethnic groups, sects and communities are able to live in harmony. We need to convert diversity within from a weakness to strength. In this regard, civil society and media should be encouraged to play a pro-active role for inter-religious, inter-sectarian, inter-regional and ethnic harmony.
4. Corruption is somehow linked with terrorism in addition to giving birth to numerous socio-economic problems. There is urgent need for putting in place an effective, transparent, independent and impartial accountability mechanism to curb widespread corruption. In this regard, required legislation may be enacted through the parliament. Since corruption has taken deep roots in the society, merely putting in place such accountability mechanism will not suffice. There is also a need to create awareness in the society to make people understand negative implications of this ill.
5. Various issues identified in this research study including addressing the issue of ethnic strives, separatism, judicial reforms, etc., there is a need to develop and strengthen political processes in the country. Effective handling of the said issues like many others will largely depend on the strength of political processes.
6. While militants exploit religion for their vested and narrow interests, there is a need for better understanding of religion among the masses. In this regard, teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet that encourage non-violent means of bringing changes in society needs to be identified and propagated. Moreover, there is a need for development of an evolving counter-narrative against extremism and terrorism.
7. Women are important segment of society and form half of Pakistan. They should not only be empowered but they may also be encouraged to play a leading role in development of the country. Women rights should be protected under all circumstances.

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