

PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS TOWARDS TERRORISM AND SUICIDAL ATTACKS IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in University of Sargodha Sub-Campus Mandi Bahauddin, Punjab Pakistan. A sample of 120 respondents was taken. The respondents were selected by using simple random sampling technique from two departments, (60 from each) i.e. Department of Sociology and Department of Mathematics University of Sargodha Sub-Campus Mandi Bahauddin.

The main objective of the study was to measure the perception of students towards terrorism and Suicidal attacks in Pakistan as terrorism has become the most dangerous and horrifying issue in the world today. During the period of 2010-11, almost 500 suicidal attacks took place regularly around the whole world and the rate of terrorism and suicidal attacks incidents was highest in Pakistan. The current research dug out those social, psychological and economic risk factors that were leading towards suicidal attacks and terrorism incidents in Pakistan.

The interviewing schedule was used as appropriate tool to get the required information. Tool was developed in the light of the objectives of the study; using English Language, the second language. The data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Majority of the respondents' perception explored that the terrorism and suicidal attacks were badly affecting the whole fabric of Pakistani Society creating horror and disorganization.

KEYWORDS: Terrorism, Suicide, Durkheim's Analysis of Altruistic and Fatalistic Suicide

INTRODUCTION

The term terrorism was first emerged at the end of the 19th century in post-revolutionary France when it was used to describe 'a regime of terror'. It is a brutal act that is committed in order to inculcate fear in others to reach a religious or political goal or to compel a government to do or not to do something. Terrorism and Suicidal attacks are the most dangerous and horrible forms of terrorism in the world today and the attacks of these can throw thousands of people into panic. The rate of attacks is rising rapidly across the whole world. In 2000–2004, more than 472 suicidal attacks took place in 22 countries of the world, killing almost 7,000 and wounding 10 thousand people in various incidents. Majority of these attacks have been carried out by the Islamist groups claiming religious motivation which are also known as jihadees (Hoffman, 2005). The terrorism and suicidal attacks are a form of extremely

committed or extremely crazy armed violence carried out in a symmetric fashion by someone who is intention on taking their own life or taken in into thinking they want to take their own life in order to take the life of another or others (Gambetta, 2005).

After the incidents of September 11th terrorist attacks, the decision of Government of Pakistan to stick together the U.S led global war against terrorism provided an opportunity to address militancy and religious extremism is the whole country. Terrorism since 9/11 has caused a death instrument of thousands of people, especially in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. This war has killed almost 4,000 innocent Pakistani people.

There are two major incidents that were responsible for terrorism and intolerance in Pakistan on religious grounds. Before 1980, the religion was not considered as a controversial issue in Pakistani society. However the sectarian troops like Sipah-e-Sahaba and many others were preaching hatred against the Shia Muslims. After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, these incidents of violence took place in Pakistan that shifted the nature and magnitude of sectarian violence in Pakistani society. A large group of so-called Islamic scholars in Punjab belonging to hard line Salafi tradition of Islam also openly approves of suicide bombing. The disciples of this so called group have faith in waging jihad against The Jews and The Shias and they have shown it in democracy. The prominent figures of these groups have preached that jihad should be waged until 'Islam' will become the dominant religion and force in the whole world. This is contradicted with the ideology of Quid-e-Azam who premised his struggle for Pakistan who did not win Pakistan by waging a bloody Jihad but brought it into being by waging democratic struggle against the British and the Hindus. The Muslims of India voted for a separate home land where they would not be marginalized by a non-Muslim majority.

The war between Russia and Afghanistan was also an important responsible factor of terrorism in Pakistan. A change that changed the character of Pakistani society occurred after the establishment of the soviet backed communist regime in Afghanistan. This paved the way of weaponisation into Pakistani society led Pakistan to "Talibanization". Pakistan has never had any problem with the way the tribes who lived their lives. The government of Pakistan had never interfered with their rituals which they called "Shariat". However when NATO and U.S troops, in the wake of 9/11, occupied Afghanistan, the tribal on the Pakistani side of the DL (Durand Line) as has been their wont for centuries came to the help of their kinsman across the border fighting the occupying troops in the same way as they did when Afghanistan was being occupied by the Soviet troops. Today terrorism is threatening the very roots and fabric of Pakistan's nationhood. More tragically, terrorism in Pakistan draws its justification from the very faith which provides the country its ideological mornings.

Sectarianism is the major cause of terrorism and suicidal attacks in Pakistan. The alliance between Pervaiz Musharraf and Bush regarding the war on terror and Pakistan's own track record over training Mujahidin and sending to Afghanistan in Russian aggression were also main factors responsible for terrorism in Pakistan. Suicide bombing and terrorism also have bad effects on the creditability of government administration especially the Law enforcement agencies, which creates a state of fear and uncertainty among mass that is a hinder in the way of activities of the entire community. When people do not perform their duties, they feel unrest, depressed and suffer from other psychological and social disorders. Religious and cultural activities are also affected by terrorism and suicide bombing because they are hesitated and feel fear to go to mosques for prayers. Religious

gathering such as (conferences), even the shrines of saints are also attacked by suicide bombers. Suicidal attacks and terrorism have also affected the foreign investment in Pakistan and it has declined to \$ 910.20 Million from \$1.4 Billion in F y 08-09. Owing to decline in investment poverty and unemployment rises. Poverty has reached to 41.4% from 37.5% in 2008-09. Owing to intense acts of terrorism in Pakistan, the World Bank has blocked two lending key loans of worth \$820 Million till the conditions ameliorate to the paradigm. Terrorism also increases the expensive of the forces to meet their needs to fight war against terrorism. Pakistan spends much and has received total disbursement of \$11,998 Million from US under Coalition Support Fund (CSF), out of this amount \$3,129 Million were economic aid and security aid amounted to \$8,869 Million. The risk of the investors and more troops in Afghanistan deployment by US rise the risk of investors to invest in Pakistan that cause serious downfall of deposits of banking sector that shows deposits fell from Rs.3.77 Trillion to Rs.3.17 trillion on September 2009 (Hussain, 2007).

Terrorism attacks of suicide bombing have its origin and continuance in the social environment of various regions of the world. It has rooted from religious, social systems, oppression, war, political systems, economics and psychological and antisocial conditions. It is a big problem with no single solution (Hutchinson, 2007). Law enforcement agencies claim that the suicidal attacks began in April 1983 when Hezbollah attacked western targets in Lebanon and a suicide bomber in a pickup truck loaded with explosives rushed into the U.S. Embassy in Beirut killed 63 people out of which seventeen were Americans. In same year, another suicidal bomber rushed a truck full of explosives at the U.S. On the same day, another bomb blast in the French compound in Beirut killing 58 French service members. These attacks caused the withdrawal of Western forces from Lebanon and after that the Hezbollah started using suicide attacks against the Israeli Defense Force in Lebanon and against South Lebanese Army posts (Schweitzer, 2000).

On 27 May 2005, a suicidal attack killed 20 people and 82 wounded at the annual Shia Muslims congregation at the shrine of Bari Imam in Islamabad. Aftab Ahmad Sherpao (Interior minister of Pakistan) got minor injuries, 28 were killed, and 35 were injured in that act of terrorism after the minister finished speaking on April 28, 2007. Another suicide bomber run his bike into a PAF bus near Sargodha, killing seven officers of the Pakistan Air Force and 28 people suffered injuries in the same year. The two suicidal attacks killed almost 63 people and injured 81 people targeting Pakistan's main munitions factory, the Pakistan Ordnance Factories August 2008. The Marriott Hotel was attacked by a massive suicide car bomb, killing over 60 and injuring 250 in September same year. Suicide bombers detonated a vehicle loaded with 100 kilograms of explosives near offices of the capital city police officer (CCPO) and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in Lahore killing at least 27 people and wounding 326, in addition to destroying a two-story building of the Rescue 15 police service in May 2009. More than 42 people were killed and 180 were wounded after two suicide bombers attacked a Sufi Islamic shrine at the Data Durbar Complex in Lahore In July 2010. In November 2010, 20 persons were killed and 100 were injured in a suicide truck bomb attack whose target was the Criminal Investigation Department building within Pakistan's major, southern city Karachi (Schweitzer, 2002).

There are several other socio-economic, psychological and political factors which are paving the way for terrorism in Pakistan. Some of them are listed below:

Lack of Justice

Is the foremost factor that breeds terrorism in a society just like Pakistan. When the complaints of the people regarding justice are not redressed they will resort to violent behavior and actions. In Pakistan the timely justice has always been a far cry. So the delay in the justice system is working as incentive for victims and dragging them to the swamp of terrorist organizations.

Lack of Education

Is considered another root cause for terrorism in Pakistan. Almost one in five men aged 15 to 24 are not able to read or write. This high illiteracy rate has led Pakistan towards terrorism. The technical and vocational education, adult Pakistan needs leadership which can rise above their financial and political vested interests for, present leadership does not have guts, vision, and will to eliminate.

Poverty

Poverty is considered as the mother of all social evils and it is also a major cause of terrorism in Pakistani Society and it is said that “a hungry man is an angry man.” The majority of population in Pakistan is leading their life below the poverty line and youngsters are unemployed. In such conditions, some people go to the level of extremism and even commit suicide and these are the people whose services are hired by the terrorist groups and they become easy prey to terrorism.

Food Insecurity

Also leads towards militancy and violence as when people are not able to afford sufficient food and are unable to meet their basic needs, resultantly the civil strife grows. According Islamabad-based Sustainable Development Policy Institute, the highest food insecurity levels are found in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas where 67.7 % of the people are insecure. The Baluchistan is next with food insecurity at 61.2 % and in KPK, almost 56.2 %. In Pakistan, the extremist forces are exploiting the feelings of lower and lower middle class food insecure people and are motivating the unemployed youth to commit crimes such as suicide attacks against innocent people. The lack of proper government set-up and lack of coordination and information sharing between various institutions of government is also a cause of behind the escalating terrorist activities. The law enforcing agencies (LEAs) have completely failed to protect high officials of the country and in the absence of law and proper trial the terrorists are entrenching their roots firmly.

Objectives

- To probe the perception of students about terrorism and suicidal attacks
- To suggest some possible measure for the reduction of terrorism and suicidal attacks

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology can be defined as it is a system of explicit rules and procedures upon which research is based and against which the claims for knowledge are evaluated (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992)”. The present

research was carried out in University of Sargodha Sub-Campus Mandi Bahauddin, Punjab Pakistan. A sample size of 120 respondents was taken for the current study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 120 respondents i.e. 60 male students and 60 female students from two departments, i.e. Department of Sociology and Department of Mathematics University of Sargodha Sub-Campus Mandi Bahauddin.

The main objective of the study was to measure the perception of students towards terrorism and Suicidal attacks in Pakistan as terrorism has become the most dangerous and horrifying issue in the world today. During the period of 2010-11, almost 500 suicidal attacks took place regularly around the whole world and the rate of terrorism and suicidal attacks incidents was highest in Pakistan. The current research dug out those social, psychological and economic risk factors that were leading towards suicidal attacks and terrorism incidents in Pakistan.

The interviewing schedule was used as appropriate tool to get the required information. Tool was developed in the light of the objectives of the study; using English Language, the second language. The data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Simple Percentage was applied. The tests statistic to use is:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

O = Observed value/frequency

E = Expected Value/frequency

\sum = Total sum

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Item No. 1 According to the opinion (in yes) of the respondents, the main causes of terrorism and suicidal attacks:

Table 1

		Frequency	Percentage
Main causes of Terrorism & Suicidal Attacks in Pakistan	Poverty	50	41.66 %
	Injustice	5	4.16 %
	Illiteracy	5	4.16 %
	Sectarianism and Association with Terrorist Organizations	60	50 %
	Total	120	100%

This table demonstrated the respondents' feedback regarding the question "According to your opinion what are the main causes of Terrorism and Suicidal Attacks". The results of above table showed that the majority of the respondents 50% pointed out that Sectarianism and Association with Terrorist Organizations are the main causes. Almost 41% respondents had opinion that poverty and lack of basic need led towards terrorism and suicidal attacks.

Item No. 2 According to the opinion (in yes) of the respondents, terrorism and suicidal attacks can be eradicated by Religious harmony, eradication of poverty, provision of justice:

Table 2

		Frequency	Percentage
Religious harmony		70	58.33 %
Eradication of poverty		35	29.16 %
Provision of justice		15	12.5 %
	Total	120	100 %

This table showed the respondents' feedback regarding the question "terrorism and suicidal attacks can be eradicated by Religious harmony, eradication of poverty, provision of justice". The results of above table showed that the majority of the respondents 58.33 % suggested that religious harmony among all sects can eradicate terrorism and suicidal attacks.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Analysis and interpretation of data are the most important steps for conducting scientific social research. Without these steps, generalization and prediction cannot be achieved which is the basic need in social research. Majority of the respondents' perception explored that the terrorism and suicidal attacks were badly affecting the whole fabric of Pakistani Society creating horror and disorganization. Terrorism and suicidal attacks can be eradicated by following steps:

Educational facilities should be provided to all children. Illiteracy and poverty should be finished. Government should provide funds to eliminate poverty. Awareness should be created. Role of media is very helpful in this regard. Various programmes about terrorism should be telecasted on radio, TV and various articles and columns should be published in news papers. Strict rules and regulations should be formulated for terrorists. The religious scholars should address the people about terrorism. Laws about terrorism should be strictly enforced in the society. Over population should be controlled to minimize the family size so that needs of family can be easily met. International NGOs should launch various projects about the education and awareness. All Jihadi, sectarian/religious, terrorist outfits must be crushed and forming a extremist outfits be declared to be punishable by death and Pakistanis must respect and support only Pakistan Army and hate all Jihadist groups. Judiciary, lawyers, bureaucracy, politicians, Police, army, and other law enforcement agencies need to be cleansed off sympathizers of Taliban and other jihadi groups.

CONCLUSIONS

Majority of the respondents' perception explored that the terrorism and suicidal attacks were badly affecting the whole fabric of Pakistani Society creating horror and disorganization.

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