



Gendered Perceptions and Impact of Terrorism / Talibanization in Pakistan

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Acronyms

CIA	Central Investigation Agency
EIJ	Egyptian Islamic Jihad
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FCR	Frontier Crime Regulation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIA	Algerian Armed Islamic Group
GID	General Intelligence Department
HUM	Harakat ul-Mujahideen
IDP	Internally displaced persons
ISI	Services Intelligence
JEM	Jaish-e-Muhammad
JI	Jammat-e-Islami
JUI	Jamiat-e-Ulema-Islam
MMA	Muthida Majlis Amal
NA	National Assembly
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PIJ	Palestinian Islamic Jihad
PIPS	Pak Institute for Peace Studies
PATA	Provincially Administered Tribal Areas
SSP	Anjuman Sipah-e-Sahab
TNSM	Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi
TNSM	Tehrik Nifaz Shariat-e-Muhammadi
TTP	Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

1. Introduction

The recent surge of religious extremism along with the phenomenon of suicide bombing is relatively new to the people of Pakistan. A gradual increase in the radicalization of society has been witnessed since the 1980s; however, at that time it was not accompanied by the same level of political violence and brutality which is currently evident in suicide bombings across the country. According to the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) security report in 2006, 657 terrorist attacks took place, leaving 907 people dead and 1,543 others wounded. Pakistan faced 60 suicide attacks during 2007, which killed at least 770, besides wounding another 1,574 people; in 2008, the country saw 2,148 terrorist attacks, which resulted in 2,267 fatalities and 4,558 wounded¹. In only the first six months of 2009, 465 people were killed and 1,121 wounded in 36 suicide bomb attacks². People are trying to make sense of this new reality of terrorism/religious extremism and crafting the meaning of the phenomenon within their own broader understanding of politics at the global, national and local level.

Pakistan's decision to become an ally and the front line state in the war against terrorism declared after the 9/11 terrorist attack on World Trade Center and the Pentagon in USA, turned the country into a central stage where the war on terrorism is now being fought. Pakistan had to take a u-turn on its policy of support to religious *Jihadi* groups under the extreme pressure and threat of 'with us or against us' from the United States. Subsequently when the government tried to bring these militants under its control, it triggered a reaction among the religious groups and *jihadi* organizations (who had been enjoying the support of the establishment in the past) and pitched them against the government and its security forces. They started challenging the writ of the government by attacking civilians and security forces through the use of suicide bombers. The militants belonging to various groups and ideologies started networking with one another on the face of pressure from the government to stop cross-border interference. Nearly forty Taliban groups formed Tehreek-e-Taliban under the leadership of Baitullah Mahsud on 14th of December.³ Those militants identified themselves as Taliban claimed that their main objective was to expel the American and NATO forces from Afghanistan and to enforce *Sharia* in Pakistan. In response to the government's effort to stop their involvement in cross-border terrorism in Afghanistan and providing protection to foreign militants, Tehreek-e-Taliban unleashed a reign of terror in the country and claimed the responsibilities of many suicide bombing incidents in which thousands of people were killed. Taliban are normally equated in public perception, with terrorism in Pakistan. Therefore, the term terrorism and Talibanization will be used interchangeably in this report.

¹ Wikipedia/chronology of terrorist incidents in Pakistan

² Amir Mir report in The News, July 3, 2009

³ The Daily News 15.12.2007.

Pakistan's role in War on Terrorism has serious social, economic, and political implications for the country. Pakistan is paying a huge price in human and economic terms for playing a role of a frontline state in the war on terror. There is hardly any systematic count available to assess the total loss of human lives (combatants, civilians, and security forces). However, in the response to a parliamentary question, the Interior Minister, Rehman Malik informed the National Assembly that in the year 2008-2009, 2,686 people were killed in 1,367 terror strikes⁴. This number does not include the estimated loss of human lives, (terrorist and civilians) caused by the military operation. Also this does not include those got injured and disabled as a result of terrorist and anti-terrorist encounters. The life of people living in conflict areas has been totally disrupted. As a result of the government's decision to conduct military operations against the militants, more than 30 million people were forced to leave their homes from the conflict ridden areas of Malakand. The local community and political structures in these areas have been completely dismantled due to the political hold of terrorist groups. The economy of the country has also lost momentum and suffered an estimated loss of US\$ 35 billion since 2001-2002.⁵

Any conflicts whether natural or man-made have multiple and differential impacts on men and women as their experience of conflict is mediated through their gender. Women are socially positioned as subordinate to men. They do not have equal access to opportunities, resources and power. Due to their lower social and economic position, they are more vulnerable have the least capacity to cope with the impact of conflicts, human and natural disasters. It is well documented by researchers from the experiences around the world that women's vulnerabilities are exacerbated in conflict situations. Women face much harsher conditions during displacement and in camps due to various forms of gender based violence i.e. trafficking, kidnapping, forced marriages and sexual harassment.

Several research studies conducted in the areas of peace, conflict and wars across the world show that not only the impact but the perceptions and perspectives of men and women of conflicts are also fairly gendered. In general, women are perceived as passive victims of wars/ conflicts who do not play any active role in initiating or participating in wars and conflicts. However there are plenty of examples that show that women are not only the victim of wars and conflicts but they also play an active role as combatants and supporters of wars and political violence.

In Pakistan, women are the neglected category in the analysis of the War on Terrorism and the growing religious extremism and militancy.. Men and women

⁴ The News, Friday August 14, 2009, P.A3

⁵ http://www.finance.gov.pk/finance_blog/p=238

both are affected by growing militancy/Talibanization in Pakistan, however, their experiences are distinctly different from each other. There is hardly any significant effort is being made to document the gender differentials of the impact of the war on terrorism. Since the impact of religious militancy is different on men and women, therefore, it is likely that the understanding and prescriptions for counter-terrorism may also be different.

Presently, the only reference to women is made when girl's schools are destroyed by militants in FATA and Malakand District or when a video was shown on the electronic media in which the Taliban were flogging a woman. Women are viewed as passive victims of Talibanization. It is generally ignored that women are capable of playing the role of both an active agent in resisting Talibanization as well as the promoters of Talibanization in the country. The incident of Lal Masjid is a case in point where women played an active role as front line soldiers to promote a radical religious agenda. Women are being actively recruited to madrissas by various religious political outfits. It is important to understand the social and political conditions in which women move towards joining radical Islamist groups and under what circumstances they oppose radical politics.

This research study endeavors to fill the knowledge gap in the understanding of the gendered role, perceptions and the impact of the war on terrorism. The study is conducted through using scientific methods and methodology to document the differential impact of terrorism/religious militancy on men and women. An intersectional approach to gender is adopted to have a nuanced understanding, as gender intersects with class, ethnicity, religion, sect and other social divisions which shape experiences. The study intends to capture gender differentials in the public perceptions of terrorism and to include their voices by bringing their solutions/strategies to counter terrorism and religious militancy into public debate. .

The main objectives of the research study are:

- To understand and capture the gendered perceptions on the war on terrorism and growing radicalization through using scientific tools of research.
- To document systematically the gendered impact of war on terrorism and the growing phenomenon of Talibanization on men and women in the country.
- To understand the role of women in the radicalization as both victims and active agents in promoting radicalization.
- To create a better understanding of radicalization that will assist the policy makers to develop more informed and an effective national policy to counter terrorism in the country

- To develop a template of the possible solutions suggested by the various sections of society to combat the menace of terrorism/Talibanization.
- To feed the findings of the study into policy options.

2. Background

The current phenomenon of religious extremism/terrorism/Talibanization in Pakistan is often traced back to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s. Pakistan, as a front line state of the US, supported 'jihad' by setting up training camps on its soil, inviting Islamist militants from all over the world and facilitated them to wage a war against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. These militant religious groups who received immense training and financial support from the Pakistani establishment later on emerged as a force on its own with its own political agenda. Our assertion is that the phenomenon of Talibanization in Pakistan is not mono-causal and cannot be explained through the singular exogenous factor of Soviet-Afghan war alone. It is a multi-causal phenomenon and must be seen and understood in its totality. It is imperative to investigate what was the ideological base that existed in the country prior to the Soviet-Afghan war and 9/11 on which the US was able to build a *jihadi* culture/infrastructure. What was the ideological and political motivation of Pakistani militants and the state, willing to fight America's proxy war in Afghanistan?

To understand the multifaceted nature of terrorism/Talibanization in Pakistan, we need to go back into the history of the sub-continent to uncover the roots of radicalization in the region in general and in Pakistan in particular. Only the more informed understanding of the nuances and complexity of the phenomenon of radicalization will give us the conceptual tools to develop an effective counter terrorism strategy.

Root of Radicalization in Indo –Pak Sub-continent

Islamist movements have been using the notion of Jihad and Muslim Ummah around the world to promote their political agendas. The concept of Jihad in Islam is fairly complex. It essentially works at three levels. *Jihadun Nafs* is about purifying one's own soul, the second level is the *Jihad* against injustices through words and lastly physical *Jihad* in the cause of *Allah*. The latter concept of *Jihad* is called *Jihad al-asghar* while the former two are included in the category of *Jihad al-Akbar*. Throughout Muslim history the latter form of *Jihad* has been invoked for different political reasons in different contexts.

Aysha Jalal maintains that in the first century of Islam, Kharajites were the first who propagated physical *Jihad* against enemies of Islam. Umayyad (661-750) and Abbasid (750-1258) also used the concept of *Jihad* as armed struggle to justify wars they fought for temporal gains. She argues, "Muslim exegetes, legists, theologians and historians in different times and places have distorted the meaning of *Jihad* in the *Quran*". (Jalal 2008)

In South Asia, Islam touched the shores of India for the first time in 712 A.D. The predominant religion in India was Hinduism that evolved in the sub-continent after the arrival of Aryans thousands of years ago. Hinduism is a combination of different sects, each sect having its religious texts and gods and goddess. Hinduism was not a centrally structured religion. However, Brahmins, the clergy

of Hinduism, weakened this by dividing Hindu society into different strata. At the bottom of the caste system was the *Shudder* (untouchables) who had this subhuman status for many generations. This intolerant caste system was against social mobility.

Monotheistic Islam was introduced in the sub-continent by Sufis who came with Muslim conquerors from the North, Central Asia, Persia and Afghanistan. The Sufis presented a tolerant Islam that attracted thousands of people from the Hindu religion to Islam, especially the untouchable caste. Those who did not convert remained disciples because association with the saint was not based on religious identity. These saints brought a message of love and peace for humanity. This was the type of Allah that was introduced to India by Sufis (Ahmad, 2002:96).

During the sultanate and the Mughal eras (from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century), the spirit of accommodation of non – Muslims was high, coming to a climax during the reign of the Mughal emperor Akbar (1556 – 1605), who brought a policy of peace for all (*sulhe-kul*). Akbar's treatment of his subjects was free of oppression and persecution. He never tried to impose his faith upon his subjects. Karen Armstrong writes (2002) that Akbar's policies were wise because persecution could have led to revolt of the Hindu majority. Hindus were accommodated in armies as well in civil administration. Akbar's policies of accommodation went further and he abolished *jizya* tax and he himself turned vegetarian in order to avoid hurting the sensibilities of the large Hindu population. "Akbar was respectful of all faiths. He built temples for Hindus, and in 1575 set up a "house of worship" where scholars of all religions could meet for discussion" (Armstrong, 2008:125). Akbar's pluralism was different from the parochial communalism developing in some circles of orthodox *ulema*. Initially he was close to the *ulema*, but his interest was more in Sufism and *falsafah* (*philosophy*), than in *Sharia*, Akbar's rejection of all types of orthodoxy and policies of religious reconciliation earned him the wrath of a segment of the *Ulema* led by Sheikh Ahmad Sirhandi who accused him of being an infidel.

Sirhandi felt that Akbar's pluralism was derived from Ibn-al-Arabi's philosophy and was thus dangerous (Jalal, 2008: pp 373-8). He believed that only through the path of *Sharia* could unity with God be achieved. Sirhandi's views did not impress many Muslims in the first part of the seventeenth century. Shahjahan followed in the foot-steps of his Grand father Akbar. The Taj Mahal was the continuation of Akbar's policy of creating harmony between Hindus and Muslims. Hindu poets were part of Shah Jahan's court and books were translated into *Sanskrit*.

Ahmad Sirhandi was of the opinion that Akbar's policies were weakening Islam. He believed that both the religions were incompatible with each other and thus there could be no reconciliation. Sirhandi was strongly opposed to friendship with

infidels, who should be “kept at arm’s length like dogs”; and he also stressed that “no relationship should be established with *Kafirs*” (Jalal, 2008:38).

Before Akbar’s policy of reconciling both faiths and his great grandson Dera Shikoh’s efforts to amalgamate Sufism and the mysticism of Hindu religion, *Sufis* found Advaita Vedanta fully compatible with Islam. Aysha Jalal maintains that the pain taken by the *Sufis* to enter into dialogue with Hindus and to study and understand their religious traditions, won them the ire of the followers of Sirhandi, known as *Shahudis*. The exclusionist approach of Sirhandi was their only method to overcome the fear of being swallowed by the ocean of *Kafirs*. Sirhandi allowed the use of temporal power for implementing his *Sharia* – more of a sectarian nature – and phrased the slogan that “*Sharia* can be fostered through the sword” (Jalal, 2008: pp 31-32). Those influenced by Sirhandi’s thinking justified waging war against *kafirs* while those opposed to his philosophy – *wajudis* – opted for tolerance and universal humanity and preferred *Jihad-i- Akbar* instead of *Jihad Asghar* (fighting with one’s sword).

Muslim rulers have always used religion to solve their own problems of legitimacy and never hesitated to use the clergy to provide them justification whenever the temporal necessity was in clash with sacred law. Despite Muslims being a minority in India, India under the rule of the Muslims was considered as *Dar-ul-Islam* (an abode of peace where Jihad cannot be waged). It was only in the eighteenth century that Muslims began to see India as *Dar-ul-Harb* (abode of war) instead of *Dar-ul-Islam* due to the fear of the loss of Muslim sovereignty.

Several sultans of Delhi cultivated *Ulemas* and recognized their juristic authority in the face of stern opposition by the Sufis who contested these narrow interpretations of Islam. The Sufis were against despotic rulers in the Arab and Muslim world. When the opposition became stronger, Muslim rulers introduced a new class of clergy to counter the powerful influence of Sufis that previously had no prominence in Islam. Aysha Jalal argues (2008) that this was a beginning of “lucrative collaboration” between state power and the *Ulema* who entered into state employment.

During Aurangzeb’s reign (1658-1707) when the Mughal Empire was in decline, he used religion as a card to solve his legitimacy problems and also to arrest the ever loosening grip of the Mughals on political sovereignty. He re-imposed *Jizya* along with double taxes for Hindus; their religious festivals were not attended by Aurangzeb. Their temples were razed to the ground. His sectarianism and intolerance manifested itself in his banning Shia celebrations in honor of Hussain (Armstrong, 2000:p.128).

While the Mughals had been successful in creating harmony between Hindus and Muslim in mainland India in the eighteenth century, the Sikhs and Hindus in the north of India were still fighting against the Mughals. Also in the North West, the Afghans tried to establish a new empire in India. This made the Muslims

more apprehensive and insecure. This was the period in which the Muslim thinker Shah Wali Ullah made recourse to the philosophy of Sirhandi. He drew upon the position of Sirhandi to address the new sense of Muslim insecurity about being governed by a majority of infidels. Shah Wali Ullah's views were a turning point in the history of Indian Muslims and continued to impact Muslims in the subcontinent well into the twentieth century. The influence of Abdul Wahab of Arabia on the teachings of Shah Wali Ullah is immense (Jalal, 2008:64). His adoption of the strict interpretation of *Sharia* turned Shah Wali Ullah into the founder of Sunni orthodoxy in India. His bias in favor of Arab culture and language made his particular interpretation of *Sharia* more exclusivist and narrow.

Shah Wali Ullah was of the view that the downfall of the Mughal Empire after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 was a result of Shia and Hindu connivance against it. He was sternly opposed to the Hindu and Persian influences upon the Mughals (Jalal, 2008:41). Wali Ullah attacked the polytheistic influence upon the Indian Muslim Mughal court. Thus he rejuvenated an orthodox Sunni version of Islam. Following Sirhandi, Shah Wali Ullah also advocated the deployment of state power to create Islamic order in the Indian sub-continent. A powerful Muslim polity was a necessity to purge all the social evils which were, according to him, opposed to the basic tenets of Islam. He thought of a military struggle against *Marathas* and *Jats* as supreme for the survival of Islam in South Asia. He also wrote letters to Muslims rulers and notables of eighteenth century India. .

In order to arrest the decline of Mughal power, Wali Ullah wrote to Najib-ud-Dawla and told him to embark on *Jihad*. The temporal power of the Mughals was receiving blows of a fatal nature from *Marathas* and *Jats*. By inviting Ahmad Shah Abdali to attack India in order to purge the ideas of Jihad with military expedition for temporal purposes (Jalal, 2008:54) Although Shah Wali Ullah draws on some facets of Sirhandi's philosophy yet he introduced many variations due to the Wahabi influence upon his thoughts. Wali Ullah is a point of reference for many as far as Jihad is concerned. He is also termed as the father of Muslim modernism. Aysha Jalal maintains that "Wali Ullah left an intellectual legacy that casts a long shadow over all subsequent explications of Jihad in theory and attempts to translate it into practice" (Jalal, 2008: pp15-16). She argues that later Islamic fundamentalist and Islamist movements were greatly influenced by the philosophies of Sirhandi and Shah Wali Ullah. Sayyad Ahmad Shaheed and Maulana Ismail Shaheed's movements against Sikhs were highly influenced by these ideas. The notion of Jihad had also been invoked on and off by Indian Muslims when fighting British colonialism.

Role of the Establishment in the Rise of Extremism in Pakistan

Pakistan became independent from British colonial rule in 1947. With independence it inherited the disputes in Kashmir and the Durand line and thus the animosity with India and Afghanistan. Also it needed a unifying factor that could keep the ethnically diverse country together. So the state elite conveniently found Islam as a unitary factor and pro-state Islamists could promote their political agenda in the region. The Pakistani establishment started supporting militants fighting in Indian held Kashmir and provided them training in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan was also seeking strategic depth in Afghanistan. Therefore, it has always been the policy of the establishment to patronize religious parties. This policy was at its peak during the Afghan Jihad (Hussain, 2005: 171).

In the fall of 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in order to support and rescue the fragile communist government of Afghanistan which was growing weak due to internal strife between the *Percham* and *Khalq* factions and the external resistance it was facing from certain deeply religious and conservative sections of Afghan society. The new agrarian, social and educational reforms introduced by the communist regime were deeply resented by the traditional Afghans.

It was a period of the cold war era when there was a struggle between two hostile super powers to contain and counter the influence of each other in every region of the world. Using regional powers for their own interests was part of the Cold War strategy. When the USSR invaded Afghanistan on Christmas Eve in 1979, the US immediately decided to help the resistance fighters to avenge what the Russians did to them in Vietnam. America wanted to make the Soviet involvement as costly as possible. They started supporting the Afghan resistance to the communist regime by providing them money and arms. In order to play this role in the region, the US desperately needed Pakistan to be on its side to fight its proxy war in Afghanistan. The Zia-ul-Haq regime that needed political legitimacy and American aid, decided to side with the US.

As part of the war strategy, the United States and its allies started encouraging Muslims from all over the world to join the Jihad in Afghanistan. Thousands of Muslims who were motivated and inspired by the religious works and views of Mohammad ibne Abdul Wahhab and the Egyptian Islamic radical Sayyed Qutb who was executed in 1966 for advocating his secular government's violent overthrow, left for Afghanistan to help the Afghan *Mujaheedins* in their fight against the Soviets. The US encouraged Islamic countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, other Gulf States and also the Chinese to assist them, both in a propaganda campaign and in covert action campaigns.

Pakistan became the hub of *Jihadi* activities during this period. Training camps for militants were established on its soil. Money and arms started flowing into Afghanistan and Pakistan. Foreign Arabs were not only busy fighting the

Russians but were also bringing in a lot of money. As early as 1984, the CIA and its Saudi counterpart the General Intelligence Department (GID) were providing \$200 million each respectively. With the passage of time it increased, “the CIA was giving \$630 million in aid to the *Mujahedin* in the fiscal year 1987, not counting the matching funds from Saudi Arabia (Rashid, 2008:113).

With adequate supplies of money, arms and zealous religious warriors at large, the only missing factor was proper training and religious indoctrination, which would have psychologically helped them to overcome the might of Soviet military power. The Pakistani intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was to provide both the training and brain washing propaganda. *Jihadi* literature was produced in abundance and religious seminaries were used to ideologically brainwash and prepare students for Jihad. Thousands of *madrissa* students joined the Afghan *Jihad*. To acknowledge the critical role of religious *madrissas* in producing *Jihadis* for the Afghan war, tremendous financial support was given to them that resulted in the mushrooming of religious seminaries all over Pakistan in places like Peshawar, Akora Khattak, Mansehra, Muzaffarabad, and Balakot and in various places in South Punjab. “In 1971 there were only nine hundred *madrassas* in Pakistan. By the summer of 1988 there were about eight thousand official religious schools and an estimated twenty five thousand unregistered ones, many of them clustered along the Pakistan- Afghanistan frontier and funded by wealthy patrons from Saudi Arabia and other gulf states.” (Coll, 2004:151). The *Jihadi* groups such as Jaish-e-Muhammad (JEM), Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM) and Anjuman Sipah-e-Sahaba (SSP) were given easy access to money, arms, military training etc. and they enjoyed full state patronage and support.

Thousands of *Madrassa* students trained and radicalized fought along side the Afghan *Mujahideen*. Equipped with American weapons and aided by Gulf countries they were able to defeat the USSR. After the withdrawal of Soviet forces, the *Jihadis* who came from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria and Pakistan, returned to their own countries where they became a threat for the secular regimes as well as for the conservative monarchies. They branded them as Americans stooges and un-Islamic. They wanted radical Islamic ideology to be implemented, which was their main source of inspiration. Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA), Abu Sayyaf Group and many more believed in the revival of Islam and establishing a Muslim theocratic empire in the world. Freelance terrorists such as Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, Aiyaman al Zahawari, Mir Aimal Kasi, Youssef Ramzi and Osama Bin Laden were also inspired by the ideologies of these groups. Afghan Jihad according to Kohlmann (2006) provided a golden opportunity to global Islamists for the “unification of thought, purpose and infrastructure” Some of these Islamist fighters started operating independently, others joined existing organizations and some were able to make their own organizations. Al Qaeda was one such organization, created in 1988 by Abdullah Azzam and Osama Bin Laden. The latter masterminding one of the world’s deadliest terrorist attacks on

the twin World Trade Centers.

After the 9/11 terrorist attack, the US government started pressurizing Pakistan to sever its links with militant organizations. Although Pakistan agreed to become a US ally in the “War on Terror” however, it continued to be reluctant to eliminate militants due to its own misperceived strategic interests.

In order to understand the reluctance of the Pakistani establishment in reversing its strategic depth policies, we need to understand as Ahamed Rashid asserts the genuine sense of insecurity; Pakistan suffers as a nation state. Pakistan is surrounded by hostile powers. With the exception of China to the north, Pakistan has Afghanistan and Iran along its western border and India to the east. All three states are not on good terms with Pakistan.

As mentioned earlier, Pakistan inherited the Kashmir dispute at the time of partition in 1947. Pakistan and India have fought two wars over the disputed territory of Kashmir. There is a strong Muslim resistance within Indian Kashmir which is opposed to Hindu rule. The Pakistani establishment has been encouraging and supporting some of the *Jihadi* organizations such as Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM) and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JEM) to fight along with Kashmiri insurgents.

Similarly Pakistan’s Afghan policy has been based on denying India any advantage in Kabul. Pakistan, for almost a decade was able to block Indian influence in Afghanistan through the Indian hating Taliban. The Taliban, who were ethnically *Pashtuns* and were funded by Pakistan, provided a safe western border to Pakistan. After the American invasion of Afghanistan and the fall of the Taliban, the Northern Alliance emerged as the victorious party, which was supported by the US as well as by all of Pakistan’s regional rivals such as India, Iran and Russia. India immediately seized the opportunity to support Karzai. Ahmad Rashid maintains, “... India supported Karzai, established a lavish diplomatic presence in Kabul, funded aid programs, and according to Pakistani intelligence, sent Indian agents to train *Baloch* and *Sindhi* dissidents in Pakistan. Kabul had suddenly become the new Kashmir-the new battleground for the India-Pakistan rivalry. The Americans, obsessed by their hunt for bin Laden, could not understand the larger strategic picture, which was changing before their eyes” (Rashid, 2008:110). Post 9/11, within the passage of few months Afghanistan turned from friend to foe for Pakistan. A strong and stable Afghanistan is always perceived by the Pakistani ruling elite as a threat to the very existence of Pakistani *Pushtoon* territory and one which was responsible for the *Pashtunistan* movement.

Pakistan has always made a policy of supporting insurgencies in both India and Afghanistan to protect its own strategic interests. Militant *Jihadi* organizations are viewed as strategic assets who have been fighting proxy wars for Pakistan in Kashmir and Afghanistan. Therefore, in post 9/11 Pakistani establishment was

reluctant to take a u-turn on its previous 'strategic depth' policy due to a change in America's policy.

After the US launched its war against terrorism, Pakistan was no longer in a position to openly fund and support *Jihadi* training camps and extend support to different extremist groups. It started working on a two-track policy. On the one hand Pakistan was helping the Americans in chasing Al Qaeda operatives and on the other they were trying to protect their beleaguered valuable strategic asset namely the Taliban. There is an abundance of evidence that shows that the ISI were allowing, harboring and protecting Al Qaeda and Taliban operatives in Pakistan.

However, when the Pakistan government moved against militant *Jihadi* groups under massive US and international pressure, they realized that these militant groups had become a force in their own right and had gone beyond their control. Various groups of the Taliban openly challenged the writ of the government, took the law in their own hand and started imposing their morality on the local population in tribal areas where they had political control. On the face of increasing pressure from the state to restrain their activities, these militant groups became united under the banner of Tehreek-e-Taliban led by Baituallah Mahsood. These extremist religious groups may have different motives but they all share the lust for political power and the aspiration to take control over the state. They were not ready to give up on their religious-cum-political mission willingly. This has finally led the government to launch a military operation in Swat, Malakand and FATA region that has resulted in the displacement of nearly thirty million people from the conflict zones.

This is the historical narrative that helps us understand the contemporary phenomenon of terrorism/Talibanization in Pakistan. However, the over emphasis on the exogenous factors at the expense of ignoring the internal factors of poverty, poor governance and the structural weaknesses of the state that have contributed to the rise of Islamist's insurgency in Pakistan will not give us a holistic picture to counter terrorism/Talibanization effectively in its totality.

3. Research Methods and Methodology

The study used a mix of qualitative and quantitative research tools and methodologies to gather data for the study. Semi-structured interviews were used as the key research instrument to collect field data. Focus Group Discussions and Case Studies were also conducted to gain a deeper insight into the subject of inquiry.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to three provinces in Pakistan. The research was conducted in Rawalpindi, Mardan and Peshawar. The research was conducted with internally displaced persons (IDPs) from FATA and Malakand region. Fifty percent of the interviews were conducted with men and women living in camps and fifty percent from men and women IDPs living outside camps.

Sample Size

Initially it was decided to conduct 60 semi-structured interviews with men and women with a gender balance of 30 each. In addition to sixty semi-structured interviews, it was decided to conduct twenty focus group discussions (FGDs), ten each with men and women and ten case studies of women from conflict areas.

However, during the field work, it became apparent that the quality of FGDs was not up to mark. People were reluctant to talk openly in the group due to lack of familiarity with each other. The data gathered in the FGDs was not adding much value to our understanding. Therefore, it was decided to reduce the number of FGDs from twenty to ten and increase the sample size of semi-structured interviews from sixty to one hundred and four to make the study more representative. Ten case studies were also included in the study.

Difficulties and Limitation of the Study

The fieldwork for the study was conducted under extremely difficult circumstances. Soon after the initiation of fieldwork, the military operation in SWAT started that led to heavy internal displacement from conflict areas. People who migrated from conflict areas were completely devastated and traumatized. It did not feel right to request interviews while they were in a state of shock, traumatized and in the process of settling themselves in a new environment of camps and off-camps. Our research team prepared itself after visiting the IDPs' camps several times. Finally the in-depth interviews were conducted through using the semi-structured questionnaires. This caused a fairly long delay in completing the required number of interviews, FGDs and case studies.

The sample of the study was selected from amongst the IDPs; therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized. Although a random sampling method was used to select the sample of the study, the sample is not claimed to be representative thus the findings can only speak of the specific group of people who were included in the study. The nature of this study is more of a diagnostic

one. It highlights the areas of concerns and points out the themes that should guide future research in formulating research questions in this area.

The findings of the research serve as a scientific base for policy makers to have a better understanding of terrorism from the gender perspective. The research findings will also help the government to realign its policy and the implementation process to counter terrorism and post-conflict reconstruction. The knowledge base created by this research work provides civil society an evidence based tool for effective advocacy and lobbying to keep pressure on the government to mainstream a gender perspective in its counter-terrorism and reconstruction policies and programs.

Furthermore, the analysis of the findings of this research provide clear guidelines for future research to explore areas that are crucial for conceptual clarity that will help to develop a more gender sensitive and informed policy to address terrorism/Talibanization in the country.

Profile of the Respondents

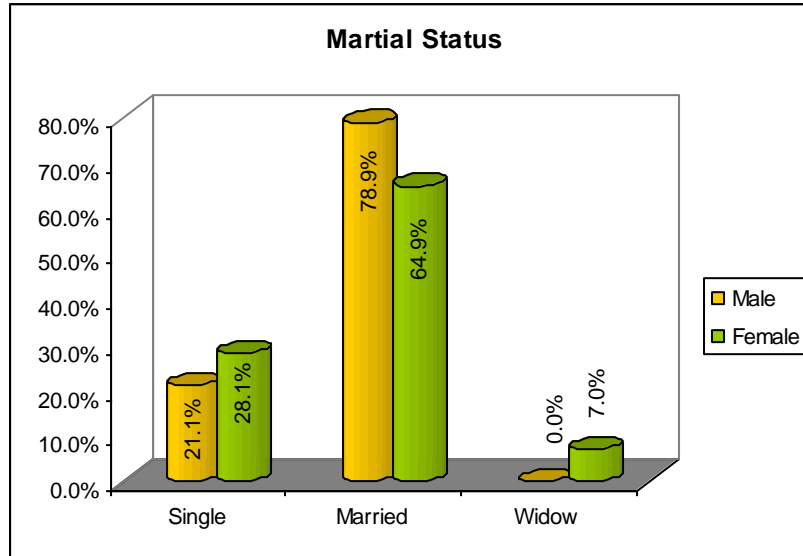
A total number of 114 semi-structured interviews were conducted with men and women. Fifty percent of the interviews, FGDs and case studies were conducted in IDP camps and fifty percent outside the camps.

A gender balance was ensured in the sample. Thus the sample of the study consists of 57 men and 57 women.

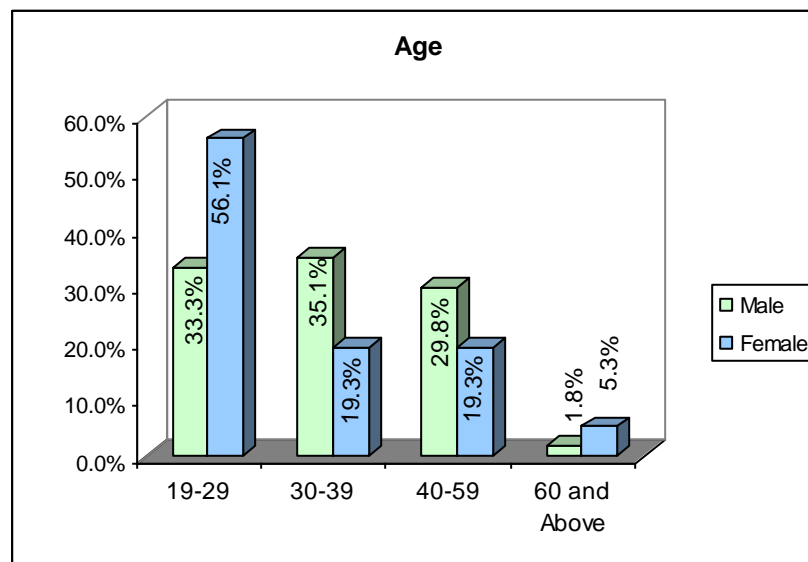
The majority of respondents (75%) belonged to Malakand region while twenty five percent belonged to FATA region.

As far as the marital status of the respondents was concerned, seventy two percent respondents were married, twenty five percent were single and three percent of them were widows.

Specifically among female respondents sixty five percent of them were married and twenty eight percent of them were single while among male respondents seventy nine percent of them were married and twenty one percent were single.



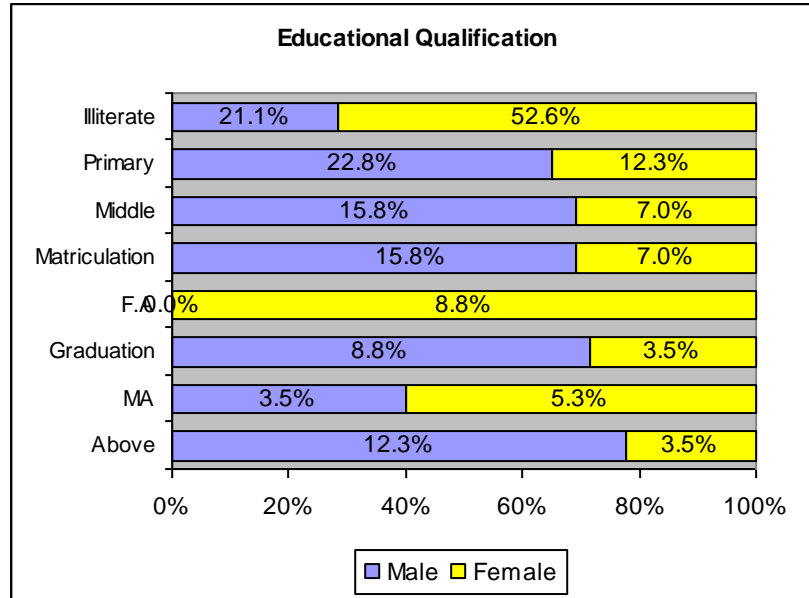
The majority of respondents (45%) fell in the age bracket of 18-29. Twenty seven percent were aged 30-39, twenty five percent were in the age category of 40-59 and three percent were aged 60 and above. The majority of women (56%) were between the ages of 18-29 while the majority of men (35%) were in the age bracket of 30-39.



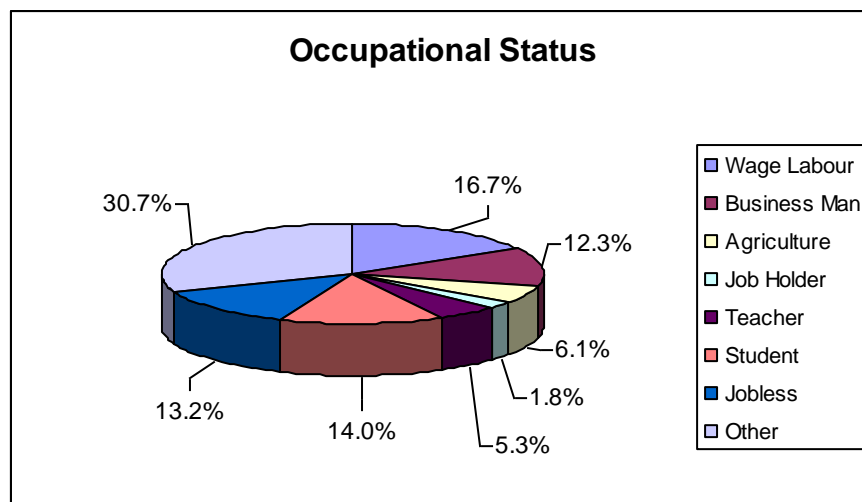
All of the respondents are Muslim with the dominant majority (95%) belonging to Sunni/Deobandi sect. Only three respondents said that they belonged to the Shia sect and two of them to Sunni/Barelvi sect.

Thirty seven percent respondents do not have any educational qualifications. Out of those who are illiterate, seventy one percent of them are women who are not able to read and write. Eighteen percent of respondents had primary level

education, eleven percent had middle, and again eleven percent had matriculation level of education. Only four percent respondents had F.A (12 years of education) and six percent were graduates, twelve percent had a master's degree or higher level of education. The data of the study shows that the majority of respondents (65%) had none or less than middle level education.



The class background of respondents was assessed through their occupational status. Women respondents were also asked about the occupational status of their fathers/husbands. The majority of respondents come from middle and lower class backgrounds. Thirty one percent of respondents said that they were working as daily wage labourers. Twelve percent were running their own business, while six percent of them were involved in agriculture. Five percent were working as teachers, fourteen percent were students and thirteen percent were unemployed.



4. Gendered Perceptions of Terrorism/Talibanization in Pakistan

The surge of terrorism/Talibanization as a result of the War on Terror waged by the US post 9/11 is viewed differently by various sections of society in the country. These views are primarily determined by the ideological positioning of people whose identity as Brohi maintained is "...increasingly contested within newly vitalized groupings of traditionalists, revivalists, revisionists and Islamic modernists, Islamic feminists and so on" in Pakistan (Brohi, 2008:138). Some of the religious political parties (Jamat-e-Islami, JUI and Tehreek-e- Insaf) and certain sections of the electronic media are sympathetic to Taliban on political and religious grounds. They maintain that Talibanization is a reaction to US neo-imperialism/terrorism and to the unjust war that the US has waged in Afghanistan and Iraq. Also they believe that the Taliban are fighting for the implementation of *Sharia* in the country. This perception is actively promoted by the conservative section of the electronic media which has emerged in the recent past as an extremely powerful tool in shaping public opinion. The lack of understanding of the nuances and complexities of the phenomenon of terrorism combined with the lack of political maturity of media managers and anchor persons who conduct discussion programs in various electronic channels has created tremendous confusion among the nation on the subject. The way questions are framed in a dichotomous manner such as "Is this war on terrorism ours or America's war" does not allow people to think beyond the false dichotomy of War as Theirs/Ours.

Our assertion is that the vast majority of people rejects Talibanization and condemns the terrorist activities of militant groups. However, this assumption can easily be challenged as there is no research based evidence to prove or reject our claim. There is a paucity of sociological research which could inform us about the profile of those who support or reject Talibanization/terrorism in Pakistan. Similarly, there is no research on the gender differential in public opinion on terrorism/Talibanization. The study explores how men and women perceive the phenomenon of terrorism/Talibanization and understand its politics. People's support or resistance to counter terrorism/Talibanization actions depends on how they perceive the religious militancy.

The on-going war in the country against terrorism/Talibanization can not be allowed to be protracted as this will have disastrous effects on the social, political and economic life of the country. The government needs to establish its writ and rule of law in Taliban controlled areas. However, the war against extremists/terrorists can neither be fought nor won by the government alone without the full support of the entire nation. In order to win the hearts and minds of people, the government, first of all, must have a much deeper understanding of people's perception on the war on terrorism/Talibanization. What do people think of the terrorists? What are the gender differentials in men and women's perception of terrorism/Talibanization? How do they propose to counter terrorism? Understanding people's perceptions of the phenomenon of terrorism is a first and a necessary step in order to develop any national strategy that leads to build a public consensus on counter terrorism policies and strategies. Men and

women may propose different solutions to combat terrorism/Talibanization due to gender differential in their experience of terrorism/Talibanization thus leading to gender differential in their perceptions and proposed solutions to restore peace in their lives.

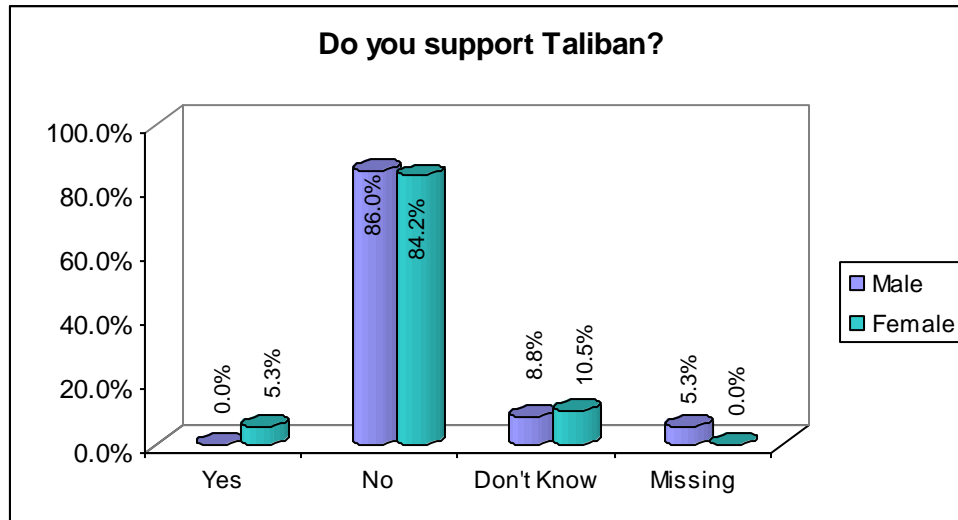
As mentioned earlier there is a great deal of difference in the general public on the politics of terrorism/Talibanization. The varied public opinion falls mainly into two opposite categories. There are those who are sympathetic or support the Taliban. They view them either as Islamists fighting for the implementation of *Sharia* in the country or as a genuine anti-imperialist force or as representatives of oppressed classes who are challenging the dominance of the *khawaneen*, the landed classes in tribal areas. Hundreds of Maliks and Khans were killed and their properties were attacked by the Taliban in Waziristan, Bajaur and Swat (Riport, 2007:20).

Those who oppose the Taliban believe that the Taliban are not interested in Islam, they are a political force that is using Islam as a tool to capture state power. Some of them view Taliban as criminals and barbarians fighting for money and political power. These opposing views are expressed in the public domain through electronic and print media; however, there is no gender breakdown of those holding both positive and negative points of view on the Taliban. We do not know where women stand in terms of viewing the Taliban and Talibanization? Is there any gender differential in viewing the politics of terrorism/Talibanization? Do women perceive terrorism/Talibanization as liberation or an oppression movement? These are some of the questions, this study endeavors to explore from a gender standpoint to fill the existing gap in knowledge.

Gender differentials in men and women's perception of terrorism/Talibanization was explored through asking quantitative and qualitative questions in the semi-structured interviews and in FGDs conducted with male and females from conflict areas.

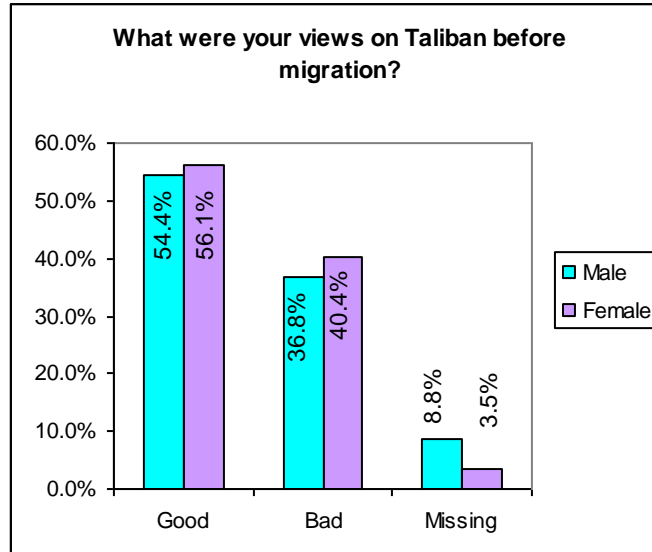
Gendered Views on Taliban

In order to explore the level of support for Taliban among people belonging to conflict areas, a direct question was asked on whether they supported Taliban. The majority of respondents (85%) responded negatively. There were only two women (2.6%) out of the sample of one hundred and fourteen who acknowledged their support for Taliban. Eleven respondents (9.6%) refused to answer the question. Out of those who refused to answer the question, five of them were men and six were women. Out of those thirteen respondents who either acknowledged their support for Taliban or refused to answer, eleven of them belonged to FATA region.

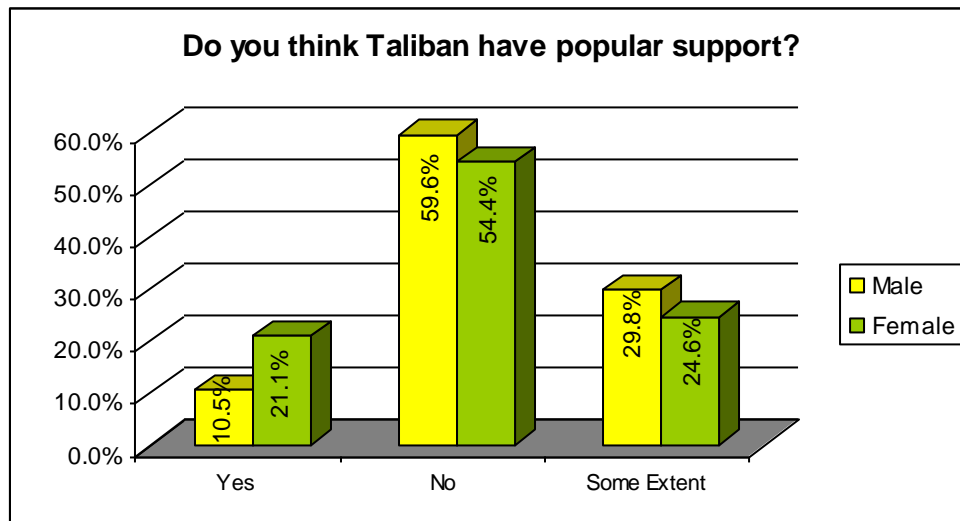


I would like to caution here that these responses should be analyzed in light of the political background that existed at the time of field research. Most of the interviews were conducted after the military operation launched in May, 2009 to counter militancy and terrorism in FATA and Malakand region. The operation forced a huge population of nearly three million to migrate from the conflict area. In the period of post-military operations, a radical shift in people's perceptions regarding Taliban and their politics was witnessed by political analysts. The tide of anti-Taliban feelings among the people from mainland Pakistan as well as from internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Swat and FATA was caused by the suffering people endured due to the oppression of Taliban and the military operation.

The anti-Taliban feeling expressed by the respondents in semi-structured interviews and FGDs was in complete contrast with their response to another question that asked their opinion about Taliban prior to the migration. In response to a question, "What were your views on Taliban before migration?" Fifty five percent respondents acknowledged their support to Taliban prior to migration. They said that they used to hold a good opinion about Taliban. They considered them to be good people with good intentions to enforce *Sharia* in their areas. They also said that in the beginning Taliban provided justice to the poor against the influential people in the area. Many people supported Taliban on ethnic grounds as they were helping Afghan *Pushtoon* to fight America. However, thirty nine percent respondents said that they never supported Taliban. Among those who held good opinion about Taliban prior to military operation/migration, there was no significant gender difference (31 men and 30 women). The data shows that for a certain time period, Taliban were clearly enjoying significant support from both men and women of the local population of SWAT and FATA prior to an anti-Taliban swing due to internal migration.



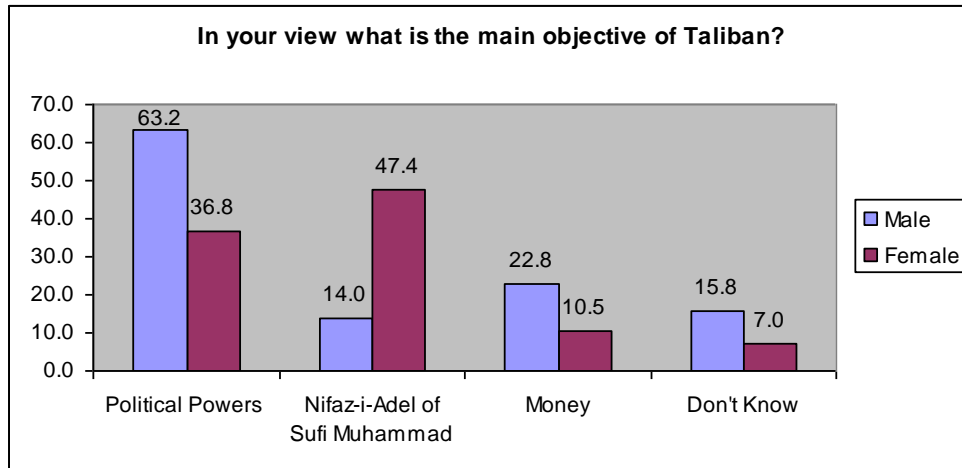
To assess the perception of local people on the continuing popular support for the Taliban, a question was asked regarding the popularity of Taliban among people. Fifty seven percent respondents said that Taliban had no support among local populations whereas fifteen percent believed that they were still enjoying popular support and twenty seven percent of respondents were of the view that Taliban were enjoying popular support to some extent.



Among those who believed that Taliban still had popular support, there were more women than men. Women appeared to be more cautious in making their assessment regarding the elimination of popular support from sections of the local population which the Taliban used to enjoy.

Politics of Talibanization

The study explored how men and women from conflict zones of Malakand and FATA view the politics of Terrorism/Talibanization. What in their view was the main objective of the Taliban? The responses of the interviewees are organized in a multiple response table below.

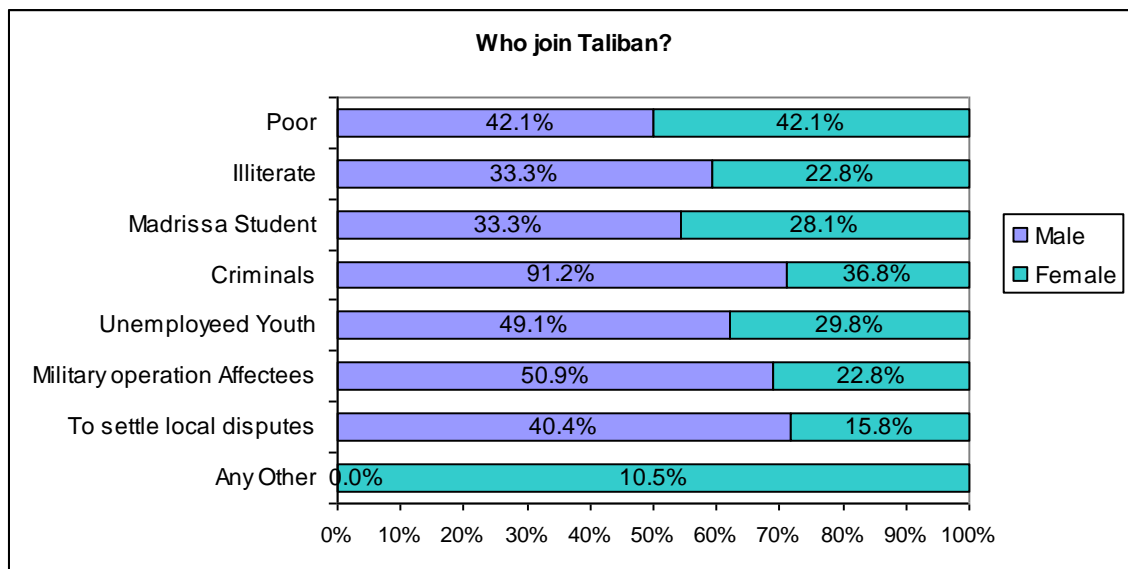


The above table shows that the majority of respondents (56%) both men and women understand terrorism/Talibanization as a political movement. Sixty three percent men and forty nine percent women felt that the main objective of the terrorism/Talibanization was to capture political power. This response was followed by thirty five respondents (31%) out of one hundred and fourteen who said that Taliban's main objective was to introduce *Sharia* and *Shari-nazam-e-Adle*. There were significantly more women (82%) as compared to men (27%) among those who mentioned the enforcement of *Sharia* as the main objective of Taliban. Money is mentioned by nineteen percent of respondents in third place as the main objective of terrorism/Talibanization.

The findings of the study show that people have a fairly good understanding of the politics of the Taliban. The majority of them were under no illusion that Taliban's politics was for temporal gains rather than sacred. However, among those who believed that Taliban had an Islamist agenda, there were significantly more women amongst this category of respondents. These are the findings that need to inform and incorporated in policy responses to create awareness amongst the public about the political agenda of Taliban. Women should be specially targeted in such public awareness campaigns.

Similarly when people were asked who joined Taliban, the majority of both men and women respondents (64%) mentioned criminals as the top category of people who were joining the ranks of Taliban. There were significantly more men (71%) as compared to women (29%) who gave this response. Among women respondents, the poor were identified as the top category of people who joined

Taliban due to economic hardships. Altogether there were forty two percent of respondents who said it was the poor who joined Taliban. There was no gender differential in identifying poverty as a reason for some to join Taliban. Equal number of men (24) and women (24) mentioned this. These responses were followed by thirty nine percent respondents mentioning unemployed youth, twenty two percent illiterate. Only thirty one percent respondents felt that *madrissa* students were joining Taliban. Thirty seven percent respondents also mentioned that affectees of military operations joined Taliban while twenty eight percent mentioned that those people joined Taliban who had local disputes to settle. They joined Taliban in the hope that they would get their support to settle their personal disputes. In the last two response categories there were more men than women.



The findings of the study show that both men and women had a fairly good understanding about the social background of the people who were joining Taliban. It is obvious from their responses that people did not think that Taliban's Islamization agenda was central in attracting local people in their ranks.

Gendered perceptions on the Role of Government to Counter Terrorism/Talibanization

High level of dissatisfaction on the role of government in countering terrorism/Talibanization was expressed by both men and women from the conflict areas. Forty percent respondents held the government responsible for terrorism/Talibanization. The failure of governance and the breakdown of the state machinery to effectively address the issues of poverty, unemployment, dispensation of justice etc. were mentioned as factors that created the breeding grounds for terrorism/Talibanization. Out of those who held government responsible forty four percent were women and fifty six percent were men. Thirty six percent of them also blamed security forces for the terrorism/Talibanization in

the country. They were of the view that security forces did not take any effective measures to counter or combat the influence of the Taliban in their areas. In the FGDs, it came out clearly that there was a serious issue of trust deficit among people regarding the role of the security forces in combating terrorism. We heard this over and over from respondents that they were highly confused about the role of security forces. They were not able to understand why despite the heavy presence of security forces in their areas, Taliban were growing in number and power. They expressed doubts about the intention of security forces to counter terrorism/Talibanization in their areas. This perception and lack of confidence was also reflected in people's views on the outcome of the military operation. Despite the fact that there was an overwhelming (89%) respondents who supported the military operation in SWAT, however, the majority of them expressed little confidence in the security forces being able to achieve positive results from the military operation. Only forty one percent respondents said that the military operation will eliminate the Taliban.

Although the majority of respondents (68%) from both samples of men and women held the Taliban as mainly responsible for terrorism in the country, forty percent mentioned the government, thirty six percent the military and twenty nine percent blamed the intelligent agencies as being responsible for terrorism/Talibanization in the country. It was interesting to note that only twenty seven percent respondents held America responsible for terrorism/Talibanization in the country. Also there were only eleven percent respondents who laid the responsibility of terrorism/Talibanization on *madrissa* students.

Women's Response to Terrorism/Talibanization

The dominant image of women in security literature is as passive victims of war/conflicts/terrorism and counter terrorism with no agency of their own. Little scholarly attention is paid to the level of women's active support and participation in terrorist groups working at the national and international levels. However, this gender blindness in the grand narrative of security studies has recently been challenged by researchers who are exploring women's active role in political violence in nationalist, religious, anti-colonial and liberation movements. Margaret Gonzalez-Perez's global study on "Women and Terrorism" (2008) gives a detailed account of domestic and international terrorist movements in the Americas, Asia, Africa and the Middle East and Europe in which women played an active and supportive role. Similarly Earger's study (2008) gave a detailed account of women involved in political violence in different contexts of nationalist/liberation movements, guerrilla warfare and suicide bombings throughout history.

Margaret Gonzalez-Perez makes a distinction between domestic and international terrorism. Her assertion is that women play more active roles in domestic terrorist groups that fight against state governments and potentially offer more opportunities to bring change in women's subordinate status than those terrorist organizations that have an international agenda. Several other

studies also document the active role of women in political violence (Brunner, 2005, Ali, 2005, Bloom, 2007, Alison, 2004, Associated Press, 2003, Eager, 2008). The new scholarship on women's involvement in terrorism irrespective of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the cause, they fought for, has challenged the earlier assumption that women are peaceful by nature thus inherently peace builders.

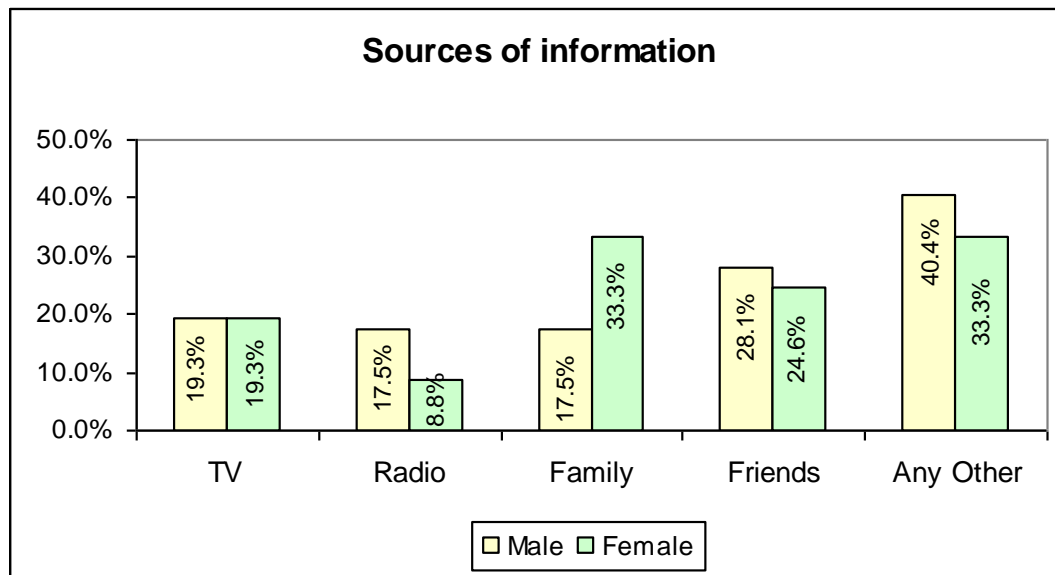
With regards to the role and participation of women in terrorism/Talibanization, the common public perception is that women do not play any role in terrorist activities. They are perceived only as the victims rather than an active agent in terrorism/Talibanization in Pakistan. This public perception is formed due to the non-visibility of women in terrorist organizations as well as the cultural assumption of women as mothers and non-violent. However, it will be erroneous to infer from the physical absence of women in terrorist organizational set-ups that women are not playing or cannot play an active role in terrorist activities.

The findings of focus group discussions (FGDs) caution us to make such an assumption. The FGDs conducted with men and women groups clearly shows that people from Swat in general and women in particular did play an active role in lending moral and financial support to Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-*Shariat*-e-Muhammadi (TNSM). Many male and female respondents gave verbal testimonies during the field work that the people of Swat were genuinely influenced by the propaganda campaign run by Maulana Fazalullah through FM radio. His FM radio transmission became so popular and affective that he was commonly known as 'Mullah Radio'. We were told that both men and women used to listen to his religious sermons on the radio and supported his political agenda of the enforcement of *Sharia* in Malakand. They were made to believe that he will be able to deliver on their demands for quick justice. Some people got so influenced by him that they generously contributed to build Fazalullah's *madrassa* in Swat. They voluntarily stopped listening to music, threw their CDs, tape recorders and televisions out of their homes and stopped watching television. We were told that many women voluntarily donated their jewellery and other material possessions to him. Mulana Fazalluah boasted on his FM radio program that he had collected tons of gold from women. His propaganda was extremely effective. A local woman from Swat said that,

“Once I heard from *Maulana* on the radio that how on the Day of Judgment my gold will become *sisā* (lead) and will burn my eyes and my body, I was so frightened that I collected all my jewellery and asked my husband to give this to *Maulana*”.

It appeared that both men and women were ideologically indoctrinated through the systematic propaganda campaign run by Taliban on FM radio. They were made to believe that the Taliban are a religious force capable of delivering justice. It was evident from the findings of the data that Taliban initially enjoyed

the support of local people. Little more than half of fifty four percent of males and fifty five percent of female respondents reported that they used to consider Taliban good people prior to their displacement. Women were slightly more in numbers as compared to men who had a positive image of the Taliban. This may be explained through women's presence in the home therefore; it is likely that they were listening to the radio program more often than men. Also women have limited exposure to the outside world. They lack independent access to information and knowledge and are thus more susceptible to such propaganda. The data of the study shows that the main sources of information of women are through family and friends.



The findings of the study show that some women from Swat did play an indirect role in supporting the Taliban in Swat. However, the study did not find any evidence of women's direct involvement or their recruitment in militant groups. In response to a question about whether women were recruited by various groups of Taliban operating in Malakand and FATA areas, men and women both responded negatively. It appears that presently Taliban are not recruiting women into their fold as combatants. The trend is in line with Taliban's religious ideology in which women's roles in Islam are strictly restricted to the arena of home. Militancy is perceived as a hyper-masculine trait of men only. The present trend of women's exclusion from religious militant organizations in the country should not make us complacent about the situation. It may not continue the same way. There is a changing trend among Islamists around the world who increasingly recruiting more women in their *Jihadist* organizations to participate in martyrdom operations (Claudia, 2005:29-48). The suicide attacks of Iraqi women on coalition forces in Iraq are indicative of the changing trend in Al Qaeda's policy on female recruitment. Women are increasingly involved more in supportive roles such as raising funds, opening bank accounts, transferring money and supplies to terrorist organizations. It is expected that on the face of mounting pressure from

the state and security forces, militant Islamist groups may change their tactics and start involving more women in terrorist operations.

The literature suggests that women are often more religious than men and that makes them more vulnerable to the Islamist propaganda of *Jihadi* militant groups. The literature on the sociology of religion has been addressing the issue of women's higher level of religiosity as compared to men. There are several psychological, sociological, and theological theories that tried to explain why women are more religious than men (Wilson, 1982). The deprivation-compensation theories that appeal to feminists explain the connection between women's dependent status in society and their higher level of reliance on religion. Without going into the merits and demerits of these theories what is observed in the context of Pakistan is that the level of religiosity (which is difficult to assess) does not result in a similar response among women. A woman's level of religiosity is not the basis for her identification or participation in fundamental religious movements. However, women's level of exposure to Islamist organizations, affiliation with religio-political parties and ties with religious institutions play a role in women's decisions to participate in militant activities.

The examples of Jamia Hafsa, a religious seminary in Islamabad whose female students demonstrated high level of militancy, the role of Jamat-e-Islami women's wing in opposing and protesting against the demand of women's rights groups for the repeal of *Hudood* Ordinance and the ideological support of Al-Huda/Al-Noor trained women to the on-going terrorism-Talibanization in the country are quite valid to elaborate the point made above.

However, the linkage between *madaris* and militancy is not automatic rather highly contested in Pakistan. Christine Fair (2007) maintains that there are contradictory findings and analysis in academic and policy literature regarding the link between *madaris* and militancy. She says; "while several prominent authors have argued that *madaris* are critical to militant production in the region and beyond, others have cast doubt upon these claims, noting that few known militants have *madrasah* background" (Christine, 2007:107-134). She calls for a more nuanced analytical approach to explain the connection between education and militancy. However, those who believe that *madaris* are producing militants and *Jihadists* often referred to the mushroom growth of *madaris* during the 80s and 90s during the Soviet-Afghan war when they needed *Jihads* to fight in Afghanistan. Also this was the period when financial aid freely flew from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States to religious *madaris* in Pakistan.

It is a fact that not all *madaris* in Pakistan have linkages with militancy; nevertheless, it can be argued that *madaris* students are more likely to be inclined to become militants due to the centrality of *Jihad* in their religious teachings. Tariq Rehman's study based on attitudinal surveys of tenth grade students in Urdu and English medium schools and their equivalent in *madaris* shows that *madrasah* students are more likely to support war with India and the

use of militants in Kashmir and are less likely to support equal rights for women and the religious minorities as compared to students from private English medium and public sector Urdu medium schools. In view of the higher potential among *midrissah* students to turn to *Jihad*, heavy investment on *madaris* was made during the Soviet-Afghan War.

There is no reliable data available on the number of *madaris* and the enrolment of students in seminaries in the country. The number of students varies between 15,298 (Ministry of Religious Affairs) to one-third of all students in the country attend madras (claim of International Crisis Group). Similarly, the Ministry of Religious Affairs claims that there is a total number of 11491 *madaris* in Pakistan while Jessica Stern claimed that there were 40,000-50000 *madaris* in Pakistan. What is obvious is the fact that there were only 137 *madaris* at the time of independence of Pakistan in 1947. According to Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr (2000: 139). It had grown to about 8000 by the 1990s and much of the mushrooming occurred during the 1980s. The timings of growth of *madaris* in a particular political context in the region provide a strong basis to assume that there is a possible link between *madaris* and militancy in Pakistan.

There is another trend which has largely been ignored so far, which relates to the rapid growth of female *madaris*. The gender stereotypes of women as non-combatants makes us complacent to the mushrooming growth of *madaris* for female students.. Out of 11,491 *madaris*, 1815 are for women while only 5751 are for both men and women. According to official statistics, the gender breakdown of enrolment in all male, all female and mix *madaris* is approximately 1,518,298 while the number of women students is around 5, 72,431. There are more female students from urban areas (3, 26,788) than rural (245643) who studied in these *madaris*⁶. We do not have much information on the profile of female students ie their class, ethnic, or educational background. We do not have the knowledge to know what are the reasons for women to join these *madaris*. There is a paucity of research in this area. These *madaris* are fairly closed and it is not always easy for researchers to have access to students of seminaries. We do not know whether women are also receiving training in militancy and are prepared to play a role in promoting the radical agenda of Islamists or not. The only example of women students' involvement in militancy was witnessed by the nation in Islamabad 2007 when women students of Jamia Hafsa (religious *madrissah* affiliated with Lal Masjid), terrorized the Islamabad administration and citizens through their vigilante actions. They demonstrated a shocking level of aggression and militancy which was unprecedented in Pakistan. First, they occupied the children's library adjacent to Jamia Hafsa to force the Islamabad authorities to submit to the demands of Lal Masjid administration for the rebuilding of eight illegal mosques that were built on encroached land. Later this demand was extended to the enforcement of *Sharia* in the country. The *burqa* clad female students wielding sticks in their hands were trying to impose

⁶ For details see table at the end of this report showing number of *madaris* and gender breakdown of enrolment.

their understanding of Islam and standards of morality on others. They kidnapped a woman on the charge that she was running a brothel who was later released after she was forced to admit her crime in front of the media in a press conference. Female students of Jamia Hafsa were seen to be playing the role of front line soldiers in all vigilante actions such as terrorizing music and video shop owners, burning CDs and videos, kidnapping police and foreigners. Women students of Jamia Hafsa were taking the lead in demonstrating vigilante militancy in Islamabad and fostering support for the radical political agenda of the male administration of Lal Masjid. The role of women students and teachers of Jamia Hafsa in terrorizing Islamabads civic administration and citizens raises many questions on the potential of women to participate in militancy who are presently studying in various *madaris* around the country.

Another group of women who had been extending active support to the radical religious agenda belong to various religio-political parties. As religio-political parties such as Jamat-e-Islami (JI), Jamiat-e-Ulema-Islam (JUI (F)), participate in mainstream politics through election, they do not use direct violence to impose their religious agenda. On the surface they distance themselves from militancy but at the same time they openly support militants/Taliban. Women belonging to these religious political parties are also sympathetic to the radical agenda of Taliban. They oppose women's rights groups and their demands for the repeal of discriminatory legislation such as *Hudood Ordinances*, Law of Evidence and *Qisas* and *Diyat* introduced by Zia-ul-Haq as part of his political project of Islamization. They accuse women's right activists of being misguided by the secular and infidel west. Some of them entered parliament on reserved seats for women despite their parties' position that politics is solely a male prerogative and women cannot become a head of state. Samia Raheel Qazi⁷ from JI said on the parliamentary floor that she entered parliament to send women parliamentarians back to their home. She said Islam ascribes the home as the legitimate place for women. Women parliamentarians associated with MMA vehemently oppose the Women's Protection Act (2006) that introduced an amendment to the *Hudood Ordinance* that withdraws the clause which required four Muslim male witnesses in case of rape. The foregoing discussion on the role of women belonging to religious Islamic parties shows that they are more likely to support conservative Islamic ideology and militancy in the name of Islam.

Another set of women who are not directly involved in supporting radical religious groups or actively opposing the women's rights movement in Pakistan are those who are trained in the religious institution of Al-Huda and Al-Noor. They reject modernity and subscribe to traditional Islam which provides an ideological base to the radical agenda of Taliban and Islamists. Al-Huda Institute headed by Dr. Farhat Hashmi runs a network of schools across the country that provides religious education to urban women belonging to middle and upper middle classes who are primarily interested in their personal purification. These women follow the dress code, cover themselves in head scarf and run '*Durs*' in their

⁷ She is a daughter of Qazi Hussain, the former Ameer-e- Jamat-e-Islami

private residences. Their religiosity comes in conflict with a secular state that is responsible for creating social and moral conditions in society. Thus there is likelihood that Islamists may enjoy higher appeal among these groups of women.

Currently women are not playing an active role in terrorism/Talibanization in the country; however, the potential of women as described above to be involved in political violence cannot be ruled out. I am not taking an essentialist view that women studying in *madaris*, political parties, or attending *Durs* are necessarily close to a radical agenda. All that I am arguing for is that there is a higher probability that women who belong to fundamentalist political parties, *madaris* and religious institutes are more likely to take up greater roles in religious political violence in future. Therefore, any counter-terrorism strategy must factor in the potential role of women as an active agent rather than only as victim of terrorism/Talibanization.

On the other hand, women of Pakistan also have a long history of struggle for democratic and secular values as well. Women Action Forum was at the forefront of resisting the military dictator Zia-ul-Haq and his Islamization project. They exhibited a heroic courage and commitment to protect democracy and secularism in the country. They consistently opposed and challenged *Hudood Ordinance*, Law of Evidence and *Qisas* and *Diyat* that were introduced in the name of Islam. These laws were discriminatory against women and negated the spirit of Islam. Again women's rights groups were at the forefront to oppose the *Hisbah* Bill that the MMA government of NWFP tried to introduce. Similarly women rights activists were extremely vocal in opposing the imposition of Shari-Nizam-e-Adel in Malakand. The majority of women's right organizations with the exception of *Shirkatgah* use a secular framework of human rights to demand gender equality. Democracy and a secular state are considered critical for the promotion and protection of women's rights. Also women have been extremely active in anti-nuclear campaign and developing people-to-people movement between India and Pakistan. Women from both sides of the border, India and Pakistan visited each other country during the time of high tension due to Kargil. Thus, women are the key stakeholders for establishing the secular system of governance and peace in the region. Women's commitment to secularism and peace can be leveraged in counter terrorism/Talibanization efforts as well.

5. Gendered Impact of Terrorism/ Talibanization

There is a large body of research that shows that all natural and man made disasters impact men and women differently. The collective positioning of women as subordinate and dependent vis-à-vis men determines and shapes women's vulnerabilities in conflict situations. The study examines the impact of terrorism/Talibanization from a gender perspective. Our assumption is that there are clearly gender dimensions of terrorism/Talibanization in Pakistan. It impacts men and women differently as both have different access to resources, power and decision making. We take an intersectional approach and assert that all women are not affected by terrorism/Talibanization in a similar manner. Our contention is that women have multiplicity of experiences of terrorism/Talibanization depending on their class, ethnic, social and political position; however, as a group they are affected distinctly and adversely as compared to men by the growing phenomenon of terrorism/Talibanization in the country.

Terrorism and Talibanization is synonymous in the context of Pakistan. Those who are involved in terrorist activities belong to TTP and claim their identity as Taliban. Their proclaimed political agenda is the enforcement of *Sharia* in Pakistan. Women as markers of identity assume a central position in Taliban's patriarchal understanding of religion and culture. That is why Talibanization has an exaggerated focus on controlling women's bodies and sexuality. They use patriarchal religious and cultural frameworks to justify the atrocities they commit against women to preserve their traditional roles in the reproductive sphere, within the four walls of homes. The most prominent feature of Talibanization is its gendered nature. They use political violence to ensure the continuity in sexual hierarchy and gender status quo. They destroyed educational institutions in general and women's schools in particular as it symbolizes modernity and holds the promise to open new avenues for women's empowerment. They were particularly strict in controlling women's mobility outside the home in the public sphere. They reasserted their misogynist myopic view of Islam and Muslim identity through compulsory veiling of women through shuttlecock *burqa* and impinging on their rights

Gender discourse and women's bodies became central to terrorism/Talibanization as well as to counter terrorism/Talibanization initiatives of the state. While the key focus of Talibanization was on the public and individual's morality, they particularly targeted women to set moral standards. They subjected them to violence and disciplinary measures in order to reinforce standards of morality in local communities. Public beating and flogging of women was frequently reported as a common practice in Taliban controlled areas. While Taliban through the control of women's bodies were asserting their masculine Islamic identity, the government also used the masculine discourse of women's victimhood, helpless creatures in need of protection and security in counter-terrorism. The government also sought the legitimacy of military operations from within the women's right discourse. The video screened on various TV channels

in the country in which the Taliban were shown flogging young women was used by the government for justification and legitimacy to launch the military operation against Taliban. Both the government and the security forces projected themselves as saviors of women whose rights they happily conceded when they signed a peace deal with Sufi Mohammad, the leader of TNSM despite strong protests from secular forces and women's rights groups who blamed both the federal and provincial government for compromising women's rights at the altar of politics. *Nizam-e-Adl* regulation was imposed on February, 2009 which permitted Taliban to impose their anti-women brand of *Sharia*.

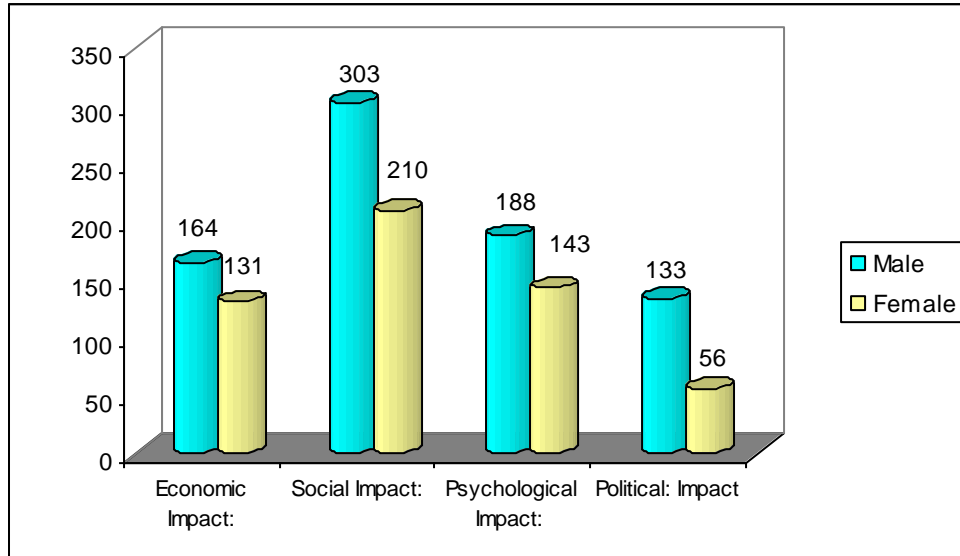
The impact of terrorism/Talibanization on the lives of men and women was assessed through the analysis of social, economic, political, and psychological aspects of their lives and how these got affected.

Social Impact

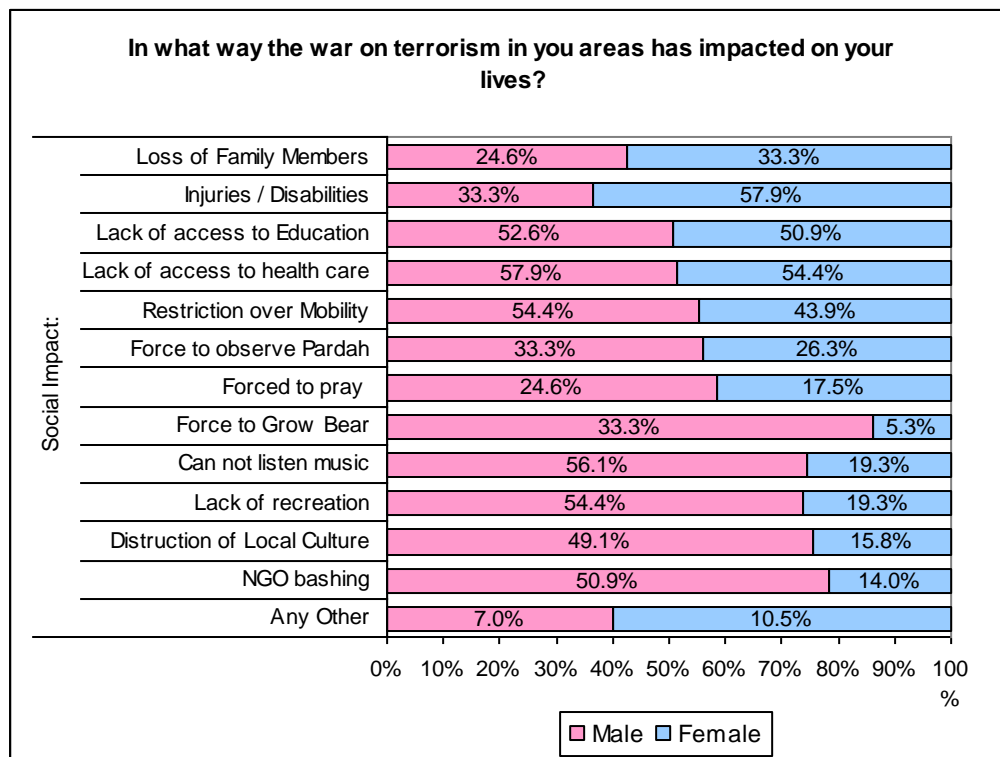
Terrorism/Talibanization has hugely affected people's lives in multiple ways. The Social landscape in Swat and FATA has completely changed due to terrorism/Talibanization in these areas. The new social order introduced by Taliban in the name of Islam was thoroughly misogynist and against the fundamental rights of people. The social life in Taliban controlled areas was totally disrupted. While terrorism/Talibanization inflicted suffering on everyone in the country, women suffered in a distinct manner due to religious ideology of terrorist groups. Since most of the *Jihadi* militants, involved in terrorism/Talibanization subscribe to orthodox Wahabi Islam that overly emphasizes the maintaining of traditional roles of women in the reproductive sphere and stricter control of men over women.

Gendered Impact of Terrorism/Talibanization on Health

To assess the effects of Terrorism/Talibanization, an open ended question was asked, "In what way has the war on terrorism impacted your life?" The aggregation of multiple responses given by both male and female respondents shows that the adverse impact on social life got top mention, followed by psychological and economic impact. There were a total of 513 responses that highlighted various aspects of social life that were negatively affected by terrorism/Talibanization. Out of 513, 210 responses were given by women and 303 by men.



It is interesting to note that there is no significant gender difference among men and women respondents in terms of their identification of social areas that they felt were affected badly by terrorism/Talibanization.



Fifty eight percent men and fifty four percent women reported that lack of access to health care facilities had impacted them most severely. The delivery of social services got badly disrupted due to the on-going conflict between Taliban, local

administration and the security forces. There was not only a shortage of drugs, non-availability of necessary medical equipment and lack of medical staff in the conflict area, there were additional restrictions imposed by Taliban on female patients to consult male doctors. That created a disastrous health situation in conflict areas. Women had to suffer health risks due to non-availability of lady doctors in medical facilities. The plight of women is evident from the following quote:

“In the middle of night I woke up with a penetrating pain in my stomach. My husband was not in the house. I was alone with my children. That night I knew that I was going to die. I could not dare step out of my house as there was equal risk of death for me had I stepped out of the house alone and got spotted by Taliban. I could not call anyone to help me. That night I wished I was not born as a woman. I do not know how that night passed. In the morning, I send my son to call one of my male relatives who took me to the hospital”.

The absence of men in women’s lives poses greater health risk as they were unable to access health services on their own. Also children faced higher health risks due to terrorism/Talibanization as Taliban put a ban on polio vaccination.

Male respondents appeared to be quite aware of the greater health risk faced by women due to Talibanization. They expressed almost similar concerns as women did on the limited accessibility of health care due to terrorism/Talibanization. As there were not many female health professionals working in conflict areas, men were equally worried about the health of their womenfolk especially about their reproductive health needs. There were more men who pointed out health as the most critical area of their concern.

Gendered Impact of Terrorism/Talibanization on Education

The second most important social impact of terrorism/Talibanization was mentioned by fifty one percent women and fifty three percent men as lack of access to education. Educational institutions in general and women’s schools in particular were attacked, bombed and destroyed by Taliban due to their perception of modern education as a threat to religious orthodoxy. Taliban destroyed 120 girls and 80 other schools in Swat Valley alone⁸.

Unlike Taliban’s negative views on female education, an overwhelming majority (91%) both male and female respondents from FATA and Swat were fully in favor of female education. There were only seven (6%) respondents, four of them were women and three of them were men who did not support women’s education.

It was interesting to note that more respondents from FATA (72%) highlighted the loss of education as the most severe social impact as compared to forty five percent respondents belonging to SWAT where literacy rate is relatively higher.

⁸ Chandran, D.Suba, Violence against Women in Swat Why Blame only Taliban? In IPCS Issue Brief, No. 97, April 2008.

According to the Population Census 1998, literacy rate (10+) in Swat is around 28.7 percent, forty three percent among males and 13.4 percent among females. Whereas the overall literacy rate in FATA is 17.4 percent, 29.5 percent among males and only 3 percent among females.

Gendered Impact of Terrorism/Talibanization on Mobility

Taliban imposed severe restrictions on women's mobility. They were not allowed to leave their homes unaccompanied by a *mehram*⁹. In the absence of men; women did not dare to step out of their homes due to the fear of persecution by Taliban. Taliban stopped women from going out to work in offices, government departments or in the field. They were not allowed to shop in bazaars or enter restaurants. They were not permitted to visit graveyards or attend funerals. The restriction on their freedom of movement had a subsequent impact on traditional spaces that are given to women in local culture in public arena. These spaces are rivers where women used to go to wash clothes, water sources from where they used to collect water, forests to collect fuel wood, graveyards and shrines. These were traditional spaces for women outside the homes where they used to meet with other women, make friends and discuss their personal issues. Taliban deprived women from these traditional support networks by restricting women's mobility outside the home. These restrictions were in line with Taliban's understanding of religion. Muslim Khan, the spokes man of TTP said,

"We wanted to give women the rightful place. In Islam women are not supposed to work in factories or even work in fields. That is a man's work. We will not allow them to shrug off their responsibilities"

It was interesting to note that there were more men (54%) as compared to women (44%) who expressed their anger over women's restricted mobility. Similarly there were a higher percentage of male respondents (33%) than female (26%) who objected to Taliban's imposition of *purdah* (veil) on women.

Taliban restrictions on women's mobility resulted in a tremendous increase of workload on men. All unpaid work that women used to do outside their homes such as work in agriculture fields, fetching water and fuel, washing clothes on river sides, taking animals for grazing etc. were shifted to men. Men lost control over women's free domestic labor. They found it difficult to manage and run their households without the help and free labor of their womenfolk. Additionally they had to make sure that at least one man is at home in case women needed something from the bazaar or they had to go out. This created tension between private and public patriarchy. While men like to dominate and control their wives and womenfolk, they were not willing to let go of their own power and control in favor of collective patriarchy of Taliban. Although private and public patriarchy was interwoven as both rest on power imbalances between men and women, however these were competing for control over women's bodies and their lives.

⁹ Husband or someone related through blood ties

This analysis explains why such a large number of men mentioned oppression of Taliban against women as one of the most adverse impact on their social lives.

Gendered Impact on Local Culture

Destruction of local culture, ban on listening to music and other recreational activities was also mentioned as another important area of social life that was fully disrupted due to terrorism/Talibanization. There were significantly more men who referred to this factor as compared to women. This could be due to the fact that traditionally women participate less in recreational activities in pre-Talibanization phase as well. Therefore, loss of recreation was not identified as an important area of their social lives.

There were significantly more women who mentioned the loss of their family members, wounded or disabled as a result of terrorism/Talibanization that badly impacted their lives.

Gender based Violence

Use of violence was the key strategy that Taliban used to spread terror among civilians. Men and women both were subjected to violence and abuse in case of their opposition or violation of norms and moral standards set by Taliban. However, their experience of violence was different. Men were subjected to punishment for shaving or not growing beards of a particular length or not attending collective prayers or for not wearing *shalwars* which hang above their ankles. They were also forced to join Taliban forces against their will. Women were systematically subjected to public and sexual violence by Taliban.

It was quite surprising that there was no mention of violence on civilians by Taliban during the in-depth interviews; however, in FGDs there was frequent mention of violence against men and women, where both men and women pointed out the brutality of Taliban and how they were slaughtering people on the suspicion of being informers. We were told about how they had seen dead bodies of people hanged in Mangora chowk that was known as *Khuni chowk* to instill fear and terror among civilians. They said Taliban used to enter forcefully in their homes and stayed there as long as they wished. They were aware that there were some incidents where women were kidnapped and raped by Taliban. They did not have any idea about the magnitude of the problem. However, they mentioned that Taliban used to marry women without their consent. They declared that if there was a girl less than twelve years of age found to be unmarried, she would be married off to one of the Taliban.

Forced Internal Displacement

Terrorism/Talibanization and subsequent military operation forced nearly three million civilians to flee from conflict areas. The provincial government set up camps for the internally displaced persons; however, the majority of IDPs (nearly 80%) were living off camps. The experience of displacement was highly gendered. It disproportionately disadvantages women, because they were

confined to the camps due to the *pardah* restriction. They did not have independent access to food supplies. Those who had no men with them living in camps were sending their children to queue up in lines to receive food. They were socially excluded. Their specific needs were neglected. Women were also exposed to greater hardships and health risks in IDP camps due to their reproductive roles. They lacked reproductive health care facilities in camps. Pregnant and lactating mothers suffered from malnutrition. Lack of availability of contraceptives put them at higher risk of unwanted pregnancies.

At some of the camps we visited, women had no access to sanitary towels. Both national and international relief and humanitarian agencies did not include sanitary towels in their supplies to IDPs. Only in an IDP camp in Mardan, an NGO, Pattan Development Organization was found to be providing women with sanitary towels.

The way in which the IDP camps were run exacerbated existing gender inequalities. Despite the fact that there were more women and children who were living in IDP camps, their concerns and needs were not fully integrated in relief work due to the gender blindness of national and international agencies.

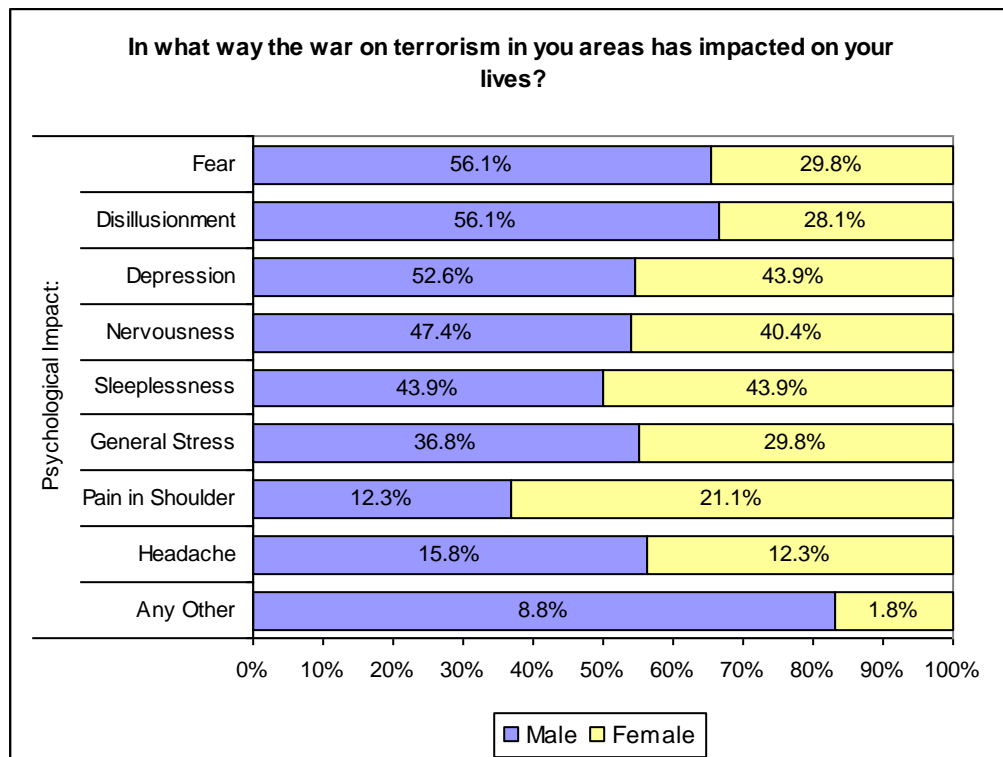
During the visits to IDPs' camps it was noted that there were hardly any women employees working with national and international agencies in IDP camps. Women were frequently disadvantaged due to gender imbalance in relief teams and the neglect of women specific needs.

The legal status of IDPs in International Law continues to be a matter of serious concern. The UN Refugee Convention of 1951 does not provide protection to people who are displaced within their own border. However, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 passed on 31 October, 2000 does specifically address the gendered impact of war and conflict. It urges member states to, "ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions, mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict". Similarly, the UN Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced persons emphasizes the protection of children, expectant mothers and mothers with young children and female headed household. However, these guiding principles and the enforcement of the Resolution 1325 were completely neglected by the national and international agencies during the IDPs crisis in the country.

Similarly a gender perspective was also missing in compensation packages. Women who had lost male members of their families or female headed households lacked access to compensation packages offered by the government.

Psycho-Social Impact

After the social impact, both women and men respondents referred to the psycho-social impact of terrorism/Talibanization on their lives. Both men and women suffered physical and psychological abuse and traumas due to Talibanization and the subsequent military operation. They had been living in constant fear of death and experienced feelings of helplessness. The constant firing of heavy artillery, bombing, and fear of death had particularly traumatized women and children. Majority of the responses among women referred to the fact that they suffered most from depression, insomnia whereas the majority of men suffered from fear and disillusionment as a consequence of terrorism/Talibanization.

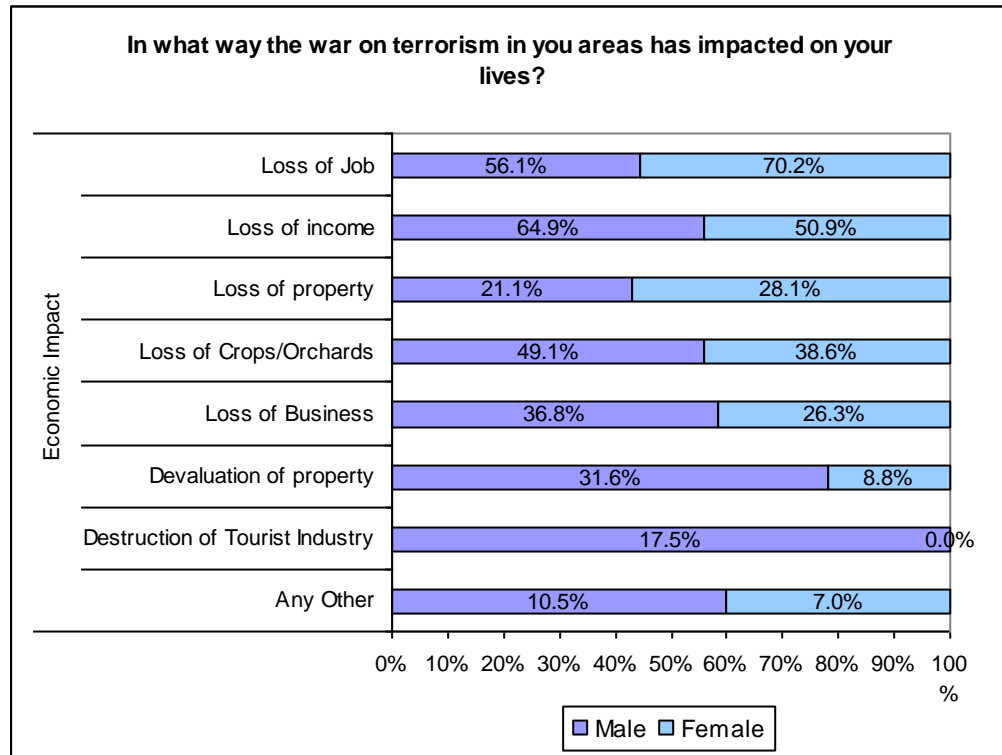


Psychological impact at times manifests itself in physical ailment. There was frequent complaint of headache, pain in shoulders and insomnia that was reported both by male and female respondents.

Economic Impact

The Terrorism/Talibanization not only destroyed the local infrastructure of schools, health facilities, roads etc., it destroyed local rural and urban economies. The economic impact of terrorism/Talibanization is mentioned as the third important area by both male and female respondents. Both men and women suffered from loss of resources, livelihoods, jobs, income from agriculture and business due to on-going conflict in their areas. However, women were affected in gender specific ways due to their traditional roles as mothers and caregivers. With the loss of family income, the burden to feed family members with little or no income weighed heavy on them.

Women headed households suffered from severe economic hardship as they were not allowed to go out to work. A women school teacher who insisted on continuing her job as she was the sole bread-earner was killed by the taliban. In the absence of a male bread-earner, it became virtually impossible for women to physically survive.



In addition to loss of livelihoods and income, thirty two percent men and nine percent women mentioned that due to on-going conflict there had been a devaluation of property. Seventeen percent men mentioned the destruction of the tourist industry in their area had a negative economic implication on their lives.

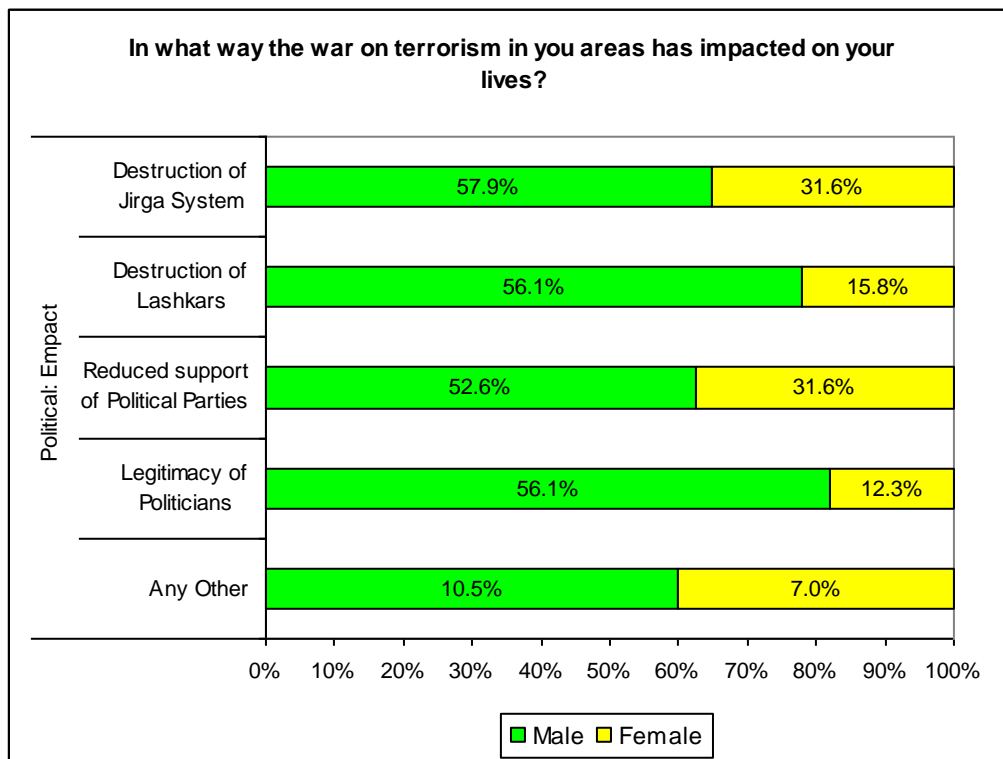
Political Impact

Terrorism/talibinization destroyed local social, political and judicial structures in FATA and Malakand region. The tribal areas of Pakistan are governed by Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR). In practice the local disputes are settled in *Jirgas* that work in tandem with political agents appointed by the federal government. Fifty eight percent men and thirty two percent women mentioned the breakdown of the *jirga* system and traditional patterns of leadership as the political consequence of terrorism/Talibanization. Taliban killed hundreds of local elders. This disturbed the political balance in FATA. The presence of the military in FATA in post 9/11 also undermined the authority of political agents. The power of the *jirga* and political agents has been assumed by Taliban commanders.

It was reported that in the beginning of Taliban control over their areas, they were able to dispense speedy justice to the poor against the local influential. People were taking their disputes to Taliban for resolution. However, very soon the Taliban started misusing their power. They started intimidating people that led to disillusionment and loss of support for Taliban.

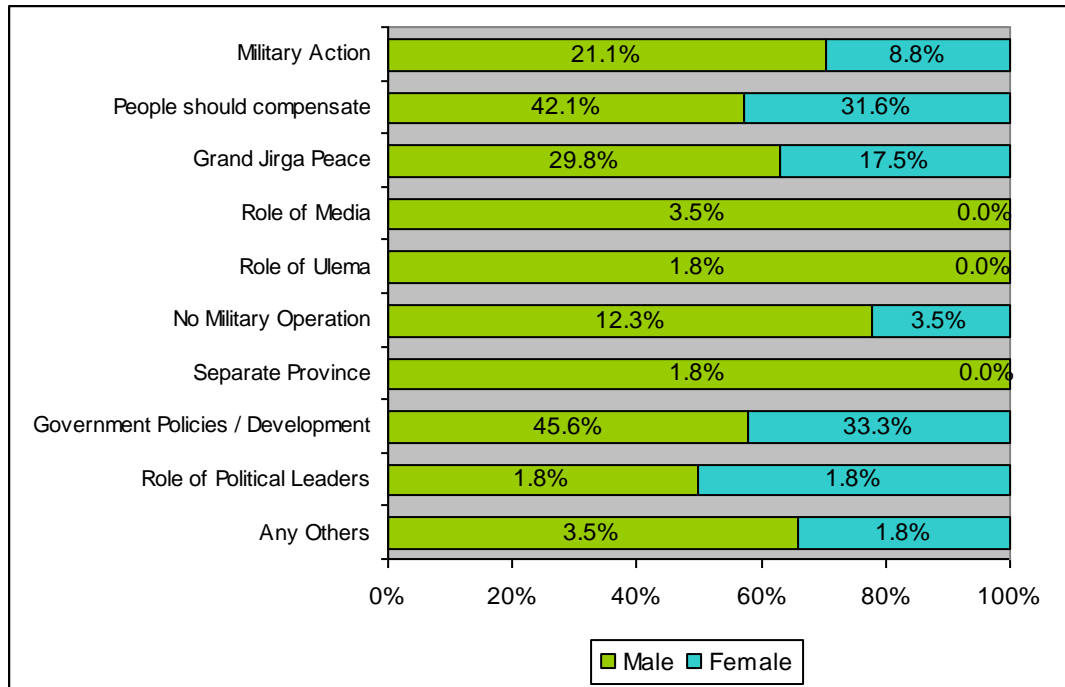
The influence of political parties was severely reduced. Political parties were not able to operate in Swat. Political representatives of FATA and Swat could not visit their own constituency due to fear of Taliban.

Women are traditionally excluded from political decision-making structures in conflict areas. Women councillors were subjected to harassment. A woman Councillor from Dir who was active and very vocal was murdered.



Strategies for Peace

As men and women's experience of terrorism/Talibanization is different, the assumption was that their proposed strategies for peace may also be different. Interestingly, there were no significant gender differentials in their proposed strategies to secure peace in their areas. Both male and female respondents prioritized government policies leading to development of their areas as the most effective strategy to counter terrorism/Talibanization and ensure peace.



Both male (42%) and female (32%) respondents said that it is important to compensate people for their material losses in order to ensure lasting peace in their areas. Due to military operations people lost their properties, business, crops, livestock etc. If they are not given compensation then they will be resentful towards the government. Thirty percent men and eighteen percent women proposed the holding of a *Grand Jirga* for Peace. Twenty one percent men and nine percent women said strong military action is the only solution to the present conflict and for sustainable peace in their areas.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study demonstrates that men and women experience terrorism/Talibanization differently. Their perceptions and participation in terrorism/Talibanization are also different.

Pakistan currently is facing the escalation of violent conflicts combined with an increase in militancy of conservative religious forces within society and a continuously worsening economic scenario. Many Pakistani and international analysts have presented their views on the dynamics and causes of these alarming processes. What is commonly missing from the analysis is the gender perspective. There is an absence of knowledge on the different ways in which women and men participate in and are affected by militancy and on-going conflict between military forces and insurgents. Likewise, the gendered impact that these dynamics create at the state level down to the community and the household levels are often overlooked. The rise in violence against women on all these levels is not being sufficiently recognized.

Presently men are the key actors in terrorism/Talibanization in Pakistan. However, the findings of the study show that women have been actively supporting religious militancy in the country. The study provides evidence of women's support to TNSM and Mullah Fazal Ullah in Swat. Female students of *madrisahs*/religious institutions and political activists of religious political parties are some of the categories of women who are ideologically close to Taliban and are more likely to assume an active role as combatants in religio-political movements in the country in future. Therefore, the study warns us about the possible risks involved in conceptualizing women only as victims of terrorism/Talibanization. Also this stereotype image of victimized women denies them agency to play a role in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction.

The study shows that all men, women and children suffered from the social, economic and political impact of terrorism/Talibanization; however, women are disproportionately affected due to their dependent socio-economic position in local cultures. They also suffered due to centrality of control over women bodies and sexuality in religious discourse of Taliban as identity markers. That meant women were perceived in needs of patronage and social control.

Women's experience of Talibanization was fundamentally different from men. Men suffered from physical violence. They were forced to fight on the side of Taliban. Men lost their businesses, properties, livelihoods and material resources. They were forced to grow beards and follow dress codes prescribed by the Taliban and were forbidden to engage in any kind of recreational activities. Women, on the other hand were denied the very right to live. They were not allowed to live as autonomous human beings. Their survival was made dependent on the presence and support of men in their lives. They were not allowed to go out of their homes under any circumstances without being accompanied by *mehram*. Women not only lost their access to education, health

and other social services, their sternly restricted mobility made their physical existence precarious and completely dependent on men. Women from conflict areas experienced the worst form of patriarchy that Taliban practiced in the name of Islam.

The findings of the study show that various forms of patriarchal control of the Taliban over women's lives created tension between public and private patriarchy. Men started resenting the Taliban for imposing restrictions on women's mobility that contributed to increased workload and tremendous pressure on men. They find it increasingly difficult to do agriculture work or look after their livestock without the traditional support of their womenfolk. This situation gave birth to a new consciousness among men. They begin to clearly see and recognize the material worth of women's unpaid labor and their invaluable contribution to the well-being of the family. The gender consciousness that men and local communities gained due to terrorism/talibanization can now be leveraged in shaping the reconstruction policies and programs to change gender relations in post-conflict communities of FATA and Swat.

As terrorism/Talibanization has not only destroyed the physical infrastructure in the conflict areas but also the social, economic and political life. This complete destruction of socio-cultural, economic and political structures opens up new windows of opportunities in the post-conflict reconstruction phase. The pressing need for development of these areas requires gender responsive policies and programs that should be transformative in nature and should aim to change traditional oppressive and patriarchal social and political structures in these areas. In the absence of such an approach it is feared that the existing gender hierarchies will be further intensified.

Based on the findings of the study, the recommendations are proposed at two levels. Some of the recommendations relate to the broader political and development contexts and others are more specifically focused on the rehabilitation and rebuilding of local communities with gender sensitive approaches. The recommendations of the study point out the most strategic direction for policy makers and planners.

- There is a lack of a gendered understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism/Talibanization in the country. Therefore, research is critically important to systematically assess the role of men and women in terrorism/Talibanization. Also the gender impact of terrorism/Talibanization needs to be assessed. The research based understanding of the gender dynamic in militancy and terrorism then must be integrated into the national policy to counter terrorism and the reconstruction of conflict areas.
- It is important that gender aware approaches are used in compensation policies and packages that are offered by the federal and provincial

governments to those who are directly or indirectly affected by terrorism/Talibanization. As gender plays a determining role in people's ability to access education, employment, health care and other opportunities to improve their lives, therefore, gender specific approaches are the only way to provide equal opportunities to reintegrate them in post-construction societies. The new consciousness that men and women have gained during the period of Talibanization and displacement due to new roles and responsibilities should also be leveraged to bring changes in women's traditional roles.

- Poverty, illiteracy and deprivation is not the cause of extremism/terrorism, however, it does create social conditions that are conducive for the breeding of extremism/terrorism. State failure to generate a better life for people will provide fertile ground for *Jihadi* recruitment among the poor masses. The Government needs to draft a national development policy with a targeted approach and a strong poverty focus. The resource investment plan for the areas where extremism is on the rise should be made. The government needs to focus on conflict affected areas as first priority for the comprehensive development package and then special attention should be paid to the surrounding areas in development efforts so that Talibanization is contained. We need to create higher stakes for people through bridging the gap in social sector indicators of tribal areas as compared to the rest of the country. The prosperous people will be the best defense line to block the onslaught of terrorism/Talibanization.
- Development policies and programs in conflict areas should have clear gender and youth focus. More than sixty percent of the population in tribal areas is in the age bracket of 15-26 (RIPRTP, 2007). Therefore, it is important that special efforts be made to include youth and women's voices and concerns in all national and community level decision-making processes of reconstruction of conflict areas. Women focused programs and projects should also be initiated. However these initiatives should be transformative in nature and should be able to move beyond addressing women's immediate needs to bring a long lasting structural change to transform gender relations.
- Terrorism/Talibanization has resulted in a high mortality rate among men and left many women as widows. Therefore, female headed households need a special focus and attention in the reconstruction phase.
- Taliban were attacking and threatening NGOs, political representatives, local tribal elders, journalists and local councilors. Special efforts should be made to strengthen civil society in general and women's rights groups in particular to play a key role in engaging local women and youth in productive activities.

In the present political situation in which the Taliban are on retreat after the military operation in Swat, it is important that some radical steps should be taken to reverse the rising trend of radicalization in the society.

- First of all the present situation should be used to administratively mainstream FATA and PATA in NWFP. A constitutional change in Article 246-247 should be introduced that protects the administrative anomaly in tribal areas.
- The Government of Pakistan must review and reverse its policy of supporting non-state actors to fight proxy wars in Kashmir and Afghanistan on behalf of military establishment.
- The State of elite should reclaim the sovereignty of the state and change its role as a frontline state of USA. Pakistan should have independent foreign policy to protect its national interests.
- Education system needs overhauling and skills and vocational training should be part of the educational system. Religious madras should be brought under state control and integrated into the national system of education.

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TABLE 1: ENROLMENT IN DEENI *MADARIS* BY LEVEL AND GENDER

PAKISTAN

LEVEL / GENDER OF <i>MADARIS</i>	ALL AREAS			RURAL AREAS			URBAN AREAS		
	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS
ALL <i>MADARIS</i>									
TOTAL	1,518,298	572,431	945,867	706308	245643	460665	811990	326788	485202
NAZRA	747,782	303043	444739	373369	141873	231496	374413	161170	213243
HIFZ	409,863	121938	287925	173379	41742	131637	236484	80196	156288
IBTIDA	130,764	54560	76204	68417	28464	39953	62347	26096	36251
MUTAWASTA	57,968	20671	37297	28594	10236	18358	29374	10435	18939
SANIA-AAMA	52,993	22207	30786	21208	8007	13201	31785	14200	17585
SANIA-KHASA	36,473	15221	21252	13147	4226	8921	23326	10995	12331
AALIA	25,338	9834	15504	8068	2506	5562	17270	7328	9942
AALIMA	21,552	8318	13234	5436	2076	3360	16116	6242	9874
TAKHASSUS	4,077	1213	2864	1395	225	1170	2682	988	1694
OTHERS	31,488	15426	16062	13295	6288	7007	18193	9138	9055
GIRLS <i>MADARIS</i>									
TOTAL	209285	192930	16355	79645	71485	8160	129640	121445	8195
NAZRA	93267	84692	8575	39057	34671	4386	54210	50021	4189
HIFZ	48669	44538	4131	16385	14658	1727	32284	29880	2404
IBTIDA	18382	17098	1284	8390	7584	806	9992	9514	478
MUTAWASTA	9821	8988	833	4145	3714	431	5676	5274	402
SANIA-AAMA	12722	12245	477	4005	3782	223	8717	8463	254
SANIA-KHASA	9162	8878	284	2260	2155	105	6902	6723	179
AALIA	6049	5709	340	1519	1286	233	4530	4423	107
AALIMA	4649	4526	123	1304	1234	70	2445	2392	53
TAKHASSUS	634	607	27	78	54	24	556	553	3

OTHERS	5930	5649	281	2502	2347	155	3428	3302	126
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BOYS MADARIS

TOTAL	483206	37223	445983	232774	14836	217938	250432	22387	228045
NAZRA	204149	20693	183456	106455	9247	97208	97694	11446	86248
HIFZ	153308	8762	144546	70458	3063	67395	82850	5699	77151
IBTIDA	28296	3233	25063	18671	1207	17464	19625	2026	17599
MUTAWASTA	21810	1134	20676	10417	450	9967	11393	684	10709
SANIA-AAMA	21241	927	20314	8868	338	8530	12373	589	11784
SANIA-KHASA	15062	578	14484	6472	146	6326	8590	432	8158
AALIA	11062	428	10634	4041	94	3947	7021	334	6687
AALIMA	7976	508	7468	2650	88	2562	5426	420	5006
TAKHASSUS	1968	64	1904	1003	44	959	965	20	945
OTHERS	8334	896	7438	3839	159	3680	4495	737	3758

TOTAL	825807	342278	483529	393889	159322	234567	431918	182956	248962
NAZRA	450366	197658	252708	227857	97955	129902	222509	99703	122806
HIFZ	207886	68638	139248	86536	24021	62515	121350	44617	76733
IBTIDA	74086	34229	39857	41356	19673	21683	32730	14556	18174
MUTAWASTA	26337	10549	15788	14032	6072	7960	12305	4477	7828
SANIA-AAMA	19030	9035	9995	8335	3887	4448	10695	5148	5547
SANIA-KHASA	12249	5765	6484	3415	1925	1490	7834	3840	3994
AALIA	8227	3697	4530	2508	1126	1382	5719	2571	3148
AALIMA	8927	3284	5643	1582	754	828	7345	2530	4815
TAKHASSUS	1475	542	933	314	127	187	1161	415	746
OTHERS	17224	8881	8343	6954	3782	3172	10270	5099	5171

TABLE 2: DEENI MADARIS BY AFFILIATION STATUS AND GENDER

PAKISTAN

AFFILIATION SATUS	TOTAL MADRIS	GIRLS MADARIS	BOYS MADARIS	MIXED MADARIS
ALL AREAS				
Total (A & B)	11,491	1815	3925	5751
A. Total (Affiliated)	7948	1249	2817	3882
Affiliated with WAFAQ	3454	555	1379	1520
Affiliated with Tanzeem	2654	439	833	1382
Affiliated with Rabta	906	121	304	481
Affiliated with Other	934	134	301	499
B. Total (Not Affiliated)	3543	566	1108	1869
RURAL AREAS				
Total (A & B)	6270	805	2106	3359
A. Total (Affiliated)	4105	520	1446	2139
Affiliated with WAFAQ	1711	214	723	774
Affiliated with Tanzeem	1353	183	392	778
Affiliated with Rabta	473	50	150	273
Affiliated with Other	568	73	181	314
B. Total (Not Affiliated)	2165	285	660	1220
URBAN AREAS				
Total (A & B)	5221	1010	1819	2392
A. Total (Affiliated)	3843	729	1371	1743
Affiliated with WAFAQ	1743	341	656	746
Affiliated with Tanzeem	1301	256	441	604
Affiliated with Rabta	433	71	154	208
Affiliated with Other	366	61	120	185
B. Total (Not Affiliated)	1378	281	448	649

TABLE 3: DEENI MADARIS BY RESIDENTIAL STATUS AND GENDER**PAKISTAN**

AFFILIATION SATUS	TOTAL MADRIS	GIRLS MADARIS	BOYS MADARIS	MIXED MADARIS
ALL AREAS				
TOTAL	11,491	1815	3925	5751
RESIDENTIAL	1812	274	772	766
NON- RESIDENTIAL	5018	979	1199	2840
BOTH	4661	562	1954	2145
RURAL AREAS				
TOTAL	6270	805	2106	3359
RESIDENTIAL	948	110	396	442
NON- RESIDENTIAL	2711	463	622	1626
BOTH	2611	232	1088	1291
URBAN AREAS				
TOTAL	5221	1010	1819	2392
RESIDENTIAL	864	164	376	324
NON- RESIDENTIAL	2307	516	577	1214
BOTH	2050	330	866	854

8. Appendixes

Gendered Perception and Impact of Terrorism

IDPS in Camp: _____

IDPS off Camp: _____

Not IDPS: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Place of Interview: _____

A. Demographic Profile

1. Sex

1	Male	
2	Female	

2. Age

1	Less than 18	
2	19-29	
3	30-39	
4	40-59	
5	60 and above	

3. Place of Residence

Swat		
1	Bunair	
2	Upper Dir	
3	Lower Dir	
4	Shangla	
5	Behrain	
6	Maingora	
7	Any Other	

FATA		
1	South Waziristan Agency	
2	North Waziristan Agency	
3	Khayber Agency	
4	Kurram Agency	
5	Bajowar Agency	
6	Mehmand Agency	
7	Orakzai Agency	
8	Any other	

4. Marital Status

1	Single	
2	Married	
3	Widow	
4	Separated	
5	Divorced	

5. Educational Qualification

1	Illiterate	
2	Primary	
3	Middle	
4	Matriculation	
5	F.A	
6	Graduation	
7	MA	
8	Above	

6. Occupational Status

1	Wage labour		11	Moter Mechanic	
2	Business man		12	Sentry fitter	
3	Agriculture		13	Plulmber	
4	Job holder		14	Photographer	
5	Barbar		15	Tailor	
6	Mouchi		16	Electrician	
7	Kasab		17	Student	
8	Nanbi		18	Driver	
9	Shopkeeper		19	Jobless	
10	Teacher		20	Any other	

7. Religion/Sect

1	Muslim	
	a. Suni	
	b. Shia	
	c. Brelvi	
	d. Deobandi	
2	Christian	
3	Hindu	
4	Any other	

8. Date of Migration: _____

9. For how long you have been living in this city.

1	Less than two weeks	
2	Less than one month	
3	More than one month	
4	More than six months	
5	More than one year	
6	2 years and more	

B. Gendered Perception of Terrorism

10. In your view who is responsible for terrorism in our country?

1	Taliban	
2	America	
3	Military Security forces	
4	India and other powers	
5	Government	
6	Intelligent Agencies	
7	Medrissa	
8	All of them	
9	Economic elite	
10	Don't know	
11	Any other	

11. Do you support Taliban?

1) Yes 2) No 3) Don't Know

12. What were your views on Taliban before migration or after migration?

1	Before Migration	1	Good	2	Bad
2	After Migration	1	Good	2	Bad

13. Do you think Taliban have popular support.

1) Yes 2) No 3) To some extent

14. Who join Taliban?

1	Poor	
2	Illiterate	
3	Madarsa Student	
4	Criminals	
5	Unemployed Youth	
6	Military operation Affectees	
7	To settle local disputes	
8	Any other	

15. In your view what is the main objective of Taliban?

1	Political Power	
2	Nifaz-i- <i>Shariah</i>	
3	Nifaz-i-edal of Sufi Mohd	
4	Money	
5	Don't know	

16. Do you support Peace Deal?

1) Yes 2) No 3) Don't Know

17. Do you Support Sharie Nizam-e-Adle

1) Yes 2) No 3) Not Taliban Nizam 4) Don't Know

18. Do you support religious political movement?

If truly religious then yes. (1) Yes (2) No

19. Do you support current Military Action after failure of the deal?

1) Yes 2) No 3) Disagree the process of operation 4) Don't Know

20. What do you think the result of this Military Action would be?

1	Taliban will become strong	
2	Taliban will be finish	
3	People will suffer	
4	Nothing will happen	
5	Any Other	

21. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

21. a. Taliban has the right to kill people who disagree with them.

1) Yes 2) No 3) Don't Know

21. b. Women and girls should be allowed to receive Education.

1) Yes 2) No 3) Don't Know

21. c. Women and girls should be allowed to go out to work.

1) Yes 2) No 3) Don't Know

21. d. Men should be forced to grow bear.

1) Yes 2) No 3) Don't Know

22. In your view what factors/reasons are responsible for extremism?

1	Poverty	
2	Inequality in society	
3	Corrupt	
4	Failure of Governance	
5	Poor justice system	
6	Illiteracy	
7	Lack of Exposure	
8	Jihadi Culture	
9	Any Other	

23. What is your source of information?

1	Newspapers	
2	TV	
3	Radio	
4	Family	
5	Friends	
6	Any other	

C. Gendered Impact of Terrorism

24. In what way the war on terrorism in you areas has impacted on your lives?

a. Economic Impact:	1	Loss of Job	
	2	Loss of income	
	3	Loss of Property	
	4	Loss of Crops/Orchards	
	5	Loss of Business	
	6	Loss of livelihood	
	7	Devaluation of property	
	8	Destruction of Tourist Industry	
	9	None	
	10	Any Other	
b. Social Impact:	1	Loss of family members	
	2	Injuries of family members	
	3	Lack of access to education	
	4	Lack of access to health care	
	5	Restriction over mobility	
	6	Force to observe purdah	
	7	Forced to pray Bajamat	
	8	Force to grow bear	
	9	Disability in family	
	10	Can not Listen music	
	11	Lack of recreation	
	12	Destruction of Local culture	
	13	NGO bashing	
	14	Any other	
c. Psychological Impact:	1	Fear	
	2	Disillusionment	
	3	Depression	
	4	Nervousness	
	5	Sleeplessness	
	6	General Stress	
	7	Pain in shoulders	
	8	Headache	
	9	Any other	
d. Political	1	Destruction of Jirga System	
	2	Destruction of Lashkars	
	3	Reduced support of Political Parties	
	4	Legitimacy of Politicians	
	5	Any other	

D. Strategies to Counter Terrorism

In your view what are best strategies to bring peace in your area:
