



THE IDEOLOGICAL RESONANCE OF RADICALIZATION AND EXTREMISM: A CASE STUDY OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Ideology has always exercised a role in constructing or deconstructing narratives of societies such as Pakistan. Pakistan's society has been radicalized in recent years, with religious intolerance leading to terrorism and violent extremism. This research examines factors surrounding radicalization, violent extremism, and terrorism. Essentially, this study aims to answer how Pakistan has become a radical society. Moreover, what role ideology played in the radicalization of Pakistani society? The authors investigated the role of Jihad-based ideology, first from a local perspective and then from a global perspective, in testing the hypothesis. The authors use secondary sources to analyze the study. The study applies process tracing research method to develop a casual mechanism between the dependent variable of radicalization and the independent variable of Religious ideology. Pakistan has been chosen as a case study to display the ideological resonance of Jihad.

Key words: Ideology, Global Jihad, Radicalization, Extremism, Pakistan

Introduction

The vision of a modernized, progressive, and prosperous Pakistan is threatened by unending religious radicalization and extremism. Religious intolerance and militancy have enslaved the entire country due to aggressive competition for influence among competing ultra-orthodox religious organizations and their extremist ideology. Pakistan has suffered a major social crisis in the previous two decades, with violent extremist groups challenging the state's authority. For



instance, after Pakistan become frontline ally of the US's campaign of Global War on Terror (GWOT), several extremist groups began an unending militancy against the Pakistan. In the evolving dynamics of Pakistan's domestic and global environment, how far radical minds may go to attain their ultimate goal is determined by how well they hold and increase their political power inside the state. In a culture of fear and insecurity, the polity is a victim of violent religious fanaticism.

The cultural and historical influences of the Middle East, South Asia, British colonial heritage, and the nation-building problems of the twentieth century have influenced Pakistan's contemporary political and societal identity. Hence, the idea of Pakistan being an independent state was driven by Religious Ideology and two nation theory however neither contributed to lasting foundation of national identity. Since the inception of Pakistan, it was challenging to create a participatory, pluralist, and decentralized political system that considered linguistic, ethnic, and regional diversity and socio-economic deprivation. The emergence of Islamic militancy and extremism generated new problems that had implications for Pakistan's domestic and foreign policies.

In 1980s General Zia's decision to support afghan Jihad against the soviets pertaining to strategic goals in the region which later would complement proxy missions in IOK. It could be considered that the adoption of these policies was the beginning of an unending extremist challenge that has turned into a mythical monster a "hydra". Since the launch of GWOT by the United States has blamed Pakistan for supporting militant networks. hence, Pakistan's support of militant organizations in Kashmir and Afghanistan contributed to the substantial political unrest in those countries and the growth of extremist networks inside Pakistan. These groups' ideology is founded on 'Jihad,' which was limited to a local perspective (Byman, 2005). However, such groups have inherited the concept of jihad from Middle Eastern movements such as Jihadi movement Palestinian liberation Organization (1964), Egyptian Jihad (in 1970s), Salafi Transnational Jihad Movement (1970), and Iranian Islamic Revolution (1979) Gradually, the concept evolved into 'Global Jihad' against the West and their supporters.

After the 9/11 attacks and Pakistan's participation in GWOT, the Pakistani Islamists saw Musharraf's choice as a betrayal. decision flocked to the streets in protest or conducted violent acts against the Pakistani government, including a few assassination attempts on Musharraf. One of the most significant concerns facing Pakistan at the turn of the century is dealing with militant Islamists in the aftermath of the US war on terror. The US invasion of Afghanistan resulted in many of the Jihadi groups who had been fighting in Afghan Jihad and in Indian held Kashmir turned against the Pakistani government under the umbrella of TTP (Sayed, 2021). This backdrop aided TTP's rise as a militant and extremist group who wreaked havoc against the Pakistani Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and targeted civilians and security personal indiscriminately.

This study aims to build the ideological resonance of Pakistani society that led to the creation of a religious radical society. This research attempts to answer the question of how



Pakistani society became radicalized? The study defines the fundamental concepts of radicalization, extremism, and radicals and why the extremist groups selected this path. This study also delves into the rise of global jihad as a viable doctrine and its infiltration into Pakistani society. In the last section the study explores the consequences of the GWOT and military operations in Pakistan's tribal areas and its impact on peace and stability of the Pakistani society. This research shall also highlight that how TTP's growth as a militant group continues to challenge Pakistan's authority.

Exhibiting; Radicalization into Violent Extremism

The study of violent extremism and radicalization signifies the "war on terror" and provides a gateway to understanding the groups and individuals that engage in terrorist activities. The Danish institute of International Studies (DIIS) defines extremism in this way: "Extremism is described as naive views of the world with a perception towards a certain group as threats. Intolerance and prejudices for other people's views, freedom, and rights. Rejection of fundamental democratic values and norms or non-acceptance of democratic decision-making processes. Use of illegal and possibly violent methods to achieve political/religious ideological goals (Hemmingsen, 2015)." Whereas radicalization is a process that consist of different factors which exist in socio-political and socio-economic fabrics of a society.

According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), violent extremism is associated with a highly political, religious, or social ideology that is non-negotiable and seeks no compromise (UNDP, 2016). Violent extremists are motivated by narrow interpretations of issues and grievances, which they often exploit onto more significant conflict dynamics. However, sometimes violent extremism has been explained according to the activities and actions of violent extremists such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, which spread the messages of violence, cultural and religious intolerance, and hate towards other ethnic groups (Borum, 2011). In doing so, groups engaged in violent extremism often distort and exploit religious beliefs, ethnic differences, and political ideologies to legitimize their actions and recruit and retain their followers.

The concept of radicalization generally expresses the idea of a process that an individual adopts to justify an extremist set of beliefs and aspirations. According to the Oxford dictionary, "radicalization is an action or a process that makes somebody more extreme or radical (Oxford Learner Dictionaries, n.d.). "Another definition of the word radical represents "extreme support" for the section of a party or a group (Oxford Learner Dictionaries, n.d.). According to Romaniuk, "radicalization" can be understood as a process by which individuals adopt violent extremist ideologies that may lead them to commit violent acts or which are likely to render them more vulnerable to recruitment by terrorist organizations (United Nations , 2018). Aly and Striegher describe radicalization as a predictor of violence and de-radicalization as an effective counter-terrorism strategy. Individuals becoming radicals is not a signal path phenomena but a diverse group of several factors (UNDP , 2016). Even though ideology is not an exclusive attracting bond, Kruglanski et al. describe social bonds that attract individuals and bring them in contact with ideology (Kruglanski, et al., 2014). It can be argued that ideology



provides a beacon for social networks to attract individuals who have the propensity to subscribe to their worldview. Similarly, in the case of terrorist organizations, ideology provides a license to legitimize the use of violence to achieve desired goals.

Kruglanski et al. explain that using ideology to justify violent extremism needs to have three essential "ingredients": The first, grievances against a group or a nation (here we can refer to the West, especially the United States and Israel as the perceived enemy of the actors). The second is a warrant to justify acts of violent extremism towards innocents. As it has been witnessed, radical groups have also targeted innocent civilians, whether Muslims or non-Muslims. In their view, Muslim countries' populations do not raise their voice against their leaders who follow western policies. The third justifies declaring Muslims as friends of the enemies of Islam, and thus they are also their enemies (Kruglanski, Crenshaw, Post, & Victoroff, 2007).

One of the ingredients of radicalization that justifies the killings of non-combatants or civilians, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, is paying taxes to the government. The government supports the armed forces who kill Muslims (Sageman, 2008). Sageman describes one of the most aggressive forms of this family of ideologies as the doctrine of "takfir" (infidel) (Hellmich, 2008). This ideology believes that they are the only true Muslims and believe that only they understand Islam. They reject the interpretations and evolution of the religion over fourteen centuries. They believe that Greek philosophy has corrupted the true essence of Islam.

Therefore, they reject the traditional legitimacy of other conventional religious authorities. The radicalization of their minds is pronounced so that even a cleric having radical beliefs is not fundamental. They weigh themselves as the only "true believers" and "guardians of Islam." This ultra-radical ideology legitimizes them to "excommunicate" the vast majority of their fellow Muslims who do not share the same ideology as them. For an average Muslim, this ultra-radical ideology contradicts the words of the Quran, which prohibits a Muslim from harming another. Nevertheless, the believers of this ultra-radical ideology believe that they are on the original morality and Islam tradition.

Ideological Evolution of a 'Global Jihad'

In terrorism studies, scholars argue that ideology is a relevant factor in radicalizing ideas as it explains radical activity (such as violent extremism and terrorism) as an 'individual's choice. This suggestion gets importance in terms of justifying extremist ideology, regardless of its specificity, whether it is a nationalist ideology, socialist ideology, or religious ideology (Jasko et al., 2016). Perez and Boye state that "ideology is to be a group of accepted norms following 'individual's beliefs, values, principles, and purposes that allows the justification of violent behavior" (Sroka, Garrone, & Kumbrián, 2017). Some scholars refer to the socio-political, socio-economic environment, and socio-psychological factors, individuals' personalities, and their relationship with the social environment to be a critical factors in radicalization (Russo, Mannarini, & Salvatore, 2020).



Global Jihad evolved as an ideology and a social movement during the Afghan Jihad. The Afghan Jihad was a launching pad of global jihadi ideology. However, the roots of such doctrine can be traced to the teachings of Sayyid Qutb of Egypt, as he is considered the ideological father of political and radical Islam. Marc Sageman describes one of 'Qutb's disciples, Muhammad Abdal Salam Faraj, who believed that Jihad was the duty of each Muslim they had subsequently forgotten. (Hellmich, 2008). Qutb and Faraj believed in fighting the far enemy (Israel, the West, the U.S.); it is necessary to overthrow the near enemy (the local government) because the local governments are adopting policies directed by the far enemy (USA). It might be argued that Al- 'Qaeda's global jihad ideology was based on the same thoughts. However, their main goal was to fight against the "far enemy" and expel the infidels from the Muslims' holiest places.

It is essential to go back into the history of social movements, organizations, and transnational groups. History can provide us with a wide variety of understanding about the rise and fall of specific Islamic movements and organizations. If we trace back the roots of Al-Qaeda's ideology, it goes back to the late 1950s, when the militant Islamist movement is known as "Jihadism" was an inward-looking movement. Their primary motivation was to replace secular Muslim rulers with states governed by sharia law. Sayyid Qutb was the architect of this ultra-orthodox violent Islamic movement. He spearheaded a militant Islamic group called al-Tanzim al-Sirri, or "the secret Apparatus" (Gerges, 2011).

As Qutb directed his followers, the movement's main objective was to fight against the enemy within and oust Muslim "tyrants" who did not follow the Sharia. For 40 years, the radical ideology of Qutb and his disciples kept prevailing, and they continued fighting against the near enemy, "the Pro-western leaders" and their policies. As Fawaz Gerges narrates, after 9/11, western researchers and analysts suddenly discovered that the radical ideology of Qutb spiritually inspired the ideology of Al-Qaeda. They portrayed him as a "philosopher of terror," the spiritual godfather to bin Laden and Zawahiri (Gerges, 2011). Scholars have quoted that bin Laden and Zawahiri repeatedly mentioned that they were the Qutb disciples carrying the torch of Qutbian ideology. Fawaz Gerges questions these statements by bin Laden and Zawahiri and accuses them of having twisted Qutb's thinking to make it suitable for their purpose (Gerges, 2011). According to Gerges, during the time of Qutb's imprisonment, he never called for his followers to confront the West.

Instead, he constantly urged us to fight against the Arab dictators who supported Western ideology and infiltrated Muslim lands (Gerges, 2011). Qutb had no interest in the internationalization of the doctrine of Jihad and confrontation with western powers. Though, the Qutbian ideology worked as a fuel for bin Laden and Zawahiri to kindle their thinking of the global Jihad movement against Islam's enemies. Even though Qutb was against the internationalization of Jihad, by portraying the United States as the biggest enemy of Islam, he internationalized anti-Americanism among Muslim countries. The Anti-American sentiments in 'Qutb's ideology became fertile ground for organizations such as Al-Qaeda to cash their ideology of transnational Jihad against Islam's enemies within and outwardly. The Afghan Jihad is considered pivotal for the rise of Al-Qaeda and the doctrine of global Jihad, fertilizing



two influential prevailing schools of thought: Egyptian Radical Islamism and Saudi ultra-conservatism (Gerges, 2011).

Although the union of these two ideologies has survived despite bin Laden's death, it has scattered somewhat since facing intensive military operations against its networks worldwide. During the Afghan Jihad against the Soviets, the Saudi Wahhabi tradition was seen as an asset that could be deployed as a foreign policy strategy to destroy leftist, nationalist, and communist influences. After the defeat of Soviet Union in Afghanistan some of the armed militias returned to their countries, they started their movements against the regimes. The Internationalization of Wahhabi Ideology became the dominant force of radicalization in the Muslim world after the Afghan Jihad in 1979. It started with the Ibn Saud's alliance with ultra-orthodox Muslim warriors who joined forces in his struggle to unite the Arab tribes and convert them to the puritanical version of Islam (Wahhabism). The 1970s era was critical for Islamic world where struggle to overcome the postcolonial upheavals and they were embracing nationalism, capitalism, Socialism to bring social revolution for the masses. The kingdom of Saudi-Arabia championed the Pan-Islamic policy. As Esposito States that "Saudi Arabia asserted its global Islamic leadership as custodian of Islam's two holiest sites made a common cause with other Muslim countries to struggle against any revolutionary movement such as the Gamal Abdul Nasser's 'secular, socialist' Pan-Arabism with its connections to atheistic communism" (Esposito J. L., 2002). The discourse of history also took a critical turn when Saudi Arabia established International organizations to promote and finance Wahhabi-based, Pan-Islamic vision and ideology. It was when postcolonial Islamic countries were embracing nationalism, Capitalism, and Communism. Iran embraced Islamic Activism, which overwhelmingly influenced the future Islamic movements around the globe.

Al-Qaeda emerged from the Afghan Jihad under the leadership of Osama bin Laden (who died in 2011). Osama was one of fifty-four children of the Mohammed bin Laden family. The family of Bin laden was the largest construction company in Saudi Arabia. He enjoyed every comfort of life from a young age (Gerges, *The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda*, 2011). Al-Qaeda emerged from the Afghan Jihad under the leadership of Osama bin Laden (who died in 2011). Osama was one of fifty-four children of the Mohammed bin Laden family. The family of Bin laden was the largest construction company in Saudi Arabia. He enjoyed every comfort of life from a young age. Most of the early life of Bin Laden was in Jeddah and Mecca. From a very young age, bin Laden was religious. He felt deeply agitated by the 1967 Arab-Israel war, in which Israel crushed the Arab armies. The events of the 1970s, specifically the Iranian revolution, the Holy Mosque's siege in Mecca, and the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, were some of the pivotal transformational moments of his youth. Bin Laden studied economics at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, where he was inspired by Abdullah Azzam, who later became his mentor during the Afghan Jihad. During his life at university, he studied Sayyid Qutb's manifestos and adapted some of his ideas and concepts (Chertoff, 2008).

The Afghan Jihad brought a massive transformation, both psychologically and spiritually, in bin Laden's life. Osama bin Laden's passion and the struggle for Jihad came from the spiritual and theological guidance of Abdullah Azzam. One significant thing worth



noting is that just like Qutb, Azzam was also not in favor of the internationalization of Jihad. Under the leadership of Azzam, the early version of al-Qaeda was not conspiring to become a transnational organizational movement (Gerges, 2011). Azzam's version of al-Qaeda al-Sulba was a different version. It was a social movement organization that intended to fight and continue Jihad in those places where Muslim brothers were under the brutality of non-Muslim regimes, such as in Indian-occupied Kashmir, Palestine, Yugoslavia, and Chechnya. It may be said that bin Laden's version of al-Qaeda had nothing in common with Azzam's version of al-Qaeda.

In the beginning, al-Qaeda was a member organization of a broader movement of ultra-orthodox Islamic movements called the Salafi Transnational Jihad Movement (STJM), which originated in the 1970s. STJM's ideology was based on the re-emergence of Pan-Islamism and the community of believers (the Ummah) in which Muslims, despite their ethnicity, culture, and national differences, constitute a brotherhood and have a binding responsibility to help each other (Nadeau, 2016). The ideology of Pan-Islamism was promoted during the 1970s and notably backed by Saudi Arabia through charitable transnational institutions and organizations (Lorenzo, DEMETRIOU, Eitan, & ALIMI, 2015). During this period, most of the Arab and non-Arab world also witnessed the proliferation of Islamic movements. The activists demanded the implementation of Pan-Islamic values in their societies (the essence of Ultra-orthodox Islam in their perspective) (Lorenzo, DEMETRIOU, Eitan, & ALIMI, 2015). Al-Qaeda's strategy consisted of engaging the U.S in an all-out confrontation with Islam and making itself a guardian of Islam and urging Muslims to participate in resistance under the banner of Al-Qaeda. It is argued that after 9/11, Al-Qaeda succeeded in ingraining its ideology in many Muslim countries. After 9/11, Al-Qaeda moved from an organization to an immense horizon of ideology and practice. Later the ideology of Al-Qaeda inspired and gave birth to many terrorist groups in Muslim countries. Al-Qaeda and its ideology became the chief motivator for Individuals and groups to join the campaign of Jihad.

Transfusion of Global Jihad Ideology into Pakistan's Society:

Religion played a critical role in the creation of Pakistan. After its independence in 1947, Pakistan became a country where Muslims had the free will to practice Islam. The nation-building of Islamic norms and principles is the foundation of Pakistan as a state. The ideology behind Pakistan's creation meant a state where Muslims have the freedom to perform religious practices without fear. The Pakistani nation-state's ideology manifested in the 'objectives' resolution presented in the national assembly in 1949 (Shah, 2009). Pakistan's constitution also lays out the paradigms of the Pakistani nation-state. In 1949 the presentation of the objectives resolution can be considered the "first formal" action to transform Pakistan into an Ideological Islamic state (STEPHEN, 2011).

The objective resolution presented the main principles for forming 'Pakistan's constitution. The objectives resolution provided a pathway to change the discourse of 'Pakistan's basic principles, which its founding fathers put forward. According to Callard, the Pakistani nation appeared to believe in the essential unity of resolve and viewpoint in the



Muslim world. Other Muslim countries' political posture is primarily based on the territorial divide, nationalism, and anti-western agenda (Weinbaum, 1996).

The creation of Pakistan was to make a state wherein Muslims can live their lives according to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah. The Nineteenth Century was a period of great trials and tribulation for Muslims of the Indian subcontinent. It was a period of decay and degeneration, and a sense of intense pessimism and extreme cynicism had gripped the Muslim masses. It is worth noting that Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, in his speeches from 1940 to 1947, had portrayed the vision that the Pakistani state would be an Islamic republic and that this would enforce Islamic principles. Similarly, he also envisioned Pakistan as a state-run with a more liberal approach than religion to dominate its policymaking. In his address to the government functionaries in October 1947, he had underscored the Islamic character in the following words:

"The establishment of Pakistan, for which we have been striving for the last ten years, is, by the grace of God, a fact today, but the creation of a state of our own was a means to an end and not the end in itself. The idea was that we should have a state, in which We could develop according to our light and culture, and where Principles of Islamic social justice could find free play" (Abdullah, 2010).

As Weinbaum describes the western perspective as, "Pakistan is the epicenter of terrorism, and it hosts organizations that challenge its stability and the region and directly threaten western security interests" (Weinbaum, 1996). For the West, especially for the U.S., the anti-western rhetoric of militant groups serves the same meaning as their cause; that ties to the West should be severed. Pakistan's views of these radical groups do not share the same meaning as Pakistan distinguishes between the groups that present a severe threat to the state and others considered to serve the national interest. 'Pakistan's current security conundrum is historically rooted in three decades of vague national and international security policies. There is less doubt that the Afghan Jihad was considered a significant event when Jihadi groups started to emerge. Pakistani and the U.S. intelligence agencies recruited and trained these jihadists gathered here from all over the Muslim world. Pakistan is still suffering from the legacy of the Afghan Jihad, and it has destabilized Pakistani society. After Afghan Jihad, a plethora of Islamist organizations emerged, each with characteristics that the scholarship has well documented. It is well documented that After the beginning of Afghan Jihad, General Zia joined forces with conservative Islamic clerics, which resulted in the creation of clandestine jihadi networks in Pakistan.

The "ideology of jihad" is one of the characteristics that became the central discourse of Pakistan, where even the rhetoric of Jihad was included in 'Pakistan's educational system. Pakistan and the near region, particularly Afghanistan, have been influenced by Islamist ideology's strong appeal as the Afghanistan have been influenced by Islamist ideology's strong appeal. General Zia is considered the prominent architect behind the spread of the ultra-orthodox version of Islam in Pakistan. This region has been a critical source of recruits to the moderate strands of Islamic movements and militant movements and networks that espouse



violence. Gen Zia's Saudi-Inspired Islamization ignited the Shia- Sunni sectarian violence in a relatively historically peaceful Pakistani society. During his regime, Pakistan went through extremist political and judicial reforms, some still in effect (Waterman, 2014).

Zia's political bandwagon with religious, political parties fanned the flames of sectarianism. There is a consensus that under the dictatorship of General Ziaul Haq, Islamization took control of Pakistan's political discourse. He was stern, a consummate British-trained army man, brutal and intensely disliked. He was personally devout, but he used Islam for political and strategic ambitions. It is argued that because Zia supported Afghan Jihad and the imposition of extreme Islamic laws, he radicalized Pakistani society (Asif, 2018). The period of the late 1970s and early 1980s was the time when ultra-conservatives and the radical right-wing political parties saw a rapid rise. With the help of Jamaat-e-Islami, he used the concept of Islamic ideology as the primary manifestation of Pakistan and transformed the education curricula. Under the guise of the Islamic rule of law in Pakistan, he changed the parts of Pakistan's legal system (Afzal, 2018).

After the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda spread its ideology of Jihad through the recruitment centers worldwide to provoke Muslims to join the holy cause. A former foreign secretary of Pakistan describes the connection between early jihadi movements and their inspirations. Most of these groups were funded and supported by Saudi Arabia in the 1980s and 1990s to promote an ultra-orthodox religious ideology. They provided large donations that resulted in making large Madrassas and the mushrooming of fundamental religious doctrine. The founders of these Madrassas had "Deobandi and Salafi inspiration." These Madrassas were the primary source of Jihadists' recruitment during the Afghan war and subsequently for other jihadi movements (Fair, 2008).

The Influence of Wahabi ideology (exported into Pakistan by Saudi Arabia) was groomed and cemented through the madrasa system of Islamic seminaries, many of which were the Jihadi training camps during the Soviet-Afghan war (Esposito J. , 2003). Zia's doctrine was devastating for Pakistan. Even in 2016, Pakistan faces serious security threats from the Taliban and other extremists and terrorist organizations, which established sanctuaries in Pakistan during his era. Because of the exceedingly porous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, drug trade, narco-trafficking, Kalashnikov culture, religious seminaries, and sectarianism came to Pakistan with Jihadist culture. After the Afghan Jihad, the Taliban brand of radicalization was significantly influenced by the neo-Deobandi movement in Pakistan (COLE, 2009). Esposito argues that in Pakistan, such ideology "transformed within Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Islam (JUI), a religious part with rigid, militant, anti-American and non-Muslim culture." Most of the members of Afghan Jihad were trained in JUI madrasas supported by Saudi funding that also brought in the influence of an ultra-conservative Wahhabi Islam (Esposito J. , 2003).

A Giant is Ready to Fight – TTP

Pakistan has been fighting a costly war on terror within its borders. Historically, Pakistan's tribal areas ran by their political systems; in the past, the Pakistani government has never been able to establish its writ. Scholars argue that the rise of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is a



backlash to Pakistan's covert support of Jihadi organizations. Similarly, within the circle of the Pakistani government and establishment, there is concrete evidence that hostile external elements have provided strategic support to local anti-state ingredients. Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan was formed in 2007 by the Pakistani Taliban under Baitullah Mehsud's leadership (d. 2009). The emergence of the TTP was inspired by the ideology of Al-Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban. In the beginning, the TTP movement's doctrine was to fight against the foreign invaders in Afghanistan (Iqbal, 2023).

The Pakistani government's inability to control the situation allowed these extremist groups to create a stranglehold in tribal areas that allowed these radical groups to start a full-scale extreme movement across borders. The emergence of the Pakistani Taliban began after 2007; it never existed before. It resulted from radicalization in Pakistan's tribal belt by Al-Qaeda and the Taliban during the Afghan Jihad movement in the 1980s. It is worth noting that TTP served as an Umbrella organization for dozens of Taliban affiliated groups throughout Pakistan. In the beginning, the Pakistani Taliban was highly decentralized, with supporters being divided into three levels: core members, affiliate members, and sympathizers (Stanford University, 2022).

When the groups converged, the overwhelming choice for the leadership position was Baitullah Mehsud. Several Wazir tribe members who had long-standing disputes with Mehsud attended the meeting and reconciled with their former advisory. Hafiz Gul Bahadur from North Waziristan was elected first deputy chief. In contrast, Maulana Fazlullah(d. 2018), head of the Taliban in the Swat region of the Northwest Frontier Province (now known as Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa), was elected general secretary. Several other former enemies of Baitullah Mehsud, including Maulvi Nazir(d. 2013) from South Waziristan and Faqir Mohammed from Bajaur Agency, were represented at the initial meeting (Topich, 2018).

Since the creation of this movement, it has been responsible for large-scale attacks in Pakistan. The primary target of this organization is the Pakistani state. TTP provides an umbrella for several splinter groups formed after Pakistan launched military operations in tribal areas (Jadoon, Amira, & Saraa, 2022). It seeks to extend its political and military control of the tribal regions and imposes its kind of sharia law throughout Pakistan. This militant organization is responsible for attacking security forces, military and intelligence targets, mosques, schools, parks, and churches. In 2009, Baitullah Mehsud and the top leadership of TTP were eliminated in a targeted drone strike (Masoosd, 2009). On August 22nd, Hakimullah Mehsud(who died in a drone attack in 2013) was chosen to lead the TTP movement to continue the militant resistance against the Pakistani military (Khan, 2009). He led the TTP for two years, and during this time, the TTP carried out major terrorist attacks in Pakistan. Subsequently, a drone strike in North Waziristan Agency (NWA) killed Hakimullah Mehsud (Khattak, Hussain, Sargana, & Hussain, 2014). Ahmad Rashid explains that the rise of the TTP has been inspired by Al-Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban's ideology (McNally & Weinbaum, 2016). He believes that after 9/11, when the U.S. and NATO forces routed the Taliban and Al-Qaeda out of Afghanistan, thousands of these fighters found safe havens in 'Pakistan's tribal



areas. Pakistan was under immense pressure from the U.S. to take stern actions against the presence of Al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters in 'Pakistan's frontier area (Ehsan, 2017).

There were grave concerns that these extremist groups would regroup and start a new campaign of terrorism across borders. According to TTP leaders, TTP was driven by the ideology of imposing Sharia law in the State of Pakistan and toppling down the elected government, which was under the United States' direct influence. In his interview, Hakimullah Mehsud described the Pakistani government as a subordinate of the U.S. and Israel as it follows their ideology. TTP rhetoric was clear: to fight against Pakistan until they can impose Sharia law in Pakistan since they believe that democracy is a creation of West/Jews to create a divide in Muslims (Mahmood, 2015).

HERE, the U.S. foreign policies can be characterized as an 'external catalyst' to run movements against Pakistan's government. Hakimullah Mehsud's death was a significant setback for the TTP; it suffered a considerable leadership crisis and defected into factions. The formation of several other groups made the situation more complicated. Hence, it created a severe problem for the government to deal with a hydra, where it had to deal with other terrorist group leaders. One could argue that governments tend to target the leadership of militant organizations. In the case of Al-Qaeda, Jamma-Islamia Indonesia, and TTP acting on a hypothesis that removal of the command could not weaken the movement, but this provides a source of motivation and spurs radicalization (Mahmood, 2015).

The major problem here is that while fighting against militant organizations, governments tend to implement the strategy of fighting against an enemy that is a structured organization with solid leadership. The same approach has been applied against the TTP, cutting the administration, and causing a collapse of the movement, but it further strengthened it. TTP receives direct support and sympathy from the Federally Administrated Area (FATA) and parts of 'Pakistan's Northern province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). The support and recruitment of this militant group are based on their ideology. These groups, such as TTP, use doctrine as a force of mobilization to justify their violent tactics to achieve their goals. The government fails to eradicate radicalization and violent extremism because there is a lack of political will and weak leadership to counter ideology (Ali, 2018).

The TTP was the formation on the basis of three ideological aspects, to enforce Sharia law in Pakistan, unity among all the armed groups to fight coalition forces in Afghanistan, and militant Jihadi movement against Pakistan because of its participation and the alliance with the U.S. in the "war on terror" (Abbas, 2008). Subsequently, it can be assumed that 'TTP's ideology is driven from Al-Qaeda's ideology of global Jihad and the implementation of Sharia. 'TTP's doctrine had a significant attraction for recruits fighting against a common enemy of Islam' (West). They use it as a romantic attraction and a tool of brainwashing for recruitment. Similarly, in the U.S. military campaign against the Taliban and the TTP, killing their families and civilians was another motivator for personal grievances (Mohibi, 2021).



Conclusion

Pakistan has been a victim of terrorism and extremism; basically, society transformed into a radical society. During General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq's administration (1977-1988), his Islamization policies and support for Jihadi groups created the groundwork for Pakistan's extremism. Parallel to the current judicial system, sharia courts were established. Zia-ul-Haq utterly transformed Pakistan's inherited British system into a parallel Islamic system.

At the same time, another religious movement started after the Iranian Revolution, a non-bloody revolution intending to spread Shia Islam in every corner of the world. The Iranian revolution was not only an uprising against the monarchy but also against the existing Islamic system. This revolution changed the dynamics of Muslim countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, and sparked Islamic activism. Saudi Arabia was under immense pressure from the Islamic uprising because of increasing Iranian influence regarding the Iranian revolution and the siege of Mecca incident. To counter the Iranian revolution's growing influence, Saudi Arabia seized the Afghan Jihad as an excellent opportunity to import and disseminate its ultra-orthodox Wahhabi doctrine in other Muslim countries, particularly Pakistan. Many madrassas and training camps were established across the Pak-Afghan border with the Saudi's financial aid. To Islamize Pakistan, General Zia-ul-Haq aligned himself with ultra-orthodox terrorist forces. He enlisted the help of ultra-conservatives to Islamize institutions in Pakistan to stave off a Shia uprising. In Pakistan, violent groups arose due to the spread of this radical ideology.

Moreover, Pakistan's attitude toward these groups has radically changed in the war on terror; Pakistan's military has conducted operations to eradicate them. Nevertheless, these militant groups did not abandon the region, and they eventually turned against Pakistan's government and armed forces. The underlying reality is that they are now battling based on a non-ethical ideology in the face of different militant groups, like TTP. Basically, Pakistani society has been radicalized because of the continuous infusion of radical dogmas based on an ideology that the Pakistani state does not own nor pursue. It is the ideological resonance based on a certain kind of non-Islamic dogmas.



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