

# ***Socioeconomic Deprivation, Fanaticism and Terrorism: A Case of Waziristan, Pakistan***

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper investigates the relationship between socioeconomic deprivation fanaticism and terrorism in Pakistan using Waziristan as a case study. It claims that major cause of radicalization was the weak and meagre socio-economic conditions including the negligence of the region by the successive governments since the creation of Pakistan. The research concludes that poverty and socioeconomic backwardness has serious implications in causing radicalism and resultantly it foments terrorism in the region.*

## **Introduction**

Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), currently comes under the territorial jurisdiction of Pakistan, had remained strategically a pivotal territory for the British imperial rule over India. It was created in 1893 when an agreement was brokered between the then Afghan and British Governments,

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respectively.<sup>1</sup> This area has not been ruled completely by the British and the successive governments of Pakistan. Instead, it has been run through a specific set of laws, called *Pashtunwali* (Pashtun code of conduct),<sup>2</sup> and Frontier Crimes Regulations known as FCRs.<sup>3</sup> Under Article 246 of the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, FATA consists of seven Agencies and six Frontier Regions (FRs). All the six FRs like the seven agencies stretch over from North to South, and function as a buffer zone between the settled areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as NWFP), a province of Pakistan federation.

According to the 1998 Census of Pakistan, the total population of FATA is 3,176,331. The region has said to have a total of 27220 Sq. Km areas that shares 1200 Km porous border with neighbouring Afghanistan.<sup>4</sup> So far as Waziristan is concerned, it is located between the Tochi River to the northwest and the Gomal River in its South. For administrative purposes, in 1895 the British India divided Waziristan into two agencies: North Waziristan and South Waziristan. Since then it had remained a semi-autonomous tribal territory and became part of Pakistan federation after the partition of United India on August 14, 1947. As per 1998 census report, the total population of North Waziristan is 361246 and South Waziristan is 429841, respectively.<sup>5</sup> Amongst the seven agencies, South Waziristan is the largest in area with 77 persons per sqkm and 1.95 percent annual

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1 Iqbal Huma Khan, "New Wine in Old Bottles: An Analysis of Pakistan's Conflict in the Pashtun Tribal Area" (An unpublished Masters Thesis, the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas, 2008).

2 Pashtunwali is a code of conduct of the people living in Pashtun populated areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. For detail see Lutz Rzehak, "Doing Pashto", *Afghanistan Analysis Network* (2011).

3 The FCR is a special set of laws which was introduced by the British India first in 1872 for North West Frontier Province (NWFP-now named as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and latter in FATA with slight amendments in 1901. After 1947 the successive governments of Pakistan also adopted the same system for FATA which is still in practice with minor changes.

4 Khan, "New Wine in Old Bottles".

5 Census Report (2008), Government of Pakistan, [Available at: <[http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/publications/pocket\\_book2006/2.pdf](http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/publications/pocket_book2006/2.pdf)

growth.<sup>6</sup> It is a mountainous, rocky, inhospitable and extremely poor region, which has Afghanistan to its northwest, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to its east and Balochistan to its south.

The FATA region was known as no man's land prior to the tragic event of the 9/11 that caused thousands deaths and the subsequent war against extremist outfits. However, this incident like many other regions has changed the entire geopolitics of FATA and brought it to the national and international attention because of the fact that after the war on terror against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan, FATA gathered much media attention and general discourse, a pivotal point remained untouched was the underlying causes of terrorism that not only emanated from this region but also spilled over to rest of Pakistan with terrorist attacks across the country. The contemporary literature provides a good insight to understand the causes of terrorism, yet it does not discuss and analyse the relationship between religious fanaticism that ostensibly led to the terrorism in Waziristan and socioeconomic backwardness. This paper aims to deal with this issue.

### **Terrorism and Economic Backwardness**

Scholars presented a variety of causes of terrorism yet without any agreement because of its occurrence in a mixture of different social, political and economic conditions. Pilat opines that terrorism requires to be examined through "historical, cultural, demographic, economic, social and political lenses".<sup>7</sup> To him terrorist acts and inspirations vary from individuals groups, nations and regions and even religions. The phenomenon of terrorism is on the increase since its known history with the changing world. Jenkins thinks that terrorism is rising persistently and potential causes of this menace are the [R]ising population; increased poverty and scarcity; racial tension; inflation and

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6 Shaheed Bhutto Foundation (SBF), (n.d: 16 [Available from: <<http://www.sbf.org/FATA-data.pdf>]

7 Pilat, Joseph F., (n.d), *The Causes of Terrorism*, LA- UR -07-8046, 17.

unemployment; increased tension between the have and have-not nations; waves of refugees shoved about by wars and repression.....”<sup>8</sup> Conversely, Atran is of the opinion that there exist no strong correlation between poverty, lack of education and terrorism.<sup>9</sup> Berrebi while studying Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) finds no or weak correlation of low level of income and education with terrorism.<sup>10</sup> Lancaster also does not see any linkage between terrorism and poverty. Furthermore, he maintains that poverty does not produce terrorism.<sup>11</sup> On the contrary, he thinks that it is the grievances of terrorists groups, which lead them to terrorist activities. These grievances may often be for land, resources or values. So in his analysis an indirect relationship between poverty and terrorism exists through poor governance. Poor governance results the collapse of the entire state structure and eruption of civil violence. This insecure state of affair resultantly provides a secure ground to the terrorists and criminals to mobilize and organize attacks everywhere.<sup>12</sup> Similar to Lancaster’s argument, Daniel Pipes also rules out any direct relationship between poverty and terrorism. Exploring a linkage between militant Islam and terrorism, he rejects the proposition that poverty and impoverishment are the prime causes in emanating terrorism. He supports his argument by quoting the 9/11 incident underscoring that all the attackers were neither poor nor uneducated.<sup>13</sup> In the same line, David Meir-Levi’s research does not show any

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8 Jenkins, Brian Michael, “Future Trends in International Terrorism”, in *Current Perspectives on International Terrorism*, ed., Robert O. Slater and Michael Stohl (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1988), 6.

9 Scott Atran, “Genesis of Suicide Terrorism”, *Science New Series*, 299, 5612 (2003):1534-1539.

10 Claude Berrebi, “Evidence about the Link Between Education, Poverty and Terrorism among Palestinians, Peace Economics”, *Peace Science and Public Policy*, 13, no. 1(2007): 1-36.

11 Carol Lancaster, *Poverty, Terrorism, and National Security*, August 08, 2003.

12 Lancaster, *Poverty, Terrorism, and National Security*.

13 Daniel Pipes, “God and Mammon: Does Poverty Cause Militant Islam?” in Gus Martin, ed., *The New Era of Terrorism: Selected Readings* (UK: Sage Publications, Inc, 2004), 111-17.

relationship between poverty and terrorism. He reveals that the world's most poverty-stricken areas such as sub-Saharan Africa cause no terrorism. He also gives the example of the top Al-Qaeda's leadership i.e., Osama, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Mohammad Atta, that they are/were rich, educated and well professionals in their respective fields. He takes the matter in cultural and religious context and is of the opinion that it is the hate of Muslim Arabs against the West and especially the USA that led to carry out terrorist acts against the Western world.<sup>14</sup>

However, Chomsky opines that the hatred amongst the Arab Muslims against the USA is the result of the latter policies towards Israel-Palestine issue and Iraq.<sup>15</sup> He states that the end result of the Regan policies during 1970s created international Jihadi movement, of which Osama bin Laden was a classic example.<sup>16</sup> Chomsky's argument, more or less, is endorsed by Cheema who ascertains that the sympathetic and benign attitude of Pakistani and American regimes, respectively, to the then Jihadi organizations in Afghanistan and then to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan has provided a conducive atmosphere for extremists to spread around the region.<sup>17</sup>

According to some researchers such as Rath, the root causes of terrorism in South Asian regions including Pakistan are hateful ideologies, religious sanctions, state support and supportive societal infrastructure and management of terrorist organizations.<sup>18</sup> However, keeping in view the aforementioned literature on the causes of terrorism, none of the researcher came up with a solid and

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14 David Meir-Levi, *Terrorism: The Root Causes*, *FrontPageMagazine.com*, Nov, 09, 2005.

15 Noam Chomsky, What Americans have learnt—and not learnt – since 9/11, *The Age*, September 7, 2002.

16 Saad Sayeed, *Chomsky on 'Terrorism'*, Interview on 10/26/06.

17 Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "Challenges Facing a Counter- Militant Campaign in Pakistan's FATA", *NBR Analysis* 19, no. 3 (August, 2008): 21-29.

18 Saroj Kumar Rath, "Root Cause of Terrorism: A Brief Survey of South Asia", *Social Research Reports* 21, no. 6 (2012): 23-36.

concrete cause that elevates terrorism in a particular region. It is because every region and area has its own dynamics, which could be held responsible for the menace of terrorism.

The main argument of this paper is that the socio-economic deprivation of an area provides safe haven to terrorist outfits and leads the inhabitants to terrorism. Deprivation leads to injustices, lack of freedom and democracy, and lack of income and inaccessibility to basic social amenities. And such helpless people may easily be indoctrinated and radicalized in the hand of those forces that have their heinous designs. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that a relationship between terrorism and socio-economic deprivation exists.

Supporting the same line of argument, some observers and top rank government officials also opine that in order to eradicate terrorism, it is imperative to educate and feed the poor populace around the world. They consider that poverty and inaccessibility to basic social and economic provisions, including primary healthcare and education, are the root causes of terrorism. Former American President G. W. Bush in his heyday of presidency once asserts, "We fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror. We fight against poverty because... we will challenge the poverty and hopelessness and lack of education and failed governments that too often allow conditions that terrorists can seize and try to turn to their advantage".<sup>19</sup> Likewise, Tony Blair, the former Prime Minister of the UK, states in his speech at the Lord Mayor's banquet on November 13, 2001 that:

The war against terrorism is not just a police action to root out the networks and those who protect them, although it is certainly that. It needs to be a series of political actions designed to remove the conditions under which such acts of evil can flourish and be tolerated. The dragon's teeth are planted in the fertile soil of wrongs unrighted, of disputes left to fester for years or even decades, of failed states, of poverty and deprivation.<sup>20</sup>

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19 Gulawar Khan, "Causes of Terrorism in South Waziristan Agency" (Unpublished Master Thesis, University of East Anglian, Norwich, UK, 2010), 5.

20 Khan, "Causes of Terrorism in South Waziristan Agency", 5-6.

Similarly, Colin L. Powell, the then American Foreign Secretary believes that, "The root cause of terrorism does come from situations where there is poverty, where there is ignorance, where people see no hope in their lives".<sup>21</sup>

Holding responsible the foreign policies of the US and Pakistan for the menace of terrorism, Leghari argues that the current wave of suicide bombings in Pakistan is due to coalition partnership that Pakistan has with the US in war against terror. To him the best solution in order to put a halt to the suicide bombings in Pakistani soil is that the latter has to corner her from the US led war against terror.<sup>22</sup>

### **Terrorism and Talibanization in South Waziristan**

In FATA, multiple causes may be held responsible for the ongoing phenomenon of terrorism. The political, administrative and fragile tribal structure coupled with lack of rule of law and social justice, increasing poverty, unemployment, worsening education system and isolation of the region from the rest of the country for the last nine decades causes the rise of fanaticism and resultantly the inherent terrorism in this entire region.

The International Crisis Group argues that the main causes of flourishing militancy in FATA is the result of dysfunctional state institutions and colonial period laws of FCRs which isolated the region for more than half of a century from the mainstream Pakistan, and "giving it an ambiguous constitutional status and denying political freedom and economic opportunity to the population".<sup>23</sup> The report further mentions that this chronic issue may only be resolved through changing the nature of FCRs and bringing the region into the orbit of the Constitution of Pakistan. Another pivotal reason of terrorism in the region is the failure

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21 Daniel Mandel, "U.S. Diplomacy: Even-handed, Empty-handed", *Middle East Quarterly*, IX, (Summer, 2002): 3-16.

22 Faryal Leghari, "Dealing with FATA: Strategic Shortfalls and Recommendations" *Perspective to Terrorism* II, no. 10 (2010): 8.

23 International Crisis Group, "Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA", *Asia Report*, no. 178, October 21, 2009: I.

of basic social and economic provisions to the local people and the pork-barrel system that patronage the local elite at the cost of the poor. These frustrated and poor youth then turn to the militant outfits and get recruited for \$190 per month.<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, scholars such as Gul,<sup>25</sup> Khan<sup>26</sup>, Ghauri,<sup>27</sup> and Leghari<sup>28</sup> are of the view that the century old system of administration, the former USSR invasion of Afghanistan, and the socio-economic backwardness and deprivation of the region are the major causes dragging the area towards terrorists and extremist elements. In the same vein, 'Voices from FATA' a monthly newsletter, also believes that poverty, the flawed administrative and legal system i.e., FCR and isolation of the region from the main political stream of the country are the potential factors that cause militancy and insurgency in FATA.<sup>29</sup>

Ahmed Rashid, a widely quoted source on Taliban, posits that the deliberate negligence of FATA by the successive Pakistani regimes since its birth led the region to radicalization. He, therefore, argues that the failure of Pakistan so far towards the education and jobs creation *vis-à-vis* FATA region has made the frustrated and unemployed youths vulnerable to the Jihadi and extremist outfits.<sup>30</sup> Hence, given the impoverished and deteriorated social and economic conditions of FATA, it can be said that the youth who are illiterate and have no jobs, become easy prey to the

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24 International Crisis Group, "Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA", 5-10.

25 Imtiaz Gul, *The Most Dangerous Place: Pakistan's Lawless Frontier* (London: Penguin Books, 2010).

26 Ijaz Khan, "Challenges Facing Development in Pakistan's FATA", *NBR Analysis* 19, no. 3(2008): 13-20.

27 Commander Muhammad Saleem Ghauri, "Role of Pakistan in War Against Terrorism with Particular Emphasis on its Tribal Area" (Masters Thesis, 2009), 6-12.

28 Leghari, "Dealing with FATA: Strategic Shortfalls and Recommendations", 2.

29 "Voices from FATA", *Monthly Newsletter*, no. 1, (Aug 2009): 1-4.

30 Ahmed Rashid, (2012), BBC News, [Available from: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/7530272.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/7530272.stm)]



Taliban and the Al-Qaeda for subversive acts. These terrorist outfits offer some lucrative financial and power sharing incentives to attract the youth. More so it has been observed that the Taliban also applies the bullying and intimidation tactics to those who refuse to join them. As pointed out by the Department for International Development (DFID) most of the youth join these extremist groups due to unemployment, for status reasons, to have guns, to fulfill a religious duty, and for self and family protection (to get support from the Taliban against his family's rival over land or other tribal dispute).<sup>31</sup> Although, the findings of the report are about Afghanistan but situation is quite relevant to that of FATA and South Waziristan that is because both peoples have same historical, cultural and socio-economic background. This anecdotal evidence also supports the argument of Ladbury who argues:

Most radicalization appears to happen after young men join a Taliban group. Young men become Taliban combatants for a mix of reasons (religious sentiment may be one) but their peers then 'radicalise' them into presenting their cause only in terms of jihad and only with reference to Islam.<sup>32</sup>

Since we yet to come up with a common and agreeable definition of terrorism, thus to underlie a single cause of terrorism may not be plausible. Different terrorist groups have different aims to carry out terrorist activities. Pilat, in this regard, states very precisely that terrorism is a multifaceted phenomenon therefore it is difficult to point out all of its causes.<sup>33</sup> With reference to new surge of terrorism in FATA region in general and in South Waziristan in particular our research leads us to some striking facts that potentially caused terrorism. Apart from radicalization of the region during eighties (how the entire region has

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31 Sarah Ladbury, Independent Report for the Department for International Development (DFID), Testing Hypotheses on Radicalization in Afghanistan: Why do men join the Taliban and Hizb-islami? How much do local communities support them?, August 14, 2009: 4.

32 Ladbury, Independent Report for the Department for International Development, 4.

33 Joseph F. Plat., (n.d), *The Causes of Terrorism*, LA- UR -07-8046: 17.

radicalized), there are a number of other issues which cause terrorism in FATA, but besides examining the various aspects of terrorism and its causes in the region, researchers have overlooked the social and economic deprivations, that to us are the pivotal causes of terrorism in South Waziristan. Thus, the remaining part of the paper presents a case study of SWA and highlights its socio-economic deprivations. Further, this study reveals that how the lack of access to basic social and economic provisions coupled with cultural norms lead local people to terrorism. The rationale for selecting SWA case for this study is because this region is not only the biggest agency, but it believed to be the 'headquarters' of entire region to breed terrorists.

### **Socio-economic Backwardness: A Major Cause of Fanaticism and Terrorism**

The social and economic parameters that may play a crucial role for the development of a society are education, health, political awareness, roads communications and connectivity etc. As stated by the *Economic Survey of Pakistan* that the primary services like education and healthcare augment and sharpen the capacity of people and increase their ability to access to the economic and social opportunities.<sup>34</sup> In order to understand the socio-economic situation in the region, we therefore portray an in-depth analysis of all the social and economic parameters and evaluate how these phenomena drive the local youth to terrorists' outfits and cause terrorism in the region.

### **Poverty Stricken Region**

The prevailing situation of poverty in SWA is precarious. Poverty may be defined as:

...lack of resources to reach some (minimum) desired standard of living or attain a set of basic needs. These needs may be a certain

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34 Joseph F. Plat., (n.d), *The Causes of Terrorism*, LA- UR -07-8046: 17.

minimum daily caloric or basic needs that includes food, shelter, clothing, education, healthcare and social participation.<sup>35</sup>

So poverty being a multifaceted concept encompasses multiple indicators. Like lack of income, housing, denial to access to basic amenities, dearth of political voice and democratic rights, being unable to read and write, being at risk and uncertainty about the future course of life are the prominent features of this concept.<sup>36</sup>

Having a glimpse at the statistics of FATA and SWA, one comes across through some shocking facts that the region qualifies for all dimensions of poverty, mentioned in earlier paragraph. For instance, 66 percent of total populous of FATA is living below the poverty line.<sup>37</sup> Separate statistics of poverty for SWA is not available, but anecdotal evidences show that this region has the highest poverty rate even comparing with other agencies of FATA.

In Pakistan, poverty is considered as rural phenomenon, and SWA is no exception. According to 1998 Census Report, a majority (97.30%) of the population lives in rural areas with annual growth of 2.19 percent. A Pakistani based website maintains that:

...It is thus not incorrect to state that the main cause of the rise of radicalism and the raging insurgency in NWFP as well as the tribal areas, (where a worse situation prevails), is due to adverse economic conditions which has badly affected livelihoods, employment, social sector and infrastructure outcomes.<sup>38</sup>

Hence, it may be argued that extreme poverty, impoverishment and joblessness have left no room for the local youth but to get recruited to the militant organizations.

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35 "Pakistan Economic Survey", Government of Pakistan, Finance Division, Economic Adviser's Wing, Islamabad, (2001-02): 52.

36 World Bank, *World Development Report: Attacking Poverty* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2001).

37 Follow the given link for more detail  
<http://waziristanhills.com/FATA/FATAinGeneral/FactorsofExtremismandRadicalization/tabid/123/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

38 Follow the given link for more detail  
<http://waziristanhills.com/FATA/FATAinGeneral/FactorsofExtremismandRadicalization/tabid/123/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

These organizations, therefore, pay these semi-literate youth a handful amount as wage, but indoctrinate and use them for their vested interests. Keeping in view the high poverty incidence and impoverished nature at one hand, and youth being succumbed to terrorist outfits on the other, it is convincing to underline that a strong and positive correlation between poverty and terrorism does exist.

### **Deplorable State of Education**

The role of education for the social and economic development of a community, nation or overall society is an undeniable fact. Education not only ameliorates the living standard of a society and nation, but it also opens a window of opportunity for better earning. Education creates social and political awareness, and enhances the skills of human beings that empower the latter to find out earning sources, and resultantly lead a better life. According to the *IMF Country Report 2004*, "Poverty declines as the education level of the head of household increase".<sup>39</sup> The report further maintains that poverty can be overcome through education with a passage of time.

Ironically, however, the quality education is the alien phrase around entire SWA. Let alone secondary and higher education, even the basic education is far from the reach of local children. Even if a child is fortunate enough to have a primary school, the standard of the existing schools is deplorable to the extent that the outcomes are no better than without attending any school at all.

Table 1 depicts the poor education condition of FATA in general and SWA in particular. The table shows that literacy condition of both male and female is the worst compared with other regions of the country. As it is shown that overall literacy rate in FATA and SWA is 17.42 percent and 18.84 percent, respectively. With only 3 percent and 2.57 percent rates, respectively, female literacy is the lowest in FATA and

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39 Pakistan: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. IMF Country Report , No.04/24, 2004: 17.

SWA around the World. While the overall literacy rate at national level is 55.92 percent.

**TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF SOCIO ECONOMIC INDICATORS**

| S. No | Indicators                     | Pakistan | KPK   | FATA  | SWA   |
|-------|--------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1     | Literacy Ratio (both sexes, %) | 55.92    | 51.41 | 17.42 | 19.84 |
| 2     | Male literacy Ratio (%)        | 54.81    | 51.39 | 29.51 | 32.5  |
| 3     | Female literacy Ratio (%)      | 32.02    | 18.82 | 3.00  | 2.57  |

**SOURCE:** For Pakistan, KP and FATA <http://www.fata.gov.pk>, and for SWA, SBF (Shaheed Bhutto Foundation), 14-16, available at: <http://www.sbf.org/FATA-data.pdf>

Furthermore, it is not only the quality of education that is missing in the region, but with the same token, the availability of education even with poor quality is also a serious issue. For instance, out of total 1135 professional colleges, 3059 secondary vocational institutions and 111 universities at national level, there is none in SWA – barring from the recent announcement of the federal government of Pakistan about the establishment of a university in FATA.

**TABLE 2: NUMBER OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN SWA AND PAKISTAN GENDER WISE**

| S. No        | Category of Institution           | SWA        |            |            | Pakistan        |                |                 | SWA % share to total |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
|              |                                   | Boys       | Girls      | Total      | Male            | Female         | Total           |                      |
| 1            | Primary School                    | 213        | 93         | 306        | 97999.7         | 59000.8        | 157000.5        | 0.00194904           |
| 2            | Middle School                     | 47         | 12         | 59         | 20000.1         | 19000.3        | 39000.4         | 0.0015128            |
| 3            | High School                       | 23         | 3          | 26         | 14000.8         | 8000.1         | 22000.9         | 0.00118177           |
| 4            | College                           | 3          | 1          | 4          | 1512            | 1484           | 2996            | 0.00133511           |
| 5            | Professional Colleges             | 0          | 0          | 0          | 471             | 664            | 1135            | 0                    |
| 6            | Secondary vocational Institutions | 0          | 0          | 0          | ..              | ..             | 3059            | 0                    |
| 7            | Universities                      | 0          | 0          | 0          | ..              | ..             | 111             | 0                    |
| <b>Total</b> |                                   | <b>348</b> | <b>186</b> | <b>534</b> | <b>133983.6</b> | <b>88149.2</b> | <b>225302.8</b> | <b>0.00237014</b>    |

**SOURCE:** <http://www.fata.edu.pk/> accessed on 09/07/2010, and Pakistan Economic Survey (various issues)

Likewise, the number of enrolment in educational institutions is also very low in SWA as compared to the national one. For example, SWA's share to the total at primary, middle, high and college level is 0.012 percent, 0.017 percent, 0.03 percent and 0.006 percent respectively. The following tables speak for the lamentable condition of education in SWA itself (see tables 2 and 3 for information).

**TABLE 3: NUMBER OF ENROLMENT IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN SWA AND PAKISTAN**

| S.No         | Category of Institution           | SWA          |              |              | Pakistan        |                 |                 | SWA % share to total |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
|              |                                   | Boys         | Girls        | Total        | Male            | Female          | Total           |                      |
| 1            | Primary School                    | 14186        | 6889         | 21075        | 9546000         | 7288000         | 16834000        | 0.0012519            |
| 2            | Middle School                     | 7311         | 1422         | 8733         | 3093000         | 2169000         | 5262000         | 0.0016596            |
| 3            | High School                       | 6623         | 877          | 7500         | 1251000         | 882000          | 2133000         | 0.0035162            |
| 4            | College                           | 487          | 28           | 515          | 426000          | 428000          | 854000          | 0.000603             |
| 5            | Professional Colleges             | 0            | 0            | 0            | 127785          | 198208          | 325993          | ..                   |
| 6            | Secondary Vocational Institutions | 0            | 0            | 0            | 149000          | 90000           | 239000          | ..                   |
| 7            | Universities                      | 0            | 0            | 0            | 308476          | 212997          | 521473          | ..                   |
| <b>Total</b> |                                   | <b>33131</b> | <b>15907</b> | <b>49038</b> | <b>14901261</b> | <b>11268205</b> | <b>26169466</b> | <b>0.0018739</b>     |

**SOURCE: Pakistan Economic Survey (various issues)**

The deprivation of the region is clear from the fact that a majority of the educational institutions of SWA are lacking the basic amenities like boundary wall, electricity, water, and toilets etc. Out of 476 educational institutions, excluding mosques and Industrial Home Centers (ICH), 226 are without boundary wall, 310 are without electricity, 368 do not have access to drinking water and 299 lack washroom or toilet facilities.

The precarious situation of the education infrastructure of SWA does not stop here. Because of the ongoing war against terrorism in the region, security forces have occupied a majority of the educational institution using them as their camps. As mentioned by Ahmed and Junaid:

....in the South Waziristan, 350 schools have been closed because the buildings of these facilities have been so badly damaged due to the ongoing conflict. The building of the Government Degree College Laddah was bombed which damaged the infrastructure, while equipment and furniture from many schools have been stolen. The damaged building of the college is now under the use of the security forces.<sup>40</sup>

The negligence and deprivation of the region by the successive governments of Pakistan is clear from the fact that after 2005-06 the number of educational institutions in the country have increased, but none in SWA. For example, *Pakistan Economic Survey* documents that the number of professional colleges increased from 1135 to 1377, and universities from 111 to 124, while none was established in SWA's territory.

The religious seminaries have filled the vacuum that was created due to the absence or poor state of available educational institutions. Albeit, these seminaries provided the students with food and shelters, but instead of educating and training them with modern education systems so that they could be used as potential human resource, they were radicalized and instigated for negative activities. Ahmed and Junaid argue, "The root cause of extremist tendencies is the sense of despair amongst the people of FATA, arising from rampant poverty and lack of education and employment opportunities".<sup>41</sup> Therefore, having said that poor state of education facilities in the region is a main cause of terrorism may not be a wrong statement. The above facts reveal that there exists a strong correlation between lack of education and extremism. Thus, it can be argued that if the youth of the region are properly educated and trained they can be utilized for the development of the region as well as country.

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40 Syed Hafeez Ahmed and Fatima A Junaid, "Higher Education in FATA of Pakistan after 9/11: Problems and Solutions", *US-China Education Review* 7, no. 5 (May, 2010): 61.

41 Ahmed and Junaid, "Higher Education in FATA of Pakistan after 9/11: Problems and Solutions", 61.

### Poor Health Facilities

Pakistan has been struggling to provide better healthcare facilities to its people, but SWA's case portraits and glaring situation as compared to other parts of the country. According to Shaheed Bhutto Foundation (SBF) the total number of hospitals in SWA are 5, with 41 dispensaries and 16 Basic Health Units (BHUs), and the total number of doctors and nurses are 37 and 13 respectively for a projected population of 509794.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, the number of population per doctor, per bed and per nurse is 13778, 3776 and 39215, respectively. See Table 4 for comparison.

**TABLE 4: COMPARISON OF HEALTH INDICATORS**

| S. No | Indicators                                | Pakistan | KPK  | FATA | SWA   |
|-------|---|----------|------|------|-------|
| 1     | Population per Doctor                     | 1226     | 4916 | 7670 | 13778 |
| 2     | Population per Bed in Health Institutions | 1341     | 1594 | 2179 | 3776  |
| 3     | Roads per sq km                           | 0.26     | 0.13 | 0.17 | 0.13  |

**SOURCE:** For Pakistan, KP and FATA <http://www.fata.gov.pk>, and for SWA, SBF (Shaheed Bhutto Foundation), 14-16, available at: <http://www.sbf.org/FATA-data.pdf>

### Agricultural Backwardness

The economy of Pakistan, traditionally being an agrarian one, absorbs virtually 45 percent of the total labour force of the country. The contribution of agriculture to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country is nearly 19 percent, whereas 67.50 percent of country's population resides in rural areas, which in one way or other extracts its livelihood from the agriculture sector.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, agriculture is the largest sector in terms of employment, though the largest sector in terms of its contribution to the national GDP. The economy of SWA likewise mainly depends on livestock, low

42 SBF (Shaheed Bhutto Foundation), (n.d), 14-16, [Available from: <http://www.sbf.org/FATA-data.pdf>

43 Government of Pakistan, *Economic Survey of Pakistan*, 2009 (Islamabad: Finance Division, Economic Adviser's Wing, Islamabad, 2009-10), 13.



scale agriculture and remittances from inhabitants working in the Middle Eastern countries and cities across Pakistan. However, despite being the main livelihood source to the inhabitants of SWA, agriculture has received least attention or no attention whatsoever of the government over the years. A statistical description presented in Table 5 unveils the level of negligence to this very sector.

**TABLE 5: COMPARATIVE LAND USE INDICATORS**

| S. No. | Items                                 | Pakistan  | KPK      | FATA    | SWA    |
|--------|---------------------------------------|-----------|----------|---------|--------|
| 1      | Total Area (sq km)                    | 796097    | 74521    | 27220   | 6620   |
| 2      | Total Population                      | 132352000 | 17744000 | 3176000 | 429841 |
| 3      | Population Density (per sq km)        | 166       | 238      | 117     | 77     |
| 4      | Irrigated Area as % of cultivated     | 82        | 52       | 40      | 36.66  |
| 5      | Population per Irrigated Hectare (#)  | 9         | 23       | 44      | 28     |
| 6      | Cultivated Area as % of reported Area | 37.21     | 30.09    | 7.35    | 2.61   |

**SOURCE:** SBF (Shaheed Bhutto Foundation), 1, 14-16, available at: <http://www.sbf.org/FATA-data.pdf>  
also see, [http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/publications/pocket\\_book2006/2.pdf](http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/publications/pocket_book2006/2.pdf)

Data presented in the Table 5 presents that land under cultivation in SWA is mere 2.61 percent of the total. While in Pakistan this number goes up to 37.21 percent. SWA is the worst among FATA and Pakistan in term of irrigation, where only 36.66 percent of total cultivable land is irrigated, whereas in Pakistan and FATA it is 82 and 40 percent, respectively. The underline statistics, therefore, show that the agriculture sector due to the overwhelming negligence of the successive governments of Pakistan has failed to provide a livelihood base to the people of SWA. The agriculture inefficiency in turn caused increasing poverty and

hunger, pushing the local people to become the soft target of extremists.

The above statistical descriptions show that how deprived the entire region is in terms of socio-economic fundamentals. And interestingly, these indicators are the worst in SWA even within the FATA region, which remained the hub for extremism for more than a decade and half. Thus, it is plausible to argue that the socio-economic deprivations could be the potential cause of terrorism in FATA and SWA coupled with other critical factors.

### **Conclusion**

The paper highlights the causes of terrorism in FATA with special reference to SWA. This region has been the focus of national and international media since 9/11 as Taliban and Al-Qaeda outfits fled to the rocky, rough and inhospitable region in search of safe haven. New surge of terrorism in the region attracted researchers and strategists to find out the causes of terrorism. Though the contemporary literature provides a good insight to understand the causes of terrorism in FATA and SWA, yet the majority of research is unsystematic and random. These studies in the stream of literature have failed to pen down the social and economic deprivations as pivotal causes of terrorism in the region. To bridge this gap, this research has made an attempt to bring forth the socio-economic deprivations as cause, and concluded a positive correlation between terrorism and social and economic backwardness, along with other factors. Contrary to the assertion that if poverty causes terrorism then why the world's most poverty stricken sub-Saharan Africa cause no terrorism, we maintain that the social and economic deprivations play a very pivotal role to nourish extremism and consequently terrorism. SWA being the largest agency of FATA reveals that its derivations culminated the entire region into the hands of extremists, though other factors also have their role to play in this regard. In other words, this research finds out a strong relationship between terrorism and lack of access to the basic socio-economic amenities.

While concluding, it is important to underscore that the root cause of the growing fanaticism is poverty and lack of opportunity leading to alienation that is easily exploitable. This alienation is not tribal or religious, but economic and class-oriented; it is not linked with any foreign occupation of Afghanistan, as many believe so. We argue that the process of radicalization during 1980s, the negligence of the region by the successive regimes since 1947, and the deprived nature coupled with some cultural norms and withering government writ drag the region towards extremism and terrorism. But above all, it is social and economic deprivations that proved to be the devastating causes of terrorism in the region.