

Social Factors Influencing Extremism in Pakistan

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Abstract

This paper aims at investigating the social factors behind extremism in Pakistan. The study infers that the social factors including poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and an acute deprivation of fundamental human rights are promoting extremism and violence in the country. The phenomenon of social extremism has been examined in the context of the social constructivism. The theory of social constructivism states that the identities and interests of actors are socially constructed and the social factors shape and affect the behaviour of the general public. Therefore, along with social factors, misperceptions of different sects, social values and identities significantly contribute in promoting social extremism. The findings of the study reveal that social factors are indeed responsible for extremism. Furthermore, most of the population in Pakistan is deprived of basic human rights and necessities of life like food, shelter and security. Thus, creating gap between upper and lower segments of the society, these under privileged people indulge themselves in unlawful activities and join radical organizations. The findings of the study also suggest that the present wave of extremism can be dampened by providing

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equal opportunities and basic necessities of life to the masses and by eliminating gender discrimination.

Introduction

Extremism in Pakistan destroyed peace and affected the socio-economic and political life. Religious and sectarian fanaticism in Pakistan started as early as in 1947, when one of the religious parties (Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Hind) declared itself as a religious unit.¹ The Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Hind was against the partition of India and after independence they became active in Punjab. Quaid-e-Azam had foresighted the exploitation of religion in politics. In his first address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on August 11, 1947, he declared that religious faith and sectarian beliefs would play no part in politics of Pakistan.² The problem became alarming when major political parties ignored the issue of extremism and took no serious measures to counter this menace.

Origin of Extremism in Pakistan

The origin of extremism in Pakistan can be traced back in 1952-53 with the first anti-Ahmedi agitation³ and later on in 1974 Bhutto government declared them non-Muslim. During Zia-ul-Haq regime sectarianism increased due to Islamization policies.⁴ Furthermore, the Iran revolution (1979) also affected the society seriously. Therefore, during 1980-90s extremism and sectarian violence gained strong roots in the country.

However, after the 9/11 Pakistan joined War on Terror (WOT) and became an ally of US against radical and terrorist groups. Pakistan also suffered extremism due to cross-border activities (between Afghanistan and FATA). The

1 Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan between Mosque and Military*, (United Book Press, 2005).

2 Afifa Zarrin, "Jinnah's Vision of Pakistan as a Modern Islamic State", *Ma'arif Research Journal* (July – Dec. 2013): 1-12.

3 Susan Maitra, "General Zia Moves against Pakistan's 'Anti-Islamic' Qadiani Cult", *Executive Intelligence Review*, 11, no. 23, (June, 1984).

4 Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan Drifts into Extremism* (New York: Armonk, 2004).

western agencies also claimed that most of the leadership is residing in FATA. Moreover, American Admiral Michael Mullen stated that, "I believe fundamentally if the United States is going to get hit, it is going to come out of the planning of the leadership in FATA—Al Qaeda specifically."⁵ On the other hand, this situation caused rising of terrorism in Pakistan. Since then, Pakistan has been facing suicide bombings even more than Afghanistan. Pakistan took certain initiatives to counter terrorism. For instance, Operation Rah-e-Rast [Urdu: Operation Right Track], Operation Rah-e-Nijat [Urdu: Operation Tract to Salvation] and Operation Silence are the most important measures. However, extremism still remains severe threat to the stability of Pakistan.

In Pakistan both the civilian and military governments ruled but unfortunately could not address the scourge of extremism. For instance, after Musharraf government the civilian government of Pakistan People's Party could not address the issue of extremism and terrorism which further enhanced unrest in the country. Even Musharraf's policies on War on Terror were continued by the PPP. In May, 2013 Pakistan Muslim League (N) came into power and tried to negotiate with the extremist groups. However, after the failure of any agreement the government decided to take strict action to bring peace in the country. Therefore, the government launched military operation named Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan and FATA to eliminate the extremists and terrorists. The operation proceeded successfully as Major General Zafarullah Khan (commander of Zarb-e-Azb [Urdu: Operation Hard Strike]) stated that 90 percent areas have been cleared from the terrorists by the Pakistan military.⁶ Many terrorists killed and this operation will be continued until the clearance of North Waziristan from

5 Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, "Threat of Extremism & Terrorist Syndicate beyond FATA" *Journal of Political Studies*, 1, no. 2, (2010):19-49.

6 Muhammad Ali Ehsan, "Zarb-e-Azb and the Issue of Strategic Depth" *The Express Tribune*, July 01, 2014. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/729243/zarb-e-azb-the-issue-of-strategic-depth/>

terrorists. Major General Asim Bajwa said that almost 2,000 militants have been killed in operation Zarb-e-Azab.⁷

Constructivism and Social Extremism

Constructivism highlights that how ideas define and can transform the organization of world politics, shape the identity and interests of states, and determine what counts as legitimate action. Furthermore, Constructivists stress on human rights, norms, perceptions and their impact on states.⁸ For a common man, it is hard to get justice. The domestic environment in Pakistan is making the ground more fertile for extremism. It is a fact that poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and violation of human rights are fuelling extremism in the society. People want their basic rights and when they are denied their fundamental rights they then join different radical groups and organizations to vent out their anger.

Constructivism states that the identities and interests of actors are socially constructed and social factors shape and affect the behaviour of the general public.⁹ Poor socio-economic conditions, unemployment and lack of freedom of expression are some of the causes behind the growing number of extremist organizations and groups in Pakistan. Social constructivism helps us understand these factors that are promoting social extremism in Pakistan. The religious, political and social extremism have started one-dimensional debate about radicalism. Over all, a cursory glance at the extremist infestation of Pakistan will indicate that its nature and factors fall within the realm of social constructivism.

Origin of Social Extremism in Pakistan

In Pakistan, both democratic and military governments have had their heydays. Political turmoil and instability caused

7 ISPR, "Operation Zarb-e-Azb: All Terrorists being Hit, Says Gen. Raheel" *The Express Tribune*, January 17, 2015.

8 Baylis John, Smith and Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics*, (USA: Oxford University Press, 2011), 105-08.

9 Cynthia Weber, *International Relations Theory* (London: Routledge Publisher, 2001).

the downfall of successive civilian governments. This political instability paved way for the first Martial Law in 1958.¹⁰ The personal interests of political leaders, military interference, injustice, political instability and discrimination are a few of the major factors behind the failure of successive governments in the past. This nation has constantly been deceived in the name of democracy and many social segments have lost their trust in the democratic setup over time. For instance, famine in Tharparkar¹¹, poor law and order situation particularly in Karachi, energy crisis¹² and high prices of basic necessities of life¹³ are some examples of poor governance.

The lion's share of state resources is enjoyed by the richer segment of society while the lower class is deprived of even their most basic rights. The gap between the upper and lower classes is widening day by day and it has created a gulf in the society. For a common citizen obtaining justice is a tough task. It is a common perception that the police do not serve the masses efficiently. Due to all these reasons and perhaps some more, the deprived people tend to escalate this cycle of violence and eradicate their tormentors. Privileged classes are despised generally, though not on a revolutionary scale, and yet they do not bother about the neglected classes. This brings lawlessness in the country. The only way to stabilize the situation in Pakistan is to implement the law and order in true letter and spirit.

Causes of Social Extremism in Pakistan

The poor social and economic conditions, unemployment and lack of freedom of expression in Pakistan are major

10 Muhammad Hassan, "Causes of Military Intervention in Pakistan: A Revisionist Discourse" *Pakistan Vision*, 12, no. 2 (December 2011): 66.

11 Javed Jabbar, "Tharparkar: A Famine of Facts," *Dawn*, March 9, 2014.

12 Muhammad Ali Qureshi, "Will Pakistan's Energy Crisis Ever End?" *The Express Tribune*, July 27, 2014.

13 Sidra Mushtaq, "Coping with High Food Prices in Pakistan," *The World Bank*, January 3, 2012. <http://blogs.worldbank.org/youthink/coping-high-food-prices-pakistan>

causes behind the growing number of extremist organizations and groups.

The Human Development Index ranked Pakistan at 146 out of 187 countries and territories for the year 2012.¹⁴ In Pakistan, sectarianism and socioeconomic differences are the greatest threat to stability. The existing circumstances present an encouraging atmosphere for extremism. A quick statistical survey discloses noticeable deprivation in this case. The net school enrolment rate is 57percent and about 40 million of the common people live in poverty. 400,000 new-born babies die per annum because of diarrhoea¹⁵ and only 37percent of the population is part of the working labour force.¹⁶

Impact of Poverty on Social Extremism

In recent times, poverty has become a serious problem in Pakistan and has given birth to a multitude of other maladies, including general depression, limited engagement of a vast majority of the society in national issues and an ever growing mistrust of the government. About sixty percent of the total population is earning less than two dollars a day and the average total family income amounts to \$429. Sixty four (64) million people were living below the poverty line in 2008, compared to 35.5 million in 2005, a shocking statistic out of line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). About 50 percent of the rural population and 65 percent of the total population is defined as poor.¹⁷ Even urban poverty is significantly higher than that in other regional centres. Almost two thirds of the population and 80 percent of the poor live in rural areas, where the majority does not have access to the most basic facilities of life. The poverty is

14 World Development Indicator, *World Bank Report* (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2013).

15 ZafarBangash, "Understanding the Root Causes of Problems in Pakistan", *Crescent International* (June 2009).

16 Government of Pakistan, *Economic Survey of Pakistan*(Islamabad: Ministry of Finance, 2009-10).

17 Salman Ali, "Rising Poverty in Pakistan," *Daily Times*, June 14, 2014.

largely a rural phenomenon and on the other hand, the gap between urban and rural poverty is increasing.¹⁸

According to the *Economic Survey of Pakistan 2008-09*, the headcount index increased to 36.1 percent in 2009 from 33.8 percent in 2008. According to a World Bank report twenty one percent of the total population lives below the \$1.25 per day as of 2013.¹⁹ Inflation had an immediate impact on poverty and has been in double digits since 2007, increasing to 23.7 percent in 2008-09, and 21.3 percent in 2010 which is an alarmingly high figure. Moreover, the rise in inflation was mainly due to the rise in food prices which particularly worsened the poverty situation because food price inflation hits the lower classes hardest. Rural poverty can further be linked to inadequate infrastructure and a lack of meaningful economic opportunities and resources, while urban poverty remains lower than both the overall and rural poverty levels because of a relatively easier access to the said facilities.

Pakistan has achieved a growth rate of 6 to 8 percent in the first seven years of the last decade but such a high growth rate could not eradicate poverty and failed to produce a trickledown effect as a positive effect of the national growth was biased towards the richer segment of the country.²⁰ This discrimination further leads to the depression and frustration among deprived citizens. The tribal areas in Pakistan are an especially prominent example of such wanton inequality, as they have always been deprived of their basic human rights including employment, education, social and economic developments and strong government institutions. Around 60 percent of the FATA's population lives below the poverty line and it is the most backward region in Pakistan. Moreover,

18 Ghulam Muhammad Arif and ShujaatFarooq, "Poverty, Inequality and Unemployment in Pakistan," *Pakistan Institute of Development Economics*, (October, 2011).

19 United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report*, 2013.

20 Husain Haqqani, "Poverty Fuels Extremism," *Gulf News*, (August, 2007) <http://gulfnnews.com/opinion/thinkers/poverty-fuels-extremism-1.193742>

this has played a leading role in the growing militancy in the region.²¹

Illiteracy and Extremism

In a democratic system, there is a direct link between education and democratic norms provided through the media, books, journals and newspapers etc. Education enables the citizens to be aware of their rights and duties. Generally, illiteracy and the contents of education are considered to be the main causes of extremism and conflicts. The literacy rate in Pakistan improved to 59 percent in 2011-12 from 58 percent in 2008-09 with annual growth rate of 1.8 percent but every year 45 percent primary school children drop out of school and the World Bank report asserts that nearly half of the adult population of Pakistan cannot read plus the net enrolment rate in Pakistan is lowest in South Asia.²² Over the time, net enrolment rate is improved but it is still far away from the ambitious 100 percent target which was to be achieved by 2015.

According to the *Economic Survey of Pakistan 2010-11*, 42 percent of the population has no formal education and only 4 percent has a degree level education while many others possess degrees without actually attending any university. Between the two extremes, 38 percent of the population is below matriculation level with 11 percent having education up to matriculation and only 5 percent up to higher secondary level.²³ The lower literacy rate in Pakistan is attributed to the low level of investment in the education sector and poor educational institutions setup as the government of Pakistan spends only 2.6 percent of its

21 Brian R. Kerr, "A Progressive Understanding of Pashtun Social Structures Amidst Current Conflict in FATA," *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 3, (December, 2010).

22 JayshreeBajoria "Pakistan's Education System and Links to Extremism," *Council on Foreign Relation*, October 7, 2009.
<http://www.cfr.org/pakistan/pakistans-education-system-links-extremism/p20364>

23 Government of Pakistan, *Economic Survey of Pakistan*, Ministry of Finance, (2009-10).

GDP on education. Child dropout rate at elementary level is about 45 percent while one-fourth of the elementary school teachers are untrained.²⁴ Moreover, basic infrastructure in many schools is missing and 37.7 percent schools up to elementary level are without boundary walls, 33.9 percent are without drinking water, 37 percent without washrooms and around 60 percent without electricity.²⁵ There are also differences among districts in the provinces. Although in Punjab, the average literacy rate is more than 56 percent, in underdeveloped districts like Rajanpur it is 28 percent, in Muzaffargarh 33 percent, in Dera Ghazi Khan 37 percent and in Rahim Yar Khan the literacy rate is 38 percent. These districts suffer from low educational standards, high unemployment and illiteracy rates. Similarly, in other provinces, literacy rate is high in urban areas as compared to the rural areas.

Unsurprisingly, there are also remarkable differences between the provinces. In Baluchistan there is an overall 62.82 percent illiteracy rate and 90 per cent of the rural women are illiterate.²⁶ According to the official data in FATA, female literacy rate is only 3 percent while the male literacy rate is 29.5 percent.²⁷ Such a huge gap in educational levels among males and females has created a deeply polarized and depressed society. Consequently, with little understanding of the true principles of Islam, there is a greater chance of people being misguided by the radical ideologues. Such a serious consequence is in line with an empirical survey of 1,050 FATA residents. Out of this sample, nearly 45 per cent of the respondents thought illiteracy is a main factor responsible for the current religious extremism in FATA. The authorities inadequately supervised the government's educational institutions and learning and

24 Hassan Abbas, "Pakistan can Defy the Odds: How to Rescue a Failing State," *Institute for Social Policy and Understanding*, (May 2009).

25 Pakistan, *Economic Survey of Pakistan 2009-10*.

26 Bajoria, "Pakistan's Education System and Links to Extremism".

27 Arshad Ali, "Internal Instability in Pakistan—Ideological and Socioeconomic Perspectives," *Islamabad: Institute of Strategic Studies* (2011).

teaching techniques are also poor. Only the people having enough money can afford a decent schooling for their children. Because of poor standards of education in government schools students are ill-prepared for good jobs and this should be considered a big threat which is promoting extremism in society.²⁸

Unemployment is increasing because of poor education system in Pakistan, which is forcing youth to become the target of different extremist groups as they have limited economic opportunities. The educational set up also suffers from poor syllabus, corruption, lack of facilities in institutions which is enhancing intolerance in the society. The extremist groups are exploiting these weaknesses for their own purposes. The government is also responsible as the management is ignoring its responsibilities.

The Nexus between Madrasah and Extremism

The madrasahs [Urdu: religious schools] provide free education, boarding and lodging to their students. These seminaries are a part of Pakistani educational system but it remains at the low level among various educational systems. On the one hand, most of the students belong to poor families and cannot afford education from state schools. On the other hand, a few madrasahs have their own syllabus to award graduation degree and the largest part of it is in Arabic or Islamic studies. After completing graduation it is difficult for a madrasah graduate to join government services. On average teachers in madrasah are paid Rs.5000 per month.²⁹ Therefore, it is hard for such pupils to get a good job and earn enough to support their families.

As a result, few of them turn to various religious organizations that are often acting as a platform for such negative activities. Some of these institutions impart military

28 Moeed Yusuf, "Rational Institutional Design, Perverse Incentives, and the US-Pakistan Partnership in post-9/11", *Defence Against Terrorism Review*, 2 (2009): 15-30.

29 Muhammad Amir Rana, "Mapping the Madrasah Mindset: Political Attitudes of Pakistani Madrasahs," *Conflict and Peace Studies*, Vol. 2, no. 1 (January 2009).

training as well. Usually, pupils who are studying in these madrasahs are between the ages of five to eighteen and they belong to poor families and rural area. Some madrasahs got financial aid from government zakat [Arabic: Islamic Tax] fund. The rest are run by using foreign funds.³⁰ The rise of sectarian conflicts is closely related to madrasahs' boom in Pakistan. Madrassah culture is posing internal security threat to Pakistan as almost all sects have their own madrasahs which resulted in sectarianism. Similarly, different religious groups are promoting extremist thoughts about religion which is further promoting religious intolerance in the country. Moreover, some extremist groups are using madrasah to train the Jihadi groups and they are preaching the concept of Jihad as an individual act rather than the state affair. Most importantly, after memorizing the Quran by heart (often without understanding it), these students hold the office of mullahs in the area mosques and they teach same syllabus which they got from their institutes and teachers. Consequently, they are spreading their influence from generation to generation.³¹

However, as madrasahs are the centre to give Islamic teaching to students and it is the responsibility of government to introduce uniform syllabus in the educational institutions. The students will be able to get Islamic knowledge of tolerance, patience, honesty etc. and will play positive role in the peaceful development of Pakistan.

Unemployment: The Main Factor behind Extremism

Unemployment is considered as one of the major causes behind terrorism and extremism. Pakistan is a state with a median age of around 20 years and it is estimated that currently around 104 million people in Pakistan are below the age of 30. During the Financial Year (FY)2011-12, out of the total population of 121.01 million people are of working

30 MateenHaider, "ME Countries Providing Funds to Religious Seminaries, Senate told," *Dawn*, Jan 30, 2015.

31 Government of Pakistan, "Islamic Education Research Cell: Ministry of Education," *Report on Deeni Madaris* [Urdu: religious schools] of Pakistan, (1988).

age and the share of employed labour force is 53.8 million.³² According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics the unemployment rate in the first quarter of 2013 was 6.3 percent. The population growth rate for the FY2012-13 was 2 percent and the fertility rate had declined modestly. In present circumstances it is expected that Pakistan will attain 160 million more persons by 2050.³³ This demonstrates that in future there will be a large labour force in Pakistan. The situation can get worse if the government fails to provide proper education, better living facilities and employment opportunities to the youth. The youth lacks access to the employment and basic education. Poor economic and social conditions and growing militancy are causing dissatisfaction and disappointment mainly amongst the youth in conflict-hit areas.³⁴ Generally, disillusionment with economic, political, societal realities causes insurgencies where citizens feel deprivation and helpless due to poor state of affairs.

Corruption and Social Extremism

Corruption is a prime obstacle which is hampering the way of economic development across the country. According to the *Transparency International Report*, Pakistan is listed at 126 position out of 175 countries in corruption, misuse of power and hidden transaction.³⁵ However, corruption is not the sole issue rather it is incompetency and dishonesty on the part of our leaders as well.

Majority of the successive elected governments failed to provide a transparent system of accountability and the larger proportion of the total resources and facilities have always been enjoyed by the politicians and bureaucrats. This

32 Pakistan, *Economic Survey of Pakistan 2011-12*.

33 UNO "Population Challenges and Development Goals Department of Economic and Social Affairs", *United Nations Publication* (2005). http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/pop_challenges/Population_Challenges.pdf

34 Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), "Radicalization: Perceptions of Educated Youth in Pakistan." *PIPS Survey Report*, (September 2010).

35 Transparency International Report, "Corruption Declined in Pakistan", *Daily Times*, December 3, 2014.

unequal distribution of resources and social evils are the main cause of social unrest and chaos in the country.³⁶ Furthermore, according to the *Global Competitiveness Report (2007-2008)*, after bad governance and poor infrastructure of bureaucracy corruption is one of the major problems preventing companies from doing investment in Pakistan.³⁷

Violation of Women Rights

As a developing country, Pakistan has to cross a long distance before it stands beside all the developed countries. In Pakistan, women comprise more than half of the total population, but they are not given their due social rights. The rapid rise of extremism made the lives of women miserable and oppressed. They are the most underprivileged segment of society deprived of the basic democratic, political, legal and economic rights. In rural areas of the country women are threatened by orthodox traditions and customs such as killing in the name of honour, social and economic discrimination, violence, prejudiced regulations and sexual harassment are common issues. According to the *World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap (2012)*, Pakistan ranked 134th out of 135 countries among the hard places for the women in the world.³⁸ Female education is restricted in the rural areas becoming a common target of violence for the native militant groups. To discourage the females to study and go outside for jobs, the extremist groups attack even on their educational institutions. In 2012, the extremists attacked on Malala Yousafzai due to her passion and commitment for education.³⁹

36 Bilal Hussain, "If Pakistan's Leaders cannot be Honest, At Least Let them be Competent," *The Guardian*, April 9, 2011.

37 Umbreen Javaid, "Corruption and its Deep Impact on Good Governance in Pakistan," *Pakistan Economic and Social Review*, 48, no. 1 (Summer 2010): 123-34.

38 Sanchita Bhattacharya, "Status of Women in Pakistan," *J.R.S.P.*, 51, no. 1, (January-June, 2014).

39 AFP "Taliban Attack Malala Yousafzai", *Dawn*, October 9, 2012.

In some of the rural areas, women are not permitted to take part in political activities and are not allowed to exercise their right to caste vote. Hence, the participation of women has almost become low in socio-political activities in the areas controlled by the fundamentalist groups. However, President Musharraf took some steps to empower women. For instance, to get the consensus on the issue of women's empowerment, he held meetings with different officials such as bureaucrats, social activists and local stakeholders. On International Women's Day on March 8, 2002 he increased the number of reserve seats for women in the national and provincial assemblies. Furthermore, he announced three months amnesty for those women who were in prison for serious crimes.⁴⁰

The government of PPP also made similar claims to improve the condition of women but these statements could not be materialized during their tenure. In 2010, the PPP government passed the Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act. This act broadly defined and conveyed the meanings of word harassment. It includes any action both written and verbal which leads to sexual advances, sexual favours and mental and physical disturbances at work place. Additionally, an inquiry committee was also formed to settle harassment issues under subsection-1 of section-3.⁴¹

Historically, it has been proved that the states can manage crisis easily only when they give priority to its common citizens over elite class while in the states where the common people are deprived of their rights and basic facilities they lack behind the world in terms of economic, social and political development. At present, the main focus of democratic states are individuals and common people but the irony is that many people in the third world countries have been deprived of their basic rights and do not enjoy

40 Anita M. Weiss, *Special Report*, United States Institute of Peace, May 2012.

41 Government of Pakistan, 2010.

http://www.ndu.edu.pk/temp/Protection_Against_Harassment_of_Women_Act_2010.pdf

their due rights while the upper strata are in a bargaining position. Pakistan is also one of those countries where the lower class has constantly been deprived of its due rights in the society and limited number of people has monopolized each and every opportunity of life.

Findings

The causes and effects of social factors in Pakistan indicate that the present wave of extremism can be dampened by providing equal opportunities and eliminating gender discrimination and basic necessities of life to the masses. It is the need of hour to narrow down the gap between upper and lower strata of the country by removing the monopoly of elite class.

Another factor which is worsening the present situation is the deprivation of the social justice. Civilian and military governments have failed to address these basic issues in Pakistan. For a common citizen it is hard to get justice. Law and order situation is getting worse day by day because of poor administration. Moreover, corruption is another cause of injustice. There are many cases in which police were also involved in crimes. For instance, Sialkot incident is an example of social injustice in which two innocent brothers were publicly tortured by the police.⁴²

Conclusion

This study highlighted important social factors motivating people to join radical groups. On one hand, Illiteracy, unemployment, injustice and deprivation of fundamental rights are creating dissatisfaction among citizens. On the other hand, extremist groups are using such people to run their radical groups to get revenge from government and society. This study concludes that the social environment of a country plays very important role in determining the behaviour and response of the masses. At the same time, there is a dire need to educate people and it is the core responsibility of the government to provide job opportunities,

42 Ali Usman, "Sialkot Brothers' Deaths: Justice Catches up with lynchings," *The Express Tribune*, September 20, 2011.

justice, education and fundamental rights to its citizens. Such opportunities will enable people to stand against extremist elements and they will not be exploited by radical groups to achieve their objectives.

The policy implications of the study are: firstly, in order to tackle the issue of extremism the social hindrances which are leading to extreme behaviour and actions on the part of individuals should be immediately removed. Secondly, social evils prevailing in this society like poverty, illiteracy, injustice, unemployment, and corruption are increasing intolerance among general public. Therefore, the government should provide equal education, justice, and employment opportunities to every citizen. Moreover, gender discrimination should be eliminated. The government should also provide equal opportunities irrespective of gender. The state and society can mutually cope with extremism effectively. Importantly, there should be uniform education system for all students in the country and the authorities should pay special attention to improve tolerance, endurance and kindness in the society through the educational syllabus. Finally, there is an urgent need to educate people about the true spirit of Islam and Qur'an. Media can also play a vital role in spreading awareness among the general public countering the extremism and socio-political issues along with promoting patience among general public for other sects and religions.