

An Investigation of the Impacts of Militancy on Social Capital in Dara Adam Khel, Erstwhile FATA



Saiqa Bibi	MPhil Scholar, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar saiqaafri26@gmail.com
Dr. Jan Alam	Chairman, Department of Sociology, Kohat University of Science & Technology Janalam@kust.edu.pk
Mr. Tariq Aziz	Visiting, Lecturer Department of Sociology, Kohat University of Science & Technology

Abstract: *The recent literature about the impacts of militancy reveals that it has various social, cultural, psychological, and financial impacts on an individual and society. The study area witnessed militancy during the last two decades. Keeping in view, this paper is designed to investigate the post-militancy situation of social capital. The nature of the study was qualitative, the data was collected from 25 participants through purposive sample technique by using in-depth interviews. Thematic analysis technique was used for data analysis which reveals that militancy has certain effects on the social capital such as change in the social/collectivity into individualism, disruption in the Hujra System, separation of family system from joint to nuclear, least control of elders over the youngsters, and the disintegration among groups occurred after militancy. This research provides a new framework for scholars and policymakers who are interested in studying further on impacts of militancy.*

Keywords: Social capital, militancy, traditional system, transformation, qualitative study

Introduction

The recent wave of militancy especially in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has affected the physical and social infrastructures alongside numerous human casualties. Thus, both belts such as Northern and Southern suffered uncountable incidents that paralyzed human life from different dimensions. On such affected area on the southern side is Darra Adam Khel, a former Frontier Region of District Kohat. The area is seriously damaged due to the prolonged in the form of disintegration in the socio-cultural and physical infrastructure.

It is observed that social capital was given less attention for a long period, it became an academic debate and policy frame in 1990. (Putnam, 1995) explained that it is an agent of interaction and development of social relations

that uphold the exchange of goods and services; and to construct a trust level among individuals and groups because of such interactions. Russell (2009) believes that ethics and shared values are the two basic principles of social capital. It also covers patriarchy, kinship and trust, shared norms, social relations, mutual benefits, and cooperation among groups and individuals in a society as revealed by Ramia et al. (2017).

Coleman (1990) argued that social capital, like other forms of capital, is also productive because it enables people to attain their goals though these would be difficult without it. According to Putnam (1993), social capital comprises people's social networks, their norms of mutuality, and the development of trust among them, in contrast to physical capital, which denotes material things, and human capital, which covers the

characteristics of humans (Temple, 2002). However, the relationship between conflict and social capital is bidirectional. Conflict, on one side, enhances stress and weakens trust. For example, when any news about violence is propagated, people will demonstrate cautiousness towards each other, resulting in a possible decrease in group efforts and forming groupings/divisions among members of a community (Collette & Cullen, 2000).

In certain cases, conflict and violence would induce humans to organize with one another, establishing social associations and resources that may be recognized via unity due to the perceived external danger. Thus, folks belonging to the same locality, town, ethnic group, or religion may display higher levels of social capital within the group and lower levels of social capital outside groups (Collette and Cullen, 2000; De Luca and Verpoorten, 2012). Likewise, the research study conducted by Pinchotti and Verwimp (2007) indicated that violence and conflict have a positive effect on social capital instead of triggering its decline. They also reported that the per capita income would progressively revert to its stable level after conflicts in Africa. Social scientists have correlated this expansion point to societal alteration and changes in social capital ensuing from war.

Fearon and Laitin (2003) reported that conflicts and war in developing countries may be due to poor governance and weak social structures. These may be the lack of resources, weak implementation of laws and policies, and poor mechanisms to fairly resolve disputes among various interest groups or prevent them from violent outbreaks (Ray and Esteban, 2017). Collier and Hoeffler (1998) found that the accessibility of natural resources, ethnolinguistic division, and differences such as religion, and class are also significantly associated with civil conflicts. Fearon and Laitin (2003) found that conflicts are positively associated with poverty, political uncertainty, substantial populations, and intriguing topography. Thus conflicts are more likely to occur in societies where there is more militancy due to several reasons such as economic and

political disparities, social class differences, racial and ethnic differences, and marginalization (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Esteban et al., 2012).

Research Question

- What are the impacts of militancy on social capital (such as family integration, kinship relations, Hujra system, and collectivity) in Dara Adam Khel Erstwhile FATA?

Objective of the study

- To investigate the impacts of militancy on social capital (such as family integration, kinship, Hujra System, and relationships among individuals) in Dara Adam Khel Erstwhile FATA.

Methodology

The researcher opted for a qualitative method for this study. The study aimed to explore the perception and knowledge of the participants about the changes in social capital due to militancy in the study area as per the analogy given by (Cresswell, 2008).

The research relied on primary data collected through in-depth open-ended interviews with 25 participants recommended by Baker and Edwards (2012). The purposive sampling technique was used as a sample strategy by selecting only those participants who could share their knowledge and experiences about militancy and social capital. The participants included the actual residents of different villages of Dara Adam Khel such as Akhorwal, Zarghun Khel, Sheraki, Bosti Khel, and Tor Chappar. After prior consent, the interviews were taken from the selected participants which consisted of three sections such as demographic information, social capital, and militancy. The participants were asked clear and unbiased questions about the impacts of militancy on social capital. All interviews were taken in the local language (i.e. Pashto), and participants were given enough time to share their expressions about changes in the social capital due to militancy. The interview lasted for 35-40 minutes by following a proper interview protocol recommended by Cresswell (2018).

In the next step, the primary data is analyzed by using the thematic analysis technique which consists of several steps such as initial coding, selective coding, categories, and themes as per the technique given by (Braun and Clark, 2006). The researchers found themes such as a change in the social/collectivity into individualism, disruption in the Hujra System, separation of the family system from joint to nuclear, least control of elders over the youngsters, and the disintegration among groups.

Discussion

This study focused on understanding the social capital in post-conflict scenarios in an area that severely suffered militancy during the last two decades. The purpose was to explore the impacts from various dimensions by using a sociological lens. It is found that militancy challenges the status quo and brings changes in a society that can have both positive and negative impacts on that society. This study also explored changes in different elements of the study area, which are given as under.

Life in a post-conflict context can be divided into formal and informal forms: physical damages that are tangible and rebuilt quickly, and social damages such as value systems, norms, and everyday life activities that are less visible. The rise of militancy affected almost all segments of society, but in this research study, the particular focus was on informal social structure.

Collectivity into individualism:

Collectivity means the collective efforts to work and live together as a single unit. Thus, shared sociocultural and collective thinking are some of the most significant components that bring social integration, cohesion, cooperation, and collective action and solidarity, all of these are necessary for growth. Martin et al. (2019) also found that valuation methods differ in focusing on personal (individual) understandings of value or eliciting those value dimensions shared by a group of people and culturally embedded within

a society.

A participant Javed responded that.

“You know our society suffered a lot, we witnessed many changes in our society, our ancestors lived like a single unit with their cousins and even their neighbors. But nowadays, especially after militancy people are separated from one another and they do not cooperate as they did previously, before, militancy”.

Another Participant Shabir Khan revealed that.

“I would say, several operations were conducted in Dara Adam Khel to curb militancy. Thus, many people migrated from the area to nearby cities such as Kohat and Peshawar to seek refuge in other cities. Such migration disturbed gathering of people also took least or no part in “Marha Jwandy or Gham Khadi¹, transforming collectivity into individualism”.

Another Participant Rasheed Ahmed further added that.

“Indeed, we lost many traditions due to militancy. The tradition of social unity and brotherhood such as Khagara/cooperation, Wafa/loyalty, Nang/chivalry, and Rorwali/brotherhood, that maintain strong relationships among sub-clans has been eradicated. People are now scattered and self-centered of one another and unconcern about other relationships which results in disorder in the region”.

Likewise, Dawar & Iqbal (2019) found that the emergence of the militants as a new force in the region allowed the lower class to take revenge on society. Militant organizations destroyed the area's social networking based on marriages, friendships, kinship links, business-oriented meetings, personal preferences, and political allegiance. Militancy affected the informal social capital, a cementing force to bind the local people in social networking.

¹ It is the local term used for sorrow such as death ceremony and happiness mainly marriage ceremony.

Disruption in the Traditional Hujra system

Hujra is a traditional system of Pakhtun Society, as old as the Pakhtun Society. It has various functions such as socialization, guest entertainment, celebrating wedding and death ceremonies, poetic and traditional musical programs, and offering prayers. It is also found that like other social institutions, the Hujra system is also changed due to militancy, not in all but some areas.

A participant Nazeer Khan expressed that.

“I remember those days when there was only one big Hujra in the village. All people of the village attend the Hujra especially in the evening and during a sorrow or wedding. Elders and youngsters from different families gathered and greeted each other. Nowadays, such traditions are rarely observed, Hujra system in many villages is transformed Bhetak² and the large gathering of people can rarely be observed”.

Likewise, another participant stated that Shah Hussain also responded that:

As far as I know, I can say that Hujra is an important institution of Pakhtun Society. It has several functions such as socialization, and discussion on various debates such as local, international, political, economic, and especially community problems. Moreover, hujra also helps youngsters learn social norms in terms of folkways and mores. However, the unfortunate war disturbs the social structure of the entire society including Hujra”.

Disintegration in the family system

The family system of the study area was very organized and most of the families were joint before militancy. Similarly, there was a strong sense of solidarity among cousins and second cousins. All family members were bonded with each other having a sense of “we feelings”. It is also observed that members of the entire family are controlled by one single elder who used to be the leader of any joint family and the rest of others were bound to obey him/her. However, this study found that a change is also observed in the family system as most families became

nuclear.

A Participant Majeed answered that,

I am sure, militancy has brought many changes in our society. It has changed our family system from joint to nuclear. One major reason is that many families migrated to different regions due to militancy. I along with my family also left my hometown and started living in Peshawar and my brother’s family moved to Karachi. When we decided to come back in 2015 to my hometown, my children refused and preferred to live in Peshawar. Thus, the entire family system of many families is transformed.

Similarly, another Participant Zeeshan Ahmad added that”:

“Militancy broke our family system. For example, some family members were supporters of the insurgents while others were against it; this situation disrupted social relations. A family gets separated. People now give priority to wives and children. Their relations with their parents and siblings have weakened due to the involvement of any family member (i.e. brother or son) in militancy”.

Power Shift from elders to youngster

The change in kinship relationships especially relations among youth and elders is also badly affected due to militancy. The study explored that the social control of the elders and other family members was weakened due to militancy. The concept of *Mashar*/Elders and *Kashar*/younger was based on obedience and respect by the youngsters. However, the power shift from *Mashar* to *Kashar* has deteriorated the social control of family members especially elders over their youngsters.

A participant Ishaq Khan expressed that.

*“Alas! Militancy has destroyed our Mashar/Elders. They used to be strong enough to control their whole families but now everyone considers himself *Mashar* and does not pay heed to the words of their elders. Thus, our problems have increased due to poor decision-making about the youngster during many tribal and*

² A small guest room adjacent to the home.

family matters”.

Another participant Hazrat Khan further added that.

“After the shift of militancy poverty also increased due to disintegration in the families. Those who are dependent on others in the joint families find it difficult to feed their families. This also increased disputes among elders and youth, especially property and business-related disputes. Thus, those kins who were living as a single unit became hostile to each other”.

Another Participant Jamshed Khan also argued that.

“The militancy drastically influenced youth character due to extremism. The brainwashing by militants with an interpretation of their ideology and hate speeches against the state and armed forces made them violent. I would say even many youngsters did not obey their parents, teachers, and other elders, which makes them vulnerable”.

Hence, it is evident from the above discussion that militancy has a negative impact on the personality of many youngsters. Their character is associated with the socio-cultural and the conditions in which they are living. The conditions due to militancy created doubts in their minds, they became frustrated and idealized militant groups.

Similarly, Qazi (2011) also mentioned in his study that the Pakistani insurgents had recruited hundreds of young Pakhtun living in refugee camps after being displaced by intense clashes between them and the Pakistani military. The insurgents’ militants regularly visit these camps and motivate youth to join their groups. In addition to avenging the deaths of any lost family members, many joined due to frustration at the government because of the lack of basic human facilities in these camps. Their displacement and the government’s lack of preparedness have alienated them and been misused by the militant groups (Rodriguez & Harlow, 2012).

Conclusion

This research study explored the damages and

deterioration of militancy and armed conflict in Dara Adam Khel. Many studies are conducted on the impacts of militancy; however, less attention is given to social capital. The study reveals that militancy dismantled the existing sociocultural values, social relations, and social networking. A shift in traditional socio-cultural systems such as Hujra, family system, social control, kinship relations, and collectivity is explored. The traditional version of unity, cooperation, brotherhood, and honor are replaced by conservatism, extremism, and radicalism. As a result, people become worldly-minded and selfish. Class differences and fear have been created in people's minds.

It is also explored that the conflict of Darra Adam Khel led to a decline in social trust; people lost confidence individuals who ultimately lost the concept of group action, integration, and unity. Lack of security towards government security agencies and local control-based mechanisms of elders, Jirga, Malik, and political agents has been perpetuated by growing incidents of killing, murders, theft, and negativity towards each other due to conflict within one family. This is added to deepened discord between individuals at the shared values and ordinary understanding level. Furthermore, the youth character was also enormously transformed due to militancy because militancy severely affected local businesses, education sectors, and the hujra system which contributed to youth character development, violence and extremism had become a common part of youth personalities.

Keeping in view the above facts, this research study is a unique one because it has studied militancy and social capital from a different dimension and new knowledge about the impacts of militancy on social capital. This study also provides an academic platform for future scholars who are interested in studying peace and conflict studies, militancy, and the impacts of militancy on any traditional society.

References

Baker, S. E., and Edwards. (2012). How many qualitative interviews are enough? *Expert voices and early career reflection on*

- sampling and cases in qualitative research. Retrieved from <https://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/id/eprint/2273/>
- Clarke, V. and Braun, V. (2013). *Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning*. The Psychologist, 26(2), P. 120-123.
- Coleman, J., S. (1990). *Social capital in the creation of human capital*. American journal of sociology, 94, S95-S120.
- Coleman, J., S.(1986) *Individual Interests and Collective Action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coleridge, S., T. (2002). *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: 1827-1834* (Vol. 5). Princeton University Press.
- Collette, N. J., and Cullen, M. L. (2000). *The nexus between violent conflict, social capital and social cohesion: Case studies from Cambodia and Rwanda*. World Bank, Social Development Family, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Network.
- Collier, P., and Anke Hoeffler (1998). *On economic causes of civil war*. Oxford Economic Papers, 50: 563–573.
- Collier, P., and Anke Hoeffler (2004). *Greed and grievance in civil war*. Oxford Economic Papers, 56: 563–595.
- Coser, L. (1956). *The Functions of Conflict*. New York: Routledge and Kogan Paul
- Creswell, J., W. (2008). *Qualitative research methods: key features and insights gained from use in infection prevention research*. American journal of infection control, 36(10), 764-771.
- Dawar, A., I. (2019). *Transnational ideologies, violent conflict, and Pashtun Social Identity*. Journal of Social and Political Sciences, 2(2).
- De Luca, G., & Verpoorten, M. (2012). *From vice to virtue? Civil war and social capital in Uganda*.
- Fearon, J., D., and Laitin, D. J. (2003). *Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war*. American Political Science Review, 97: 75–90.
- Martin, S. R., & Côté, S. (2019). *Social class transitioners: Their cultural abilities and organizational importance*. Academy of Management Review, 44(3), 618-642.
- Pinchotti, S., and Verwimp, P. (2007). *SOCIAL CAPITAL and the RWANDAN GENOCIDE a micro-level analysis* (No. 30). Households in Conflict Network.
- Putnam, R., D. (1993). *Bowling alone: America's declining social capital*. Journal of Democracy, 6(1), 65-78.
- Putnam, R., D. (1995). *Bowling alone: America's declining social capital*. Journal of Democracy, 6(1), 65-78.
- Ramia, I. (2017). *The Conflict Impact on Social Capita: Social Degradation in Syria*. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and Rima Dali of the Syrian Center for Policy Research.
- Ray, D., and Esteban. J. (2017). *Conflict and development*. Annual Review of Economics, 9: 263–293.
- Rubin, B. (1995). *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press
- Russell, B. (2009). *Authority and the Individual*. Routledge.
- Temple, J. (2002). *Growth effects of education and social capital in the OECD countries*. Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung, 5-46.