

IMPACTS OF AFGHAN REFUGEES ON SECURITY SITUATION OF PAKISTAN

Mr. Jahan Ul Mulk

M.Phil Scholar (Sociology)
University of Peshawar

Mr. Basit Ali

PhD Scholar (Sociology)
Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan
&

Mr. Atta Ullah

M-Phil Scholar, Rural Sociology
Agriculture University Peshawar

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in Chakdara, District Dir Lower, which is one of the major cities of District Dir Lower and where there is a huge camp for Afghan refugees. The objectives of this study are to find out the impacts of Afghan refugees on the security situation of Chakdara. Apart from the local population of Chakdara, which is 29,712, some 11,184 refugees live in camp while some of the refugees live out of camp in Chakdara and surrounding areas. In order to know whether these refugees have any impact on the security situation of the area, a sample size of 379 respondents was selected through stratified random sampling from the local community. The sample size, 379, was taken according to Sekaran method. Data was collected through interview schedule and their views about the impacts of refugees on security were found. The study proved that the massive influx of Afghan refugees to Chakdara has not only created social, political, economic, environmental and ecological problems, but also caused an alarming threat to Pakistan's internal security. Because of the presence of refugees, the law and order situation has become worst and the crime rate has increased enormously in Chakdara. It is clear from the study that the refugees are wholly solely responsible for promoting Kalashnikov culture, drug trafficking and various other crimes in Chakdara. The study shows that the Afghan refugees are the main source of anarchy and sectarian differences among the local people of the study area.

Keywords: Refugees, Security, Impacts, Chakdara

INTRODUCTION

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) attacked Afghanistan in 1979 with more than 100,000 troops. This decade long war compelled more than three million people to leave Afghanistan and to get refuge in the neighboring countries. On the basis of similarity in culture, religion or languages, Pakistan and Iran hosted all of the afghan refugees of 1979 war (Douglas, 1999). Farr (1986) argued that making arrangements of stay and other basic facilities for such a huge number of refugees was too much difficult task for a poor country, Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan launched camps in all the provinces for the Afghan refugees. Majority of the camps were established in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan which are the provinces on the border with Afghanistan.

According to Express Tribune (2014), currently, 2.8 million Afghan refugees are living in Pakistan which includes both registered and unregistered refugees. Majority of the refugees are living in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. After their arrival, the Afghan refugees were adjusted in various camps which were specially launched for them in specified areas. The refugees later left these camps and began living in areas outside the camps. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, camps for Afghan refugees were launched in Dir, Mansehra, Haripur, Nowshera, Mardan, Kohat, Charsadda and Peshawar districts.

According to William (1994), when the Afghans took refuge in Pakistan, the arms, both heavy and light, became common and soon everyone could approach these. Because of the weaponization of Pakistani society, the law and order situation soon became the most horrible and the government lost its influence in safeguarding the people from criminals, religious extremists and political target killers. Kidnappings, robbery, target killings and killings in the name of religion, sect and honor became ordinary things. The overall ratio of crimes touched the extreme level within few years. Because of the weaponization of Pakistani society, the people started use of heavy arms against each other even during their minute disputes. Ghufraan (2008) in his research study says that the supply of weapons to the Afghan fighters, called *Mujahideen*, from the United States was continued throughout the Afghan war via Pakistan that developed the “Kalashnikov culture” in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa began business of illegal weapons; therefore, Kalashnikov became a prominent fraction of Pakhtun culture.

Throughout the Soviet-Afghan war, the US used propaganda against the USSR in Afghanistan and Pakistan for which Islam was used as a tool. The US invested billions of

dollars and launched a large number of religious institutions inside Pakistan. A huge amount of money was spent on the printing of religious books, pamphlets and brochure which had messages and slogans about the holy war, *Jihad*. General Zia also promoted religious institutes (Madrassa) all over the country. There were only 900 Madrasas in Pakistan till 1971 but in early 1980s there were more than 40,000 Madrassas in Pakistan where most of the teachers and scholars were Afghan refugees. These teachers called the Soviet-Afghan war a "holy war" (*Jihad*) and started mobilization of young students, in order to make them ready for the holy war. In Pakistan, the Shia and Sunni sects have different Madrasas. These two sects have rivalry with each other since long and in 1990s; they started assassination of their religious scholars and targeting their places of worship with bombs and grenades (Jessica, 2000).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pakistan's stance on the Afghan war and its agreement of the refugees was because of the same religion and culture with Afghans and national interests of that time which took Pakistan to a critical position. The impact of the huge influx of the Afghan refugees on the Pakistan's security situation was too much. These could be seen in the challenging wall chalking in Peshawar and Quetta, in fabrication of weapons, in the drug trafficking, sectarianism, nationalism, in the bombings and acts of intervention that mostly affected the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), current Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluchistan, in the atmosphere of political stress and creating conflict over internal economical resources between Afghans and local people Cronin (1985).

According to the research study of Raees (1994), the migration of refugees to Pakistan made it easy for the *mujahideen*, the Muslim resistance fighters, to live among the common refugees in camps. This raised worries on Pakistan's part that Soviets may retaliate *mujahideen* attacks in Afghanistan and in doing so, will disrupt Pakistan's borders with impunity. Due to the literally "free" nature of the tribal areas and the porous border, Pakistan was in no position either to bring an end to the influx of refugees or to competently stop the passage of militants from and to Afghanistan. Moreover, in past, the Afghan governments had put in danger Pakistan's security by providing political support to the nationalist groups in Baluchistan and in Frontier province. The operating armed involvement of a superpower in funding of an economically poor and weak regime gradually opposed to Pakistan provided difficult security problems.

Nixon (1992) argued in his study that the Afghan war badly hammered the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa because it was the main medium for supply of arms to *Mujahideen*. The refugees' camps were playing a vital role in *mujahideen's* strength and in many cases, served as training points for the militants. The violent behavior created by the refugees, elevated stress in the border region. Therefore, the rate of violence and bomb blast of the Afghan intelligent agencies were high, having an average of one blast per week in the North West Frontier Province. The supply points for weapons and other equipments to the Afghan fighters were inside Pakistan. Consequently, the Soviet and Afghan forces several times attacked the areas of Pakistan along the border. Apart from the border areas, the incidents of terrorism inside Pakistan also increased in which the Soviet and Afghan intelligence were involved. Some of the circumstantial proofs say that Soviet Union and Afghanistan were involved in the assassination of General Zia because the Soviets comprehended that General Zia was not in favor of Geneva agreement.

Just like KP, Baluchistan too hosted a large population of Afghan refugees. It was stated that one out of every four person of the area was an Afghan refugee. The arrival of Pakhtun Afghan refugees in Baluchistan unbalanced the fragile national and cultural equilibrium of the province by consolidating the positions of Pakhtuns and changing the status of Balochis to minority in their own province. The refugees not only increased the ratio of Pakhtun population, but also contributed in decreasing Baloch majority dominance. The Baloch had long begrudged the power of Pakhtun communities in their area. With the arrival of the typical Pakhtun refugees, Baluchistan seemed to develop a Pakhtun dominant area. Thus, in difference with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the refugees motivated the Baloch leaders, but their presence made the dream of Greater Baluchistan ineffective (Hilali, 2002).

During the first decade of attack, the Afghans army and militants were equipped for fighting with the Soviet forces. When Pakistan realised that it will be affected if this aggression meet Russian's expectations, it joined the US-led coalition and supported the Afghan Mujahideen. The ISI and CIA examined that the Afghans would be tougher to the Soviets and that they were having the spirit of fighting a "Holy war" against the Red Army in Afghanistan. The establishment of Madrassahs training camps for Mujahideen were on top in Pakistan and the government would receive huge amount of money and arms for the Afghan fighters. 92 training camps of Mujahideen were established in Pakistan, out of which 40 were

in the NWFP. From 1982-88, the ISI and CIA trained more than 1.6 million Mujahideen in Pakistan (Kukreja & Singh, 2005).

According to Bhola (1989), the US supplied a huge amount of AK-47 rifles and other arms/ammunitions for the Afghan Mujahidin in order to equip them well against the USSR. This generosity of the US for mujahideen laid the foundation of weaponization of Pakistani society. During the early years of Afghan war, the US Congressmen alleged that some corrupt officials and mujahideen have misplaced 40% of the total arms aid to Afghan freedom fighters. Among the weapons which came to Pakistan from abroad for Afghan jihad, one third of the total was taken by political figures, one third by the leadership of Afghan mujahideen and the rest was sent to mujahideen. Some Afghan Mujahidin groups started business of weapons which they smuggled to Pakistan, where people would purchase these weapons on very reasonable prices. These included rapid fire guns, missiles, anti-aircraft guns, hand grenades, rocket launchers, anti-tank ammunitions etc. These weapons were spread to each and every corner of Pakistan.

Darra Adam Khel, a tribal village of Pakistan's federally administered areas, has flourished as one of the world's largest arms business centre. There are 2600 arms shops and five gun factories having more than 3000 skilled labours which could jointly manufacture more than one hundred Kalashnikovs in a single day. Because of manufacturing of weapons, Darra Adam Khel soon changed into a large manufacturing spot of home-grown weapons. This market had a large variety of arms, both small and heavy arms. The Afghan Katchi Basti of Sohrab Goth, Karachi was given a free status in terms of illegal arms' business during president Zia government. Because of this large scale illegal arms' business, the culture of Kalashnikov became common in Pakistan. No doubt, the current flood of terrorism; militancy and insurgency in FATA and Balochistan; ethnic and sectarian conflicts and systematic crimes are the consequences of weaponization of Pakistani society after the Afghan war (Hussain, 2007).

The Russian army gradually left Afghanistan in the early 1990s, Pakistan was facing the worst law and order situation and political crisis. The armed groups of criminals and terrorists were wandering in the streets of large cities and towns of Pakistan. The arms dealers in Pakistan would freely display their arms and would sell to whoever they wanted. The outbreak of violence and corruption in Pakistan was an unintended by-product of the United States' use of the country for more than a decade as a conduit for an estimated \$8.7 billion

(1986-90) of weapons aid for Afghan mujahideen: weapons which are now in the hands of militants, criminals, ethnic and sectarian groups, challenging state forces and encouraging insurgency (Hartung, 1994).

According to Mazari (2004), because of its safe nature, the militant groups preferred to establish their bases in the tribal areas of Pakistan. In doing so they got the support of the local people. The tribal people opposed when the government announced military operation there. Actually the government wanted to eradicate terrorism from Pakistan whose basis were in those tribal areas but the tribal people took it as a move against them. They thought the operation in their areas will trample all of their rights. This concept resulted in the establishment of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), led by Baitullah Mahsood. The root of talibanization were in Afghanistan but soon it spread to Mohmand, Bajaur, Orakzai, Kurram agencies and enjoyed support even from the settled areas of Bannu, Tank, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Dera Ismail Khan, Swat and Buner. The operation against talibanization was started from the tribal areas and its surrounding settled areas.

Fair (2009) argued that during the operation against militants in tribal areas, few unforgettable incidents occurred in Pakistan which created sympathy for Taliban and hatred for the government in the hearts of common people. Among these were the air strike on a madrassah in Bajaur in which several children were killed; and operation against the Red mosque in Islamabad where the unarmed children and women were reportedly shot dead by the rangers. Later the drone attacks launched by CIA in tribal areas further aggravated the situation and the government lost its credibility in its people. These incidents were the turning points in the law and order and political situation of Pakistan. Taliban, which were the anti-government elements, got sympathy and support of the common people and a trend of talibanization developed in Pakistan, particularly in Pakhtun belt.

Talibanization in Pakistan severely affected the overall situation of Pakistan, particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The businessmen left the province and settled their businesses in other parts of Pakistan. Another great shock that Pakistan received because of talibanization was in the form of brain drain in which a large number of educated and talented people migrated to foreign countries like Europe and United States. The talibanization inside Pakistan affected its image internationally because of which the international firms and investors were reluctant to do investment in Pakistan. From the year

2004 to 2008, Pakistan has faced a great financial lose because of talibanization (Askari 2008).

Gul (2009) said in his research work that Talibanization flourished the culture of terrorism in Pakistan which includes attacks on armed forces by Tehreek E Taliban Pakistan (TTP); target killing of religious, political and civil society celebrities, scholars and doctors; demolishing schools, offices of NGOs and bridges; and suicide attacks in mosques and other sacred places. So far more than 35000 Pakistanis have been killed in different terrorist incidents after 9/11, which include 5000 soldiers. In 2008 alone, 2113 attacks by militants and insurgents have been reported, killing 2913 people and injuring another 5824. In addition, because of the worst law and order situation and lack of security, the most talented and intelligent people of Pakistan is leaving the country and are migrating to countries such as Canada, Australia, America, England, United Arab Emirate and South Africa in search of better and safer future. According to a rough estimate, six million Pakistanis having great brain have migrated to foreign in the last three decades. Talibanization and terrorism has affected the foreign direct investment as well. According to another rough estimate, \$ 200 million is slips out of Pakistan to foreign countries by Pakistanis and foreign investors.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Because of the nature of the research, all respondents were males and were selected from sampled locality in order to assess the impacts of refugees on the security situation of their area. Data was collected from local people belonging to various walks of life .i.e. teachers, social and political activists, university students, religious scholars, businessmen etc. A structured interview schedule based on Likert scale was used for data collection. Data was entered and analyzed on SPSS software and then the Chi Square test was applied to find out association between various variables.

MAJOR FINDINGS

This study was carried out in Chakdara, Dir Lower, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A total of 379 respondents were interviewed. According to the nature of the study, all of the respondents were male and were selected from various walks of life.

- 49% of the respondents were of the view that the refugees are responsible for weapon supply to their areas. The presence of refugees have a significant association ($P=0.039$) with the supply of weapons to the study area. This is endorsed by the study of Bhola

(1989) which states that during the Afghan war, the US supplied a huge amount of weapons for the Afghan Mujahideen in order to fight against the USSR. Some of the Afghan mujahideen groups and other influential started smuggling of these weapons to Pakistan. When it was found a beneficial business, majority of the Afghan refugees started smuggling of weapons to Pakistan. Kalashnikov culture flourished in Pakistan because of the smuggling of weapons by the refugees.

- 48% of the respondents were of the view that the refugees have affiliation with various jihadist groups having a significant association ($P=0.017$). This study is supported by the research work done by Rais (1994). Rais says that the US started propaganda against the USSR with the support of Afghanis and Pakistanis religious leaders who named the Afghan war *Jihad*. Majority of the refugees' religious leaders were affiliated with various militants groups. They would often discuss the importance of *Jihad* in their sermons. They would brainwash the youth and after mobilizing them, they would be referred to various militants groups in order to train them for Afghan war.
- 38% of the respondents shared that the refugees of their area share information with terrorists living in Afghanistan. It has a significant association ($P=0.016$).
- 49% of the respondents were strongly agreed to the statement that the refugees are involved in terrorist activities like bomb blasts in their area. The significant association is ($P=0.031$).
- 49% of the respondents told that the religious scholars of the refugees use religious institutes for various propagandas having a significant association ($P=0.04$). This result is supported by the study of Hammond (1984). His work says that during the Afghan war, the US created hatred for communism among the Muslims. The religious scholars of various mosques and madrassas were used for this purpose. They would advise their students and followers that they should participate in Afghan war either directly or through financial support, as it was a holy war against the pagans. The speeches of these scholars would be valued a lot and people would believe whatever these scholars would say against Russians.
- 40% of the respondents were strongly agreed to the statement that the refugees are involved in killings in their areas. This too has a significant association ($P=0.035$). This result is supported by the study of Zahab (2000). The research work conducted by Zahab shows that the Afghan refugees are involved in killings of the local people in the

name of religion, sects or nationalism. During the Shiite-Sunni conflict in Pakistan, the Afghan refugees have always tried to increase the prevailing tension between the two sects. The study further explores that there are some criminals among the Afghan refugees who kill people for the sake of money.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that the refugees are often found to be involved in various types of crimes like theft, killings, kidnapping, drug running etc. Apart from crimes, their presence is a great threat to the law and order situation of the area. They have been found to be involved in terrorist activities like bomb blasts, weapon supply, cross border communication and affiliation with jihadist groups. The Afghan refugees are burden on Pakistan because it is economically a weak country with limited resources and it cannot further afford the stay of millions of refugees. The refugees have contribution in all the serious issues which Pakistan has been facing like terrorism, killings, kidnappings, religious extremism, weapon culture, cultivation of poppy, drugs, smuggling of various products and corruption in various departments like police, NADRA etc. They are security risk for Pakistan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the overall findings and conclusions of this research the study recommends that Afghan refugees should be restricted to their respective camps as long as they are in Pakistan. The movement of refugees throughout Pakistan should be closely monitored in order to avoid threats to internal security. Further, police and other law enforcing agencies should check the supply of goods of the Afghan refugees in order to avoid the smuggling of weapons and other harmful products, while the unregistered refugees should be deported from Pakistan

REFERENCES

- Ali, S.M. (2013). Afghan Refugees in Pakistan. Islamabad: *Daily The ExpressTribune*, p. 6.
- Askari, S.J. (2008). Economic Woes Cause Brain Drain. Karachi: *DailyThe Nation*, p. 11.
- Bhola, P.L. (1989). *Benazir Bhutto: Opportunities and Challenges*. Jaipur: Yuvraj Publishers.
- Cronin, R. P. (1985). *The United States, Pakistan and the Soviet Threat toSouthern Asia: Options for Congress*. Washington DC: Congressional Research Service.p. 27
- Douglas, A., & Borour, J. (1999). *Superpowers defeated: Vietnam and Afghanistan Compared*. London, UK: Star Press.
- Fair, C. C. (2009). Pakistan's own war on terror: what the Pakistani publicthinks. *Journal of International Affairs*, 63(1), 39-55.
- Farr, G.M. (1985). *Effects of Afghan Refugees on Pakistan*. New York, US: Vanguards Press.
- Ghufran, N. (2008). *Afghans in Pakistan: A Protracted refugee Situation*.Islamabad, Pakistan: Institute of policy Studies.
- Gul, I. (2009). *The Al Qaeda Connection: The Taliban and Terror inPakistan's Tribal Areas*. New Delhi: Penguin Press. p. 12.
- Hartung, W. D. (1994). *And Weapons For All*. New York, US: Harper CollinsPublishers. p. 123
- Hilali, A. Z. (2002). The costs and benefits of the Afghan War for Pakistan. *Contemporary South Asia*, 11(3), 291-310.
- Hussain, Z. (2007). *Front Line Pakistan: A struggle with militant Islam*. London: I.B, Tauris Publishing Company. p.143
- Jessica, S. (2000). *Pakistan Jihad Culture*. New York, US: Council of Foreign Relations Press. p.119
- Kukreja, V. & Singh, M. P. (2005). *Pakistan: Democracy, Development and Security Issues*. New Delhi: Sage Publications. p.187
- Mazari, S. (2004). *Rethinking the national security policy of Pakistan*. Pakistan: Margalla Papers.
- Nixon, R. (1992). *Seize the Moment: America's Challenge in a One- Superpower World*. New York: Simon & Schuster. p. 91
- Raees, R. B. (1994). *War without winners: Afghanistan's Uncertain Transition after the Cold war*. USA: Oxford University Press. p.237