

Department of Development Studies

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Thematic Focus: Conflict and Security

Why Youth Joins Militancy? The Case of Mohmand Agency (FATA) - Zia Ullah (2011-2013)

A survey based research highlights qualitative and quantitative correlates pushing youth towards militancy. Among these correlates are included poverty, lack of education, monetary gains, and the Collective Responsibility clause of Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). The study recommends collective institutional input from governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to reduce unemployment through investment on livelihood programmes.

Key Findings

1. The aim of this study was to find out factors pushing youth towards militancy. These factors include poverty, lack of education, and the Collective Responsibility clause of Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). The study highlighted the inadequacy and inappropriateness of educational service facilities provided to tribal people generally and specially in Mohmand Agency. School buildings remained unprotected. It was also found through this research that there was no proper coordination between Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Public sector to establish schools.
2. FCR is declared as a draconian law and had made life harder for the tribal people. Under Collective Responsibility, they are paying the price on behalf of others. Sometime they even do not know that why they have been captured or their businesses have been sealed. Road blockade is very common.
3. One of the major factors that contributed towards increased poverty is unemployment. About eighty six percent of the respondents stated that youth joined militancy due to lack of economic opportunities. In tribal society, where there is a lack of economic opportunities, joining militancy was an ultimate answer to making money, having power, and other privileges.
4. Agricultural activities have been destroyed due to ongoing military operation. The least developed infrastructure was destroyed again in current militancy. Therefore Mohmand Agency remains on top in terms of illiteracy, unemployment and poverty.
5. The research showed that the youth had joined militants to have more money, and to pressurise their opponent through Taliban. In many cases youth from rival family joined Taliban to protect their own families from their opponents. These youth are collecting huge amount as extortion from local people. Infact this is due to escalating illiteracy and poverty that locals were deceived in the name of Islam.

Policy Recommendations

1. Government must take proper steps to improve literacy rate. There are significant efforts from UNICEF, WFO, Aus-Aid and UK-Aid.
2. The security forces need to vacate all educational buildings so that schooling may resume.
3. To reduce unemployment in Mohmand Agency, government and NGOs should invest on livelihood programmes.