

## **Impact of Militancy on Female Dropout in Conflict Areas of Pakistan: A Study of Selected of Secondary Schools in District Swat**

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### **Abstract**

*This research study is to investigate the impact of militancy on female dropout at secondary schools in District swat, Pakistan from 2007 to 2016. This study is conducted late 2018. The methodology of this study is quantitative and data is collected from the ex-students of the schools they quite due to conflicts or the threat of violence by the conflicting parties in 2009 Taliban regime in Swat. The study was delimited in swat district to the 5 secondary schools of girls randomly selected for the purpose based on highest number of schools having dropout girls. Total target population was 1137 been the number as dropout cases accordance to statistics given by education officer in elementary and secondary education in district swat(November 2017).The study utilized a sample size of 280 respondents while proportionate random sampling was used to collect data from respondents. This paper attempts to explore the aspect of education management in conflict zones with focus on dropout as the single out variable that can project the trend of fall and rise going side by side with increase in conflict from tension to violence on scale to gage the issue.*

**Keywords:** Militancy, Female Literacy, Dropout, Talibanization, Violence

### **Introduction**

Militancy affects all segments of population adversely. Its impact extends to all spheres of life and human activity including socio-political, educational and economic domains. From the perspective of gender, women are also adversely affected as they belong to the less powerful and weaker section of society along with children, the old and the persons with disabilities.

The impact on women is more severe as they do not enjoy greater visibility and public notice. One instance of their sufferings includes their decreased chances of education and increased ratio of dropouts at school level. The phenomenon multiplies when other variables come into play including adolescence, lack of proper security outside homes

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and at schools, gender segregation and early marriages. In the recent wake of militancy in Pakistan, the most affected areas included women education that witnessed a steep rise in dropout cases. More specifically, women in Swat and FATA could not attend schools for two main reasons. First, there was a fear of insecurity at schools and second, most of the schools had been destroyed by militants.

**Table-1 Annual dropout**

Years	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total <sup>†</sup>	760	654	553	522	746	762	721	734	712	736
No. of students dropout	142	229	147	204	85	87	71	80	77	89
Percentile dropout	18.7	35	26.6	39	11.4	87	11.4	10.9	10.8	12.1

*Source; Field Data (2018)*

The research basically focuses to understand how militancy and security risk due to Taliban affect female education at secondary level in district Swat? And how many girls got dropped out from their schools during 2007 to 2016.

Among Pashtuns, women derive their social security from kinship network and strong familial ties, but their education remains out of this kinship net in public sphere. Due to its situation in public sphere, women education remains vulnerable to societal forces. For instance, in the recent past, militants targeted women and their outside activities. They imposed ban on their jobs and issued threats to those families who would send their female children to schools. The policy was to confine womenfolk to their homes and to discourage their entry into the public sphere. This resulted in a great increase in the dropout cases of female students from schools and colleges (Salaman, 2012). Initially, the militants targeted female students and professionals and later on banned them from public life declaring gender mixing against the tenants of Islam (Orakzai, 2011). For the militants, school and colleges promoted the agendas of the infidels and thus destroyed

<sup>†</sup> Total enrolled students in the year for the five selected schools of the study in district Swat.

around 700 schools with explosives devices (Salaman, 2012) of both boys and girls, which increased dropout rate at the secondary school level. In some cases, women were put to public punishment if they violated the orders of the militants.

Historically, female education in Pakistan has been low but in the recent decades there is a growing awareness about education. The militants targeted this rising trend and it is observed that in District Swat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Province, the literacy rate saw fluctuation when female and male literacy rate was 24 and 68 percent respectively (PSLM, 2008-09). Among the major consequences of militant conflicts, the drop out ratio in female schools especially at secondary level saw a visible increase (Buckland, 2005).

When the Tehreek-e-Nifaze Sharite Muhammad (TNSM) raised its voice and challenged the state of Pakistan in the leadership of Sufi Muhammad in Swat, it had consequences for the peace and harmony in the district. Subsequently, an era of destruction began when schools were bombed, public places were annexed, and a wave of killings engulfed the whole area. The head of the TNSM Maulana Fazlullah banned female from going to schools and colleges. Instead, he asked people to send their young ones especially female children to madrassas to get Islamic education. He was also against women participation in active life and their right to vote was declared un-Islamic (Ali et al., 2013). Similarly, in 2008, the Taliban group leader, Shah Dauran, justified women leaving schools and colleges by stating that “female education is against Islamic teaching and spreads vulgarity in society”. Such type of harsh attitude towards female education compelled girls to restrain from getting formal education (Hussain, 2008).

Pakistan social living measurement (PSLM) serves as the most authentic source for Education and is significant in its contribution to education policy development in Pakistan. The PSLM report (2008-09) says that “Pakistan has not been able to complete the targets of “Education for All” (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with regard to access to primary education, gender equity and equality. The challenge still remains as the Fear of insecurity and uncertainty due to the presence of militant hideouts are reported in the province. (PSLM, 2008-09).

Buckland (2005) considers Conflicts as “Big hurdles” for realizing the dream of gender equality in education and universal enrolment at primary school level (Buckland, 2005, 1). Fleischner (2011) explained the history of Swat as princely state and claimed that “it was widely held to have been the most developed state in the region”. He further stated that Miangul Abdul Wadud, who was the first Wali i.e., ruler of Swat “developed public education for both male and female”, and its own judicial system was known as Dasturul Amal in 1917. During the reign of his son Miangul Jahanzeb, health facilities, communication and higher education were improved. In period of 1949-1969, there were 36 high schools, 3 colleges and 30 middle schools and more than 270 primary level educational institution and lower primary schools (for both female and male), Sixteen (16) government hospitals and 45 dispensaries in district Swat during his government. In 1969, Swat merged with Pakistan as a Provincially Administered Tribal Area (PATA) (Flischner, 2011, 4). According to Shoaikat and Aroosa (2013) militants destroyed 5831 schools between 2009-12 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including merged districts bordered with affiliation (previously known as FATA). Consequently, the already neglected educational system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA regions further got deteriorated. This alarming situation is not very encouraging for the young children. The insecurity has developed psychological problems on the young minds of children who are reluctant to go to school anymore.

Militancy and subsequent military operation in Swat destroyed peace in the region, destroyed homes, displaced communities and affected the livelihood in the region. In the name of Islam and Sharia, the Tehrik Shariat Nifaz Muhammadi restricted female from attaining education and working outside and those who did not follow the rules were severely punished publically. Public flogging, a routine matter under the militant’s rule who did not comply with their version of Sharia

### **Literature review**

Myriad of studies indicates the facts that belligerency terrorism and war bring unspecified negative challenges on state driven education. In this connection its sum up from research that terrorism and war decreases school enrolment rates among primary student and

dropout rates were high of the war torn zones (UN, 2011). It is notice that valuable time of children is waste on account of terrorist activities i.e. the glaring instances of academic year is lost on account of militancy and war in Iraq and Pakistan (World Bank, 2007, Burki, 2010).

Militancy and war escalate the ratio of children dropout in secondary education instruction. The central causing factor beyond such enlargement in dropout at school are easy targets because of closure of schools and it escalates scariness of parents to move and send their children to school. Militancy bereft the children along with teacher's leads to worsen quality of school in education. The descending quality and standard of education lies in the fact of qualified skillful and train teachers which is piece of cake for terrorist activities. Physical infrastructure design is glaring risk which is easy for terrorist operations and the central problem in this connection is financial fragileness which is confronted by government, the government is incapable to reconstruct the damage schools. The governments have usually low expenditure and educational investment decreases and give birth to worsen quality of education in the mid of war terror period (Malley, 2010). Similarly, schools as targeted enhance children dropout ratio at education institutions. Allied activities are also discouraged and it is hard nut crack for government to safeguard teachers and maintain security amid war. Resembling scenario are fundamental due to number of teacher lost their worthy life and remain frighten which force them to quit off their jobs and move to safe zones (Education International, 2010). Militancy caused heavy displacement of the people. Some two (2) million residents left their homes as IDPs from Swat, Buner and another affected area under Taliban control (Safdar, 2009). Migration from Swat as IDPS was one of the greatest in recent human history. "The human migration from the war-torn Swat valley in northern Pakistan is turning into the world's most dramatic displacement crisis since the Rwandan genocide of 1994" (Walsh, 2009). People left each and every thing and come out from the military control area a lot of school going children both boys and girls left their education and migrate with their families to safe areas.

Besides, the entire scenario brings the dearth of teachers and shortage of availability of trained qualified and skillful teachers as well as education standard persistently descending. Lack of punctuality in teachers at school is a grave concern in this ambient and it is testimony that all education institutions resemble lack of qualified teacher and migration of teachers vacate the positions that leads to worsen performance and give birth to dropout (Human Right Watch, 2008). The lingering influences of sexual violence by men on duty who may attack or target girls on their way to school therefore Girls Children are fornicated and got early illegitimate pregnancies bring stigma and shame to the family of orientation reported in Sierra Leone. These victims are physically branding early mutilated and amputated so in this they dropout from schools (Goetz and Jenkis, 2010).

In connection with the above mentioned facts terrorism and war operation also have a profound impacts on learning capabilities of school going children's. Cognitive capacity of children remains dormant in war and terror period. Resembled condition evokes because of anxiety and fear in children which reduce their school attendance and punctuality at education institutions. Various studies portrays that lack of punctualities and attendance promotes dropout (AIHRC, 2008) while some other studies indicates that thousands of school going children miss entire academic year due to terrorism such as in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq situation has been noticed (Malley, 2010). Girls are at more risk to dog their academic year in comparison to boys' dropout ratio in existing situation (World Bank, 2007).

In addition, according to (Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004), sexual violence in frustration are order of the day usually noticed in the war across the world which particularly signifies girls enrolment and dropouts. Furthermore, research vividly shows that war and terror related activities demolished physical infrastructure such as roads, building, houses and other communication facilities, similarly, education infrastructure is the one normal targets for terrorists. In Palestine and Israel 60 percent of primary and 40 percent secondary Schools were entirely demolished while 23 percent of School partially damage by this menace (World Bank, 2007).

Another matter of grave concern residing in this connection is the inability of state to rebuild education infrastructure and renovate the effected schools due to war on terror. As a consequence government not having sufficient financial capital to reconstruct schools and hence no proper facilities exist to ensure quality education. The entirely damaged education infrastructure like for example Schools, buildings are visible for disconnection of schooling and loss of academic years which leads to perennial disconnection of education institutions as termed as dropout (UNRWA & UN, 2010). Contextualizing to Pakistan the physical infrastructure has been demolished in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and adjacent zones particularly female education infrastructure through targeted militant activities (Insurgencies in Pakistan, 2009).

Research indicates that it is the herculean task for government to handle the education and allied activities in the course of war and terror because the government does not have sufficed financial resources to carry and maintains the quality of education and incapable to reconstruct the education institutions. The instrument to highlight the lingering disconnection in particular leads to dropout (O Malley, 2010). Because of incapability of government to given suffice space and to children it is witness that number of children enhances in schools due to adjustment (Leary, 2010). Militancy and terror environment symbolically affect cultural activities including the culture of education. Terror related activities and atmosphere leave children psychologically debilitated and their parents less secure about their security outside homes. In this regard, studies further shows that family fear and lack of interest in schooling leads to dropout in particular among female students. (Paper and Alexandar et al, 2010). In such a psychologically damaging environment, families fear sending their children outside (AED, 2003)

**Objective of the study**

1. To investigate the co-relation between militancy and female education
2. To find out the impact of militancy on female dropout from educational institution from secondary schools

**Methodology**

This research was conducted in the secondary schools for girls in District Swat. All those school having minimum 5% increase in the dropout was included in the study. Also the maximum dropout of the year recorded in the district was used as the bench mark for selection of a school against the enrolment for the corresponding year from 2007 till the year 2016. These selected schools constituted the population for this research. The unit of the study was the schools which fall under the category mentioned above. The sample size was 280, selected through a random procedure. The sample was 10% of the entire female dropout of the selected schools.

The researcher randomly selects five schools from the district Swat namely;

1. Government Girls High School Aboha,
2. Government Girls High School Barikot,
3. Government Girls High School Odigram,
4. Government Girls High School Tahirabad, and
5. Government Girls High School Manglawar,

The preliminary data was based on the total enrolment from the year 2007 to 2016 while the total female students at the end of each academic year was the target population for collecting data for the study. The total population of the five schools calculated was 1137, out of which sample size taken is 280 through Krejcie and Morgan (2012) Model table of sampling

**Results and Discussion**

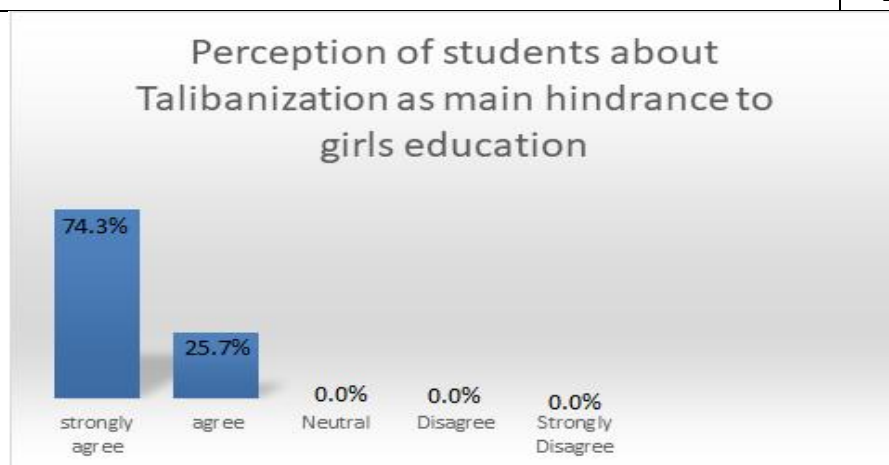
Field information provided in the table 1.2 below illustrates the problem of Talibanization faced by people of locality and its association with female dropout. In this context, different statements have been given in the table. Field information indicates that the majority of 208 (74.3%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Talibanization was a main barrier to female education in the area. Further 72 (25.5%) respondents replied with agree and stated that Taliban were a major hurdle on the way of



female education. It is concluded from the above table and respondents answers that due to Talibanization female dropout were very high in locality.

**Table -2 Perception of students about Talibanization as main hindrance to girls' education**

	N	%
Strongly Agree	208	74.3
Agree	72	25.7
Neutral	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Total	280	100.0

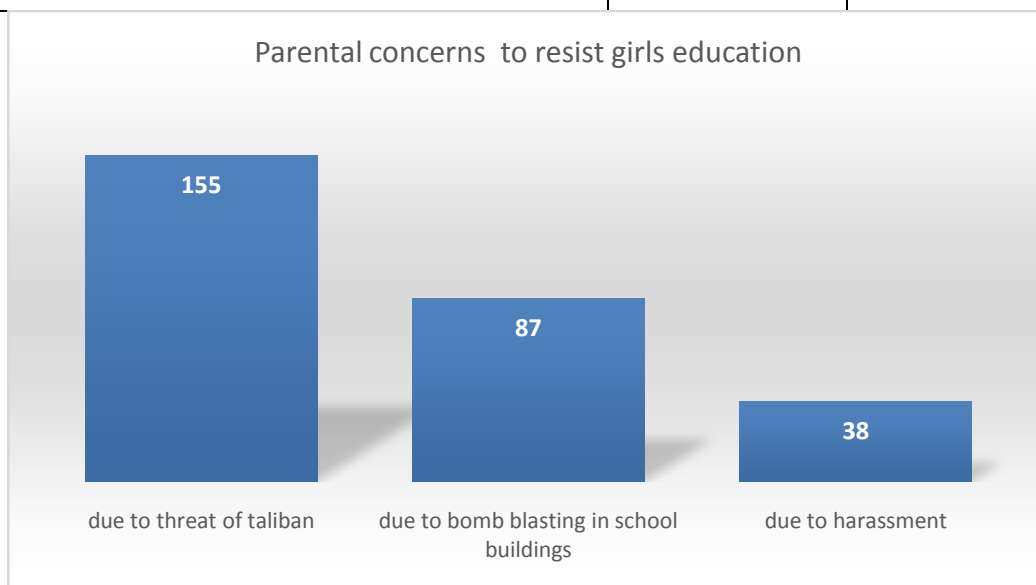


The tabular information shows a significant resemblance to literary information where it is evident that terrorism and militancy compels parents to take various precautionary measures regarding their children. Such measures hamper children education as well as having various negative impacts on children's education. Table 1.3 shows that a significant majority been 55.5 % (155) respondents opted for the statement that parents are afraid to send their children to school due to threat of Taliban whereby 87 (31.1 %) agreed that parents were afraid due to bomb blasting in school buildings. Further, 38 (13.6%) respondents said that harassment is one of the perilous issues observed during militancy for that reason parents were reluctant to send their girls child to school. Within the discussed category, 155 (55.5 %) respondents agreed with the statement respectively

that parents do not send their children to school due to threat of Taliban. Therefore, it is apparent from literary information, field information that different reasons that hamper sending girls to school during militancy which hinders children education. The most significant among them includes not sending their children to school due to fear of Taliban that makes it a reason of dropout from schools. As mentioned by Alexander et al, (2010) Terror related activities and atmosphere leave children psychologically debilitated and their parents less secure about their security outside homes. In this regard, studies further show that familial fear and lack of interest in schooling leads to dropout in particular among female child. In such a psychologically damaging environment, families fear sending their children outside (AED, 2003)

**Table-3 Parental concerns to resist girls' education**

Parental concerns to resist girls education	N	%
due to threat of Taliban	155	55.4
due to bomb blasting in school buildings	87	31.1
due to harassment	38	13.6
Total	280	100.0



The Classification table 1.4 shows that how much our cases (responses) are correctly classified. 95.7% classification was correctly classified by our respondents. Table 1.4 contains the Cox & Snell R Square and Nagelkerke R Square values, which are both methods of calculating the explained variation. The explained variation in the dependent variable based on our model ranges from 22.6% to 33.1%, it mean 22.6% to 33.1% variation in our dependent variable (drop out due to militancy) was explained by factors (Security threat , Internally displaced, School destroyed, Militant's threat, Shut down by Government/Military, Disability Life or abduction threat, Talibanization was the barrier). That factors are responsible for drop out of girls from school.

**Table-4 Militancy and school dropout**

Classification Table				
Observed		Predicted		
		Are you dropped out from school due to militancy		% Correct
		No	Yes	
Are you drop out from school due to militancy	No	27	46	37.0
	Yes	9	198	95.7
Overall Percentage				80.4

a. The cut value is .500

Model Summary			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	249.709 <sup>a</sup>	.226	.331

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 7 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

The table 1.5 revealed the statistical importance and contribution of each independent variable to the model. The Wald test ("**Wald**" column) is used to determine statistical significance for each of the independent variables. The statistical significance of the test is found in the "**Sig.**" column. Subsequently, it is observed that the Security threat ( $p = 0.00$ ), internally displaced ( $p = 0.05$ ), School destroyed ( $p = 0.01$ ), Militant's threat ( $p = 0.02$ ), Shut down by Govt/Military ( $p = 0.00$ ), Disability ( $p = 0.00$ ), Life or abduction threat ( $p = 0.00$ ), Talibanization was the barrier ( $p = 0.01$ ) added significantly to the model. . In model all the independent variables are categorical, so the interpretation is

based on Exp ( $\beta$ )(odds ratio). Security threat 2.037 times more received by drop out students as compared to those who are not drop out. Similarly those are drop out are 2.016 times are more internally displaced as compared to non-drop out, one of the factor of drop out was school destroyed.

**Table-5 variables in the equations**

Variables in the Equation						
	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Security threat	-3.292	1.189	7.664	1	.006	2.037
Internally displaced	-.989	.504	3.845	1	.050	6.372
School destroyed	.701	.436	12.586	1	.0108	2.016
Militant's threat	.596	.484	10.516	1	.0218	1.814
Shut down by Government/Military	2.936	1.109	7.010	1	.008	18.846
Disability	2.537	.808	9.859	1	.002	12.637
Life or abduction threat	-4.330	1.207	12.869	1	.000	3.013
Talibanization was the barrier	-1.263	.925	12.866	1	.0172	4.283
Constant	4.312	1.287	11.225	1	.001	74.599
a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Q38, Q22a, Q22b, Q22c, Q22d, Q24a, Q24d, Q32.						

## Conclusion

Pakistan in general and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for specific for the last couple of decades been victim of militancy which caused major damages to the socio-economic infrastructure and social fabric. The study proved that reduction in female education attainment in many areas especially in Swat is due to militancy and Talibanization. The militant were against female education as proved in the literature reviewed both explicit and implicitly. The narrative of Shariah and Islam used, Taliban misguided the innocent people of the Swat valley. Taliban destroyed a lot of female educational institution and gave life threats, to both students and their parents. The fear hindered parents to allow their child for schools which lead to increased dropout from schools. Due to militancy in the area majority of people migrated to other places which increased female dropout further from the local institution. Majority of female schools were blown up by Taliban in militancy hit area which was another factor for female dropout.

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