



RESEARCH PAPER

Counter-Terrorism Strategy of Pakistan: A Case Study of Military Operations

¹Dr. Adeel Irfan* ²Aneel Waqas Khan ³Aqeel Naqvi

1. Assistant Professor, School of Peace and Counter-Terrorism Studies, Minhaj University Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
2. Lecturer, Department of Philosophy, Government College University Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
3. Ph.D. Scholar, School of Political Science, Minhaj University Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

***Corresponding Author:** adeel.rao@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study offers an empirical analysis of the United States' counter-terrorism strategy and Pakistan's military scheme in the war on terror and put forth the argument that the non-conventional military strategy adopted by the Pakistani government to vanquish militancy is explained by document analysis. The objective of the study is to assess the counter-terrorism strategy of Pakistan after 9/11. Predominantly, the counter-terrorism strategy of the United States was based on military operations, regardless of the strategy of Pakistan which was inconsistent and swung between the peace process and military operations. The purpose of the study is to assess the counter-terrorism strategy applied by the United States on Pakistan and the response shown by the Islamic state. Moreover, the research focuses on content analysis and explains the relations between the United States and Pakistan but also analyses the fact as to what would be the effect of the policy on bilateral relations between both states. Here, the focus of the research is on how to achieve a better understanding of Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategy and enhance the effectiveness of the Pak-U.S. alliance in the fight against terrorism. The study shows that Pakistan is required to take strong measures like border fencing, better law and order situation and sufficient resources to deal with the terrorists.

KEYWORDS Al-Qaeda, Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Military Operations, Taliban

Introduction

The impetus of the entire research is to understand the impact of the U.S. counter-terrorism strategy, on Pakistan's military approach in forecasting and achieving the desired short/long-term goals. In other terms, the research would assist in finding ways and means to achieve a better return on the U.S. policy in Pakistan after evaluating Pakistan's true current capacity and capability and understanding its geo-political, socio-cultural, and socio-economic limitations. Research would highlight the importance and impact of public opinion on the pattern of extremism and courses of action, specific to the Afghan-Pak region within the years mainly from 2008–2018. Understanding the other variables, like regional discourse, ideology of terrorists, universal aggressive military strategy from the United States, suicide bombing, and level of trust would help formulate a better strategy for the U.S. and Pakistan to deal with such challenges in the future.

A number of questions, with respect to the U.S., and Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategy in the war on terror, revolve around the pattern of U.S. involvement in Pakistan. However, the center of convergence of the research is to explain the relations between the United States and Pakistan as a result of the 'do more' policy and also analyses the fact as to what would be the effect of this policy on bilateral relations between both of the states. The United States wants Pakistan to 'do more' against terrorists while Pakistan thinks in an entirely opposite direction. According to Pakistan, the Islamic state has already lost more than 70,000 lives of people, misplaced the economy, fall in FDI and decline in business confidence, etc, in the war against terror (Muzaffar, Khan, & Karamat, 2017). Then, why is

the Trump administration asking to 'do more' despite the fact that Pakistan has already given so many sacrifices? Hence, the focus revolves around the question of the study as to how to achieve a better understanding of Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategy and enhance the effectiveness of Pak-U.S. alliance in the fight against terrorism.

Hence, understanding the local discourse and availability of funds is likely to play a significant role in achieving desired objectives and pave the way for a long-term Pak-U.S. strategic relationship. Moreover, it will not only provide credibility to the global war on terror but may also have direct/indirect impact on the strategic implications toward the U.S. in Afghanistan, Iraq and other areas with similar conditions (Muzaffar, Khan, & Yaseen, 2019).

Literature Review

Pakistani government and army used different techniques to deal with the militancy. The counter-terrorism policy of Pakistan experienced three different periods.

Counter-terrorism strategy during Musharraf regime 2001-2007

President Musharraf in his book, *In the line of fire* stated that there were three major factors that triggered him to support the United States in the war on terror. First, Pakistan is a weak country militarily which could not bear the United States' hostility. Second, Pakistan is economically weak as well and it could not sustain economic sanctions from the United States. Third, Pakistan's society is divided on ethnic, linguistic, and sectarian grounds (Musharraf, 2008).

Jones (2002) pointed out two elements that motivated President Musharraf to support the United States against the war on terror. First, it would bring foreign funding to his country and second, the decision could lift his political stature internationally (Jones, 2002). Moreover, Pakistan's intelligence agency was also fragmented on the decision to support the United States in war on terror. Woodward (2002) claimed that Musharraf took a pronounced decision and dismissed ISI's chief General Mahmood to win the intelligence's support.

Talking about Musharraf's strategy, Khattaq and Mushtaq (2015) claimed that states either go for military operation or negotiation by carefully measuring the prevailing conditions in order to resolve the conflict. They asserted that the CT strategy of Musharraf was based on military operations as well as the peace process irrespective of the fact that the United States did not like the idea to commence dialogues with terrorists. However, they further claimed that Musharraf's policy came out as a failure who did not pay attention to the rehabilitation and rebuilding of institutions in the war-affected FATA region which caused a sense of deprivation among the masses and became the cause of the emergence of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan in the region.

Musharraf's strategy was baffled as on one side, he commenced peace process, while on the other side, he supported drone strikes. According to Khattaq and Mushtaq (2015), Pakistan became the frontline ally of the United States and sent troops to Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) after 9/11 incident. In 2003, Pakistan army started Operation without understanding the history of local discourse. Soon after, Pakistan realized that the results of military operations are not as per their expectations and they are facing losses. Hence, they decided to change their counter-terrorism strategy and went for negotiations. In 2004, Pakistan military ceased the operation and the agreement was signed between Pakistan army and Nek Muhammad Wazir, who was a prominent mujahedeen leader and was killed in a drone attack in South Waziristan. Washington was not happy on this agreement and they claimed that the militant group will strike against NATO forces in Afghanistan (Muzaffar, Nawab, & Yaseen, 2021) U.S. Secretary of State, Rice also condemned Musharraf strategy against terrorism and warned to cut financial aid. Subsequently, the U.S.

continued drone strikes on FATA and killed the tribal leader and, finally, the peace agreement was discarded by the militants and FATA was changed into battlefield. After the death of Nek Muhammad, Baitullah Mehsud got the leadership of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and there started an intense fighting between Pakistan army and Mehsud group. The battle concluded on a peace deal in February 2005 but it did not remain so long and Mehsud group breached the agreement and started suicide bombing.

Khattaq and Mushtaq further claimed, Musharraf acknowledged the United States' policy and banned many militant organizations in Pakistan and Pakistani president also started a campaign to reform Madrasahs. However, he did not pay attention to prevent the expansion of militant organization. According to them, TTP spread around the whole country during peace process and recruited the extremists in their group. TTP got hold of Bajaur Agency of FATA and collected support from the militants of Afghanistan. There were six agencies of FATA where Pakistan's army launched military operation one by one.

Khattaq and Mushtaq also professed that Musharraf's strategy to support the United States in following drone strikes did not work as it killed many innocent people along with militants and secondly, the strikes developed a sense of agitation among the local masses. According to Musharraf, they said, drone strikes are the most economical means to deal with the terrorists as there would be no loss of soldiers. Finally, the drone strike strategy was evaluated as a failure because the lethality of terrorists' acts was increased.

Counter-terrorism strategy during Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) Government 2008-2012

The CT strategy during PPP was based on 3D approach; deterrence, development and dialogue, nonetheless, government of PPP was pressurized again by Obama administration to start military operations against terrorists. Although operations were considered as a success of Pakistan's military, however, the main leadership of TTP fled to Afghanistan. Khattaq and Mushtaq further pointed out that two major operations named Operation *Rah-i-Raast* in Swat Valley and Operation *Rah-i-Nijat* in South Waziristan Agency were launched in 2009. The PPP government wanted to settle the matter peacefully but the activities of militants as well as increasing pressure from the United States trigger Pakistan's military to start kinetic operations in affected areas.

Political analysts considered PPP's strategy as failed one as it was mostly relied on drone strikes and resulted in a loss of many innocent lives. The United Nations and Amnesty International considered drone strikes against international law and they violated the fundamental rights of people. In a nutshell, this strategy did not produce the desired results.

Counter-terrorism strategy during Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz [PML (N)] Government 2013-2018

According to Syed (2013), there was not much difference in the counter terrorism strategy of government of Nawaz Shareef. PML(N) disclosed that they have five components – dismantle, contain, prevent, educate and reintegrate rather 3Ds – a policy adopted by PPP against militancy, however, the policy of Nawaz government produced some productive results and the graph of terrorists' activities came down (Syed, July 6, 2013). Political pundits also affirmed that government of Nawaz did not support drone strikes as it take the lives of innocent people and against international law as well. Hence there was less number of drone attacks during PML(N) government. They further declared that the government of PML(N) believed in negotiations in dealing with terrorism but soon Sharif's government realized that terrorists' activities are increasing despite their peaceful policy. Hence, there started a major military operation called Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* in June 2014. The operation lasted for almost one and half year but it destroyed the backbone of Al-Qaeda and TTP. After operation *Zarb-e-Azb*, Pakistan army launched operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad* to demolish the sleeping cells of the terrorists across the country.

The literature of first part highlights two points. First, the United States is pushing Pakistan to do more as they believe that Pakistan is giving sanctuaries to terrorist organizations like Haqqani network which is responsible for the terrorist attacks on the U.S. troops and other bomb blasts in Afghanistan. Second, terrorists can capture nuclear technology and pose a serious threat for global peace. However, the mainstream literature does not provide any study which highlights why there persists confusion between the United States counter-terrorism strategies and Pakistan military scheme and why Washington keep on asking Pakistan to 'do more'. Further, it does not provide any study about the key indicators which are the causes behind counter-terrorism strategy of Pakistan.

Case Study of Military Operations

The case study is performed by two kinds of research methodologies i.e. Document analysis which is conducted via secondary data and Surveys and In-depth Interviews via primary data.

Geo-strategic US-Pak relationships are not innovative, but it has a long history of past six decades. Most of the United States involvement in Pakistan is to reinstall the democratization process. After 9/11, both the United States and Pakistan come into close context and work together against terrorism and extremism. This study will analyse the relationships during Afghan War and then after 9/11 attacks.

Pakistan – A breeding place for mujahidin during Soviet-Afghan War

In order to analyse, how War on Terror turned to war of survival, it is essential to take a look on historical event briefly. During Soviet-Afghan war (1979-1989), Geo-strategic location of Pakistan helps the United States to curtail the expansion of communist Soviet Union. Constructivism suggests that states define their interests through the process of defining or evaluating a particular situation and the United States was very much concerned for the territorial expansion of Soviet Union. For this purpose, Washington required supports from Pakistan. The Islamic state provided sanctuaries to Taliban commanders and raised a movement of jihad against Soviet Union. Initially, the strength of invading army was 30,000 but it increased later on to 100,000. While, in contrast, the quantity of mujahidin were 200,000. In the start, there were guerrilla wars between mujahidin and Soviet Union troops but later on, with the involvement of the U.S., mujahidin got more sophisticated weapons to fight against Soviet Union's army. War continued for almost 10 years and the U.S. funded with the net worth of \$2.1 billion during this period. Osama Bin Laden was also a part of mujahidin (Reidel, 2010). The assistance of CIA included latest anti-aircraft missiles and stinger missiles which have the capacity to bring down the Soviet Union aircraft and helicopters. Mujahidin were succeeded to push back army with the help of CIA but war posed catastrophic effect on Afghanistan and they paid a heavy price in shape of the death of more than 90,000 of Afghan people including mujahidin, local people and government officials. Around 1.5% populations of Afghan people killed overall. They most devastating effect of the war on neighbouring countries was the migration of Afghan refugees. Around six millions people were migrated to nearby countries and almost 95% of them moved to Pakistan and Iran. This was the second largest refugee migration after Syrian refugees. It was a difficult task for Pakistan to deal with such a large number of refugees.

Pakistan and the War on Terrorism

According to constructivism, states define their interest in a particular situation. After 9/11, the interests of the United States changed and freedom fighters of the 80s became terrorists now. The U.S. started its military campaign in October 2001 to dislodge terrorists in Afghanistan and the threats are well proliferated in Pakistan also. Many of Taliban and Al-Qaeda leaders fled from their country and got sanctuaries in federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region of Pakistan (Ahmed 2014). By 2003, they joined with tribal militant group and a loose alliance under the leadership of Nek Mohammad Wazir

came into being in South Waziristan. They started terrorist activities in that region and, with the passage of time, got expanded into settled areas and big cities to produce widespread fear.

The United States declared War on Terror in Afghanistan and they needed full support from Pakistan. Islamabad knew its geo-strategic importance for Washington against Al-Qaeda. To deal with the terrorists, the U.S. entered into Afghanistan, and Pakistan provided support in shape of logistics assistance, sharing intelligence information, capturing and giving back to the United States. Christian Fair wrote in her book that American officials acknowledges the services of Pakistan against global terrorism and said that Pakistani support against global terrorism in terms of catching terrorists and providing troops is matchless. Above all, Pakistan provided their two naval air bases to the United States to deal with the militants (Fair, 2004).

Taliban found safe heavens in Pakistan

Both the countries, i.e. Pakistan and Afghanistan are demarcated by 2640km long Durand Line. The important thing is that anybody can cross the border without getting visa as the border line is not fenced. After 9/11, when the United States attacked Afghanistan, most of the Pashtuns crossed the border line and hide themselves in FATA of Pakistan and Osama Bin Laden was also among them. It is to be noted that majority of the Pashtuns were already living there and it was not difficult for immigrants to melt themselves among the people who already lived there. It is also important to mention here that FATA was the most disowned region of Pakistan before 2001 attacks and there was already an atmosphere discontentment among the local masses. So, after moving here, immigrants took the region as a breeding place to unite their movement and provoked the locals to start 'Jihad' against the U.S. Soon after, the region became the recruitment centre of terrorists who trained the youth and injected Talibanization into them. Soon, the trained youth spread into different districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and started terrorist activities. The sole purpose of the movement is to support Afghan Taliban against the U.S. forces. It took almost five years for Taliban to unite the radical-minded people in Afghanistan and Pakistan and started insurgencies but Islamabad officials take this case in a different way (Ashraf, 2011).

It was the Pashtuns belt which affected most. During Russia-Afghan war, the place was used to train mujahedeen. Pashtuns knew that mujahedeen believe on hardcore religious ideology which was contrary to their culture. So, there is a group of progressive Pashtuns who thought after entering the Taliban again after 9/11 attacks that another war might hit their grounds. As a result, Pashtun nationalists and their elders stood up against Taliban, but before the victory of military operation in Swat Valley in 2009, they paid a heavy price.

Military operations in Pakistan after 9/11

Constructivism suggests that every state devise their counter terrorism strategy according to regional discourse. Initially, Pakistan army started operations against terrorists in 2003 in FATA and the first operation was Operation *Al-Mizan*. The operation continues until 2006 when Pakistan Army Chief General Pervez Musharraf sent around 70,000 to 80,000 army personnel to FATA. Pakistan military bore a heavy loss in this operation due to the novelty of this kind of operation, lack of knowledge about terrorists and lack of support from the local public. Around 1200 to 1500 soldiers lost their lives during the operation. Soon, Pakistan government realized that they need to change their strategy. In 2006, Pakistan military decided to go for negotiations with Taliban and Al-Qaeda members who promised to go for ceasefire both in Pakistan and Afghanistan but as a result of the U.S. drone attacks, Taliban did not keep their words and started building their rebellious agenda. The terrorists developed their base in Swat Valley also. In November 2007, army started operation *Rah-e-Haq* against terrorists called Tahrir-e-NAFAZ-e-SHARAT-e-MUHAMMADI

(TNSM). The operation ended after peace accord named Malakand Accord between the government and TNSM (Nabi, 2016).

It is to be noted that FATA have seven agencies named Khyber Agency, Kurram Agency, Bajaur Agency, Mohmand Agency, Orakzai Agency, North Waziristan and South Waziristan. These were the places where militants were hiding. In January 2008, Pakistani forces started operation in South Waziristan Agency against TTP Commander Baitullah Mehsud and his followers. For this, around 200,000 people were displaced and military demolished almost 40,000 houses. Pakistan military also started Operation *Sher-e-Dil* side by side in Sep 2008, in Bajaur Agency to kill terrorists. 1000 militants were killed and 63 security persons lost their lives during this operation. Army also launched Operation *Sirat-e-Mustaqem* in Bara Tehsil of Khyber Agency in July 2008 against Lashkar-e-Islam. Soon, military took over the control of these agencies.

Furthermore, after the failure of Malakand Accord in Swat Valley, Pakistan army launched Operation *Rah-e-Rast* in May 2009 and soon got the control. In Oct 2009, operation *Rah-e-Nijaat* was started in South Waziristan to destruct terrorist base. In order to destroy militants in Kurram Agency, military started Operation *Koh-e-Sufaid* in July 2011 against Sunni extremists. Till 2012, Pakistan military controlled most of the Malakand Division and agencies of FATA. The only remaining part of FATA where terrorists were present was North Waziristan. Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Ashfaq Pervez Kiyani did not give green signal to start operation in that area because of opposition of local inhabitants and lack of army proficiency to handle such a large operation. But when Raheel Shareef succeeded Kiyani, he gave command to start operation and finally, Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* was started in June 2014. It was one of the largest operations in the history of Pakistan and continued for almost two years. The operation started against all the major terrorists' group, including TTP, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, East Turkestan Islamic Movement, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Al-Qaeda, Jundallah and the Haqqani Network. Pakistan military used the slogan "Seek, Destroy, Clear, Hold". Pakistan military got visible success in operation *Zarb-e-Azb*. Around 3400 terrorists were killed 837 of their houses were demolished and almost 21193 terrorist were arrested. Fig. 3 shows the declining of terrorist incidents after operation *Zarb-e-Azb*.

Pakistan military paid a heavy price for this. 488 officers lost their lives and almost 1914 got injured. There was a vivid increase in security situation after this operation. Although, Pakistan military got success in military operations but their officials claimed that some of the terrorists have been run to Afghanistan and hide them there. Terrorists also attacked Army Public School on Dec 16, 2014 and later on, Pakistan army claimed that terrorists came from Afghanistan. After operation, Pakistan army got visible clues of cross border infiltration. On May 12, 2017, there was a firing from the Khost province of Afghanistan and two Frontier Constabulary (FCB) soldiers were injured. After Lal Shahbaz Qalander attacks and following attacks across country, Pakistan military blaming Afghan-based Pakistani terrorists doing these infiltration. On May 18, 2017, Pakistan military claimed that they have satellite images and ground evidences that show terrorists' involvement from Afghanistan. Lieutenant Colonel Haroon of the Pakistan Army claimed that according to evidences, Parchow in Nangarhar Province of Afghanistan was used for terrorist activities by TTP, Khalid Sajna and Deaesh groups (Mohanty, 2017).

Here, research also evaluates the counter terrorism strategy of the United States on the basis of financial aid provided by Washington to Islamabad, in order to counter the militant activities. Table 4.1 shows the financial assistance provided by the United States to Pakistan from 2001 to 2019.

Table 1
Financial assistance from the United States

Sr. No.	Year	Financial aid (\$)
1	2001	\$177m

2	2002	\$831m
3	2003	\$563m
4	2004	\$401m
5	2005	\$712m
6	2006	\$888m
7	2007	\$824m
8	2008	\$873m
9	2009	\$1.2b
10	2010	\$2.7b
11	2011	\$1.9b
12	2012	\$1.2b
13	2013	\$812m
14	2014	\$1.0b
15	2015	\$1.1b
16	2016	\$780m
17	2017	\$837m
18	2018	\$367m
19	2019	\$129m

Source: USAID, <https://explorer.usaid.gov/cd/PAK>

Table 3.1 shows that after 2010, the U.S. gradually cut down the financial aid. It was the time when President Obama clearly said that financial aid should be attached with the performance of Pakistan and he wanted the Islamic State to ‘do more’ against terrorist groups. Moreover, Figure 3.1 shows the number of incidents over a period of time.

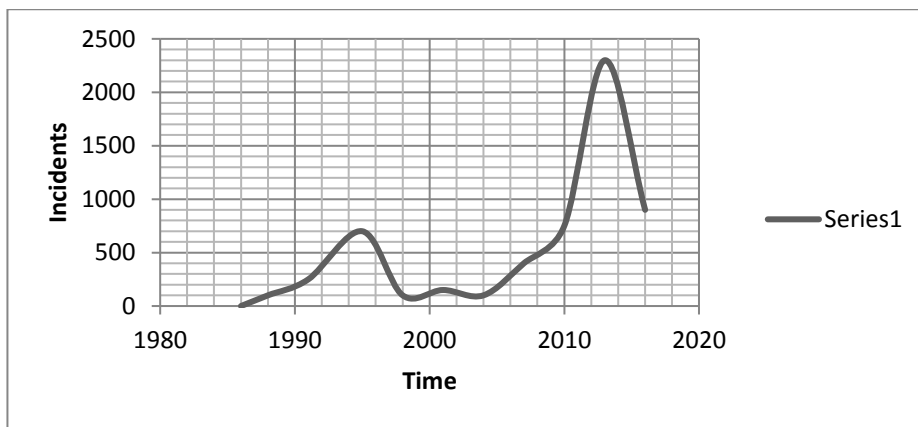


Figure 1 Attacks from 1986 to 2017 Source: Global Terrorism Database (GTD),

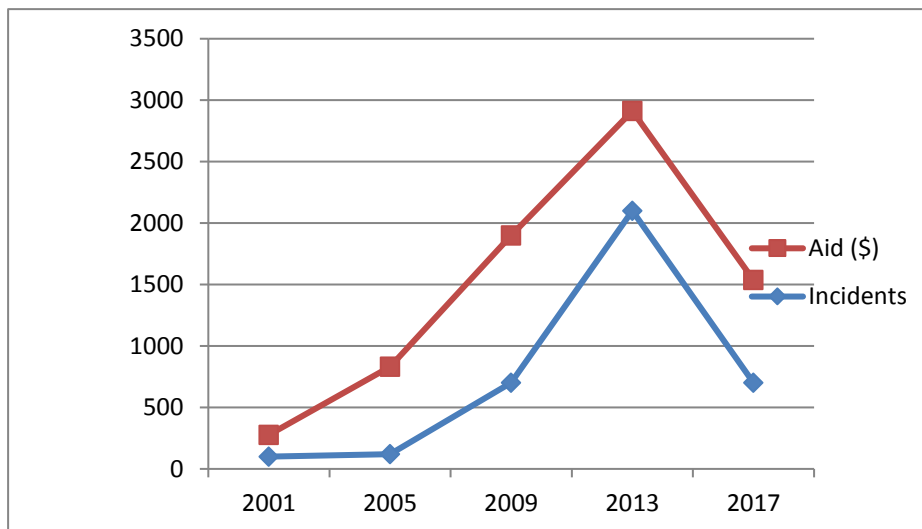


Figure 2 Financial Aid vs. Terrorist Incidents Source: USAID, GTD

Figure 3.2 shows that relationship between the financial aid and the number of incidents is directly proportional. The United States increases the financial aid from 2005 to 2013 which give a boost to terrorist incidents. As soon as, the financial aid decreases, the number of terrorist attacks also decreases.

Good Taliban vs. Bad Taliban

The United States want Pakistan to “do more” against the terrorists. Apart from Afghan conflict, they want to ensure safe control of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons, averting the major Pak-India conflict, check on Pakistan not to proliferate nuclear technology. Hence, they want Pakistan to do more against militants.

As mentioned above, ideas shape identities according to constructivism. Pakistan differentiated Taliban on the basis of their ideology. Those who carried similar thoughts were given safe exit. In order to analyse, we try to see the strategy of Pakistan army towards the militants. From 2002-2013, Pakistan army conducted almost 57 large-scale operations against nine militants groups (Muzaffar, Yaseen, & Afzal, 2021). Some of these groups targeted with military operations and offered no peace deals like Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Al-Qaeda. While some groups offered both military operations and peace deals. By contrast, Haqqani network was the only terrorist organization which received no military operation but one peace deal. Figure 3.4 and 3.5 show the violence, number of military operations and peace deals in FATA (Staniland, Mir & Lalwani, 2015)

Furthermore, Pakistan army distinguishes the militants group on their ideological basis and their role which should be helpful for them in Afghanistan, India and in their country also.

From the Figure 3.6, it is clearly evident that Pakistan military did not take any action against Haqqani networks and Gul bahadur group is on second number and this situation is hurting the United States in Afghanistan.

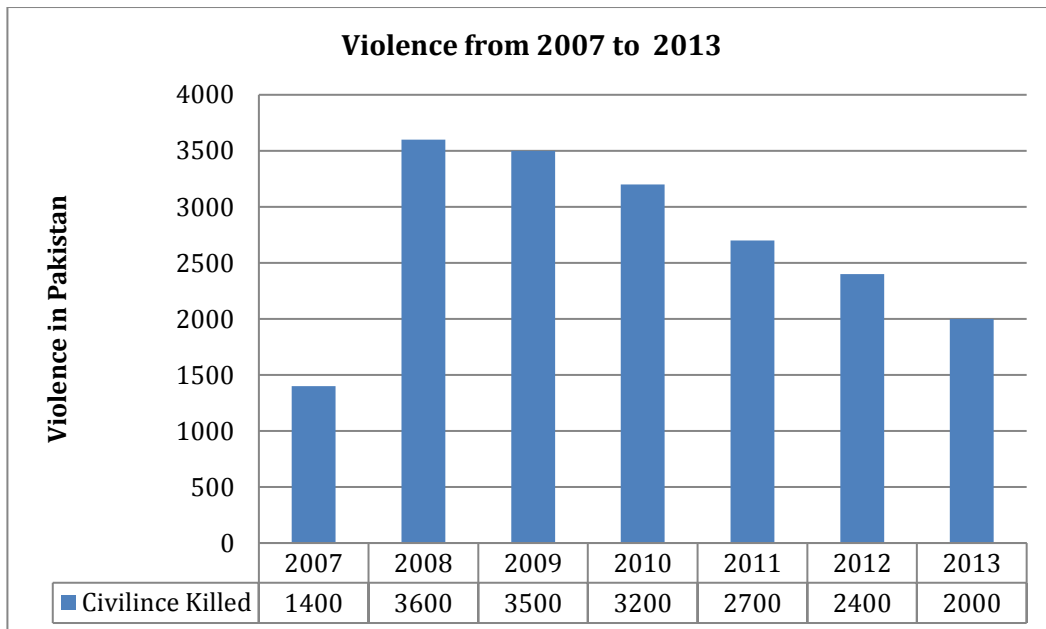


Figure 3. 4 Violence in FATA Source: Staniland, Mir and Lalwani 2015, p.8

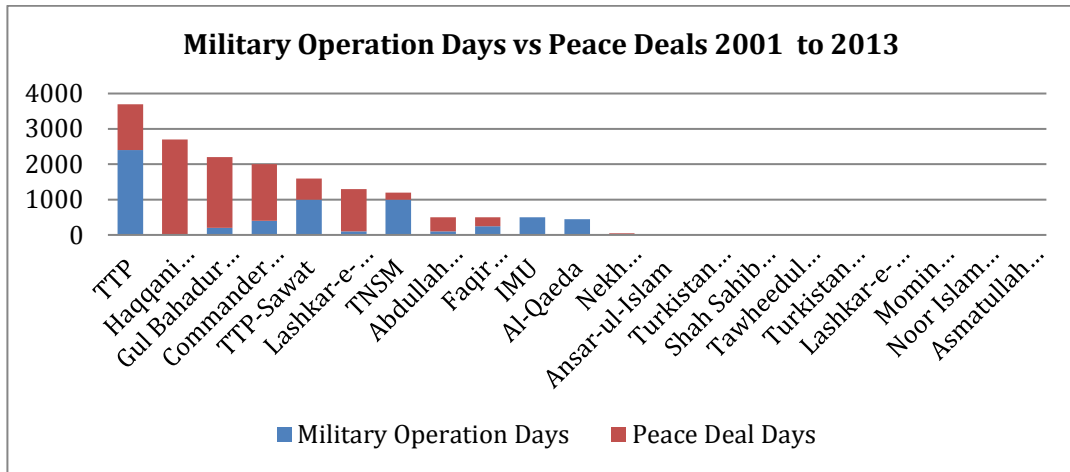


Figure 3. 5 Military Operations and peace deals in FATA Source: Staniland, Mir and Lalwani, 2015, p.7

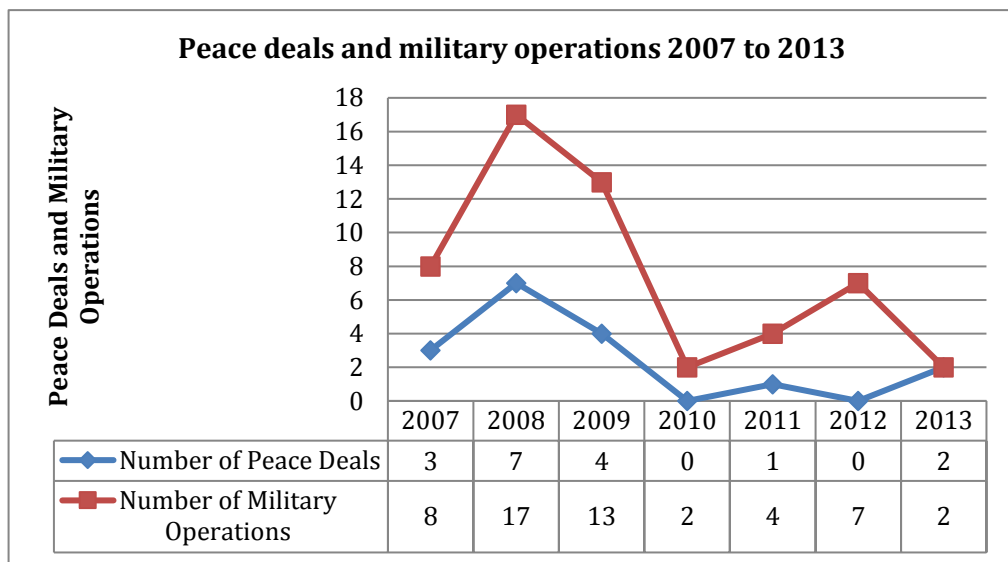


Figure 3. 6 Military operations and peace deals from 2007 to 2013 Source: Staniland, Mir and Lalwani, 2015, p.8

Border fencing and cross border terrorist activities

The length of Pak-Afghan border line is measured approximately 2640 kilometres. The line is not clear-cut and well-defined and local population on both sides of border considered it as hypothetical. They cross the border without paying attention to government rules (Shah, 2013).

Moreover, there is no formal jurisdiction from both of the government who control the movements across border. Another reason, that local people do not take border line seriously, is that line runs through local towns and villages of Pashtuns community who have common culture, norms, traditions, language, etc. They live on one side of the border and their agriculture lands are present on the other side of the border. Similarly, the relatives of Pashtuns community live on both sides of the border. These people cross border on daily basis and do not indulge in any formalities.

Some important tribes living along the Durand Line are the Afridis, who live mainly in Khyber, Tirah, Chorah Bazar, Kohat Pass and some areas of Ningrahar; the Shinwaris in the Khyber Pass and near the banks of the Kunarh river and Sirobi; the Mohmands in Peshawar and at Lalpura, Asmar (Kunarh) and Dhakka in the Ningrahar; Mangals in Kurram

Agency and in Paktika; Wazirs, who are further divided in AhmadzaiWazirs in South Waziristan and the UtmanzaiWazirs in North Waziristan, live in Birmal, Shawal, Shakai, Razmak, Khaisora Valley, Shaktu, Wana and Badar; the Mahsuds live in Kaniguram and Makin; the Daurs are concentrated mostly in the Miranshah, Mirali and DattaKhel areas; Achakzais are in Gulistan and Kandahar; and the Barech in Nushki and in Afghanistan. The major non-Pashtun ethnic groups living adjacent to the Durand Line include the Wakhi, Khow, Kirgihiz, Tajik, Kalash, Sarikuli, Yedgha and Bash-gali, who live mainly in Chitral, Wakhan, Kunarh, Nuristan, Kamdesh, Bamburet and the Barir Valley.

Shah also claimed that after the United States invasion in Afghanistan, Taliban leadership crossed the borderline and regroup in tribal areas of Pakistan for launching cross-border incursions against NATO forces. The following development severely undermined tribal structure destroyed the tribal social elite, undermined political power, destroyed the educational system, undermined cultural institutions like the Jirga, hujra, and mosques, and forced thousands of families to leave their homes. Taken together, these developments wreaked havoc on the area. This hitherto remote but otherwise tranquil area has evolved into the world's most deadly region. The breakdown of the tribal social fabric and the appropriation of the tribal system by foreign militants who are better equipped and financially supported continue to have a negative impact on the entire region..

Pakistani President, General Pervez Musharraf suggested fencing on the Pak-Afghan border to keep check on the unauthorized movement of people. He thought that fencing would enable Pakistan to restrict illegal activities happening across the Pak-Afghan border. Moreover, Durand Line is very long and it is not possible to fence the whole area. At the same time, there are certain parts of the line which does not require any barrier as those areas are hard to cross. So, it was decided that fencing would only be built only on those areas which can be utilized for movement. The open border between Pakistan and Afghanistan has made it possible for illegal traders to sneak all kinds of items into Pakistan, including electronics, in addition to preventing the entry of unauthorised persons. In accordance with the Afghan Transit Trade Agreement between the two nations, a sizeable portion of the products bought by Afghanistan have been trafficked back into Pakistan. While the Pakistani government insisted on border fencing because they believed it would prevent unauthorised entry into Pakistan, fencing has significant ramifications for Afghanistan. The Afghan government views this as a cunning Pakistani ploy to establish a permanent international border along a "controversial" line under the guise of preventing cross-border terrorism by garnering the cooperation of the US. in Afghanistan Afghanistan has never, according to the Afghan sources, accepted this as a settled border. They always considered it as "imposed" upon them by the imperialists, and were never reconciled to the division of the Pashtuns into three parts.

There also came strong opposition from Afghan side and President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai considered this move as impracticable and unserviceable. He further said that Pashtuns and other families live on both sides of the border and any kind of barrier on Pak-Afghan border may divide them which are unjustifiable. He further claimed that fencing would not prevent terrorists rather it may divide different tribes and families living across border area. Further, there came a strong reaction from Pakistani side and nationalists from Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan province opposed this move and termed it unacceptable as fencing the border is not social and economic interests of the ethnic Pashtun tribes. Further, Muttahida Majlis Amal, a group of religious parties who were in then in government both in Pashtunkhwa and Balochistan, also disapproves it.

The tribal residents gathered on the Afghan side and asked that the government stop building fences. On January 8, over 8,000 people demonstrated in Paktika and 500 demonstrators demonstrated in Kunarh. Around 2,000 tribesmen were organised in Chaman on January 15 by the local Awami National Party branch. The fencing of the border was also condemned by Baloch political parties during a meeting held in Quetta, who

referred to it as "a conspiracy against the tribesmen straddling the border" and expressed support for Pashtun political parties who also opposed fencing the Durand Line. Not pleased with this, the Afghan government expressed serious concerns over the fence of the country's border with Pakistan in a formal letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on January 10, 2007.

Fighting broke out between the two nations' armies in April and May 2007 over the border fence. By putting in place its fencing project, Pakistan was allegedly legalising the Durand Line in the eyes of the Afghans. When the Pakistani troops opened fire on the Afghan troops while they were pulling down fences close to the Durand Line between the two nations, the Afghans simply responded with small guns in self-defense, according to a spokeswoman for the Afghan Defence Ministry. Although the precise toll is unknown, a rigorous estimate put it at around 20, with the bulk occurring on the Afghan side. The Afghans saw it as Pakistan occupying their region. The Pakistani government, however, categorically refuted these accusations. They also reiterated that they were determined to stop the cross-border infiltration, and would utilize all resources under their control and within their reach and go ahead with the fencing of the border at an appropriate time.

Many other countries including the U.S., U.K., France, Russia, Sweden, etc., interceded and convinced Pakistan that fencing may further deteriorate the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Rather than fencing, Pakistan should develop effective border control mechanisms and the countries will provide incentives for it. They promised to provide Pakistan with a mini mobile radar system, which Pakistan called "the most suitable technology because of its state-of-the-art capability to check such movements within the radius of five kilometers area". But there was not seen any development in the plan and the project was relinquished. The authorities of Pakistan again decided to construct fencing instead to rely on mini Radar system.

Due to heavy operations in FATA, Pakistani army deployed more than 100,000 troops there and claimed to have around 240 security check posts, while Afghans, on the other side, only have 100 check posts. Interestingly, three major towns, including Chaman and Ghaznali, are located half in Pakistani and half in Afghanistan. In addition to the famous Khyber Pass route leading via Torkham into Afghanistan, there are about 128 frequently and infrequently used routes between Pakistan and Afghanistan, which need to be checked properly to control the cross-border movement of unwanted people. However, due to the strict vigilance on the Pakistani side, cross-border activity has been substantially reduced. Fewer border security arrangements on the Afghan side have not been enough to restrict the movement from the other side. It has been labelled a very difficult task which would "take an inordinate amount of resources". Commenting on the issue of the fencing of the Durand Line, a top Pentagon official, Colonel Viet Luong, Commander Task Force Rakkasan and 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, said that.

"It's naive to say that we can stop, you know, forces coming through the border". "In order to secure the border, as well – as you know, it takes a lot. It takes efforts on the other side, by the Pakistanis." He was aware of the peculiar situation. "To secure the border in the traditional sense, if you're talking about, you know, like what we would do along our own border with Mexico down in the south western United States, that's not what we're doing. It takes an inordinate amount of resources and force to be able to do that", he said. "You can look at this as a defense in depth, whereby you have your frontline defenders, which are – which really starts on the Pakistani side of the house, by the way. They have hundreds of border checkpoints across backed up by dozens of checkpoints on our side that's manned by Afghan border police, and then we back those guys up with the US and ANA forces, really to hand over the border piece to the Afghan border police".

Conclusion

This study offers an empirical analysis of the United States counter-terrorism strategy and Pakistan's military scheme in the war on terror and put forth the argument that the constructivist approach explains the non-conventional military strategy adopted by the Pakistani government to vanquish militancy. According to constructivism, states define their interests differently in different situations and identities are never permanent in international relations. During Soviet-Afghan War, Pakistan military supported the United States against the Soviet Union. At that time, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) became the breeding place for mujahedeen. The United States defeated the Soviet Union with the help of Pakistan. While, after 9/11, The US-led military campaign in Afghanistan dislodged the Taliban regime that they supported previously. It expanded the threat well into Pakistan. Most of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban leaders and cadre slipped into Pakistan's tribal areas, bordering Afghanistan. Initially, they had concentrated in South Waziristan and then expanded their support base in the other areas of the FATA. At the time it became difficult for Pakistani forces to launch operation against same mujahedeen whom they supported previously during Soviet-Afghan War. After 9/11 attacks, Pakistan moved to the U.S. camp and supported the U.S. with air base, land routes and military personnel. In return, Pakistan got financial aids from the United States. However, as a result of military operations against terrorists, Pakistan faced heavy retaliation in terms of bomb blasts all across the country. Whenever, Pakistan military started military operation, suicide bombing got increased not only in hard areas but also in metropolitan cities to frighten people and to destabilize the government. By following constructivist approach, interests of the United States were changed after 9/11 and freedom fighters of 80s became terrorists now. The U.S. started its military campaign in October 2001 to dislodge terrorists in Afghanistan and the threats are well-proliferated in Pakistan as well as many of Taliban and Al-Qaeda leaders fled from their country and got sanctuaries in federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region of Pakistan and they needed full support from Pakistan. Islamabad knew its geo-strategic importance for Washington against Al-Qaeda. To deal with the terrorists, the U.S. entered into Afghanistan, and Pakistan provided support in shape of logistics assistance, sharing intelligence information, capturing and giving back to the United States.

References

- Ahmed, N., (2014, Jan 28). Pakistan's Counter-terrorism strategy and its Implications for domestic, regional and international security', *HAL*.
- Ashraf, S. I., (2011, Dec 13). *Pashtuns in Pakistan: Why the war on terror is being lost*, Heinrich Boll Stifting, The Green political Foundation,
- Fair, C., (2004), 'The counter terror coalitions: Cooperation with Pakistan and India,' Washington: *RAND*.
- Jones, O. B. (2002). *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Khattak, M. R., Mushtaq, M., (2015), 'Pakistan's Counter-Terrorism (2001-2014): An Analysis', *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, XXXVI (1), 29-46.
- Mohanty, T.R., (2017, May 23,), 'Afghanistan-Pakistan: Border Disorder – Analysis *Eurasiareview*
- Musharaf, P. (2008). *In the Line of Fire*. London: Simon & Schuster.
- Muzaffar, M., Khan, I., & Karamat, S. (2017). The Politics of Religious Legislation: A Case Study of Pakistan 1979-2000, *Pakistan Social Sciences Review* 1(2), 76-90
- Muzaffar, M., Khan, I., & Yaseen. Z. (2019). End Game or a New Great Game? Indo-Pakistan Rivalry and Post Withdrawal Afghanistan, *AJIPS*, 3, 1-11
- Muzaffar, M., Nawab, M. W. & Yaseen, Z. (2021). The US Exit from Afghanistan: A Way Forward, *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, 2(2), 30-41
- Muzaffar, M., Yaseen, Z., & Afzal, N. (2021). US Exit from Afghanistan: Impacts on Pakistan and India, *Journal of Political Studies* 28 (2), 55–68
- Nabi, A., (Dec 28, 2016). List of Military Operations', *Liverostrum*.
- Reidel, B., (2010, May 20). Pakistan's Role in the Afghanistan War's Outcome.' *Brookings*
- Shah, S. W. A., (2013). Fencing the Durand line and its impact, *Internationales Asienforum*, 44(1-2), 85-103.
- Staniland, P., Mir, A. & Lalwani, S., (2018). Politics and threat perception: Explaining Pakistani military strategy on the North West Frontier, *Security Studies*, 27(4), 535-574
- Syed, S., (2013). No radical shift in new anti-terror strategy'. *Dawn*.
- Talukdar, S. (2018). US freezes military aid to Pakistan: Donald Trump's adhoc policy unlikely to force Islamabad's compliance', *First Post*
- Walsh, D., (May 4, 2011). Osama bin Laden killing prompts US-Pakistan war of words', *The Guardian*.
- Walt, S. M., (1985). Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power, *International Security*, 9(4), 3-43.
- Waltz, K. N. (2010). *Theory of international politics*, Waveland Press.
- Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what state makes of it: the social construction of power politics." *International Organization*, 46(2), 391-425.
- Woodward, B. (2002). *Bush at War*. New York: Simon & Schuster