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A Critical Study of Pakistan's Counterinsurgency Strategy in the Tribal Areas (2001-2014)

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A Critical Study of Pakistan’s Counterinsurgency Strategy in the Tribal Areas
(2001-2014)

Alamgir Khan

Ph.D. Thesis University of Dundee, November 2021
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List of Abbreviations

ANP: Awami National Party
APS: Army Public School
ARD: Alliance for Restoration of Democracy
CENTO: Central Treaty Organization
CIA: Central Intelligence Agency
CTD: Counter Terrorism Department
FATA: Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FC: Frontier Corps
FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation
FCR: Frontier Crimes Regulation
FR: Frontier Regions
GHQ: General Headquarters
GID: General Intelligence Directorate
ICG: International Crisis Group
ISI: Inter-Services Intelligence
ISPR: Inter-Services Public Relations
JI: Jamaat-i-Islami
JUI: Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam
KP: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MDAA: Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement
MMA: Muttahida Majlis Amal
MNA: Member of the National Assembly
NA: National Assembly
NAP: National Action Plan
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
PBUH: Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him
PKMAP: Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party
PML-N: Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz
PPP: Pakistan Peoples Party
RAW: Research and Analysis Wing
SEATO: Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SC: Supreme Court
SSG: Special Services Group
TTP: Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan
UAV: Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
US: United States
USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
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Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the author of this thesis; that, unless otherwise stated, all references cited have been consulted by me; that the work of which the thesis is a record has been done by me and that it has not been previously accepted for a higher degree.

Alamgir Khan

Date: July 19, 2021
Abstract

After the United States (US) invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the military regime in Pakistan faced a religiously motivated insurgency in the tribal areas. However, the respective Pakistani governments failed to make an effective counterinsurgency strategy to counter it. This project is devoted to ‘The Study of Pakistan’s Counterinsurgency Strategy in the Tribal Areas (2001-2014)’ which focuses on the following key questions; Why did insurgency begin in the tribal areas? Why did the insurgency expand? Why did it escalate? Most importantly, why did Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy fail to contain it? The theoretical literature on the onset of civil war and insurgencies suggests that relative deprivation and weak state capacity are key factors responsible for the onset of insurgencies. Similarly, the empirical literature on insurgency considers the country’s foreign policy during the Soviet-Afghan war and foreign presence in Afghanistan as an explanatory factor for the insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Likewise, the literature on the expansion of insurgency suggests that the lack of will and lack of capacity of the security forces were key factors responsible for the expansion of insurgency in tribal areas. Also, the literature on the escalation of insurgencies argues that external support for insurgents and internal coercive measures contribute to the escalation of insurgencies. The novelty of this study is that it advances different explanations for each of these areas in the light of the three-stages framework developed for this thesis. The framework stresses that there is not one single explanation for the origin, expansion and escalation of insurgency in the tribal areas; therefore, advancing these different explanations for insurgency contributes to the existing knowledge. After explaining the nature of insurgency in the tribal areas, the study uses classical and global counterinsurgency theories which will enhance our understanding of how to counter religiously motivated insurgency.
A Critical Study of Pakistan’s Counterinsurgency Strategy in the Tribal Areas (2001-2014)

Introduction

In this study I examine the onset of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Tribal Areas also known as Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) consisted of seven tribal agencies (districts): South Waziristan, North Waziristan, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai and Kurram and it shares approximately 300 miles border with Afghanistan. In addition to these agencies, there are six small areas called Frontier Regions which are jointly administered by the federal and provincial government. This mountainous region became an epicentre of different local and international militant groups after the United States (US)-led war on terror in Afghanistan. This new sanctuary, therefore, created serious security challenges externally as well as internally. Externally, the cross-border\textsuperscript{1} incursion of the militants posed serious threats to the US and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) security forces in Afghanistan. Internally, the country witnessed an insurgency\textsuperscript{2} against the Pakistan government in 2004, followed by an unprecedented wave of violence which shattered the foundation of the country. In particular, I focus on the counterinsurgency strategy of the successive Pakistani governments from 2001-2014 which failed to contain the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas. The insurgency, which was initially confined to South and North Waziristan, expanded and engulfed the remaining tribal agencies of Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram and Orakzai after 2004. I also analyse the impact of US drone strikes on the escalation of the insurgency.

The thesis demonstrates that, instead of challenging the ideological narrative of the militants, the government focus on the military operations was a key factor which led to the onset of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan and its subsequent expansion. The collateral damage caused by the military operations created strong

---

\textsuperscript{1} Pakistan shares 1640 miles border with Afghanistan called Durand Line. The border was demarcated in 1893 as a result of an agreement between the British India and the government of Afghanistan. The agreement was signed by Foreign Secretary of British India Sir Mortimer Durand (named after him) and the ruler of Afghanistan, Emir Abdur Rehman. The border has remained controversial between the two countries as Afghanistan does not recognise it as an international border.

\textsuperscript{2} The word ‘insurgency’ in the thesis mostly refers to the insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan while the plural ‘insurgencies’ refers to insurgencies in general.
resentment against the government and enabled the militants to form an umbrella organisation of about forty groups in the tribal areas in 2007. This new militant organisation called Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) announced a jihad\(^3\) against the Pakistani government and unleashed an era of terror in the country. Taliban were madrassa (school of religious studies) graduates who occupied Afghanistan in 1996. Pakistan militants were also called Taliban as they wanted Afghanistan like Shariah government in Pakistan. They declared jihad against the government and evolved an effective narrative against the security forces. In contrast, the government counterinsurgency strategy lacked clarity and certainty and failed to obtain the support of the people against the insurgents.

**Research Questions**

In addressing these issues, the study will examine the following key research questions:

- Why the insurgency began in the tribal areas of Pakistan;
- Why it expanded to the remaining tribal agencies;
- Why it escalated;
- What is the role/importance of counternarrative in the effective counterinsurgency strategy;
- Why the government’s counterinsurgency failed to contain the expansion of the insurgency;
- How the US enemy-centric approach, especially drone attacks and their collateral damage, influenced Pakistan’s counterinsurgency policy.

**Contribution of the Study**

The existing theoretical literature has explored the relationship between insurgencies and poverty (Gurr, 1970; Muller and Seligson, 1987; Stern, 2000; Fandl, 2003;  

\(^3\) Jihad is an Arabic word that means ‘struggle’ or ‘strive’. The word has been used in a different context in the Quran. For instance, struggle to become a better person. However, in its current usages, it is sometimes associated with violent means to achieve one’s objectives.
Blattman and Miguel, 2010; Benmelech, Berrebi, and Klor, 2012). Similarly, several studies have stressed that state weakness is the most important factor in the outbreak of civil war and insurgencies (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Jakobsen, Soysa and Jakobsen, 2013). Likewise, a considerable body of empirical studies consider Pakistan’s foreign policy during the Soviet-Afghan war (1979-88) and the use of religion for furthering national interests, as significant causal factors for the current insurgency in the tribal areas (Ahmed, 2009; 2011; Fair, 2004; Weinbaum and Harder, 2008; Ghufran, 2009; Murphy and Malik, 2009; Siddiqua, 2009; Gopal, Mahsud and Fishman, 2010; Bokhari, 2011; Nawaz, 2011; Brown, 2013; Riedel, 2013). The empirical literature also stresses that the foreign presence in Afghanistan and India’s interference in Pakistan were key explanatory factors for insurgency in the tribal areas (inter alia Tajik, 2011; Ahmad, 2013; Afridi, 2016).

The question regarding Pakistan’s counterinsurgency and the subsequent expansion of insurgency to the rest of the tribal areas has also been discussed in the literature, much of which has revolved around two key arguments. A number of studies suggest that the lack of political will of the Pakistani government was a key factor that weakened the country’s counterinsurgency strategy and helped to facilitate the subsequent expansion of the insurgency into the tribal areas (Weinbaum, 2014; Fair, Malhotra and Shapiro, 2010; Nawaz, 2009a; Rubin and Rashid, 2008; Behuria, 2007; Hussain, 2007; Khan, 2007). In contrast, a number of other studies argue that it was the weak capacity and capabilities of the security forces which undermined the efforts of counterinsurgency and led to the expansion of insurgency to the remaining tribal areas (Lieven, 2011; Rizvi, 2011; Cohen and Nawaz, 2009; Kilcullen, 2009c; Nawaz, 2009b; Paczynska, 2009).

Similarly, the existing literature has discussed the key factors which contributed to the escalation of the insurgencies (Bose, 2003; Byman, 2006; Kubo, 2007; Melshen, 2007). These studies suggest that external support to insurgents plays a significant role. According to the above studies, external support for the insurgents can be moral, political, economic and military. However, the above literature has overlooked the importance of outside support to counterinsurgents (not just insurgents) and its impact on insurgency. This study will examine this issue.

In contrast with the existing theoretical literature on insurgencies which has stressed the importance of factors such as poverty and state weakness, this study
demonstrates the vital role of counternarrative in the origin of insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas. Counternarrative in this study refers to the government efforts to deconstruct the ideological narrative of the militants. Similarly, in opposition to the existing empirical literature on the expansion of the insurgency in the tribal areas, which has focused on the lack of will and capacity of the security forces, this study stresses the significance of the military’s disproportionate use of force in the poorly governed tribal areas. Likewise, compared with the existing literature on external support to insurgents, this study examines the external support to counterinsurgents and its impact on insurgency escalation. A key contribution of this thesis is that it provides novel explanations for the key questions noted above. It does this by employing a three-stages framework developed by the author.

The first stage of this framework suggests that the insurgency began in the tribal areas of Pakistan when the government tried to resolve an ingrained issue of militancy without developing a political and religious consensus. The second stage of the framework suggests the key factor responsible for the expansion of insurgency was the inability of the state to develop an effective counternarrative, combined with its limited statehood in the tribal areas, and exacerbated by military operations which alienated the local population. The third stage of the framework demonstrates that the external support for the counterinsurgents was a key factor that intensified the insurgency in the tribal areas. The third stage suggests that if an external actor’s intervention and support for counterinsurgents reinforces the insurgents’ narrative, the insurgency is likely to escalate.

Counterinsurgency Theories

In addition to the above contribution which enhances our understanding of why insurgency began, expanded and escalated in the tribal areas, this study also uses classical and global counterinsurgency theories as its main theoretical framework to address insurgencies. Classical theory focuses on the importance of winning over the

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4 Militancy is the use of violent means to advance a political or social cause. However, in this study, the word has been used interchangeably with the insurgency.

5 Limited statehood means those areas where the central government cannot implement its decision and have a lack of legitimacy and monopoly over the use of violence.
support of the population and argues that in every insurgency there are three types of population group: There is a pro-insurgent minority; there is always a pro-government minority; but the more critical and decisive role is played by the neutral majority. Any of these forces would likely win the war if they could obtain the support of this neutral majority. The classical theory argues that insurgency is predominantly a political conflict and requires a political solution. The political solution should come first and policies should be adopted which would insulate the main population from the pull of the insurgents, and only once this is achieved can military means be employed. Military operations without a political solution are more liable to lead to abject failure.

However, the classical theory has its limitations when dealing with modern insurgencies which have external dimensions. Therefore, the study also uses the global counterinsurgency theory of David Kilcullen, which argues that international terrorist organisations such as Al-Qaeda use and exploit local militant organisations for their objectives. These international organisations first provoke the attacks of international forces and then exploit the collateral damage incurred at the hands of these forces. An organisation such as Al-Qaeda aggregates the resentment of these victims against the counterinsurgent forces. Kilcullen suggests the strategy of disaggregation to avoid the exploitation of victims at the hands of insurgents. The theory is particularly important to understand the impact of US drone strikes in the tribal areas of Pakistan, and their influence on Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy. Therefore, in addition to the contribution of the three-stages framework on the origin, expansion and escalation of the insurgency in the tribal areas, the application of both classical and global counterinsurgency theories enhances our knowledge and provides us with a greater understanding of Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy.

Context and Extent of the Problem

As stated above, the tribal areas of Pakistan were profoundly affected by the US-led war on terror in Afghanistan and its aftereffects. In order to avoid the US attacks in Afghanistan, many Al-Qaeda and Taliban members crossed the border and entered the adjacent tribal areas of Pakistan and established their sanctuaries there (see figure 1 for details). Pakistan security forces conducted successful operations against the international terrorist organisations, however, they failed to prevent the emergence of
local militant groups. According to the initial official estimate, there were only 70 Ahmadzai tribesmen in South Waziristan in 2003 who were harbouring foreign militants in the area (Jones and Fair, 2010, p. 47). The number of foreign terrorists hiding in the tribal areas in 2004 numbered approximately 600 (The Frontier Post, 2004a, p. 1). However, the number of local Taliban fighters reached 10,000 in early 2008 (Iqbal and Silva, 2013, p. 77). Similarly, it is estimated that the number of foreign militants reached 8,000 in the tribal areas in 2008 (Khan, 2014, p. 20). In addition to their increasing influence in the tribal areas, the Taliban also occupied Swat – a district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)\(^6\) province in 2009, and they advanced to the adjacent district of Buner which is only sixty miles away from the country’s capital - Islamabad.

---

\(^6\) Pakistan has four administrative provinces: Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). KP is an adjacent province to the tribal areas and shares the same language, ethnicity and religion. The province was called North-West Frontier Province and renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2010.
Insurgency in the tribal areas not only increased in size but also in extent. The TTP created havoc by starting a wave of suicide attacks across the country. According to the South Asian Terrorism Portal (SATP), 54 suicide attacks were carried out in 2007.
alone, which killed 765 people and injured 1,677. From 2007 to 2014, more than 400 indiscriminate suicide attacks were conducted against security agencies and the general population (SATP, 2018). The leaders of progressive political parties, such as the Awami National Party (ANP) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), were mainly targeted and killed for their liberal views. Pakistan’s former Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, was assassinated in one such suicide bomb blast in December 2007. In 2008, one of the country’s most expensive hotels – the Marriott – was attacked, sending a message to foreigners that Pakistan was no longer a safe place. In 2009, the militants attacked the General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Pakistan army, killing nine soldiers, a brigadier and a colonel, in retaliation for Government military operations in South Waziristan.

In 2012, the Taliban attempted to kill a social activist, Malala Yousufzai (a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 for her struggle against the suppression of children and their right to education). The Taliban targeted schools, hospitals, public places and headquarters of the security forces. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attacks (2014), reported that more than 838 schools were attacked between 2009-2013. Health workers were threatened and killed, with the aim of thwarting an anti-polio vaccination campaign. The rampant recurrent persecution of minorities created a grave human security crisis. In December 2014, the militants attacked an Army Public School (APS)7 in Peshawar killing 148 people, including 132 innocent children.

The security situation adversely affected domestic economic activity. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) plummeted from $5.6 billion in 2007 to $860 million in 2012 (Aazim, 2020). Over $106.98 billion was lost to the government exchequer, draining economic resources and halting service delivery (Pakistan Economic Survey, 2014-2015). Foreign countries issued a warning list to those who wanted to visit Pakistan. Foreign tourism was adversely affected by the security situation. In his speech in 2009, US President Obama spoke about the threat which emanated from the frontier region between Pakistan and Afghanistan. He warned that the region had become a safe haven for both Afghan and Pakistani militants and “the most dangerous place in the world” for the American people (quoted in Murphy, 2013, p. 1). The then US Secretary of

7 The responsibility of the Army Public School (APS) attack was claimed by TTP.
State, Hillary Clinton in 2009 cautioned the US Congress that “Pakistan poses a mortal threat to the security and safety of our country and the world” (Ibid).

These apprehensions were reinforced by the capability of local Pakistani Taliban who were implicated in terrorist attacks in several foreign countries. The failed attack in New York’s Times Square in 2010 by an American-born Pakistani Faisal Shehzad was linked with TTP in Waziristan. The incident strengthened the international opinion that most acts of terrorism in the world were planned in Pakistan (Jalal, 2011, p. 7). Similarly, the 7/7 London bombings in 2005 and a failed terrorist attack in Barcelona in 2008 were planned by Al-Qaeda and TTP in the tribal areas of Pakistan (Iqbal, 2010, p. 134). In his interview on Al Jazeera television aired on January 28, 2008, Bait Ullah Mehsud – head of the TTP, announced that their aim was to destroy the US and Britain and their major cities (Iqbal and Silva, 2013, p. 82). The local Pakistani Taliban became more dangerous than the Afghan Taliban. They provided sophisticated training to European Muslim students from Britain, Germany and Sweden, to launch terrorist attacks in their home countries. This also increased the fear that Pakistan could become a failed state, and with nuclear weapons it could pose terrifying threats to other countries (Rashid, 2012, pp. 33-35).

However, despite these atrocities and a huge loss in men and materials, successive Pakistani governments were unable to develop an effective counterinsurgency strategy to address the insurgency. Insurgency, according to Galula (1964, p. 45) cannot normally be developed unless it meets two key prerequisites: it has a strong cause and the opponents are weak. In Pakistan, the military government of Pervez Musharraf8 and his employment of coercive operations against the militants without a political and religious consensus, provided a strong motivation to the insurgents against the government. The military government of Musharraf lacked political support, while his alliance with the US undermined his legitimacy and led to his being labelled a puppet of the Bush government which was waging war against Islam and the tribesmen. The credibility of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government in 2008, also played a critical role in the deterioration of the security situation. So, it is immensely important to understand the reasons for the emergence,

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8 Pervez Musharraf seized power in a military coup in October 1999 by toppling a civilian government of Nawaz Sharif. Declaring himself Chief Executive and later President of the country, he ruled Pakistan from 1999-2008.
expansion and escalation of the insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan which remained peaceful before 9/11.

**Project Outline**

In addition to the introduction and conclusion, the thesis is structured into six chapters. The first chapter, the ‘Literature Review’ discusses the existing literature on the subject and identifies the gap in the literature which this thesis addresses. The chapter is divided into nine main sections: The chapter begins with the debate on different insurgency-related concepts and discusses the difference between traditional and modern insurgencies. Section two deals with the theoretical literature on the origin of insurgencies with a focus on the analysis of empirical literature on the insurgency in tribal areas of Pakistan; the third section explores the existing literature on the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan; the fourth section analyses the existing literature on the escalation of insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas. The development of counterinsurgency strategies is discussed in the fifth section. Section six analyses the alternative approaches to fight insurgencies. Theories of counterinsurgency are discussed in section seven. A critique on counterinsurgency strategy and its main theories are discussed in section eight. The section also identifies in the existing literature. The last section demonstrates how the three-stages framework addresses the gap.

Chapter 2 ‘Methodology’ explains the methods adopted for this project. The first section explains the qualitative historical analysis method adopted for this study and also discusses the differences between qualitative and quantitative methods. The following section will explain the selection and justification of the case study adopted for this study. The section also discusses the selection of tribal areas as a case study. Section three reflects on the author’s positionality. Section four explains the method of data collection for this study. The last section discusses the methodology not selected for this study.

Chapter 3 ‘Historical Context: Pakistan’s Security Apprehensions’ provides the historical background of the project to help readers understand the current problems in light of the region’s troubled history. The chapter is broadly divided into four sections:
The first section sheds light on the deep-rooted and unresolved issue of Kashmir which has remained a bone of contention between India and Pakistan since their independence in 1947. Pakistan’s turbulent relations with India and the unresolved issue of Kashmir are important to understand the external security apprehension of the country, especially the army. The second section explains the relation between the US and Pakistan in the context of Afghanistan. Section three discusses how the security apprehension emanating from Eastern and Western borders has impacted Pakistani politics. An overview of the political system and the role of the army in politics is discussed in the section. Political parties, the role of judiciary and media, and the state of society are discussed in the following subsections. The last second provides a historical background and profile of the tribal areas and explains how the area was used as a launching pad during the Soviet-Afghan war. The historical context is immensely important to understand the empirical chapters.

As noted above, the key questions of the insurgency’s origin, expansion and escalation in the tribal areas will be analysed in the light of the three-stage framework. Chapter 4 ‘Beginning of Insurgency: Building a Narrative against the Insurgents’ explores the Pakistani government policy for dealing with the insurgency in the tribal areas. The first section sheds light on the importance of narrative and counternarrative; the second section discuss the policy shift of the Government after 9/11; the third section analyses the role of political and religious parties and how they contributed to the polarisation of the nation’s views against the insurgents. How this space or gap was exploited by the insurgents will be analysed in the subsequent section. The chapter then moves on to discuss the Government’s contradictory and fractured counternarrative. What constitutes an effective counternarrative is covered in the last section of the chapter.

Chapter 5 ‘The Expansion of Insurgency: Winning Battles and Losing People’ explores the inability of the state to develop an effective counternarrative in the first section. The second section analyses the weak governance in the tribal areas of Pakistan. The subsequent section explores the military operations conducted in the tribal region. This includes a discussion of “Operation Enduring Freedom” and Pakistan’s role, “Operation Al-Mizan”, “Operation Silence in Lal Masjid” (Red Mosque), “Operation Tri-Star” (Zalzala (Earthquake)), and “Operation Rah-i-Nijat” (Path to Salvation). The last section explores how the changing strategy from ‘search
and destroy’ to winning the ‘hearts and minds’ helped the government to achieve some success.

Chapter 6 ‘Escalation of Insurgency: One Problem many Solutions’ examines the interaction of the external and internal actors. The first section of the chapter explores the brief history of Pak-US relations and the Indian factor. This is followed by a discussion on drone strikes in Pakistan’s tribal areas. The subsequent section deals with the legality of the drone strikes. The US perspective on drone strikes is discussed in section four. Section five discusses Pakistan’s perspective on drone attacks. Global counterinsurgency theory is analysed in section six. The last section explores the impact of drone strikes on the escalation of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan.
Chapter 1: Literature Review

The existing theoretical literature has provided various explanations regarding the onset of insurgencies and political violence (Gurr, 1970; Muller and Seligson, 1987; Blattman and Miguel, 2010; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Jones, 2008), however, they do not adequately explain the outbreak of insurgency in tribal areas of Pakistan. Similarly, numerous empirical studies have attempted to explain the reasons for insurgency in the mountainous region of Pakistan (Rashid, 2001; Hussain, 2007; Weinbaum and Harder, 2008; Murphy and Malik, 2009; Gul, 2009; Nawaz, 2011; Bokhari, 2011; Riedel, 2013; Brown, 2013) but they insufficiently explain the beginning of insurgency and its subsequent expansion in the tribal areas. The key questions which still have to be addressed are: Why did insurgency begin in the tribal areas of Pakistan? Why did it expand, and why did the government’s counterinsurgency strategy fail to contain it? Why did it escalate? This study will be the first to advance different explanations for these fundamental questions in the light of the three-stages framework developed for this study.

This chapter aims to review the existing theoretical and empirical literature on insurgency and counterinsurgency. Section one begins with a definition of insurgency and the different concepts relating to insurgencies, such as guerrilla wars, insurgency and terrorism. Section two explains the key theoretical and empirical perspectives on the origin of the insurgency. In section 3, I analyse the expansion of insurgency in the light of the above arguments. Section 4 will explore the existing literature on the escalation of insurgency. Section 5 examines the historical development of counterinsurgency and its two main approaches - enemy-centric and population-centric. Section 6 deals with the theories of insurgency and counterinsurgency. Section 7 discusses the critique of counterinsurgency strategy and its main theories. In section 8, I will provide a critique on the existing literature and will identify the key gap. In the last section, I will demonstrate how my three-stages framework addresses the gap in the literature.
1.1. Insurgency

1.1.1. Defining Insurgency

Insurgency and counterinsurgency are not new forms of warfare. The roots of their modern manifestation can be traced back to nineteenth-century guerrilla operations whose legacy can date back to ancient times (Barnes, 2015). The importance of irregular warfare can be known from the fact that between 1816 and the end of the twentieth century 464 wars took place out of which only 79 (17 per cent) were conventional conflicts which occurred between states, while 385 (83 per cent) were civil-war insurgencies which occurred within states (cited in Kilcullen, 2010, pp. ix-x). From the Clausewitzean period until the 1960s, insurgencies and guerrilla warfare were considered peripheral to mainstream conventional conflict and were paid little attention, but at the end of the Cold War, insurgency (which replaced the term ‘low-intensity conflict’) became increasingly important (Rich and Duyvesteyn, 2012, p. 2). According to Rich and Duyvesteyn (2012, p. 11), the term insurgency was applied ‘when guerrilla tactics developed into a more comprehensive strategic approach at the start of the twentieth century.’

Insurgency and its methods were refined by the Chinese, Vietnamese and Algerian states during the Cold War, which is considered the golden age of insurgency (Metz, 2012, p. 32). In order to defeat a stronger army, Mao defined a three-stage model for materially weak insurgents. The first stage according to Mao is strategic defensive, where insurgents accept their inferiority to the stronger army and avoid direct battle with it, in order to maintain the survival of their organisation (Rovner, 2014, p. 303). In this stage, insurgents flee and hide, and buy time to strengthen the organisation while gaining public support and exhausting the enemy. In the second stage of strategic stalemate according to Mao, insurgents can be roughly comparable with the enemy in terms of public support but continue attacking the weak and vulnerable areas of the enemy. In the third stage of the strategic offensive, the insurgents - after passing the state in term of material resources - ‘attack the state, operating on internal and external lines, while counting on the fact that the enemy’s public support will collapse under pressure’ (Ibid).

In popular debate and academic discourse, the term insurgency is used exclusively for subversion and irregular warfare and similarly, counterinsurgency is
used for such measures taken by the government and its foreign supporters to defeat it (Zaalberg, 2012). In the West, the field of insurgency emerged during the anti-colonisation period, but the field was mainly dominated by the US after the decolonisation period. Both the American and European ideas about insurgency were considered modern and many non-Western nations sent their professionals to learn this type of modern counterinsurgency to deal with their respective insurgencies (Metz, 2012, p. 32). The US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003 respectively, however, gave new life to insurgency and counterinsurgency, and as Kilcullen (2006a, p. 111) noted that ‘more has been written on [counterinsurgency] in the last four years than in the last four decades.’

Insurgency and terrorism are sometimes used interchangeably, but it is important to stress the fact that there are important differences between these two concepts (see table 1.1 for details). As Gompert and Gordon (2008, p. xxix) stress that, insurgencies are usually large and have some popular support, whereas terrorist groups may be small and operate on their own, and do not have popular support. Insurgencies rely on the support of the population for their survival, but this is not the case with terrorists, who seek to create fear and anxiety amongst the local population. Insurgents represent deeper problems or grievances within society (Kilcullen, 2005). The most important distinction between terrorists and insurgents is that the former use violence more freely to create fear and then manipulate that fear to achieve their demands (Santos, 2011). ‘Insurgents use many different strategies and tactics; from terrorist campaigns designed to intimidate the population, to conventional warfare designed to overthrow the government’s army. Yet all insurgents have the same goal - attaining power’ (Corum, 2009, p. 15).

Namrata Goswami (2009), cited in Metz (2012) argues that insurgents desire to control a given area and terrorists do not, and instead use violence against non-combatants for political purpose. The focus of the counterinsurgent forces in the insurgency is, therefore, to address the grievances of the population and gain their support, or to destroy the insurgents. Nielsen, Syed and Vestenskov (2015, p. 45) demonstrate that ‘insurgency is more related to the situation where the population is demanding the right of self-determination, whereas terrorism is more of a tool of insurgents or militants or an external power to undermine the writ of any state.’ Earlier, terrorism was considered a component of insurgency and only emerged as an
independent factor in the 1970s in response to growing international terrorism (Sahni, 2001). Insurgents, however, use terrorism in the initial phase to gain attention and attract potential support (Metz, 2012).

**TABLE 1.1: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TERRORISM AND INSURGENCY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Terrorism</strong></th>
<th><strong>Insurgency</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism is an unrepresentative aberration</td>
<td>Insurgents represent deeper issues in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No negotiation with terrorists</td>
<td>Winning hearts and minds is critical, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>often involves negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods and objectives are both unacceptable</td>
<td>Methods are unacceptable; objectives are not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>necessarily so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorists are psychologically and morally</td>
<td>Insurgents use violence within an integrated-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flawed, with personal (psychopathic tendency)</td>
<td>politico military strategy - violence is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toward violence</td>
<td>instrumental, not central to their approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism is a law-enforcement problem</td>
<td>Insurgency is a governmental problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism adopts a case-based approach</td>
<td>Counterinsurgency uses a strategy-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focused on catching the perpetrators of terrorist</td>
<td>approach focused on defeating the insurgents’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actions</td>
<td>strategy – catching them is secondary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Insurgents aim to replace the existing order with one that is compatible with their political, economic, ideological and/or religious objectives (Gompert and Gordon, 2008, p. 23).

Gompert and Gordon (2008, p. 25) outline four types of insurgencies in terms of their size and region:

1. **Local**: Local insurgencies are those which are self-contained in their cause, scope, and effects. Despite the impact of globalisation, local insurgencies constitute 60 per cent of the total number of insurgencies as of 2007. Philippine insurgency (1899-1902) and more recently insurgency in Colombia are examples of local insurgencies.
2. **Local-International:** In this type of insurgency, insurgents often seek and receive external support in the form of money, arms, media coverage, expertise and propaganda. Vietnam, Kosovo and Chechnya are examples of local-international insurgencies.

3. **Global-Local:** A local insurgency when it receives international support and becomes part of a wider regional or global struggle is called a global-local insurgency. Though global-local insurgencies have made up just 5 per cent of all insurgencies since World War II, they still pose major challenges for counterinsurgent forces. The insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas falls under this category which is the main focus of this study. A local militant group Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) developed links with the Afghan Taliban and Al-Qaeda. The latter continued to lend support to TTP. TTP affiliated themselves with the greater cause of Islamic jihad.

4. **Global:** Global insurgencies are not confined to one state but directed against the nation-state order in general. Such movements may ‘predate globalisation, e.g., the anarchist and pre-Bolshevik international communist movements of the turn of the 20th century and Che Guevara’s attempt to rid Latin American of capitalism and US influence’ (Gompert and Gordon, 2008, p. xxxi).

Concerning their goals, there are nine types of insurgencies according to O’Neill (2005, p. 30): ‘anarchists, egalitarians, traditionalists, pluralist, apocalyptic-utopians, secessionist, reformists, preservationists, and commercialists.’ The first five according to him are revolutionary because they want to completely change the existing political system. Traditionalist insurgents are those ‘who articulate primordial and sacred values rooted in ancestral ties and religion [and] have posed the greatest threat in the early twenty-first century’ (O’Neill, 2005, p. 32). There is a subtype within the traditionalist insurgency that are more zealous, and seek to re-establish their ancient political system which they idealise as a golden age, and can be categorised as reactionary-traditionalist (Ibid). In terms of its goal, the insurgency in Pakistan can be categorised as reactionary-traditionalist.

Insurgency is also sometimes confused with the concepts of revolution and plots but there is a difference between these concepts. Insurgency according to the American *Counterinsurgency Field Manual FM 3-24* is:
an organised movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict…. Stated another way, an insurgency is an organised, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control’ (US field manual, 2006, p. 1).

Revolution, on the other hand, is a sudden, spontaneous and unplanned upheaval (France, 1789; China, 1911; Russia, 1917; Hungary, 1956) to overthrow the existing order; although it can be explained after it occurs, it cannot be predicted before (Galula, 1964, p. 2). A plot, he further notes, is a sudden, brief and clandestine action of an insurgent group to overthrow the top leadership of the country. Unlike a revolution, a plot does not involve the masses because of its covert nature.

Insurgency according to Galula (1964, p. 2) is a ‘protracted struggle conducted methodically, step by step, in order to attain specific intermediate objectives leading finally to overthrow of the existing order (China, 1927-49; Greece, 1945-50; Indochina, 1945-54; Algeria, 1954-62).’ Insurgencies like revolutions are also not easy to predict, and they are slow to develop, therefore difficult to determine when exactly they start (Galula, 1964).

The fundamental difference between conventional and guerrilla warfare is that in the latter the insurgents strike the opponent where he does not expect it, and the main purpose is to avoid his strength and target attacks on his weaknesses (Rich and Duyvesteyn, 2012). Insurgents avoid conventional war and engage in the battle over the support of the population, a major characteristic of the revolutionary war; they succeed when they manage to dissociate the population from the counterinsurgents (Galula, 1964). Kilcullen (2005) argues that insurgency is a grassroots uprising that aims to overthrow the constituted government or societal orders through subversion, irregular warfare and terrorism. By this definition, Kilcullen (2005) concludes that global jihad is a global insurgency which seeks to overthrow the existing political order, aggregate the local grievances, and transform them into border ideologies. Therefore, he proposes a disaggregation strategy which I shall discuss in detail in section five of this chapter.
Mockaitis (1990, p. 1) makes a distinction between guerrilla warfare and insurgency. He maintains that ‘guerrilla’ was a Spanish term used for ‘small wars’ during the Napoleonic era, however, ‘tactics of guerrilla warfare are as old as organised warfare itself.’ He argues that insurgency is an internal struggle of disgruntled people which combines subversion, guerrilla tactics and terrorism to control the nation (Mockaitis, 1990, p. 3). Insurgents conduct their operations for specific political objectives which are slightly different from guerrilla warfare because they operate separately from a conventional army (Santos, 2011, p. 2). Differentiating between the two, Beckett (2012, p. 23) maintains that insurgency refers to the transformation of traditional methods of guerrilla and irregular warfare to more revolutionary methods in both intent and practice. He further argues that social, economic, psychological and political elements were added to the traditional hit-and-run insurgency to change the structure of the state more radically. In an insurgency, the insurgents use the same traditional guerrilla tactics, but the target of their violence is political rather than military.

The insurgency cannot be controlled by conventional means, as it is not the strength they strike, but the weakness. Robert Taber (1965, p. 25) argues that ‘the guerrilla fights the war of the flea, and his military enemy suffers the dog’s disadvantage: too much to defend; too small, ubiquitous, and agile an enemy to come to grips with.’ The government does not have all the resources to defend each person and every building, but if it has the support of the population, it helps them to control the insurgency. It is argued that the British army and police failed in their struggle against the Irish Republic Army (IRA) initially only because they were using conventional methods which finally led them to develop a British counterinsurgency strategy (Mockaitis, 1990). It is also evident that the British government succeeded in Malaya because it implemented the counterinsurgency principles effectively.

As mentioned above, insurgencies are grassroots movements and cannot be sustained without the support of the population. That is the reason that insurgency cannot be fought without a strong popular cause which attracts many people. The causes, however, vary. For instance, during the colonial period in Indonesia, Indochina, Morocco, Tunisia, Cyprus, and Algeria, the cause was to gain independence (Galula, 1964). Sustaining insurgency without a cause is difficult, and addressing the cause can
help to end the insurgency. For instance, in Malaysia, the Malay Communist Party was fighting for independence, but its cause suffered heavily when the country was granted its independence (Galula, 1964).

It is important to bear in mind that the cause and motivation of insurgencies have shifted over time. Rich and Duyvesteyn (2012) argue that the motivation shifted from ‘nationalism, decolonisation, liberation and revolution to most importantly, the Salafist jihad.’ John Mackinlay introduces the concept of post-Maoist insurgency and along with Kilcullen and Hoffman believes that the idea of insurgency has gradually changed from a national struggle into a global one (cited in Rich and Duyvesteyn, 2012, p. 12). Mackinlay argues that the Maoist insurgencies among others were characterised by a clear ideology, and a defined target of violence, whilst post-Maoist insurgencies rely on multiple audiences and actors, where virtual communities have a significant role (Ibid).

1.1.2. Traditional and Modern Insurgencies
Insurgency is not a new form of violent opposition. Empires and governments have encountered insurgencies for centuries. But modern insurgencies are different from the earlier traditional insurgencies. During the traditional insurgency period (1944-1980) the insurgent groups focused on expelling foreign forces in order to gain liberation and establish independent states (Spear, 2008, p. 394). However, this is not the case with modern insurgencies. Kilcullen (2006a) argues, that the aim of traditional insurgencies was to overthrow the colonial government, but current insurgencies seek state failure rather than state control. In some religiously motivated insurgencies, their aim is not political but to earn God’s favour. Kilcullen (2006a) further explains that in traditional insurgencies the insurgent was normally the instigator, but in contemporary insurgencies such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya and Pakistan, the insurgents are reactive rather than proactive. Another difference explained by Kilcullen (2006a) is that in classical insurgencies, insurgents were able to live off the support of the population and counterinsurgencies were designed to prevent such support going to the insurgents. In contrast, in the current insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, insurgents are better off than the population and provide resources to them.
One of the most important aspects of modern insurgency is its transnational nature while ‘classical theory typically regards insurgency as something that occurs within one country or district, between an internal non-state actor and a single government’ (Kilcullen, 2006a, p. 114). The modern global insurgencies which rely on virtual communities, according to Rich and Duyvesteyn (2012, p. 12), have no centre of gravity which can be targeted by military and political means. The use of technology has made the modern insurgency incomparable to the past. Insurgent groups use technology to mobilise the audience. The use of technology has made it difficult to control cyber-mobilisation. In a modern insurgency, the internet provides a virtual base, where the insurgent can reach other likeminded people and develop their plan of action (Ibid). John Mackinlay and Al-Baddawy (2008, p. 22) maintains that in modern insurgencies population live in different countries. ‘Each of these populations plays an important role in the insurgent and counterinsurgent campaigns. Their support is part of the strategic centre of gravity of both sides. It is not their physical support that largely sustains the campaign, but rather their political or emotional support.’

1.2. Origins of the Insurgencies

1.2.1. Poverty and Relative Deprivation

A conservative estimate suggests that between 1945 and 1999, 127 civil wars occurred which reportedly killed 16.2 million, five times more than the people killed in the same period in interstate wars (Fearon and Laitin, 2003, p. 75). What explains the outbreak of civil war and insurgencies has remained a focus of scholarly debate. Since the time of Aristotle, scholars have argued that the root cause of political violence and revolution lies in economic inequality (Muller, 1985). Leading American political scientist Robert Gurr (1970) maintains that relative deprivation and grievances are the root causes of political violence and conflict. He claims that relative deprivation induces discontent which contributes to violence. Relative deprivation is defined as a ‘perceived discrepancy between men’s value expectations and their value capabilities’ (Gurr, 1970, p. 13). Value expectations ‘are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightly entitled’ and ‘value capabilities are the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining, given the social means available
to them’ (Ibid). He argues that the fundamental source of political violence in humans is the frustration-aggression mechanism, where discontent is generated first, followed by its politicisation which is actualised in political violence (Gurr, 1970). The basic frustration-aggression proposition is that the greater the frustration, the greater the quantity of aggression against the source of frustration.

According to Taydas, Peksen and James (2010, p. 196), ‘Relative deprivation, systemic discrimination, repression (land, income, gender) inequality, and ethnic and religious fractionalisation/polarisation are some of the factors that create a sense of injustice and provide groups with the motivation to use violent means.’ Mild deprivation will motivate few to violence, moderate deprivation will push more across the threshold, very intense deprivation is likely to galvanize large segments of a political community into action’ (Gur, 1970, p. 9). According to Gurr societal conditions that ‘decrease men's average value position without decreasing their value expectations similarly increase deprivation, hence the intensity of discontent’ (1970, p. 13). Similarly, Muller and Seligson (1987) state that inequality in the distribution of income rather than maldistribution of land generates discontent and political violence. These views are shared by Blattman and Miguel (2010) who observe that low income and slow growth contribute to the outbreak of civil war in less developed countries. They further maintain that the relation between low per capita income and a higher tendency for internal war is the most robust one. Similarly, Fandl (2003) suggests that people left without access to wealth and opportunities become desperate and susceptible to conflict.

Benmelech, Berrebi, and Klor (2012) posit that there is a strong relationship between economic conditions and political violence. They maintain that high unemployment and poor economic conditions enable terrorist organisations to recruit more educated and experienced people for their attacks. Khawaja (2016) also stresses the positive relationship between economic conditions and extremism, and argues that poverty heavily contributes to terrorism. Moonis Ahmar (2013, p. 168) argues that ‘economic measures are key to counterterrorism because violence and acts of terror tend to develop when there is poverty, unemployment, underdevelopment and backwardness.’ Akram (2015) maintains that the fundamental origin of Islamic
militancy lies in the failure of Muslim states to provide jobs and deliver justice to the growing population of youth.

This conventional wisdom is adopted by leaders and policymakers across the world. In a speech in 2002, US President Bush said that “We fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror” (quoted in Krueger and Maleckova, 2002). Similarly, John Kerry the former US Secretary of State (2013-2017) maintained that poverty in many cases is the cause of terrorism and cause of the alienation of millions of people in this world (quoted in Sterman, 2015). Colin Powel, the then Secretary of State, declared in a discussion in 2002 that “I fully believe that the root cause of terrorism does come from a situation where there is poverty, where there is ignorance, where people see no hope in their lives” (quoted in Berrebi, 2007, p. 2). Likewise, speaking to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, the then Secretary-General Kofi Annan said the world cannot be a safer place if so many people suffer from poverty (BBC, 2002).

Pakistan is a developing country in South Asia with an annual per capita income (PCI) of $1,470, which was lower than Bangladesh’s $1,538 (Economist, 2017) and India’s per capita income of $1,930 in the same period (Mazumdaru, 2017). A report published in the Pakistan national daily says that 58.7 million people out of 180 million live below the poverty line (Dawn, 2012). Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) present a more dismal picture of poverty, and according to Shinwari (2010) it is widely believed that unemployment contributed to extremism in the area. A research study conducted by FATA Research Centre (FRC) in 2012 titled ‘Extremism and Radicalisation: An Overview of the Social, Political, Cultural and Economic Landscape of FATA’ concluded that the existing deprivation and poverty are responsible for growing radicalisation and militancy in Pakistan’s tribal areas (The Tribune, 2012). The above argument is supported by Behuria (2007, p. 704) who claimed that Al-Qaeda exploited unemployment in the areas by recruiting fighters, and paid each recruit up to $250 per month. Stern (2000), in her study argued that poverty is a significant factor which compelled poor families in Pakistan to send their sons to jihad.

This study, however, argues that the relation of poverty with the insurgency is highly exaggerated and refutes any connection between poverty and the insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. The tribal areas of Pakistan suffered from poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment for many years, however, it remained peaceful.
If poverty was the most important factor, as stated above, why did the insurgency only begin after 9/11 and not before this date? The relation between insurgency and poverty has also been questioned by several scholars. Blair et al. (2013) in their extensive survey representing 6,000 Pakistani individuals find no correlation between poverty and militancy in Pakistan. Contrary to the conventional wisdom that militancy is strongly related with poverty, Shapiro and Fair’s (2009) study finds that economic conditions do not determine support for Talibanization in Pakistan. Another political scientist, James Piazza (2006), in his study on terrorism and casualties in ninety-six countries from 1986 to 2002, questions the core assumption among scholars and policymakers regarding the relationship between poverty and violence. He also denies that there are any significant relations between economic development and political violence.

Consistent with Blair et al. (2013), Fair et al. (2018) reject the hypothesis that poverty causes support for militancy. They further argue that poor people in Pakistan are less supportive of militancy and more exposed to the violence of militants because of the infrastructure and their inability to move to more safe places. Militant groups in Pakistan have no anti-poverty agenda, which negates the relation between poverty and support for militancy (Fair et al., 2018, p. 61). Blair et al. (2013) maintain that in actual fact, poor people in Pakistan hold low regard for militants. Krueger (2007, p. 2) argues that the ‘evidence is nearly unanimous in rejecting either material deprivation or inadequate education as an important cause of support for terrorism or of participation in terrorist activities.’ His study suggests that the best-educated people, having high income are more likely to participate in terrorism. They conclude that the relationship between poverty or education and political violence is indirect and quite a weak one (Krueger, 2007, p. 13; Krueger and Malečková, 2003, p. 141).

The above argument is supported by Hafiz (cited in Akhtar, 2016, p. 16), who demonstrates that mere poverty and deprivation are not sufficient factors to explain Islamic insurgencies. Zaidi (2010) maintains that poverty alone is not a sufficient explanatory factor for the promotion of radicalisation in Pakistan. This argument has also been endorsed by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) - Karachi (Pakistan), in its research study, which also found that it was not only family issues and poverty which pushed people towards militancy, as well-off people also joined militant groups in Pakistan (The Nation, 2017).
1.2.2. State Weaknesses

The second group of scholars contend that ‘financially, organisationally, and politically weak central governments render insurgency more feasible and attractive due to weak local policing or inept and corrupt counterinsurgency practices’ (Fearon and Laitin, 2003, pp. 75-76). A weak state is vulnerable to insurgency and increases the chances of rebels surviving and achieving their goals in comparison with a well-organised and strong state (Jakobsen, Soysa and Jakobsen, 2013, p. 143). Fearon and Laitin (2003, p. 88) argue that ‘decolonization from the 1940s through the 1970s gave birth to a large number of financially, bureaucratically, and militarily weak states. These states have been at risk of civil violence for the whole period, almost entirely in the form of insurgency, or rural guerrilla warfare.’ In Lebanon, for instance, the sectarian balance made the state weak, which triggered insurgency in the country from 1975 to 1991 (Jones, 2008a, p. 18). Similarly, Afghanistan, Mozambique, Georgia and Bosnia witnessed insurgencies because of the weak state system (Jones, 2008a, pp. 18-19).

Goodwin and Skocpol (1989) maintain that revolutionary movements will occur in the Third World countries which are financially, administratively and militarily weak. In the words of Francis Fukuyama, ‘Since the end of the Cold War, weak and failing states have arguably become the single most important problem for international order’ (Fukuyama, 2004, p. 92). Similarly, Richard Hass, the then State Department’s director of policy planning maintained that “The attacks of September 11, 2001, reminded us that weak states can threaten our security as much as strong ones, by providing breeding grounds for extremism and havens for criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists. Such lawlessness abroad can bring devastation here at home” (quoted in Patrick, 2006, p. 3).

In comparison to weak states, Collier and Hoeffler (1998) opportunity cost model suggests that rebels will conduct civil war if the benefits are sufficiently large than the cost of rebellion. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) further maintain that rebellion is not caused by motive but opportunities available to the insurgents. Weak government military capability creates opportunities for the insurgency (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004). Doyle and Sambanis (2006, p. 32) study support opportunity cost theory and maintain that insurgency is a rational decision influenced by economic opportunities. Collier (2000, p. 852) maintains that ‘rebellion is modelled as a criminal activity – the only difference from common crime being that predation is directed against the natural
resources instead of household wealth.’ In the rebellion-as-crime model, the rebels want to control the natural resources which contribute to violent conflict because the government want to defend it (Collier, 2000). Jakobsen, Soysa and Jakobsen (2013, p. 154) study suggests that ‘poverty fuels grievances, but income level also – and, as suggested herein, to a more substantial degree – affects the rational calculation of whether or not one instigates or joins a costly rebellion, and the result indicate that it is the latter factor that dominates among the determinants of rebellion.’

Koren and Sarbahi (2017) argue that a state having poor capacity will more likely witness civil wars. Their findings validate Fearon and Laitin’s (2003) argument that state capacity is a significant explanatory factor when it comes to explaining the beginning of a civil war. The argument is supported by Mason and Greig (2017) who maintain that civil wars are more likely to occur in states having weak capacity. Hegre et al. (2001) suggest that democracies and full autocracies are unlikely to experience civil war, while semi-democracies and weak autocracies are more vulnerable to civil war. According to Hironaka (2005, p. 149), structurally weak states are not able to ‘effectively or equitably resolve political discontent, nor can they repress the insurgencies that grow as a consequence.’ Furthermore, he argues that two factors make weak states more vulnerable to civil war and insurgencies. First, weak states lack effective control over their territories and borders. Secondly, since weak states do not have control over their peripheral areas, a handful of radical insurgents, therefore, continue to fight.

Gurses and Mason’s (2010, p. 151) study suggests that among weak states ‘neopatrimonial or personalist regimes are the most susceptible to civil war onset.’ They argue that democracies are relatively immune to revolutions. ‘The grievances that might fuel a revolution in a non-democracy can be addressed through non-violent means in a democratic state because the leaders are subject to the discipline of the ballot box’ (Gurses and Mason, 2010, p. 142). Taydas, Peksen and James (2010) maintain that institutionally strong states will less likely experience civil war because the institutions in strong states are aware of the citizens’ problems and are responsive to their needs. The major proxies of institutional quality such as anti-corruption, rule of law and the quality of bureaucracy are associated with the prevention of civil war (Taydas, Peksen and James, 2010).
Hendrix (2011) measures state weakness in terms of its terrain. He stresses that, ‘mountainous terrain and, to a lesser extent, noncontiguous territory are not only associated with conflicts because they offer sanctuary from the state, but they also affect the capacity of the state to deter or placate violent challengers’ (2011, p. 366). Taydas, Peksen and James (2010) consider weak states to be those which do not have efficient institutions of coercion like army and police. They also found that the quality of an institution is a significant factor affecting the onset of civil war in a country. Civil wars are more prevalent in countries with high levels of corruption, lack of respect for the rule of law and poor bureaucracies. Furthermore, weak and ineffective institutions undermine state legitimacy and create grievances among people, contributing to the outbreak of insurgencies.

Hendrix (2010) argues that a strong level of state capacity to address and accommodate the grievances of the people, minimises the chances of violent rebellion, and conflict becomes less likely. State capacity, according to Soifer and vom Hau (2008, p. 220), is ‘broadly a function of state bureaucracy, the state’s relations with social actors, and its spatial and societal reach’, whilst Sikkink (1991) and Skocpol (1985) define it as the ability of state institutions to effectively implement their goals. However, the goals of the state depend on the nature of the regime which controls it, therefore different types of capacities may be needed to achieve these goals (Hanson, 2018). Hendrix (2010, p. 274) defines state capacity in terms of military, bureaucratic/administrative capacity and the quality and coherence of political institutions.

Scholars have identified three distinct dimensions of state capacity: extractive capacity; coercive capacity; and administrative capacity (Hanson, 2018; Croissant and Hellman, 2018). The state’s ability to raise revenues is called extractive capacity and it is not only necessary for state financial activities but also reflects state power (Hanson, 2018). Coercive capacity is the ability of the state to dominate the society, establish order within boundaries, use force to overcome opposition within the country and defend its territory from external threat (Ibid). Similarly, administrative capacity is the competence of state bureaucracy and the extent of its territorial reach (Seeberg, 2014). The administrative capacity of the state indicates its ability to make and implement its policies and regulate the social and economic aspects within its territory (Hanson, 2018).
The above argument also has its limitations as it does not explain why some weak states face insurgencies and not others. For instance, in comparison with the above stated examples, weak states such as Bhutan, Cameroon and Ecuador have not faced civil war and insurgencies (Akhtar, 2016, p. 21). Similarly, Pakistan is described as a weak state but it is important to know whether this weakness contributed to the insurgency in the tribal areas. According to Kfir (2007) ‘Pakistan has yet to reach “failed state” status, but there is little doubt that it is a weak state, teetering on the precipice of being a “failed state.”’ Due to the weak capacity, according to Paczynska (2009), the government could not meet the expectations of the citizenry, which undermined the efforts of the government to win the support of the people. Underhill (2014, p. 93) maintains Pakistan is not a strong state like US, Ireland, France or Germany, but at the same time it cannot be categorised a failed state such as Sudan, Chad, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, or Zimbabwe. She maintains that Pakistan can be categorised as an endemically weak, crisis state despite sharing many of the attributes of weak and failed states (2014, pp. 98-99). However, despite being weak, Pakistan did not face any insurgency in its tribal areas before 9/11. So, this argument, as noted above, does not provide a full explanation for insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan (see section 1.7 for more details).

1.2.3. Insurgency as an Outcome of Pakistan’s foreign policy

The empirical literature advances two key explanations for insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. A significant amount of literature suggests that the roots of the current insurgency in the tribal areas were created during the rule of General Zia (1977-88) when Pakistan established relations with militant groups to pursue its national interest in Afghanistan. For instance, Bruce Riedel (2013) observes that General Zia changed the course of Pakistan’s history more than anyone after Jinnah (the founder of Pakistan) and can indeed be called the father of modern global Islamic jihad. He considered himself God-ordained, whose mission was to transform Pakistani society according to Islamic lines, and as long as he performed his duties according to the Quran⁹ and Sunnah,¹⁰ no one could challenge him (Rizvi, 1984). The argument is further advanced

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⁹ The Holy Quran: The Divine Book according to Muslim belief revealed to Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH).
¹⁰ Sunnah is the way of life of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and the second most important source of Muslim after the Holy Quran.
by Bokhari (2011), who maintains that the seeds of current extremism were sowed
during his military rule, and jihad was supported by the secular army.

According to Hussain (2007), the military’s interference in politics had started
before the Afghan jihad, but it was General Zia who turned the country into an
ideological state. He further argues that Afghani jihad inspired the whole generation of
Pakistani militants who considered fighting against Muslim oppression anywhere in the
world their religious duty. Murphy and Malik (2009, p. 25) observe that a narrow
version of Islamic teaching was promoted during the Zia period, and the alliance
between Mullah and the military was strengthened, which ‘became a persistent factor
in Pakistani politics and was a sign of times to come’ (Bokhari, 2011, p. 84). According
to renowned scholar Ishtiaq Ahmed, radicalisation increased in Pakistan when the
country joined the US-Saudi sponsored jihad against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan
and Muslim warriors from different countries were brought to Pakistan where they were
trained and indoctrinated (2009, p. 10; 2011, p. 8).

Rehman (2017) claims that ‘Pakistanis today live not in the country envisaged
by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah but in the country practically shaped by
General Zia.’ After assuming power, he introduced controversial Islamic legislation
such as the Hudood (Islamic codes), 11 Zakat (compulsory almsgiving), 12 User
(agriculture tax), Islamisation of banks and establishing Shariah courts through his
handpicked parliamentarians (Murphy and Malik, 2009). Brown (2013) states that Zia’s
Islamisation 13 drive during the Afghan jihad contributed to the emergence of different
jihadi groups in Pakistan. Weinbaum and Harder (2008, p. 30) demonstrate that
‘Afghan policy [was] responsible for boosting radical political Islam [and] expanded
an intelligence apparatus that shored up jihadi groups to help the government monitor
and, when necessary, stifle its political opposition.’ During the Zia government,
Pakistan became the epicentre of jihad, and his government was financially supported
by Western Europe, America, Arab countries, and Japan (Murphy and Malik, 2009).
The unholy alliance between Mullah and the military resulted in an increasing level of
religious extremism in the country (Hussain, 2007).

11 Hudood Ordinances was a set of laws enacted under Zia’s Islamisation process which replaced the
English Laws with Shariah’s Laws.
12 Zakat is compulsory almsgiving in Islam paid annually.
13 Islamisation was a set of political and legal measures adopted by General Zia ul Haq (1977-89) to
Islamise the country.
Mehrotra (2000) demonstrates that Islamic militancy and terrorism began during the leadership of General Zia where he used Islam to legitimise his own rule in Pakistan. The renowned expert on militancy, Ahmad Rashid (2001, pp. 187-188) while describing the impact of Islamabad’s Afghan policy, notes that ‘Pakistan became a victim not of its strategic vision but of its own intelligence agencies’ and working closely with the Taliban the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) officers ‘became more Taliban than the Taliban.’ According to Riedel (2009, p. 9), the Pakistan intelligence agency ISI trained some eighty thousand fighters from forty-three countries along the border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan for global Islamic jihad. These radical Islamists ‘who came from all over the world to resist the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan went on to become allies of Pakistan’s military intelligence apparatus’ (Haqqani, 2007, p. 147).

A renowned Pakistan scholar, Imtiaz Gul (2009, p. 13), argues that much of the recent and current turmoil in the country ‘has roots in the seismic events of 1979 and policies taken in response to them’ which gave birth to a new generation of anti-Western warriors in Pakistan. Similarly, Ghufran (2009) and Lodhi (2011) believe that the current insurgency in the tribal areas is the result of the actions of Pakistan and the US in the 1980s, when they supported the Mujahideen against the Soviets. After the Soviet withdrawal, some of the militants left while many remained in Pakistan. Gul (2009) maintains that after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistan used these Mujahideen against Indian forces in Kashmir. Nawaz (2011) observes that the religious-based war against the Soviets in Afghanistan, assisted by the US, produced Islam-based curricula in Pakistan, leading to religious leaders increasingly being placed in a subservient role. Weinbaum and Harder (2008) argue that under Zia, the state started funding the Mullahs (religious leaders) in the tribal areas which increased his political role on the one hand while weakening the role of the Malik (tribal elder) on

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14 Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is the prime intelligence agency of Pakistan responsible for gathering relevant information regarding national security.
15 Mujahideen is a word used for different religious groups who fought the Soviet Forces in Afghanistan (1979-1989).
16 Kashmir is disputed land between India and Pakistan.
17 Mullah is a religious leader/elder whose importance was increased in the society after Afghan jihad. Malik is a tribal leader/elder who plays important role in the tribal society.
the other hand. This gradual shift in the power structure from Malik to Mullah made the tribal areas hospitable to extremist elements (Ibid).

1.2.3.1. Madrassas System in the Country
The key element of General Zia’s policy was the establishment of madrassas. To wage a jihad against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, Pakistan opened madrassas in the country. The government recruited and trained the radical students of these madrassas to wage jihad against the Soviet Union (Lian, 2010). Mehrotra (2000) claims that madrassas in Pakistan are the chief promoters of jihad in different parts of the world, especially in India and Afghanistan, arguing further (2000) that the Pakistani leaders made no efforts to close down these madrassas in the aftermath of 9/11.

There were only 137 madrassas when Pakistan came into being in 1947 (Nasr, 2000). Rashid (2001, p. 89) mentions that there were only 900 madrassas in 1971, which rose to 8,000, in addition to 25,000 unregistered ones, by the end of the Zia government in 1988, providing education to over half a million students. The mushrooming of the madrassas took place during the Afghan war in 1980. Many new madrassas were established during this period, and most of these were supported by the government. In 1984 for instance, the government spent 9.4 per cent of the zakat fund on madrassas which benefited 2,273 madrassas and 111,050 students (Malik, 1989, p. 13).

Scholar of terrorism Jessica Stern (2000) maintains that some extremist madrassas in Pakistan preach jihad without understanding its true meaning. Stern (2000, p. 3) further states that only 4,350 out of 40,000 to 50,000 madrassas are registered with the government, and some of them send students for training without the consent of their parents. Singer (2001) shares the same view and maintains that religious schools in Pakistan have become a new breeding ground for extremism. The International Crisis Group (ICG) in its 2002 report claimed that madrassas in Pakistan produce indoctrinated clergyman of various sects. The graduates of these madrassas join forces with those who fight for the establishment of an Islamic system. Reforming madrassas has remained a complex issue in Pakistan and according to Rana (2015), the government has no vision how to deal with them.

18 Madrassa is an institution which imparts religious education.
However, Graff and Winthrop (2010) argue that the role of madrassas in promoting extremism in Pakistan has been exaggerated. Bano (2007) questions the generalisation of the research done on madrassas and argues that it is based on misplaced claims. Discussing the role of modern educational institutions in promoting extremism, Dr Sanaullah Abbasi who heads the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in Sind province, expressed the view (in a seminar titled ‘Growing radicalisation in education institutions’), that extremism is growing in modern educational institutions and it is more likely that the next generation of militants will be university students rather than students of madrassas (Dawn, 2017c).

1.2.4. Foreign Presence in Afghanistan and its Impact on Insurgency in FATA
The Pakistan government officially claims that the tribal areas never witnessed any unrest before the US war on terror, and the current insurgency is the result of US policies in the region, especially the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Pakistan National Security Advisor, Lt General Nasir Janjua, notes that extremism in Pakistan is the direct outcome of the Afghan war (APP, 2017). Pakistan Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal (2017-18), while responding to the US accusation that Islamabad has provided safe haven to the terrorists, maintained in 2018:

I want to remind the US that these are your inventions. As soon as the war against the Soviet Union ended, you withdrew and went home without thinking what your radicalising of Afghanistan to create an anti-Soviet narrative would lead to. The seeds of the extremist views you used to win that war weren’t going to suddenly start producing computer chips: they were going to breed terrorism and extremism. The Pakistani nation is still paying for those seeds that you planted (quoted in Dawn, 2018b).

Tajik (2011) argues that the US military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and the subsequent military operations conducted by the Pakistan army contributed to the militancy in the region. Similarly, Ghufran (2009) maintains that insurgency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and adjacent tribal areas was the result of the incursion of US and NATO forces into Afghanistan and the following military operations conducted by

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19 Pakistan army constitutes the major bulk of armed forces and a key player in both the offensive and defensive capabilities. For further details see An Introduction to Pakistan’s Military by Aguilar et al. (2011).
Pakistan security forces. It is also argued that the US operations in the tribal areas created strong hatred against America, therefore helping militants to recruit a new generation of suicide bombers (Jaspal, 2009).

According to a US Department of Defense News briefing (2001), between the 7th and 28th of October, the US and NATO forces launched 100 missions in Afghanistan and dropped 3,000 bombs on 200 pre-selected targets. The US attack on Afghanistan toppled the Taliban government, however, it did not stop Al-Qaeda and the Taliban from crossing into Pakistan’s tribal region (Rubin, 2007). Consequently, Al-Qaeda’s presence in the tribal areas led the Bush administration to put pressure on Pakistan to take action. After Pakistan’s attempts at diplomacy and bribery failed, it launched a series of military incursions into the area (Tellis, 2008). In 2003 during his meeting with President Musharraf at Camp David, President Bush praised his border security measures, which helped to neutralise the Al-Qaeda threat (Tellis, 2008, p. 1). But after realising that Musharraf was not taking action against those groups who were involved in cross-border infiltration, the relations between the two countries began to deteriorate.

The Bush administration’s policy to defeat Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan changed after the launch of its war with the Saddam regime in Iraq (Evera, 2006). Riedel (2011) observes that the short-term interest of the US policymakers in Pakistan from both parties created instability and radicalisation which made the country fertile ground for international jihad. Lieven (2011, p. 535) maintains that in order to address Pakistan’s problem of extremism the Western policymakers should recognise ‘at least in private, that it has above all been the US-led campaign in Afghanistan which has been responsible for increasing Islamist insurgency and terrorism in Pakistan since 2001.’ Pakistan fears that the US will once again leave it alone to deal with the social and security problems resulting from the war in Afghanistan. As Riedel concludes, ‘Pakistan is a complex and combustible society undergoing a severe crisis. America helped create that crisis over a long period. If we don’t help Pakistan now, we may have to deal with jihadist Pakistan later’ (2009, p. 18). Pakistan ex-Director General of the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI), Asad Durrani, in an interview with Russia Today (RT), declared that peace in Afghanistan is not in the US’s interest. He further maintained unless there is turmoil, powers such as the US cannot play one country off against the other and lose their clout (quoted in RT, 2017). The above literature indicates that the current insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas is the result of the foreign presence - be it the former Soviet Union or America - in Afghanistan.
1.2.5. India’s Role in Pakistan’s Internal Insurgency

Traditionally it has been argued that Pakistan’s obsession with threats from India has affected its counterinsurgency policy. Ahmad Rashid (2009) claims that Pakistan is still obsessed with the belief that external threats are emanating from India. Pakistan’s relation with India hinges on the issue of Kashmir, and unless the issue of Kashmir is resolved, militants will produce and perpetuate violence on both sides of the borders (Tajik, 2014). Riedel (2012) notes that the resolution of Kashmir would make Pakistan a normal state, less preoccupied with India.

However, the Pakistani government alleges that India is responsible for terrorism and sabotage inside Pakistan. It is argued that India’s intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and the Indian consulates in Afghanistan are ‘responsible for spreading propaganda against Pakistan and providing different kinds of support to militants in Baluchistan, FATA and other parts of the country’ (Ahmad, 2013, p. 25). Pakistani army officers and defence analysts believe that the Taliban’s degree of sophistication in their fight against the security forces indicate the foreign help. Besides donation and drug money from Arab countries, it is suspected that ‘India intelligence was actively involved in strengthening the Taliban’ (quoted in I. Ahmed, 2013, p. 379).

A Pakistan army spokesperson accused India and foreign powers of supporting terrorist organisations, such as Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) which operates in FATA and Baluchistan and claimed that these organisations cannot function on their own unless they receive funding from external powers (quoted in Pakistan Today, 2015). In 2016, Pakistan security agencies arrested a serving Indian secret agent Kalbushan Jadhav, who confessed his involvement in terrorism in Baluchistan and Karachi (Dawn, 2016b). He also acknowledged that the Indian intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) has ties with TTP (The Tribune, 2017b). Pakistan’s permanent ambassador to United Nations Maleeha Lodhi accused India of destabilising neighbouring countries, supporting terrorism, and sabotage inside Pakistan (The Tribune, 2017c).

Pakistan’s current foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi alleged that ‘after 9/11, the world saw that Pakistan has become a front-line state. While Pakistan was making sacrifices in ‘blood and treasure’, India was busy laying terrorist networks using its own soil and spaces in [Pakistan’s] immediate neighbourhood and beyond’ (Dawn, 2020). He went on to say that Indian intelligence agencies are financing terrorism and supporting banned terrorist organisations such as TTP, the Baluchistan Liberation Army.
Military spokesman Major Gen Babar Iftikhar in a press briefing unveiled India’s involvement in Pakistan and stated that RAW agents were involved in motivating tribesmen in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and sending them to Afghanistan for training and fighting. He said that Pakistan has “incontrovertible evidence” that Indian embassies and consulates near the Pakistan-Afghan border were functioning as a “hub of terror sponsorship against Pakistan” (Dawn, 2020). Indian intelligence agencies, according to him, were utilising 87 multi-purpose base camps for harbouring and launching terrorist activities in Pakistan, and 66 of these camps were in Afghanistan.

These views were shared by the former spokesperson of TTP and its splinter group Jamaat ul Ahrar, Ehsanullah Ehsan. In his confessional statement, he stated that militant groups carrying attacks against Pakistan security forces were facilitated by the Indian and Afghan governments inside Afghanistan (quoted in Diplomat, 2017). The Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Nafees Zakaria said at the weekly briefing that Ehsanullah Ehsan had unveiled Indian’s role in Pakistan. The confessions proved that India supports terrorist activities in Pakistan (Dawn, 2017d).

Pakistan shares a long, rugged border with Afghanistan. The Afghanistan government does not recognise the 2240 km long border. Pakistan alleges that India is exploiting the western border to foment insurgency in the country. Pakistan also feels threatened due to India’s increasing influence in Afghanistan. In 2013, Senator Chuck Hagel, President Obama’s nominee for US Defence Secretary, revealed that “India has over the years financed problems for Pakistan from across the border in Afghanistan” (quoted in Dawn, 2013a). To avoid unrest on both sides of the border, Pakistan wants to have a pro-Pakistan government in Kabul. Danial Markey (2007) argues that the US should address Pakistan’s interests in the region. ‘Nothing could transform Pakistan’s long-term potential for stability, wealth, and democratic rule more than the normalisation of its relations with India’ (Markey, 2007, p. 98). Without improved relations between these two countries, there can be no regional peace.

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20 Baluchistan Liberation Army is a militant organisation fighting for Baluch autonomy in the province of Baluchistan.

21 Jamaat ul Ahrar is a terrorist group that split away from TTP in 2014.
1.3. The Expansion of Insurgency

As stated above, insurgency initially began in the South Waziristan agency but gradually expanded to the rest of the tribal areas. Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy failed to contain this expansion. The question of Pakistani government inability and the subsequent expansion of insurgency has been discussed in the literature. The existing literature suggests two key factors responsible for the expansion of insurgency in the tribal region of Pakistan. The first stresses the lack of political will, while the second emphasises the importance of capacity and the capability of the security forces to deal with the insurgency in the tribal areas.

1.3.1. Lack of political will

Counterinsurgency expert Paul Dixon (2009, p. 357) maintains that victory in counterinsurgency depends on the will and determination of the political elite. However, in Pakistan the political elite matters less in security matters, and it is the powerful army which calls the shots. According to Pakistani historian Ishtiaq Ahmed (2013, pp. 17-19), Pakistan became a garrison state as a result of the US policies in the region and consequently the ‘military has become the most powerful institution’ and ‘exercises de facto veto powers over both internal and external policies.’ There is increasing consensus in the existing literature that the Pakistani military was never serious to abandon its relations with militant groups which influenced the government’s strategy to deal with the insurgency.

For instance, Siddiqa (2009) argued that there is duplicity in the policy of the government, and the security agencies have continued to have their links with the Taliban and other militant groups. She argues that the militancy will not vanish in Pakistan unless the security agencies stop viewing the different militant groups as potential foreign policy assets. The Pakistan intelligence agency ISI has not only allowed different Afghan-based militant groups to operate in FATA and other parts of the country, but has also provided technical and logistic support to the insurgents (Brown, 2013). Gopal, Mahsud and Fishman (2010) demonstrate that Pakistan has taken action against the local anti-Pakistan militants but ignored the actions of those groups who are engaged in Afghanistan. Mistry (2019) observes that Pakistani reluctance to act against the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network was because it
planned to use them to stop the spread of India’s influence after the US departed from Afghanistan. Rubin and Rashid (2008) argue that insurgency from Pakistan will continue unless it decides to concentrate its efforts in supporting the Afghanistan government, instead of placing its efforts in countering the Indian threat.

Haqqani (2007) maintains that Pakistan has remained tolerant of the remnants of the Taliban regime, in order to gain influence in Afghanistan. Weinbaum (2014) maintains that Afghan groups fighting against foreign forces have enjoyed varying degrees of support from the Pakistan ISI. It is generally believed in the West that Pakistani leaders are playing a double game by proscribing some militant organisations, whilst at the same time tolerating their presence and supporting them (Weinbaum, 2014). Haqqani (2007) further argues that making a distinction between foreign militant groups such as Al-Qaeda and those fighting in Kashmir has remained a consistent policy of the state. Weinbaum and Harder (2008) observe that Pakistan’s preoccupation with its foreign policy goals of achieving US military aid and gaining strategic depth in Afghanistan to avoid encirclement, has led Islamabad to turn a blind eye to the growth of internal radicalisation and its impact on the country. Khan (2007) believes that in addition to the use of excessive force which led to the alienation of the tribal people, a major reason for the intensification of the conflict has been the dubious role of ISI. Bokhari (2011) further observes that Pakistan’s support for these groups was in line with its ideological wish to establish a Sunni Islamic state and exercise its influence in Afghanistan.

Tankel’s (2016a) study which focuses on the Punjabi Taliban and their links with the militant group in FATA, argues that the unwillingness or inability of the state to act has allowed these groups to preach their extremist ideologies. He argues that although Pakistan has gained some success against anti-state militant groups by retaking control of certain areas, that does not mean that Pakistan is going to end its support for its long term allied militant groups. Siddiqa (2011) concurs, pointing out that Pakistan has not taken any action against militant groups which are not involved in terrorism inside Pakistan. She (2011) further observes that the army is not ready to address US concerns concerning the actions against militant groups in North

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22 Sunni is the main branch of Muslims in Islam. The name came from Sunnah, the code of life of the Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH).
Waziristan, because both the army and militants have formal and informal agreements that they will not attack each other. She further claims that Pakistan has its own definition of good and bad Taliban like many other stakeholders in the region.

Referring to the militant problem in the border areas, Fair, Malhotra and Shapiro (2010) argue that Pakistan intelligence agencies have links with a complex network of militant organisations including the Taliban in Afghanistan which have conducted terrorist attacks in India in recent years. Cohen et al. (2011) claim that the Musharraf government, even after promising the Bush government, did not stop its support of violent militant groups in Afghanistan, Kashmir and India. Fair (2012) further argues that the ISI believes that these militant groups can be rehabilitated and can be used against India and internally in Afghanistan. Pakistan security policies, according to Brown (2013), are controlled by the country’s strong army which views Afghanistan through the lens of its deep-rooted rivalry with India. The Pakistani security establishment focuses on threats emanating from India, and its support to Haqqani Network meant that it deliberately spared the militant infrastructure in the tribal areas (Tankel, 2015).

There are many different local and international groups operating inside Pakistan. Yusuf (2014) identifies four major categories, namely anti-Pakistan, anti-US and NATO, anti-Indian and sectarian. TTP is the major and most provocative anti-state group, which has been at war with the state since its establishment. They have made tribal areas their base, and carry most of the attacks in the adjacent KP and other parts of Pakistan. Farah Taj (2011a), however, argues that without the willingness of the state, the militant groups would have not stayed in Waziristan or elsewhere in tribal areas. She (2011a) further maintains that after the US war on Afghanistan, militants entered the tribal areas with the consent of the Pakistani state.

The Musharraf government has also been blamed for its appeasement policy with the militants. Tankel (2015) claims that to stop the spread of militancy from FATA to the settled areas, the Musharraf government adopted a strategy of appeasement, and further argues that the militant groups grew stronger as a result of his appeasement policies. Musharraf selectively took actions against those militant groups who were involved in sectarian conflicts within Pakistan such as Laskar-e-Jhangvi, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen al-Alami, Jundallah and Sipah-e-Muhammad (Tellis, 2008). However, those groups which operated outside Pakistan and were
involved in jihad in Kashmir, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad, and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, were treated differently by the Musharraf government (Tellis, 2008). This led to tensions between the US and Pakistan governments as the US demanded that all extremist groups should be targeted.

Despite officially denying any role in Afghanistan, there is evidence that Pakistan has supported some radical groups in order to secure its strategic depth across the border (Brown, 2013). The army uses these groups to pursue its interest in the region. Referring to the Islamic threat in Pakistan, Grare (2006, p. 1) argues that ‘no Islamic organisation has ever been in a position to politically or militarily challenge the role of the one and only centre of power in Pakistan: the army. On the contrary, the Pakistan Army has used Islamic organisations for its purpose, both at home and abroad.’

Stern (2000) argues that Pakistan is now facing a typical principal-agent problem where the state’s (the principal) interest is not fully aligned with militant groups (the agent) interest. The principal-agent problem is a conflict where an agent begins to act in its own vested interest instead of pursuing the principal’s interest.

The above literature suggests that Pakistan still supports different militant groups for the national interest. However, Pakistan officially denies these allegations. The above allegations were also questioned by the US commander in Afghanistan, General David Petraeus, in his interview with the Royal United States Institute (RUSI), in London in 2016 when he denied there was any such link between Pakistan and militant groups:

I looked very very hard then (as US commander in Afghanistan) and again as CIA director at the nature of the relationship between the various (militant) groups in FATA and Baluchistan and the Pakistan army and the ISI and I was never convinced of what certain journalists have alleged (about ISI support of militant groups in FATA)…I have talked to them (journalists) asked them what their sources are and I have not been able to come to grips with that based on what I know from these different positions (as US commander and CIA director (quoted in RUSI, 2016).

Another CIA former director Robert Grenier (2015, p. 40) writes about the role of the Pakistani intelligence agency and says that the allegation that ISI created the Taliban is certainly not true.

Pakistan rejects the allegations that it supports militancy in the region. Pakistan complains that the country is being accused of supporting the insurgency in Kashmir and elsewhere in India, but India’s support of the Baluch insurgency does not get the same level of criticism (Weinbaum, 2014). Haider (2014, p. 66) notes that Pakistan’s
efforts are compared with the US struggle in Afghanistan and Iraq, which is not entirely comparable. As he stresses, ‘one crucial factor that complicates the military’s efforts as compared to the US campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, is that the Pakistani military is fighting its own people… and it is also facing a terror campaign in its major urban centres. This is no trivial distinction.’

The Pakistani security forces always found it easy to identify the ethnically foreign Al-Qaeda elements in the tribal areas in comparison with the Taliban who have the same ethnicity, language and culture (Tellis, 2008). These attributes made it easy for Taliban members to penetrate into society and mingle with the local population.

1.3.2. Capacity and Capability of the Security Forces

The second key argument in the literature suggests that the capacity and capability of the security forces was in fact a significant factor responsible for the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas. For instance, Nawaz (2009a) observes that both the army and Frontier Corps (FC)\(^{23}\) faced several problems such as proper counterinsurgency training and poor equipment in the highly mobile war. Similarly, Watts et al. (2014) maintain that the unwillingness or incapability of the FC led the army to rely on air power and artillery, which led to high collateral damage. Mistry (2019) shares the above view and states that the limited counterterrorism capacity and operational reasons explain Pakistan’s reluctance to act against domestic militants in the tribal areas. According to Cohen and Nawaz (2009), the lack of helicopters and night vision devices hampered the army efforts to fight an unconventional war. Kilcullen (2009c) maintains that the Pakistan army also lacked the necessary counterinsurgency training and mobility assets such as helicopter and mine-protected vehicles. A British Counterinsurgency expert John Nagl (2002) maintained that success in counterinsurgency depends on the learning and adapting capacity of the army. He further notes that the British army succeeded in Malaya because of its organisational culture and learning capacity as compared to US army failure in Vietnam (Nagl, 2002, p. xiv).

\(^{23}\) Frontier Corps is a paramilitary force of Pakistan, stationed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan provinces to control the borders with Afghanistan and Iran.
Explaining the case of Pakistan, Watts et al. (2014) argue that the country has a large professional and highly capable army but that state capacity and civic institutions are weak. Lieven (2011), and Jones and Fair (2010) share the same argument and maintain that Pakistan is a weak state but has a strong army. The Pakistan army ranks 8th in the world with more than 900,000 regular and paramilitary personnel (Watts et al., 2014, pp. 119-120). The Pakistan army has never lacked military superiority over the insurgents, however, the force and energies of the army, as noted above, have primarily been focused against its conventional enemy - India (Watts et al., 2014). It is also argued that countries avoid counterinsurgency capability in order to keep their conventional military capability (Byman, 2006). Aguilar et al. (2011) praise the Pakistan army for seeking to provide its citizens with security, better governance, and the development of the local economy, and blame the civilian government for hindering the military efforts.

The capacity argument is questioned by Bukhari (2009), who claims that Pakistan’s military operation in Swat and South Waziristan shows the counterinsurgency capability of the army and nullifies the argument that the military has only conventional capability. Similarly, Lalwani, (2010) argues that the military’s change of strategy from indiscriminate violence to a policy of ‘clear and hold’ in Bajaur, Swat and South Waziristan, shows the adaptive capability of the Pakistan army. This study, however, suggests that the capacity and capability of the security forces alone do not explain the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas. There were other significant factors which I shall discuss in detail in chapter 4.

1.4. Escalation of Insurgency

The question of external support in the escalation of insurgencies has been touched upon by a number of authors (Hibbs, 1973; Bose, 2003; Byman, 2006; Kubo, 2007; Melshen, 2007). The studies have focused on the role of counterinsurgent (in the host state) and outside support to insurgents. As Daniel Byman, a counterinsurgency expert at Brookings Institution, maintains that allies (host states) of the US faced structural problems in their fight against insurgencies, which include ‘illegitimate (often repressive) regimes; civil-military tension manifested by fears of a coup; economic backwardness; and discriminatory societies’ (2006, p. 81). Success in
counterinsurgency according to Byman (2006) depends on the military force of allies (host states).

Similarly, Melshen (2007) demonstrates that external support for an insurgency plays a decisive role in its success or failure. Receiving little external support, the Huk insurgency in the Philippines (1947-55), the Malaya insurgency (1948-60) and the Mau Mau insurgency in Kenya (1952-60) failed, while in contrast the Viet Cong insurgency in Vietnam (1955-75) succeeded due to external support (Melshen, 2007, pp. 685-86). Melshen (2007) observes that counterinsurgent forces should control the external support and cross border infiltration of insurgents because if they are not contained, the counterinsurgency campaign will become protracted.

Goswami’s (2013) study demonstrates that the use of massive force against insurgents contributes to the escalation of insurgency. She also discusses the role of external support to insurgents and how it escalates insurgency. Kubo (2007) also observes that state repression plays a key role in the escalation of insurgencies. Bose (2003) stresses the impact of repressive policies on the rise of radicalisation and escalation. The above argument is supported by Ahmad (2013), Tajik (2011) and Zaidi (2010) who maintain that the Pakistan army’s reliance on repressive measures contributed to the escalation of the insurgency in the tribal areas.

Bose (2003, p. 116) maintains that ‘regime of repression had the effects of further radicalizing public opinion and of convincing thousands of Kashmiri youths to take up arms to fight the Indian state. The years 1990–1993 were the boom period of armed struggle in the valley, a time of immense turmoil and suffering but also of great enthusiasm and optimism about the mass movement. Kubo, 2007, p. 181 notes that ‘When repression by the state authorities is excessive, it can be counterproductive and radicalise the ethnic group that is targeted by the state.

1.5. Development of Counterinsurgency

The concept of counterinsurgency developed especially at the time of the decolonisation period, aiming to deal with challenges emerging from independence movements (Rich and Duyvesteyn, 2012, p. 13). Many of these independence movements were supported by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev in his speech in 1961 said that “the Soviet Union would support wholeheartedly and without reservation wars of liberation, such as the
conflicts in Algeria, Cuba and Vietnam” (quoted in Kilcullen, 2012, p.132). In reaction to Khrushchev’s speech, US President John Kennedy ordered the development of counterinsurgency capabilities in government institutions. In his famous speech the same year at the opening ceremony of a counterinsurgency school within the army’s special forces, he declared:

> We need to be prepared to fight a different war. This is another type of war, new in its intensity, ancient in its origin, war by guerrilla, insurgents, subversives, assassins; war by ambush instead of combat, by infiltration instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. It requires, in those situations where we encounter it, a whole new strategy, a wholly different force, and therefore, a new and wholly different kind of military training (Ibid).

In response to President Kennedy’s speech, the RAND Corporation conducted a five-day symposium on Counterinsurgency in April 1962, the results of which were published in 1963 (Hosmer and Crane, 1963). The symposium was a significant moment in the intellectual history of classical counterinsurgency theory (Kilcullen, 2012, p. 133). One of the key purposes of classical counterinsurgency theory was therefore to control liberation or independence movements. That is why the post-classical theory questions its relevance in treating modern complex insurgencies. Therefore, we can see the revival of classical counterinsurgency in the aftermath of the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. This led to the publication of the “US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual”, in 2006.

The term counterinsurgency is fluid, and its definitions have changed throughout history. The US field manual (2006, p. 1-1) defines counterinsurgency as ‘military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat the insurgency.’ The British Army Field Manual (2009, p. 1-6) defines counterinsurgency as, ‘those military, law enforcement, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken to defeat the insurgency while addressing the root causes.’ So, a successful counterinsurgency is that which addresses the root cause of insurgency through political, social, cultural and economic means. Ucko (2012, p. 68) considers the definition too broad as it does not exclude any action taken against insurgents and simply labels all the actions taken by the government as counterinsurgency. He further notes that the definition only describes the intent and does not differentiate between counterinsurgency and other military operations.
Kilcullen (2010, p. 2) notes that there is no standard counterinsurgency, and the measures adopted in it entirely depend on the nature of the insurgency. To solve the conundrum, according to Ucko (2012, p. 68), the concepts of ‘population’ and ‘enemy’ were added to the strategy, but they are unsatisfying because they are part of every counterinsurgency. Kilcullen (2010, p. 1) further maintains that counterinsurgency is an umbrella term used for the political, administrative, economic, military and psychological measures governments take to defeat the insurgency. The classical theory of counterinsurgency argues that the fundamental principle of these measures should be to gain the support of the population against the insurgents. Galula (1963, p. 70) divides the population into three main categories. There is: a) a friendly minority, b) a hostile minority and c) a neutral majority. The focus of both insurgent and counterinsurgent groups is to get the support of the neutral majority, which is a decisive factor for victory and defeat.

Etzioni (2015, p. 350) identifies three kinds of counterinsurgencies – COIN lite, thick COIN and double-headed COIN. Although the purpose of these different kinds of counterinsurgencies is to win the hearts and minds of the people, they are different from each other. In order to obtain the support of the people, the counterinsurgent forces provide an incentive to the people which includes digging wells to provide them water, opening health care clinics, building roads and filling other needs of the community. Etzioni (2015) calls this COIN lite. The thick COIN according to him recognises that apart from making small investments, much more is required to undermine the support for the insurgency. Therefore, they add nation-building and the idea that people should see that they are governed by a legitimate and honest government. Double-headed COIN includes comprehensive political, economic and social reforms to suppress the insurgency (Ibid).

In counterinsurgency, there are usually four actors involved: insurgents, local government and their international allies, and the population whose support is very critical in the fight (Gompert and Gordon, 2008). Galula (1964, p. 3) maintains that in ‘conventional war, either side can initiate the conflict, but only one – the insurgent – can initiate a revolutionary war, for counterinsurgency is only an effect of the insurgency.’

The nature of insurgency has changed with time, which has led to changes in counterinsurgency. It is essential to note here that in several modern insurgencies –
Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Chechnya, for instance – the government or coalition forces started a campaign and the insurgents were strategically reactive like in resistance warfare (Kilcullen, 2006a, pp. 112-113). This makes the modern insurgency different from the earlier communist and nationalist insurgencies. The modern insurgency is also not confined to geographical space and is able to exploit the modern means of communication very effectively.

The distinguished military historian Martin van Creveld observes that there is no importance of counterinsurgency principles in the field, and notes that 99 per cent of this has been written by the losing side (cited in Rich and Duyvesteyn, 2012, p. 1). John Nagl (2002) disagrees with this notion and gives the US example in Vietnam, where it lost the war because it did not implement counterinsurgency principles. Insurgency and counterinsurgency are strategies to get the support of the neutral majority, and success depends on which group effectively mobilises the population to its side. In this struggle, Galula (1964, p. 3) argues that counterinsurgents have overwhelming superiority over insurgents in terms of tangible assets, which range from legitimate legislative, executive, and judicial powers, to control over the armed forces, police, communication and propaganda. Insurgents, on the other hand, are only equipped with intangible assets – ideology. Therefore, the insurgents try to win the support of the population, which plays a decisive role in the insurgency.

1.6. Alternative Approaches to fight Insurgencies

The difference between terrorism and insurgency has led to the evolution of two different approaches: counterterrorism and counterinsurgency. They are sometimes used interchangeably but they are different approaches to modern warfare. According to Michael Boyle (2010, pp. 342-344) there are three basic differences which make each strategy different from the other. Firstly, counterterrorism involves use of lethal often sporadic use of force against terrorists such as drone strike and operations against Al-Qaeda in Pakistan. On the contrary, in counterinsurgency force is used discriminatorily to avoid the resentment of the population. Secondly, the relation of terrorist with population varies significantly. Some have strong relation with local population (Irish Republican Army in Ireland) while other can be parasitic such as Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Insurgents on the contrary have deep rooted relations with the populations. Thirdly, counterterrorism model does not focus on state legitimate
institutions building and makes no efforts for territorial control. Counterinsurgency model involves in boosting the capacity of the government to minimise the chance of shadow government. Insurgents usually try to establish their own shadow government to get control over the government institutions.

According to Rineheart (2010, p. 31) the difference between counterterrorism and counterinsurgency has become increasingly unclear yet they are two different doctrines. The current debate on counterterrorism is structured around two approaches: the war (or military) model and the criminal justice model (Rineheart, 2010, p. 37). The war (military) model is closely associated with enemy-centric approach while criminal justice model champions rule of law and democratic values (Ibid). John Nagl (2002, pp. 27-28) calls this direct and indirect approach. The central thesis of the direct approach is that revolutionary war is like conventional war and focus on defeating the enemy with military force. Indirect approach focuses on winning hearts and minds of people against insurgents.

Various scholars maintain that without using force insurgents cannot be effectively defeated. For instance, Kalyvas (2006) maintains that some sort of selective violence and use of force is necessary in unconventional warfare to obtain intelligence and establish territorial control (Quoted in Pampinella, 2015, p. 505). According to Pampinella (2015, p. 503) victory in counterinsurgency can be produced by combination of factors such as coercive, persuasive practices rather than a single factor. Ralph Peters argues that faith-fuelled insurgency can only be eliminated through the use of fire and the sword (Peters, 2009). Wolf quoted in Long (2006) in his Cost/Benefit Theory, refutes the argument that increasing development will win the hearts and minds. He further notes that ‘development made more resources available to citizens, which insurgents could then acquire from the population through persuasion, coercion, or a combination of the two. Thus, paradoxically, programmes designed to reduce popular support for insurgents could actually reduce the insurgent’s costs for inputs such as food’ (Long, 2006, p. 25).

Jacqueline Hazelton in his “coercion theory,” challenge the conventional wisdom of minimum use of force and good governance in counterinsurgency theory. Hazelton (2017) claims that it is armed and unarmed elites not population which are important actors in counterinsurgency. Secondly, she identifies further that use of force is an important factor in successful counterinsurgency contrary to limited use of force
proposed by other counterinsurgency experts. However, contrary to the above scholars, Santos (2011, p. 14) demonstrate that the French Army failed in Algeria because it focused too much on fighting the enemy while not addressing the root causes. The US had similar experience in Afghanistan in the first few years.

Within counterinsurgency two schools since US war in Vietnam have dominated the debate in the English-speaking world: the “population-centric” and “enemy-centric” schools (Moyar, 2010, p. 135). However, John Nagl (2002), a renowned British counterinsurgency expert, goes further back to the Norman period and argues that the two approaches have evolved since then. To deal with the complex nature of guerrilla warfare and subdue the Welsh, the Norman King William II started a ruthless operation in 1097 against the Welsh under Gruffydd. He ‘intended to abolish and utterly destroy all of the people until there should be alive not so much as a dog. He had also proposed to cut down all of the woods and groves so that there might not be shelter nor defence for the men of Gwynedd henceforth’ (Nagl, 2002, p. 26). While disagreeing with William II’s approach, Gerald of Wales presented a new approach to subdue the Welsh in his book in 1194. He said, ‘the prince who would wish to subdue this nation and govern it peacefully must use this method…. Let him divide their strength and by bribes and promises endeavour to stir up one against the other’ (Ibid).

The current two counterinsurgency approaches, i.e. enemy-centric and population-centric have their foundation in these earlier two different approaches to dealing with insurgents. This also resembles the direct approach which focuses on the annihilation of the enemy, and the indirect approach which emphasises the alienation of the population from insurgents. According to the population-centric approach, the basic aim of counterinsurgents should not be insurgents but the population, whose support provides space to the insurgents for their operation (Larsdotter, 2014). The enemy-centric approach views insurgency as a conventional war and focuses on defeating the enemy (Paul et al., 2016). However, contrary to the popular conception both population-centric and enemy-centric approaches are not mutually exclusive (Paul et al, 2016, p. 1020)

The more recent concept has its roots in the British war in Malaya where the British forces succeeded in defeating an insurgency by winning the hearts and minds of the people. The phrase is associated with Sir Gerald Templer’s campaign in Malaya against communist insurgents, where he argued, ‘The answer (to the uprising) lies not
in pouring more troops into the jungle, but in the hearts and minds of the people’ (quoted in Dixon, 2009, p. 361). However, Dixon (2009, p. 353) argues that Sir Gerald Templer’s phrase ‘hearts and minds’ is used to describe the British counterinsurgency experience in Malaya which is not accurate because the British used high levels of forces, violated the law and abused human rights. Etzioni (2015) does not agree with Nagl and demonstrates that it was coercion strategy which worked in Malaysia rather than winning the hearts and minds of the people.

In the debate between these two schools, the population-centric approach also known as “hearts and minds” has remained most influential among counterinsurgency experts (Moyar, 2010). ‘Increasing political rights of the people, improving standards of living, and reducing corruption and abuse of government power were prescriptions of the counterinsurgency theory, which came to be known as “winning the hearts and minds of the people,”’ (Long, 2006, p. 23). Respecting local people and their culture is instrumental in winning hearts and minds of the people (Dixon, 2009). General Stanley McChrystal, Commander of International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Afghanistan (2009-2010), in his 66 pages report which stressed the importance of the population-centric approach, wrote that ‘Our strategy cannot be focused on seizing terrain or destroying insurgent forces; our objective must be the population. In the struggle to gain the support of the people, every action we take must enable this effort’ (McChrystal, 2009, p. 1-1).

Historically, the practitioners of counterinsurgency from Rome to the Soviet Union and more recently Sri Lanka have used the enemy-centric approach where military victory was attainable (Metz, 2012, p. 35). But the British experience in Malaysia and the US experience in Vietnam, reveals that without the support of the population, revolutionary war cannot be won. The question about the proportion of power/force is a matter of debate, but the proponents of the population-centric approach maintain that it should be used to clear and hold the area instead of controlling the territory. McFate and Jackson believe that there is a direct relationship between the appropriate use of force and a successful counterinsurgency (cited in Spear, 2008, p. 399). However, the critical question is about the utility of force as mentioned by Donald Rumsfeld, “We know we’re killing a lot, capturing a lot, collecting arms. We just don’t know yet whether that’s the same as winning” (quoted in Hoffman, 2004, p. 16).
1.7. Theories of Counterinsurgency and their Justification

It is important to explain here that a single theory is not sufficient to understand Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy. Therefore, both classical and global counterinsurgency are used as a theoretical framework to understand Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy. To understand the internal dimensions of insurgency, David Galula’s (1919-1967) classical counterinsurgency is used. Galula perhaps left the most significant and lasting impact on Western counterinsurgency thinkers more than any other scholar (Paul et al., 2016). Galula stressed the importance of the political aspect of counterinsurgency and maintained that ‘the military action is secondary to the political one’ (Paul et al., 2016, p. 1021). Though the classical theory was expounded to deal with the traditional insurgencies, its importance and relevance cannot be denied while understanding modern insurgencies. The population, the core of the classical theory, still constitutes an important component of modern counterinsurgency. The theory helps us to analyse Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy and to gain a better understanding of the failure of the government to win the support of the population.

However, David Kilcullen, the post-global counterinsurgency theorist, argues that the above theory was meant to deal with the traditional insurgencies, hence cannot explain modern complex insurgencies (2006a, p. 112). Therefore, it is important that more complex insurgencies should be analysed through the post-classical or global counterinsurgency theory. The insurgency in Pakistan is not only complex, but it has an external dimension, and therefore, in this study, global counterinsurgency theory is also used to help us gain an understanding of the external dimension of insurgency in the tribal areas.

1.7.1. Classical Theory of David Galula

After the World War II, insurgency ‘emerged from the combination of nationalism and anti-colonialism, peasant unrest, leftist or communist ideologies which exploited and organised this discontent, and, in some cultures, a tradition of banditry and raiding’ (Rich and Duyvesteyn, 2012, p. 12). There were mainly two types of insurgent struggle: a struggle against outside rulers particularly the colonial powers and a class-based struggle against local elites. The former was common against the colonial powers of British, Dutch, Belgians, Spanish and Portuguese and latter was common in Latin
America and the Philippines (Ibid). In order to defeat these insurgencies classic counterinsurgency strategy was propounded. According to Zaalberg (2012, p. 84) classic counterinsurgency is best known from ‘the semi-theoretical handbook Defeating Communist Insurgency (1966), written by Sir Robert Thompson after his experience as an administrator in Malaya and an adviser in Vietnam.’ The purpose of classic counterinsurgency theory was to defeat Maoist style rural insurgencies. According to Metz (2012, p. 32), ‘where the British saw counterinsurgency as akin to colonial policing and thus stressed the synthesis of police and military efforts, the French (and later the Americans) considered it to be more like war than policing.’ According to Rineheart (2010, p. 41) ‘classical insurgency is generally associated with a struggle within one state, with a possible safe haven in a bordering state, a classical counterinsurgency is confined within the borders of a single state.’

The ‘term ‘classical counterinsurgency’ describes the theory of counterrevolutionary warfare developed in response to the so-called wars of national liberation from 1944 to about 1980’ (Kilcullen, 2006a, p. 111). David Galula (1919-1967) is considered the father of classical counterinsurgency theory. Galula, a French military officer who served in World War II during the liberation of France and worked as military attaché in the French embassy in China, and took part in the Algerian war (1954-1962) where he applied personal counterinsurgency tactics in the elimination of insurgents. He described his practical field experiences in Indochina, Greece and Algeria in his books, Pacification of Algeria (1963) and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice (1964). In his studies, Galula expounded counterinsurgency principles which are still relevant today. Galula (1964) maintained that conventional warfare is different from revolutionary warfare. According to Melshen (2007, p. 666):

In many ways conventional warfare is much less difficult to master than are low intensity conflict and counterinsurgency warfare – ‘Two divisions up and one division back, protect your flanks, and do not invade Russia in the winter’ and you are a conventional warfare genius. The mastery of low-intensity conflict, in the current case counterinsurgency warfare, is much more difficult…. Counterinsurgency strategists have to be avid practitioners and military scholars of counterinsurgency in order to have the mental assets to develop war-winning counterinsurgency strategies.’
Galula explained the importance of population in counterinsurgency:

A victory [in a counterinsurgency] is not the destruction in a given area of the insurgent’s forces and his political organisation…. A victory is that plus the permanent isolation of the insurgent from the population, isolation not enforced upon the population, but maintained by and with the population…. In conventional warfare, strength is assessed according to military or other tangible criteria, such as the number of divisions, the position they hold, the industrial resources, etc. In revolutionary warfare, strength must be assessed by the extent of support from the population as measured in terms of political organisation at the grassroots. The counterinsurgent reaches a position of strength when his power is embedded in a political organisation issuing from, and firmly supported by, the population. (Galula, 1964, pp. 54-55).

Most of the insurgencies during Galula’s period were influenced by the spread of communist ideology around the world. From his practical experience in the field, Galula (1963, p. 246) proposed four counterinsurgency laws which he believes can be applied elsewhere:

**The first law.** The objective is the population. The population is at the same time the real terrain of the war. (Destruction of the rebel forces and occupation of geographic terrain led us nowhere as long as we did not control and get the support of the population). This is where the real fighting takes place, where the insurgents challenge the counterinsurgents, who cannot but accept the challenge.

**The second law.** The support from the population is not spontaneous, and in any case, must be recognised. It can be obtained only through the efforts of the minority among the population that favours the counterinsurgent.

**The third law.** This minority will emerge and will be followed by the majority, only if the counterinsurgent is seen as the ultimate victor. If his leadership is irresolute and incompetent, he will never find a significant number of supporters. The necessity for an early partial success by the counterinsurgent is obvious.

**The fourth law.** Seldom is the material superiority of the counterinsurgent so great that he can literally saturate the entire territory. The means required to destroy or expel the main guerrilla forces, to control the population, and to win its support are such that, in most cases, the counterinsurgent will be obliged to concentrate his efforts area by area.

The above laws demonstrate the importance of the population in revolutionary warfare. According to the theory, the counterinsurgent should identify and then alienate insurgents from the population. For the said purpose he argues (1963, p. v) that the counterinsurgent needs to ‘outwardly treat every civilian as a friend; inwardly you must consider him as a rebel ally until you have positive proof to the contrary.’ However,
this is not possible without having or evolving an effective intelligence collecting system. Galula (1964, p. viii) suggests how the necessary intelligence can be obtained:

First, civilians must be separated from insurgents using road blocks, identity cards, and a census. Next, the counterinsurgent must guarantee civilian security by training local security forces who are then readily available for manning the road blocks and conducting the census. Finally, the government should target the insurgents armed with specific, local information derived from long and close association with the population.

He further asserts the condition for gathering intelligence from the population. Intelligence is the key source of information about insurgents and should come from the population, but they will not provide intelligence unless they feel safe and they will only feel safe when they believe that the power of insurgents has broken (Galula, 1964).

At the operational level, according to Galula (1964, pp. 55-56), the counterinsurgents should employ these principles where insurgents have dominant control:

1. Concentrate enough armed forces to destroy or to expel the main body of armed insurgents.
2. Detach for the area sufficient troops to oppose an insurgent’s comeback in strength, install these troops in the hamlets, villages, and towns where the population lives.
3. Establish contact with the population, control its movements in order to cut off its links with the guerrillas.
4. Destroy the local political organisation.
5. Set up, by means of elections, new provisional local authorities.
6. Test those authorities by assigning them various concrete tasks. Replace the soft and the incompetents, give full support to the active leaders. Organise self-defence units.
7. Group and educate the leaders in a national political movement.
8. Win over or suppress the last insurgent remnants.

Through these measures, Galula believes insurgents can be targeted and alienated. The essence of Galula’s theory is to ‘Build (or rebuild) a political machine from the population upward’ (1964, p. 95).

Sir Robert Thomas also in his book has explained five principles for successful counterinsurgency operations:

1. The government must have a clear political aim.
2. The government must function in accordance with law.
3. The government must have an overall plan.
4. The government must give priority to defeating the political subversion not the guerrilla.
5. In the guerrilla phase of an insurgency, it must secure its base first.

Similarly, Mark Mayor (2010) in his “leadership-centric theory” of counterinsurgency claims that ten leadership qualities contribute and influence the effectiveness of counterinsurgency.

1. Initiative
   Mayor explains that counterinsurgent leader should be able to take initiative on his own sometimes without waiting for orders from top. He gives example of Lewis Merrill who successfully defeated the Ku Klux Klan in South Carolina in 1871.

2. Flexibility
   The counterinsurgent will face unfamiliar challenges where he would need divergence from the established laws. Therefore, dealing with insurgency demands flexibility from the leaders. Flexibility helps counterinsurgents to deal effectively with complex problem in the field of insurgency. He gives example of Afghanistan where restrictions and bureaucratic processes stopped officers in the field to deal with the situation accordingly and insurgency kept growing.

3. Creativity
   Creativity helps the counterinsurgent to effectively deal with the insurgency by generating new methods of counterinsurgency.

4. Judgment
   The use of logic and intuition to make a better decision enables commanders to successfully deal with challenges from insurgents.

5. Empathy
   Mayor argues that, ‘empathy enables leaders to appreciate the thoughts and feelings of others, thereby boosting their ability to anticipate the consequences of actions’. It also enables commanders to inspire their subordinates to get information from other officers.

6. Charisma
   Explaining how charisma plays an important role in leaders Mayor gives an example of Abdul Sattar Abu Risha, who played a significant role in Anwar Awakening in Iraq through his charismatic leadership.
7. **Sociability**

‘Counterinsurgency commanders must talk with leaders of other organization and other nationalities to obtain their cooperation in all manner of endeavors, and they speak regularly with citizens who can provide invaluable assistance’.

8. **Dedication**

Staying away from family, fighting in unfamiliar areas, working during nights need a strong dedication in counterinsurgency.

9. **Integrity**

‘Leaders of integrity, whose conscience tells them that such acts are wrong, resist these temptations and, through example and discipline, prevent those under their command from perpetrating abuses of power’.

10. **Organization**

Counterinsurgency commanders who organize people and their actions and regularly keep check on their subordinates to ensure that they efficiently and honestly performing their assigned tasks. Counterinsurgency leader with good organization capacity address insurgency more effectively.

Mayor (2010) argues that it is hardly possible that a counterinsurgent leader would have all these qualities but a substantial number of these qualities required for efficient performance in counterinsurgency.

It has to be borne in mind that like these theories classical theory has certain limitations when it comes to a modern urban insurgency which operates virtually in many cases. Kilcullen (2012, p. 134) in his critique on Galula’s work maintains that ‘Counterinsurgency Warfare [a book by Galula] – is thus not really a general theory of counterinsurgency, but rather, to some extent, a theory of counterinsurgency tactics in Algeria, with Algeria taken out. According to Kilcullen (2012, p. 140) ‘many of the assumptions that were carried across from specific case studies into the general, classical theory of [counterinsurgency] do not transfer well to today’s conflicts.’

However, the theory is very helpful to understand rural insurgencies, such as in Pakistan’s tribal areas, where the active support of the people matters the most. In Chapter 4, I will analyse the measures undertaken by the government of Pakistan in the light of classical theory.
1.7.2. The Post-Classical Theory of David Kilcullen

The classical theory has immense importance, but its application in the modern complex insurgency period has been questioned by post-classical or global counterinsurgency theorists who argue that the 20th century counterinsurgency strategy cannot be effectively applied to the current global insurgencies (Tyrrell, 2014). The classical counterinsurgency theorists according to Hoffman (2007, p. 71), ‘would be startled by the complexity of Afghanistan and Iraq and the distinctly broader global insurgency of the Long War.’ Although current Western counterinsurgency doctrine is still based on the work of the classic British and French theorists, the recent school of post-classic or global counterinsurgency theorists have tried to take the concept beyond its geographical limits (Zaalberg, 2012, p. 84). Global insurgency is not confined to a specific geographic area; therefore, global counterinsurgency or post-classical counterinsurgency look at a worldwide counterinsurgency struggle fought in distant battle theatres as much as on home soil (Rich and Duyvesteyn, 2012, p. 13).

According to Jones and Smith (2010),

The second school of thought reflects an ambitious attempt to draw connections between the specifics of local insurgencies and broader currents at work in the international system after 9/11. This school views de-territorialised Islamist jihadism as a ‘global insurgency’. It further perceives such insurgency as ‘post-Maoist’, unbounded by space, where the local and global interact to produce a transnationally networked resistance movement. In other words, this second school presents a radically different appreciation of insurgency.

This second school came to prominence after 9/11. ‘After 9/11 attacks on the US, John Mackinlay first proposed the view that the unprecedented scope of Osama bin Laden’s ‘organisation and operational approach’ supposed a movement that had travelled ‘significantly beyond the established template of insurgency’. Bin Laden’s global constituency, spreading over 40 states ranging from ‘Oslo to Jakarta’, meant that his appeal ‘could not be regarded as a national or even a regional phenomenon’ (Jones and Smith, 2010). It was David Kilcullen who proposed global counterinsurgency to address the global insurgency. According to Rineheart (2010, p. 42) ‘This modern approach [global counterinsurgency] is basically a classical counterinsurgency theory of winning the “hearts and minds,” which denies the enemy sanctuary, seeking to promote good governance and engaging in information operations - but on a global scale.’
David Kilcullen, an Australian author and counterinsurgency expert who served as Chief Strategist in the US Counterterrorism Department from 2005 to 2006 and also worked as a senior counterinsurgency advisor to David Petraeus\(^{24}\) from 2007 to 2008. Kilcullen in his different accounts argued that the nature of current insurgencies is entirely different from the traditional insurgencies and therefore, classical theory cannot be applied. Maoist insurgency emphasized the importance of the population, which in military terms constitutes the vital ground. In a global insurgency, the population is still the vital ground, but there is not just one population—there are many.

First and foremost, Kilcullen (2006a) argued that the classical theory deals with the traditional insurgency happening in a specific geographical area, but this is not the case with modern insurgencies, which have virtual bases. Secondly, the classical counterinsurgency theory deals with traditional insurgencies which were confined to one country while modern insurgencies are transnational in nature (Ibid). Logistically, he argues that the classical insurgencies relied on the support of the population and therefore the basic purpose of the counterinsurgency operations such as the Briggs’ Plan\(^{25}\) in Malaysia and other classical counterinsurgencies was to isolate the insurgents from the population. However, this is not the case with the modern insurgency, where often the insurgents are wealthier than the population (Kilcullen, 2006a). The other significant difference highlighted by Kilcullen is the emergence of urban insurgencies. In the classical insurgency period, the insurgents would hide in the rural areas, ‘but in urbanised societies (like Iraq) or countries with under-populated mountains, deserts and forests (like Afghanistan), the cover is in the cities (Kilcullen, 2006a, p. 120).

According to Kilcullen (2006a), modern insurgencies are also different from classic insurgencies of the 1960s because they may not seek to overthrow the government, may have no coherent strategy, and have their ideology based on faith; therefore, they cannot be countered with traditional counterinsurgency approaches.

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\(^{24}\) David Petraeus was the US commander of the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq in 2004. In January 2007, he was made commanding general of Multi-National Force – Iraq where he led the US troops till September 2008.

\(^{25}\) Briggs Plan was a military plan devised by Sir Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs who was appointed director of the counterinsurgency effort in 1950 to defeat the Malayan National Liberation Army while cutting off their local support. For further details on Briggs Plan see *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* by John Nagl (2002).
further says that there may be different competing insurgencies in a single theatre where it is important to control the overall environment instead of defeating one enemy.

After establishing that the modern insurgencies are different from the traditional, Kilcullen (2006a, pp. 121-124) suggests that the counterinsurgents can only control insurgencies after applying these new principles.

1. In modern counterinsurgency, the side may win which best mobilises and energises its global, regional and local support base – and prevents its adversaries doing likewise.

As noted above, the modern insurgency is not confined to a single state, and there are different global and regional actors who exploit the grievances of the local actors. Therefore, it is crucial that the counterinsurgents control the whole environment and prevent their adversaries from energising and mobilising support.

2. In modern counterinsurgency, the security forces’ ‘area of influence’ may need to include all neighbouring countries, and its ‘area of interest’ may need to be global.

The modern insurgents operate beyond the borders of a state and exploit a global ‘virtual sanctuary’. Unlike the state, insurgents do not have legal and political limitations and operate beyond borders. Therefore, to control this modern complex and intricate insurgency of a global nature, states need to cooperate to control the movement, funding and communication of the insurgents.

3. In modern counterinsurgency, the security forces must control a complex ‘conflict ecosystem’ – rather than defeating a single specific insurgent adversary.

Unlike classical counterinsurgency, there are multiple competing actors, whose aim is to impose order and not to defeat the insurgents in the complex, chaotic environment. Therefore, counterinsurgents should control the whole system.

4. In modern counterinsurgency, a common diagnosis of the problem, and enablers for collaboration may matter more than formal unity of effort across multiple agencies.
In classical counterinsurgency, unity and control of power from national to local level and horizontally between districts was required but ‘today, international aid organisations, global media, non-government organisations and religious leaders are critical for success.’

5. *Modern counterinsurgency may be 100 per cent political – comprehensive media coverage making even the most straightforward combat action a ‘political warfare’ engagement.*

According to Galula, classical counterinsurgency is 80 per cent political and 20 per cent military (1964, p. 63). Certain areas beyond government control would need combat action. In contrast, modern counterinsurgency is 100 per cent political due to the increasing role of media coverage. ‘Political warfare’ even at the lowest level matters more than ‘combat action’ in the battlefield success, asserts Kilcullen.

6. *In modern counterinsurgency, ‘victory’ may not be final – permanent containment’ may be needed to prevent defeated insurgents transforming into terrorist groups.*

In classical counterinsurgency, victory was defined as the destruction of the insurgents, their organisations and their marginalisation from the population. This definition of victory cannot be applied to modern counterinsurgency in which ‘cell-based organisations, bomb-based tactics, global communications and improved lethality make it easier for marginalised insurgent movements to transform themselves into terrorist groups’ (Kilcullen, 2006a, p. 123). In modern counterinsurgency, the concept of victory needs to be redefined, where it should be made necessary to disarm and reintegrate the insurgents into society while avoiding the risk of transforming insurgents into terrorist cells.

7. *In modern counterinsurgency, secret intelligence may matter less than situational awareness based on unclassified but difficult-to-access information.*

It is important to note here that modern insurgency is a complex system of different insurgent organisations with different cultural and demographic backgrounds. Therefore, it is essential for counterinsurgent forces to have basic information about the culture, terrain and people. In a modern insurgency, a knowledge of the field and the
ability to deal with situation on the ground matter more than secret intelligence (Kilcullen, 2006a).

The proponents of global counterinsurgency theory argue that modern insurgency is an intricate web of different local and international insurgent groups which cannot be understood through the lenses of classical theories. ‘There is global jihadist movement, but it comprises a loosely aligned confederation of independent networks and movements, not a single unified organisation. Global players link and exploit local players through regional affiliates – they rarely interact directly with local players, but sponsor and support them through intermediaries’ (Kilcullen, 2005, p. 602). These jihadists aggregate the local grievances and exploit them against their enemies. Therefore, the best strategy he proposes is disaggregation which will do exactly the opposite.

Disaggregation Strategy

A strategy of disaggregation focuses on (2005, p. 610):

1. Attacking the ‘intricate web of dependency’ – the links that allow the jihad to function effectively.
2. Interdicting links between Islamist theatres of operation within the global insurgency.
3. Denying the ability of regional and global actors to link and exploit local actors.
4. Interdicting flows of information, personnel, finance and technology (including WMD technology) between and within jihad theatres.
5. Denying sanctuary areas (including failed and failing states, and states that support terrorism) within theatres.
6. Isolating Islamists from the local population, through theatre-specific measures to win hearts and minds, counter Islamist propaganda, create alternative institutions and remove the drivers for popular support to insurgents.
7. Disrupting inputs (personnel, money and information) from the sources of Islamism in the greater Middle East to dispersed jihad theatres worldwide.

The global jihadists such as Al-Qaeda exploited the US invasion of Afghanistan, and established links with local insurgent groups who provided them with recruits and sanctuaries. Kilcullen (2009a, p. 28) calls Al-Qaeda interaction with local allies ‘accidental guerrilla syndrome’ where the international terrorist organisation such as Al-Qaeda first provoke local insurgency, and then exploit it in their favour. The accidental guerrilla syndrome according to Kilcullen (2009a, p. 35) emerges ‘from a
cyclical process that takes place in four stages: infection, contagion, intervention, and rejection’ (see figure 1.1). In this process ‘the local people begin to become accidental guerrillas, fighting alongside extremist forces not because they support the *takfiri* ideology but because they oppose outside interference in their affairs, because they rallied to support local tribal or community interests, or because they are alienated by heavy-handed actions of the intervening force (Kilcullen, 2009a, p. 38).

**Figure 1.1: The Accidental Guerrilla Syndrome**

![Diagram of the accidental guerrilla syndrome cycle](source)

Source: The accidental guerrilla (2009a, p. 35).

Al-Qaeda, being a terrorist organisation, according to Kilcullen (2009a, p. 30) applies ‘four basic tactics that are standard for any insurgent movement.’
1. **Provocation:** The first thing insurgents have done throughout history is to commit atrocities and carry provocative attacks to compel the opponent to react. To control this, the government takes repressive actions which alienate the population or provokes a religious, tribal, ethnic or a community group, and this helps them to exploit the situation. The obvious example he quotes is the 9/11 incident which provoked the US and prompted the spontaneous uprising of the Muslim ummah.

2. **Intimidation:** The insurgents target and kill those who cooperate with the government or coalition forces. In Afghanistan for instance, the Haqqani network attacked the US embassy in 2008 killing 41 people, and in Pakistan, they attacked *Maliks* (tribal leaders) who cooperated with the government.

3. **Protraction:** The third tactic they use is to prolong the war. After the government react or overreact, the insurgents know the amount of pressure and hide. They emerge later to fight the government. Kilcullen (2009a) therefore, argues that enemy-centric approach to counterinsurgency is counterproductive because it harms the common population instead of the enemy which melt away after the initial attack. The classic example is the escape of members of Al-Qaeda and its top leadership to Pakistan's tribal areas where they established sanctuaries.

4. **Exhaustion:** The last tactic insurgents use is to exhaust the government resources, will and capacity and to make them realise that continuing war is costly for them.

Kilcullen (2009a) also mentions that seeing the immediate failure of a mass uprising in the Muslim world after 9/11, Al-Qaeda’s strategy changed and began to focus on the exploitation of the alienated Muslim population. Kilcullen (2010) observes that each conflict should be understood in its own environment not by drawing any analogy with another conflict, because every insurgency offers a different challenge.

Jones and Smith (2010) argue that global counterinsurgency theory have its limitations despite its accurate characterisation of the contemporary transnational insurgency. According to them global counterinsurgency thinkers appear reluctant to define the concept with the degree of precision (Jones and Smith, 2010, p. 102). The global counterinsurgency theorists have downplayed the ideological content of the
insurgency and have reduced it to ‘accidental guerrilla’ syndrome where addressing local grievances will help (Ibid).

1.8. Critique and Gap in Literature

The above theoretical literature suggests that poverty and inequality explain the onset of insurgencies. For instance, Gur maintains that relative deprivation is the key explanatory factor for insurgency (1970, p. 23). Furthermore, he observes that political violence is the outcome of grievances that developed from unrealised expectations. The existence of grievances leads to aggression and political violence. Esposito and Voll (1996) argue that poverty renders people more vulnerable to militant activities (cited in Fair et al, 2018, p. 58). Blattman and Miguel (2010, p. 22) argue that ‘civil war is more likely to occur in countries that are poor, are subject to negative income shock.’ However, the literature insufficiently explains the factors that lead to the beginning of reactionary-traditionalist insurgencies. If this was a case, the tribal areas of Pakistan being relatively deprived, backward and underdeveloped would have witnessed insurgency before 9/11. The absence of insurgency in the presence of above factors indicate that poverty alone does not explain the onset of insurgency.

Similarly, the theoretical literature maintains that weak states are more prone and vulnerable to insurgencies. According Fearon and Laitin (2003, p. 80) ‘Insurgents are better able to survive and prosper if the government and military they oppose are relatively weak-badly financed, organizationally inept, corrupt, politically divided, and poorly informed about goings-on at the local.’ This study argues it was not the weak state factor but more appropriately limited statehood combined with the military operations which led to the beginning of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Goodwin and Skocpol (1989, p. 505) suggest that ‘the structures of states and armies, as well as the political relations between states and various sectors of society, provide the keys to explaining revolutions in the Third World.’ However, contrary to the above literature, there are weak states which have not witnessed insurgencies. For instance, El Salvador and Bhutan are both weak states but they have not faced any insurgent movements (Akhtar, 2016). Similarly, Pakistan remained a weak, if not a failed, state from the beginning of its creation. When compared to Canada or France, Pakistan inevitably fails. When compared to India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal and Sri
Lanka, things therefore do not look so terrible’ (Lieven, 2011, p. 35). However, it did not witness any insurgency in the tribal areas before 9/11. ‘Blattman and Miguel (2010, p. 4) argue that ‘the correlation between low per capita incomes and higher propensities for internal war is one of the most robust empirical relationships in the literature. The weak state contention is important, but this study advances a different argument (for more details see section 1.8 of this chapter) which explains the outbreak of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. As Huntington argues that the great revolutions have taken place in history in highly centralised monarchies such as Bourbon France, Tsarist Russia and Imperial Manchu China (Goodwin and Skocpol, 1989, p. 498). As said earlier this study maintains that weak state alone was not alone the most important factor which led to the beginning of insurgency. In the case of tribal areas there were other factor which this study discusses in the below three-stages framework.

There is much agreement in the existing empirical literature regarding the origin of insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas (as discussed in the above literature review). It suggests that Pakistan’s support of militancy during the Soviet-Afghan war (1979-89) was a significant factor responsible for the current insurgency in the tribal areas, and laid the foundation of an extremist religious infrastructure in the country. For instance, Fair, (2004); Ishtiaq Ahmed, (2009) maintain that radicalisation and militant recruitment in Pakistan took place during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Pakistan mobilised support Afghan jihad against the Soviet forces which left long-term domestic implications for Pakistan (Weinbaum and Harder, 2008). Murphy and Malik (2009, p. 17) support the argument by saying that the US backed war in Afghanistan during 1979-88 paved the way extremism, militancy and terrorism in Pakistan. The empirical literature, as argued above, provides some interesting arguments on the origin of insurgency, however, it does not provide a satisfactory answer why the country did not witness any insurgency in tribal areas before 9/11.

Similarly, the empirical literature on insurgency expansion in the tribal area has advanced two key arguments (as explained in the literature review). It demonstrates that the lack of will and lack of capacity and capability of the security forces were the key factors which contributed to the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. They argue that state intelligence and military agencies have spawned a complex network of militant groups that include the Taliban in Afghanistan and several Pakistan-based militant groups that carry attacks in both Afghanistan and India (Fair,
Malhotra and Shapiro, 2010, p. 496). Therefore, the intelligence agency ISI remained reluctant to take indiscriminate action against the Taliban (Nawaz (2009a, p. 11).

Similarly, it is argued that the resource shortage has led to inadequate police forces nationwide, with barely 350,000 police for a population of over 170 million, most of whom earn only about $100 a month.’ ‘It is not surprising therefore that the police in Pakistan have been ineffective in their normal duties as well as in counterinsurgency work’ (Cohen and Nawaz, 2009, p. 2). These factors are important, but this study demonstrates that the government conducted major military operations in the tribal areas which reflect the will of the government. Similarly, the military operations in Bajaur and Swat showed the capability of the army. The question remains why, despite the will and capacity, the government failed to control the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas.

Likewise, the literature on insurgency escalation has focused on the significance of external support to insurgents and the coercive military operation of counterinsurgent forces (see section 1.3). They argue that these two factors play a key role in the escalation of insurgencies. However, they have ignored the role of external support to counterinsurgents and how this contributes to the escalation of insurgencies. The theoretical and empirical literature as noted above insufficiently explains some of the fundamental questions. This key gap is addressed by the three-stages framework developed for this study.

Similarly, an increasing number of scholars on counterinsurgency (Rovner, 2014; Porch, 2014; Gentile, 2014; Gventer, Jones and Smith, 2014) have criticised Galula’s theory and the overall concept of counterinsurgency which aims to win the hearts and minds of the people. For instance, Rovner (2014) argues that Galula’s book which is considered a solider book has serious problems. He notes that Galula has presented civil war as a simple drama which involves three actors: insurgents, counterinsurgents and the civilian population. Galula divides the population into three categories: pro-government, pro-insurgents and neutral and considers the civilian population homogenous, but according to Rovner (2014, p. 304) the civilian populations are often very large and heterogeneous, and they have more than three choices in the midst of civil conflict. He further maintains that Galula projects civil war as an electoral campaign where public support is tantamount to victory; this is a serious problem if we view insurgency as a fight for power and control (2014, pp. 304-305).
Galula in his theory maintains that the population should be separated from insurgents. The population-centric strategy would require population concentration in specific areas, their identity papers, food, and permission granted to the security forces to search houses, enforce a curfew and create a self-defence group. However, Mathias identifies that these measures observed by Galula during Chinese communist methods are not successful in some societies where ‘people had no surnames, birthdays were unrecorded, women objected to being photographed’ (cited in Porch, 2014, p.184). In Algeria, for instance, to separate them from the population, members of the Muslim population were transported to concentration camps a process referred to as *regroupement* (Porch, 2014). Furthermore, people were beaten for minor violations, arrested, and they consequently found the entire counterinsurgency strategy unfair and illegal. Rovner (2014) argues that the conventional wisdom which has been built on the selective and misleading use of history by French military thinkers such as Galula and Hubert Lyautey\(^\text{26}\) needs greater scrutiny.

Porch (2014) denies Galula’s claim that the French army had no counterinsurgency plan in the early months of the Algerian war. He (2014) concludes that counterinsurgency apologists refuse to accept faults in French tactics and maintains that the counterinsurgency principles were not applied properly in Algeria, applied too late or to blame the French government for the defeat. According to him, the claim that Galula’s counterinsurgency principles helped pacify the region in 1957 is not true.

Similarly, the British experience in Malaysia, which is presented as a case of the successful application of counterinsurgency principles, has also received criticism from scholars. Gentile (2014, p. 243) maintains that the whole story of British counterinsurgency in Malaysia from 1948-60 is not true. He further observes that the general belief that Sir Gerald Templer (British High Commissioner for Malaya in 1952) and his efforts won the hearts and minds of the people is based on fiction and ‘what is not fiction is that the British won the war, because they did. But they won it, contrary to the counterinsurgency narrative, for different reasons’ (Ibid). He demonstrates that the British defeated the communist insurgency in Malaya because of Templer’s predecessor General Sir Harold Briggs (Director Operations in Malaya), the originator of the famous ‘Briggs’ Plan’ in 1950. Under this plan, nearly half of the Chinese

\(^{26}\) Hubert Lyautey (1854-1934) was French Army general and colonial administrator.
population were resettled in camps, which undermined the insurgents’ support, and the effective military operations conducted by the British Army that cut the links between insurgents and the relocated population. So, according to Gentile, it was Briggs’ Plan (2014) that helped to defeat the insurgency, not Templer’s strategy of winning hearts and minds.

Likewise, much of the scholarly and academic work undertaken after 9/11 borrowed from the French and British experiences which can be described as the first wave of counterinsurgency (Gventer, Jones and Smith, 2014, p. 1). Following on this, the US military experts under the leadership of David Petraeus revised and updated US counterinsurgency strategy at the end of 2005. They believed that the approach of US military officers was too conventional, and their revised strategy took inspiration from the classical studies of the decolonisation period of the 1950s and 1960s to help them win the support of the people. These experts and military strategists produced a new set of guidelines in the “Field Manual 3-24”, which they believed would enable them to defeat the insurgencies and which could be employed universally. Gventer, Jones and Smith (2014) maintain that the conceptual underpinnings of this newly developed counterinsurgency are weak despite its practical claims, and it does not offer a solution to solve future conflicts. Porch (2014) further maintains that the US counterinsurgency strategy is simply a modern version of imperialism.

The new US counterinsurgency manual assumed that insurgencies are caused by social injustices having no ideological foundation and therefore, the US soldiers need to be nation builders as well as warriors to address these issues (Biddle, Freidman and Shapiro, 2014). The US Field Manual 3-24 argues that insurgencies in the Philippines and Malaysia were defeated because counterinsurgent forces transformed their tactics and focused on gaining public support by protecting the civil population, curbing corruption and addressing their grievances. Rovner (2014, p. 301) however, maintains that these cases are more complex than merely relating them with the security of the population and legitimacy of the government. Bing West (2014, p. 232) argues that American counterinsurgency has failed in Iraq and Afghanistan. For instance, in Iraq, in Anbar Awakening, it was not counterinsurgency strategy but funding to Sunni tribes against Al-Qaeda along with the Shia27 militia decision to decrease their attacks.

27 One of the two main branches in Islam.
against Sunnis, that helped to reduce violence (Gentile, 2014, p. 248). The decrease in violence also happened in Iraq because the Sunni tribes felt threatened by Al-Qaeda, and they made joint cause with the US forces (Rovner, 2014, p. 300).

However, despite the above criticism of counterinsurgency theories, the significance and relevance of both the classical and global counterinsurgency theories cannot be denied. The theoretical contribution of this study is that it is using both theories together to understand the counterinsurgency strategy of the respective Pakistani governments from 2001-2014. The application of both theories along with the three-stages framework developed for this study help us to understand the different aspects of beginning, expansion and escalation of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan and enable us to know how the government could effectively counter this religiously motivated insurgency. It is important to understand that insurgencies in different parts of the world are not necessarily the same. Melshen (2007, p. 690) rightly put it that ‘What worked in one counterinsurgency campaign may not work in another. To search for a ‘model’ for counterinsurgency is to search for a ‘quick fix’ or ‘easy solution’ to a complex problem’ (Ibid). Therefore, this study advances a different explanation in the following three-stages framework.

1.9. The Three-Stages Framework

**Stage One: Insurgency Beginning**

I demonstrate in this framework that the military government of Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan after 9/11 sought to address a political problem through military means in order to consolidate his rule. The policy shift in the aftermath of 9/11 without developing political and religious unity was a key factor that led to the insurgency in the mountainous region of Pakistan. The people of the tribal areas had supported the government’s call for jihad in the Afghan war in the late 80s (see Chapter 3 for more details). The government after 9/11 changed the policy with regard to militant groups but it is questionable whether the people in general, and security forces in particular, were ready for this abrupt reversal without developing a consensus. Soldiers in the Pakistan army were led to believe that supporting jihad in Kashmir and Afghanistan was state policy, but now they were being told that these militants were enemies of the state.
The policy shift was perceived by the people - especially the tribesmen - as the outcome of international pressure. Consequently, this provided strong justification to the militants to rise up against the state. They effectively built a narrative that the West had waged war against Islam, and the Musharraf government was now pursuing a Western agenda. In unconventional warfare, a narrative is used to gain the support of the people. Narrative simplifies the facts and provides a framework which helps people to understand events (Kilcullen, 2006b, p. 106) and it is considered a foundation of all strategies (Vlahos, 2006). In order to get the popular support, the militants used the most popular narrative where they equated ‘jihad - which most Islamic scholars interpret as the striving for justice (and principally an inner striving to purify the self) - with guerrilla warfare’ (Stern, 2000, p. 3).

Relying on coercive powers without building a political and religious consensus, therefore, received no support from the political parties. Instead, all the major political parties criticised Musharraf’s government for pursuing the US agenda. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Pakistan Muslim League – N (PML-N), Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI), Mutahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMM) alleged that his government was pursuing the US interest in the tribal areas. The anti-government stance of the political and religious parties kept the society polarised and public opinion divided. This created space for insurgents to exploit the sympathies of the people, thus making it difficult for the government to undermine support for insurgency – a prerequisite for victory in unconventional warfare.

Stage Two: Insurgency Expansion
The second stage of the framework demonstrates that the mixture of factors was responsible for the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas. Firstly, the government inability to create an effective counternarrative preceded the government military operations in the tribal areas. When the government conducted military operations, the collateral damage reinforced the insurgents’ narrative that innocent people were killed to please the US. Historically, the tribal areas posed serious challenges to all invaders including Alexander the Great, the Mongols, the Mughals and the British Raj (Behuria, 2007). During the US ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ (OPF) in Afghanistan in 2001, the Pakistan army employed two infantry brigades for border security, in addition to approximately 4,000 Frontier Corps (FC) personnel deployed in FATA to conduct
operations against Al-Qaeda and its affiliates (Jones and Fair, 2010, pp. 41-42). The tribal people perceived this as a breach of an agreement signed with them in January 1948, which noted that the government would continue to rule the area with the concession extended by the British government before partition, and it would not interfere in their internal affairs (Abbas, 2014).

Secondly, the government outreach in the tribal areas was weak, which I argue constituted an area of limited statehood (see Chapter 5 for details). Therefore, after military operations failed, the government signed a peace agreement to appease the militants. The government had no effective governance system to address the grievances of people after the military operation. This helped the insurgents to replace the century-old corrupt system of the government to resolve public matters.

The security situation was further exacerbated by the army operation in Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) in July 2007. The Lal Masjid operation was the deadliest battle between the army and local militants after Pakistan became an ally of the US in the war against terror. The incident added new energy to the already warring militant groups within FATA because about 70 per cent of the students studying in the mosques were from the tribal areas and KP (Hussain, 2017). The operation led to a new wave of suicide bombings which shattered the security of the state. After five months of the operation, almost all major groups united to form Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in December 2007. TTP announced a defensive jihad against the Pakistan army and refused any future peace deals with the Government in 2007 (Abbas, 2008).

To control the backlash after the Lal Masjid operation in Islamabad, the government increased the number of troops in tribal areas which numbered 90,000 by 2008, 120,000 by 2009 and 140,000 by 2010 (Watts et al., 2014, p. 130). The operation badly damaged the morale of the army while many officers in uniform were targeted. After the operations, army officers were warned by Musharraf to avoid wearing uniforms outside military garrison (Cohen et al., 2007). Military operations were further conducted, but could not stop the regeneration of militant recruitments in the area (Z. Hussain, 2013). The second stage of the framework enhances our understanding by offering a different explanation that not a single factor, but a mixture of these factors, was responsible for the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas.
**Stage Three: Insurgency Escalation**

The third stage of the framework demonstrates that US drone strikes escalated the insurgency in the tribal areas by providing an opportunity to the insurgents to attract support and recruit new members. The drone strikes united different militant groups against the US and Pakistan security forces (Harrison, 2007). According to The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ), a leading drone database, drone strikes killed 424-969 civilians including 172-207 children between 2004-2018. Pew Research in its report (2014) claimed that two-thirds of Pakistanis believed that drones were killing innocent people. Similarly, Enemark (2011, pp. 226-227) found that 93 per cent of people in Pakistan considered drone strikes as negative, and 90 per cent people believed that they killed innocent people.

Drone strikes helped the militants to attract recruits by instilling a desire for revenge. And that revenge resulted in more attacks against Pakistan security forces and civilians. The above literature argued that external support for insurgents (not counterinsurgents) and coercive measures are significant factors which determine the escalation of insurgency. However the third stage of the framework broadens our knowledge by demonstrating that external support/intervention for counterinsurgents (not insurgents) also determines the escalation of insurgency if it reinforces the narrative of the insurgents.

**Conclusion**

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that insurgencies are organised movements which seek to overthrow a constituted government through the use of subversion and irregular warfare. Insurgents challenge the legitimacy of the constituted government while exploiting the grievances of the population. Broadly, insurgencies can be categorised into traditional and modern. Traditional insurgencies during the Cold War and decolonisation period aimed at achieving independence from their colonial masters. Many of them were influenced by communist and nationalist ideologies and were supported by the former USSR. To counter the Soviet influence, the US military devised a counterinsurgency strategy.

The existing literature has advanced different arguments to explain the onset of insurgencies. Numerous scholars argue that civil war and insurgencies begin due to relative deprivation and inequality. The empirical literature on tribal areas also suggests that poverty was a contributing factor in the outbreak of insurgency. An important
theoretical argument advanced by different scholars demonstrates that it is the weak state which makes the country vulnerable to insurgencies. A significant amount of empirical literature considers Pakistan’s foreign policy in the region and the madrassa system as key factors responsible for the current insurgency in the tribal areas. It is argued that Pakistan supported these groups during the Soviet war with Afghanistan, and it continued the same policy after 9/11. Furthermore, the literature suggests that Pakistan used these militant groups for its national interest internally as well as externally. Similarly, external factors such as the foreign presence in Afghanistan and India’s role to destabilise Pakistan have also been advanced in the literature as contributing factors for the insurgency.

The empirical literature on the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas maintains that the lack of political will was a significant factor in the expansion of insurgency. The Pakistan army undertook military operations in the tribal areas but it was never serious enough to eliminate the militant groups. It is also argued that the capacity and capability of the security forces were the most important factors which contributed to the failure of the counterinsurgency. Lack of unconventional capability and resources are believed to have undermined the counterinsurgency efforts. Similarly, the empirical literature on insurgency escalation has focused on the role of external support for insurgents but has overlooked the importance of external support for counterinsurgents and how it escalates insurgency.

The existing literature, however, insufficiently explains the absence of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan in the presence of the above-stated factors before 9/11. The area was relatively deprived and suffered from poverty. Similarly, the area was used as a training ground for militancy during the Soviet-Afghan war, but the area did not witness any insurgency before 9/11.

To control insurgencies, classical counterinsurgency theorists, such as Galula, expounded a theory which focused on gaining the support of the population instead of controlling the territory. Galula adapted the Maoist principle of insurgency and argued that counterinsurgency is 80 per cent political and 20 per cent military. Counterinsurgency was defined as all the political, economic, social and military measures undertaken to address insurgency. However, with the increasing urbanisation and technological development, the nature of insurgency has also changed. That is why global counterinsurgency experts believe that the classical theory cannot fully explain
modern complex insurgencies. The main argument of global counterinsurgency is that modern insurgencies are transnational in nature and, therefore, denying the global and regional actors an opportunity to aggregate the grievances of local actors would help to contain insurgency.

The critique of the counterinsurgency theories suggests that the principles outlined for victory in insurgency are not based on facts. They question the idea that the success of the British government in the Malay insurgency was not because of the application of counterinsurgency principles, but because of the Briggs’ plan which resettled the Chinese population and helped to undermine the support for insurgents. Despite the above criticism, these theories of counterinsurgency provide valuable insight into countering insurgencies.

This thesis demonstrates that the insurgency arose when the government pursued a policy with regard to militant groups without creating an effective counternarrative against them. This inability coupled with poor administrative control in the tribal areas followed by indiscriminate violence led to the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas. Thirdly, the US drone strikes and the subsequent killing of innocent people reinforced the insurgents’ narrative, which played a significant role in the escalation of insurgency. The above framework enhances our understanding of the different aspects of reactionary-traditionalist insurgency\textsuperscript{28} in the tribal areas of Pakistan.

\textsuperscript{28} Reactionary-Traditionalist Insurgency is a subtype of traditionalist insurgency seek to implement an ancient political system they consider ideal. For further details see Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse by O’Neill (2005).
Chapter 2: Research Methodology

The chapter explains the methodology adopted for this research study. It explains the qualitative historical method and the key differences between qualitative and quantitative methods. Furthermore, it discusses why the qualitative method was adopted for this study. It also explains the selection of case study and why the tribal areas was selected as a case study. The chapter also reflects on the author’s positionality with regard to the existing literature. The final section discusses why the archival source of data collection was adopted for this study and not other sources.

2.1. Qualitative Historical Analysis

This study has adopted a qualitative historical analysis design. A research design is ‘the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of study’ (Yin, 2003b, p. 19). Qualitative historical analysis ‘denotes a methodological approach that employs qualitative instead of quantitative measurement and the use of primary historical documents or historians’ interpretations thereof in service of theory development and testing’ (Thies, 2002, p. 352). Scholars in international relations have adopted qualitative historical analysis and archival sources of data collection to conduct their research. For instance, *The Elusive Balance* (1993) by William Wolfforth is an example of a political scientist making good use of archival sources released by the Soviet government during the end of cold war. Similarly, John Lewis Gaddis’s book *The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations* is the example of using archival sources by a political scientist. Larson’s work *Origins of Containment* (1985) is also cited good example of the effective use of archival sources.

In order to understand why the qualitative method was adopted for this study, it is important to know the differences between the qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative method is different from quantitative or statistical methods that ‘focus on questions of ‘how many’ to infer causality’ (Vromen, 2010, p. 249). Qualitative research unlike quantitative does not adopt statistical procedures or quantification but focuses on understanding the nature of the problem (Strauss and Corbin, 1994). Furthermore, the qualitative method places emphasis on people’s experience and the
meaning of such experience, while the quantitative method emphasises numbers and statistics. The selection of choice of any particular method entirely depends on the nature of the study. Sometimes both methods are combined to achieve the desired result, but this study chose the qualitative method over the quantitative because the aim was to understand the thoughts and feelings of the people involved/affected by the problem.

2.2. Case Study as a Research Strategy

In qualitative research, a case study is the main method where different sub-methods such as: ‘interviews, observations, document and record analysis, work sample’ are used (Gillham, 2000, p. 13). The common ‘use of the term ‘case’ associates the case study with a location, such as a community or organisation’ (Bryman, 2012, p. 67). The method of case study is privileged over alternative methods ‘when “how” or “why” questions are being posed when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (Yin, 2003b, p. 1). The case study method is used in different subjects such as political science, sociology, psychology, and social work to understand “why” the particular incident has happened, and the researcher should have to rely on a wide array of documentary evidence in addition to conducting interviews (Yin, 2003b). Although case studies are not exclusive to the qualitative method, however, Bryman (2012) agrees with the notion that case study design favours qualitative methods and is particularly helpful in an extensive and detailed examination of the case.

Robert Yin (2003a, p. 5) explains different kinds of case studies.

1. The single case study focuses on a single case in the study.
2. Multiple case studies focus on two or more cases in a research study.
3. An explanatory case study usually explains the cause and effect relationship.
4. A descriptive case study offers a comprehensive description of a problem in a particular study.
5. The exploratory case study explains the hypothesis of the study and determines the feasibility of the research.

As this study aimed to investigate the causes of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan, its expansion and how it could be prevented, an explanatory case study was adopted.
2.2.1. Arguments in favour of and against Case Studies

The greatest concern regarding case studies is that investigator is undisciplined and does not follow the systematic procedure and allow equivocal evidence and biases to influence the finding and conclusions (Yin, 2003b, p.10). However, Lune and Berg (2017, p. 177) argue that case study methods are ‘as objective as any other data-collection and analysis strategies used by social scientists.’ The second major concern is that the case study does not provide enough basis for scientific generalisation (Kennedy, 1979). Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 221), addressing the misunderstanding about case studies, argues that ‘one can often generalise on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalisation as supplement or alternative to other methods.’

The third complaint levelled against case study research is the long time it requires, massive results and the unreadable documents it produces. Fetterman (1989) and Jorgensen (1989) refute this argument by saying that the complaint emerges from the confusion of other data collection methods such as ethnography or participant observation with case studies. Ethnography usually requires more time for detailed field observation and participant observation also needs huge field efforts, but a high-quality and valid case study can be conducted without leaving the library, telephone or internet, depending on the nature of the study (Yin, 2003b, p. 11).

Despite the criticism of case studies, the method is widely used to obtain an in-depth understanding of a real-life problem. They are involved in ‘intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units … observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period of time’ (Gerring, 2004, p. 342). In international relations, a case can involve a country, a crisis, war or other events (Thies, 2002) and it provides an opportunity for the researcher ‘to gain a deep holistic view of the research problem’ (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 1). Keeping in mind the research questions of this study and in order to have a holistic view of the problem, this study adopted a single case study. A single case study is justifiable because it represents a ‘critical test of a significant theory’ (Yin, 2003b, p. 41). One of the advantages of single case studies is that they are less expensive and less time consuming compared to multiple case studies. They are particularly important if a researcher wants a deeper understanding of the phenomena involved.
2.2.2. Selection of Tribal Areas as a Case Study

As explained earlier Pakistan became an ally of the US in the war against terror in 2001. Pakistan’s security forces conducted targeted operations to apprehend the Al-Qaeda and Afghan Taliban operatives. The security forces achieved some success by capturing Al-Qaeda leaders but the failure to obtain support of the tribesmen made the tribal areas a new sanctuary for international and local militants. This emerging crisis attracted the attention of scholars both at home and abroad. Similarly, as an observer of the situation, the crisis also drew the attention of the author. The criteria used for selecting the tribal areas as case study was to see where the problem originated, where it is centred and where the government conducted military operations. Firstly, the tribal areas shared rugged and porous border with Afghanistan which led the entrance of Al-Qaeda and Taliban to the area. Secondly, the government conducted military operations in tribal areas to defeat insurgency. Thirdly, insurgency began in the tribal areas after these military operations. Fourthly, the area remained a stronghold of different militant groups and they posed serious threat internally as well as externally. Therefore, the area constituted an important case study warranted a thorough investigation. Case study according to Odell (2001, p. 162) could be ‘a single instance of an event or phenomenon.’ According to Thies (2002) ‘In international relations a case is often a country, or it may be a dyadic pair of countries, or a crisis, war, or some other event.’

After limiting the scope of data to the tribal areas the key question was to select the time span of the study. The study selected the span between 2001-2014 for three reasons. Firstly, insurgency began after 2001 when Pakistan became a US ally in the war against terror. Secondly, the tribal areas became an epicentre of militancy and terrorism during this period where insurgency expanded to other parts of the area. The time span also covered the military regime of Pervez Musharraf (2001-2008) and the responses of PPP government (2008-2013). The study was limited to 2014, because after the APS incident in the same year Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy was completely changed. The time constrain did not allow the author to measure the consequences of the new ongoing strategy after 2014.
2.3. Reflection on Positionality

The term ‘positionality both describes an individual’s world view and the position they adopt about a research task and its social and political context’ (Holmes, 2020, p. 1). According to Hall (1990, p. 18) ‘There’s no enunciation without positionality. You have to position yourself somewhere in order to say anything at all’. Positionality is therefore ‘determined by where one stands in relation to ‘the other’ (Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Lee, Ntseane, & Muhamad, 2001, p. 411). Reflecting on my positionality, the research process was shaped by my ethnic, cultural and religious background. ‘It is reasonable to expect that the researcher’s beliefs, political stance, cultural background (gender, race, class, socioeconomic status, educational background) are important variables that may affect the research process. Just as the participants’ experiences are framed in social-cultural contexts, so too are those of the researcher’ (Bourke, 2014, p. 2). However, my positionality was not a limitation as I was a researcher and a primary observer of the issue in its context. According to Bourke (2014, p.) the research is ‘shaped by who I am, and as long as I remain reflective throughout the process, I will be shaped by it, and by those with whom I interact.’ Positionality, therefore, represents ‘a space in which objectivism and subjectivism meet’ (Bourke, 2014, p. 2).

Reflecting on my position I witnessed the exploitation of religion for state vested interest while growing in the city of Peshawar. After major military operation began in tribal areas in 2004 the militants began to target the security forces, government buildings, bridges, and markets. However, the common people including myself were confused about what was happening. Why innocent people are being killed? Most importantly, who are killing them? Reading newspaper, listening to political and religious leaders further added to the confusion. Later, I would realise that this confusion in the society at large benefited the militants. In 2006, I asked a soldier who was stationed in South Waziristan (where military operations were being conducted about his experience against the militant). He told me that the Taliban being killed in military operations are martyrs and he can feel the fragrance from their dead bodies. People were reluctant to attend the funeral of soldiers because they believed they were fighting a war against their own Muslim brothers at the behest of the US. This confusion persisted until 2014 when the TTP attacked the Army Public School (APS).
My own positionality with regard to what have already been said is that I believe that religion was exploited during the Soviet-Afghan war. Jihad was glorified. The common people were attracted and recruited to fight jihad. They were made believe that they will get paradise and whores in return for their jihad. When 9/11 took place, the policy shift in the government took place without involving the religious stakeholders. In the Afghan war these Mullahs who were part of the society and enjoyed respect played dominant role. Syllabus was introduced and slogans were made making jihad indispensable. After 9/11 as said above the meaning of jihad was changed not by these Mullahs but the government. Mullah who was part of the government’s plan during Afghan war was now against the government. The Mullah began to glorify the jihad again and the government failed now to challenge the narrative of the Taliban. Religion was not only exploited by the state for its vested interests but also the by the religious section including the Taliban. This earlier exploitation of religion and now allying with the US after 9/11 limited the government credibility to produce a counternarrative. This inability of the government after 9/11 created space for the militants to exploit the religion again and obtain the support of the people.

2.4. Source of Data Collection

The next step in the research process after choosing a particular method is to select historical source material. ‘Political scientists and historians approach their subject matter with different types of research question, much of the data needed by political scientists may not be present in these secondary sources’ (Thies, 2002, p. 358). Therefore, archival sources are used if the data is missing from secondary sources. This study used the archival record of a newspaper. ‘Newspapers allow the construction of a chronology of events… chronology is crucial because the sequence of events tells us how the actors were responding to each other.’ (Thies, 2002, p. 357). As this study aimed to explore why the government counterinsurgency failed, therefore, the newspaper not only helped to establish the chronology of the events but it also helped to know that how the different actors such as the Taliban, the tribesmen and government were responding to each other.

However, it is difficult to unveil reality while relying only on one source of data. Therefore, in addition to the archival record of the local newspaper, the online sources
were analysed. The study triangulated different archival sources with online sources to cross-check the reliability and validity of the data. The main portion of primary data was gathered from *The Frontier Post* – an English daily, which comprehensively covered the issue of militancy in the tribal areas more than other sources. Additionally, the official website of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), National Assembly (NA) and Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) were accessed and found to be helpful. The secondary data was obtained from online publications of scholars and experts, official reports, data published in the print media, reports of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other online sources. The purpose of collecting data from different sources was to test the claim that the counterinsurgency strategy employed in the tribal areas of Pakistan was not complemented by an effective counternarrative. The claim was supported by the evidence and it was concluded that insurgency of a tribal and religious nature can only be won when the government evolves an effective counternarrative against the insurgents and alienates them from the population.

2.5. Methodology not Selected

A researcher adopts a methodology which helps him/her to obtain accurate and reliable data addressing the research questions. In the process, he/she finds some methodologies suitable while leaving others. The methodology adopted for this study was discussed in the above section, and this section will now discuss those methodologies which were found unfeasible and impractical for this project.

As argued in the above section, the research relied on documents and archival analysis for this study. It can be argued that interviewees from different segments of society could produce insight and understanding regarding the government counterinsurgency strategy during 2001-2014. The interview method was not selected for this study for three reasons. One, the lack of security made it difficult to access and visit the area. Secondly, the fear and uncertainty in the area have made it difficult for people to freely express their views. Thirdly, the chances of locals giving honest answers were very low as this could lead to their beheading by the militants who still had a presence in the area (Taj, 2011b).
It can also be argued that interviews from state/military officials could strengthen the thesis while responding why the government lacked an effective counternarrative. Again, the option was not chosen because the chances of the state/military officials giving an honest and independent opinion was very low. If they were to express their opinion against the Taliban the chances were there that they be killed on the charges of supporting/standing with the US. And if they had to speak against the powerful army, the chances were there that they be expelled and punished. For instance, in March 2010, the Taliban kidnapped two former ISI officials and later brutally killed them. Sultan Amir Tarar famously known as Colonel Imam along with other ISI official Khalid Khwaja were kidnapped by the Taliban in North Waziristan. Khalid Khwaja was executed on April 30, 2010, and his body was dumped in a village near Mir Ali in North Waziristan. A note attached to his body stated that he was an agent of ISI and CIA (Yusufzai, 2011, p. 19). Colonel Imam was killed January 22, 2011, by the TTP and charged with spying for US and Pakistan intelligence agencies (The News, 2011).

Similarly, the Pakistan Army set a ‘Court of Inquiry’ against former DG ISI General Asad Durrani for publishing a book with Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) Chief A.S. Dulat. Durrani was investigated because his book touched upon some of the thorny issues such as terrorism, Mumbai attacks and Kashmir (Syed, 2018). The then Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar was quoted as saying in 2017 that ‘As far as the freedom of speech is concerned, the Constitution makes it clear that national security and defence institutions would not be criticised and that citizens would not engage themselves in any activity that causes damage to the prestige, reputation and goodwill of Pak Army’ (Quoted in Dawn, 2017). As demonstrated above it is hard for civil and military officers/officials to speak freely about the thorny issues in the presence of strong army. Therefore, instead of interviewing them the archival sources of data collection were consulted which helped the researcher to construct chronology of the events.

One can argue that the focus groups technique could produce a better result for this study. Bearing in mind the security situation of the area since 9/11 the option was neither feasible nor practicable and involved a high security risk.

It can also be argued that participant observation would enable the researcher to observe the real-life experience within the field, thus enriching the result of the study.
Again, it depends on the nature of the study and the availability of time a researcher has. The method was not found relevant for two reasons. First, the researcher has limited time to collect data from the field which put constraints on undertaking the time-consuming participant observation method. Secondly, as said earlier the participant observation method requires a researcher to spend more time in the field to observe the behaviour of the participants, and this was again not feasible for this study because of the security situation and cultural constraints. Therefore, the historical analysis method was preferred for this project.

Lastly, a quantitative method was also not considered suitable for this research study because the quantitative methods, which include structured interviews, surveys, experiments, and statistical analysis are not found helpful for this study to obtain an in-depth understanding of the problem. Structured interviews and surveys do not provide flexibility to the researcher. Similarly, experiments and statistical analysis would not fulfil the purpose of this research project and were not adopted.

**Conclusion**

The methodology chapter discussed the detail of the whole process of undertaking this research project. It begins by explaining the qualitative historical analysis and the differences between the qualitative and quantitative methods. This was followed by a discussion on a case study approach with its advantages and disadvantages, and the justification of using the tribal areas of Pakistan as a case study. The chapter also explained the methods for data collection adopted for this project. This includes both primary and secondary data. Methods of data collection such as interview and ethnography were not adopted for this research project due to security reasons as explained above in the chapter.
Chapter 3: Historical Context: Pakistan’s Security Apprehensions

In order to understand the application of a three-stages framework in the empirical chapters, it is essential to know first the historical context of the current problem. It is important to understand Pakistan’s external security vulnerabilities and apprehensions and how they have shaped the country’s internal politics and foreign policies. As I demonstrated (see Chapter 1), Pakistan’s militant problem was deeply entrenched and both the Pakistani and US governments attempted to address it without learning from history. In this chapter, I will provide a historical account of Pakistan’s creation, its deep-rooted conflict with India, and its impact on the security of the country. The chapter also discusses Pakistan’s relations with the US in the context of its western border with Afghanistan. The profile of each tribal agency has been discussed at the end of the chapter to understand the context of the problem.

3.1. The Partition of India and birth of Pakistan

Following the Indian nationalist struggle, the British Empire finally decided to give independence to its colony - British India, on June 3, 1947. Independence was accompanied by the creation of two separate states. Pakistan became a Muslim majority state on August 14, 1947, while India became a Hindu majority state on August 15, 1947. Independence ended almost 100 years rule of the British Raj over India. According to the independence plan, the Muslim majority provinces in the north, including Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier Province (renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2010), Baluchistan, and Bengal in the east would constitute Pakistan. Sind and Baluchistan, which had overwhelming Muslim majorities, became part of Pakistan, and the fate of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province was to be decided through a plebiscite, because its people had elected a Congress government in the earlier election of 1946 (Ziring, 2003). However, Punjab and Bengal were to be divided between India and Pakistan along religious lines.

To demarcate the two provinces, Lord Mountbatten, the last Governor-General of India, formed a commission to draw up the boundaries. The commission was headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, a British lawyer, and it was named after him. The commission published its plan for the division of Punjab and Bengal on August 17, 1947. West Punjab and East Bengal became parts of Pakistan, while East Punjab and West Bengal
were annexed to India. With the announcement of the Radcliffe partition plan, Hindus living in the newly created Pakistan, and Muslims living in India found themselves in the minority (see figure 3.1 below).

The border was demarcated without inspecting the villages and communities living along the border (Khan, 2017). Muslim majority areas fell to India and vice versa Hindu villages to Pakistan. Consequently, mass migration began. Muslims marched towards Pakistan while Hindus and Sikhs moved in the opposite direction. The migration left fifteen million people uprooted, between one and two million dead, and seventy-five thousand women raped (Dalrymple, 2015). The partition freed people from foreign control but sowed the seeds of hatred and conflict between the two newly created countries which can still be witnessed today. The renowned Pakistani historian Ayesha Jalal concludes, ‘The central historical event in the twentieth century in South Asia, a defining moment that is neither beginning nor end, partition continues to influence how the people and states of postcolonial South Asia envisage their past, present and future’ (Jalal, 2013, p. 4).

Pakistan accused Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, of manipulating the partition plan in favour of India by annexing Muslim majority areas, including the districts of Ferozpur and Gurdaspur to it. Gurdaspur provided India with road access to Kashmir, thus paving the way for Kashmir to be annexed. Stanley Wolpert, a British historian, maintains that ‘The tragedy of partition and its more than half-century legacy of hatred, fear, and continued conflict—capped by the potential of nuclear war over South Asia—might well have been avoided, or at least mitigated, but for the arrogance and ignorance of a handful of British and Indian leaders’ (Wolpert, 2006, p. 2). Collins and Lapierre (1975, p. 218) in their account narrate the tragedy of partition:

Nowhere were there any guidelines, any precedents, any revealing insights from the past to order what was going to be the biggest, the most complex divorce action in history, the breakup of a family of four hundred million human being along with the assets and household property they had acquired in centuries of living together on the same piece of earth.
Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, a Congress leader and an ardent supporter of united India, predicted that the deep-rooted hatred between the two communities which led to the partition would have a profound impact on the future of both countries. Both the neighbours [India and Pakistan] will focus on their defence against each other at the cost of their societal betterment (quoted by Ahmad, 2011). It is important to mention that in the very first year of independence both countries engaged in a war over the Muslim majority princely state of Kashmir.

Kashmir was an important Muslim majority (78 per cent in 1947) princely state which was ruled by a Hindu ruler, Maharaja Hari Sing (I. Ahmed, 2013, p. 79). During the partition, the princely states were given a choice to either accede to India or Pakistan. The population of Kashmir wanted to join Pakistan, but the Maharaja Hari Sing was against accession. The internal uprising began against the Hindu Maharaja and urged him to annex the state to Pakistan. The Pakistan army was still commanded by British officers who were unwilling to support the uprising militarily (Jones, 2002, p. 63). The then Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan was himself involved in making plans to send irregular Lashkar (Militia) from Pakistan’s tribal areas to free Kashmir from
Hindu domination (Ibid). On October 21, 1947, the irregular forces crossed the border to support the uprising and after a few days’ fighting they were close to occupying Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir (Aguilar et al., 2011, p. 22). Seeing the level of tribal support, Hari Sing requested military support from India to suppress the uprising.

The Indian government agreed but asked the Maharaja to cede the state first to India (Ziring, 2003, p. 40). The Maharaja agreed to the condition and signed an agreement called the Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947, which formally made Jammu and Kashmir part of India. India, which had road access to Kashmir, sent its forces to Jammu and Kashmir on October 27, 1947, to defend the state territory, and eventually pushed the irregular force back (Jones, 2002). In May 1948, Pakistani forces also entered Kashmir to support the irregular tribal forces. War, costing 1,500 lives on each side, continued until December 31, 1948, when the United Nations (UN) intervened, (Riedel, 2013, p. 49).

Pakistan occupied a small portion of the Kashmir valley, and its larger part remained with India (Ziring, 2003). After UN intervention, both countries agreed to hold ceasefire talks and conduct a plebiscite to decide the fate of the Kashmiri people. However, the plebiscite was never held. President Truman and the British Prime Minister asked Pakistan and India to cooperate with the UN delegation headed by Admiral Chester Nimitz, but the Indian Prime Minister, Nehru, turned down the proposal (Riedel, 2013, p. 50). The original state of Kashmir is now divided into three parts: India occupies 43 per cent, Pakistan holds 37 per cent, and 20 per cent is held by China which was ceded by Pakistan in 1963 (Riedel, 2013, p. 49). (see figure 3.2 below).
The unresolved issue of Kashmir paved the way for the permanent struggle between the two newly independent neighbours. To avoid each other’s aggression both countries started spending a significant part of their budgets on defence. In order to strengthen its defence capability, Pakistan signed a number of defence agreements with the US. In May 1954, a Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement was signed with the US. In the same year, Pakistan became a member of the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) along with the US, United Kingdom (UK), France, Thailand, Philippine, Australia and New Zealand. A year later in 1955, Pakistan also joined the Baghdad Pact, another mutual defence pact with Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Britain. After the withdrawal of Iraq, the pact was renamed the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). Between 1953 and 1961, Pakistan received $508 million of US military aid.
Ensuring security, however, did not bring peace between the two neighbours and they engaged in a full-scale war in 1965.

In the seventeen-days war both countries claimed territorial gains against each other but rescinded, and the forces returned to their original position in 1966 (Aguilar et al., 2011). While Pakistan engaged with India over Kashmir, the political uncertainty in its eastern part called East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was increasing. For a long time, East Pakistan was ignored by its western counterparts in power-sharing. In 1970s general elections, Sheikh Mujeeb ur Rehman’s party Awami League gained a majority of the seats but was denied the formation of a national government. Protest and riots started which led to military action. The army operation led to an insurgency and India’s military intervention.

The long-distance East from West Pakistan and India in the middle, provided the Indian army with a manoeuvring opportunity against the Pakistan army, and it assisted the insurgency militarily (Cohen, 2011, p. 23). Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto who became President of Pakistan after the dismemberment noted that ‘the 1971 war was the climax of a long series of hostile and aggressive acts by India against Pakistan since the establishment of the two as sovereign and independent states’ (quoted in Meher, 2015, p. 300). East Pakistan was lost, and 93,000 Pakistani civilians and army personnel were made prisoners of war. The secession of East Pakistan further intensified the animosity between the two neighbours.

In 1974, India started its nuclear programme which would finally lead both countries to conduct nuclear explosions in 1998, and the same year, both neighbours again engaged in a conflict in Kargil - a strategically important district of Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan was blamed for sending its troops in the guise of Mujahideen to occupy the district. Pakistan believed that the occupation of Kargil would cut the link between Indian-held Kashmir and its Ladakh region and would be instrumental in pressurising India to negotiate over the issue of Kashmir. The escalated tension between the two nuclear-equipped neighbours worried the international community. US President Bill Clinton pressurised the Pakistan government to withdraw forces to the pre-war position.

The partition in 1947 and subsequent wars with India have left a profound impact on Pakistan’s domestic politics and its foreign policy. Internally, the role of the army has increased immensely. Christian Fair (2011, p. 91) observes that, ‘The army enjoys an accepted “right to intervene” due in part to Pakistan’s origin as an insecure
state and the intractable security competition with India, which first centred on the disputed disposition of Kashmir but now derives from India’s ascent as an emerging global power.’ India is more powerful than Pakistan in almost every sphere, be it political, military or economic, and this gap is growing (Aguilar et al., 2011).

Externally, Pakistan is deeply concerned about India’s increasing influence in Kabul, which Islamabad believes will make the country’s western border with Afghanistan vulnerable. In order to ensure the security of its western border, Pakistan wanted to have a friendly regime in Afghanistan. It supported different Mujahideen groups and remained an ally of the US during the Soviet-Afghan war and war on terror in 2001. However, the difference between the two allies remained, which also affected the counterinsurgency efforts which I will discuss in Chapter 6.

3.2. Pakistan’s Relations with the US in the context of Afghanistan

The relations between Pakistan and the US have seen many ups and downs throughout history. Being allies in the war on terror since 2001 their bilateral relations suffered from distrust, significantly impacting their collective efforts against terrorism. US President Trump, in his Twitter message in 2017, directly slammed Pakistan for its role in the war on terror. He went on to say, “The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!” (The Guardian, 2018). The US government claims that since the war on terror in 2001, it has given Pakistan a total aid of $33.4 billion, but Pakistan maintains that the actual foreign aid is $18.8 billion, while the total loss to the country’s economy caused by the conflict is $123.13 billion (Rana, 2017). Responding to the US accusation, Pakistan’s Foreign Minister, Khawaja Asif, said that “America has turned Pakistan into a “whipping boy”. We do not have any alliance with the US…this is not how allies behave” (quoted in Shah, 2018). The nature of the current Pakistan-US relations and their efforts against terrorism cannot be understood without comprehending the history of their bilateral relations.
The history of Pakistan-US relations can broadly be divided into three phases:

1) The Cold War and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1945-1989);
2) The Afghan Civil War (1989-1996);
3) The War on Terror (Since 2001).

I will discuss here the two early phases briefly and the third phase in more detail in Chapter 6.

3.2.1. The Cold War and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1945-1989)

The world was divided into two ideological blocks when Pakistan was born. Since its birth in 1947, Pakistan has established economic and military relations with the US. Pakistan’s first Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan visited the US in 1950 while cancelling his previously planned visit to Moscow (Nawaz, 2008, p. 76). The relations were further strengthened when the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement (MDAA) was signed by both countries in 1954. In the same year, Pakistan became a member of the US-supported Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) whose goal was to contain communism in the region. Their strategic relations were further enhanced when Pakistan’s Prime Minister Suhrawardy accepted the US request for the lease of the Peshawar Air Station, to keep an eye on the Soviet Union’s ballistic missile programme. The famous American spy plane U-2 which was shot down by the Soviet Union, flew from the Badaber airbase in Peshawar.

Pakistan and the US came close to each other primarily for two reasons. First, India’s neutral position in the cold war left no option with the US but to further strengthen the strategic relationship with Pakistan. Secondly, Pakistan’s anti-communism stance was more compatible with the US interest in the region. Following the beginning of the Cold War, the bilateral relations between the two countries reached their peak during the era of President Ayub Khan (1958-69). US economic assistance in 1962 reached $2.3 billion (The Guardian, 2011). However, during the 1965 and 1971 wars with India, the US did not support Pakistan and instead imposed a military and economic embargo on both countries. It was during this period that Pakistan became disappointed with the US, but both countries again came close during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.
Two incidents at the end of the 1970s, i.e., the Islamic revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 increased Pakistan’s strategic importance for the US. It was in Afghanistan where the two superpowers fought a decade-long indirect war. The relative stability in Afghanistan came to an end when in April 1978 President Daoud’s government in Afghanistan was overthrown by Nor Muhammad Taraki, the communist leader of a faction of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). The revolution called Saur (April) was supported by the Soviet Union, but the Tarakai government soon came to an end when his own aide Hafiz Ullah Amin conspired against him and overthrew his government. This led to civil war in Afghanistan, and a resistant movement started by Mujahideen against the Amin government. Before Afghanistan could slip into the embrace of America, the Soviet government directly intervened in December 1979 and installed a puppet government led by Barak Kamal.

The Soviet Union, under the Brezhnev doctrine, believed that it was morally and politically justified to help a socialist government if it faced a threat from hostile forces (Galeotti, 1995). The US government declared the Soviet intervention to be an act of aggression and subjugation of an independent state. In his address to the American people in 1980, President Jimmy Carter, while expressing the sentiment of the Afghan people said, “It is a deliberate effort of a powerful, atheistic government to subjugate an independent Islamic people” (Carter, 1980). Pakistan, which shared a long border with Afghanistan, was worried about the spillover effect of war and the possible direct incursion of the Soviet forces across the border (Afghan Task Force, 1980).

Many countries, including Pakistan, the US, and China supported the Afghan Mujahideen resistance movement which established safe sanctuaries in Pakistan’s tribal areas (Afghan Task Force, 1980). To stop Kabul falling into the hands of the communists, the Carter administration in July 1979 ordered the CIA to provide modest assistance to the Afghan fighters (Riedel, 2013, p. 95). The Soviet Union spent US$5 billion a year or a total of US$45 billion in its struggle against the Afghan Mujahideen, and the US spent some four to five billion dollars between 1980 and 1992 to assist the Mujahideen (Rashid, 2001, p. 18). The Zia government developed a trilateral relationship between the three intelligence agencies the Saudi General Intelligence Directorate (GID), the CIA and the Pakistan ISI (Riedel, 2013). The job of Washington and Riyadh was to provide financial support, while Islamabad had to provide logistical support to the Mujahideen.
America wanted to contain Russia in the Soviet-Afghan war, and Pakistan’s objective was to confront its eternal enemy - India (Riedel, 2013). Needing each other’s support, the relations between the US and Pakistan improved significantly during this period. The then US National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski said:

There was a certain coolness and distance in the American-Pakistan relationship prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. After that invasion, we collaborated very closely. And I have to pay tribute to the guts of the Pakistanis: they acted with remarkable courage, and they just weren’t intimidated and they did thing which one would have thought a vulnerable country might not have the courage to undertake. We, I am pleased to say, supported them actively and they had our backing, but they were there, they were the ones who were endangered, not we (Brzezinski quoted in I. Ahmed, 2013, pp. 274-275).

During the Afghan war (1979-89) the US increased its military and development assistance, and Pakistan became one of the biggest recipients of US aid, receiving $5 billion between 1980 and 1990 (Newsweek, 2009). It was during this period that the Pakistan ISI established close relations with different militant groups and became a strong intelligence organisation. Rashid (2001, p. 18) identifies seven major Mujahideen groups (“the Peshawar Seven”), which were recognised by Pakistan and received aid from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

1. Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan (Gul Baddin Hekmatyar)
2. Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan (Maulvi Younas Khalis)
3. Jamiat-e-Islami Afghanistan (Burhan-ud-Din Rabbani)
4. Ittehad-e-Islami Afghanistan (Rabb Rasool Sayyaf)
5. Mahaz-e-Millie-e-Islami Afghanistan (Syed Ahmad Gillani)
6. Jabha-de-Nijat-e-Milli-e-Afghanistan (Sibghatullah Mujaddidi)
7. Harkat-e-Inqilab-e-Afghanistan (Maulvi Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi)

Mullah Umer, who later became Amir of the Taliban movement, was a member of Khalis’s Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan (Rashid, 2001). The power of ISI increased exponentially during the Soviet-Afghan war. As the number of employees increased from 2,000 to 40,000, so did its influence and it trained between 80,000 and 90,000 Mujahideen in the Soviet-Afghan War, Mullah Umer the Taliban leader being one of the trainees (Riedel, 2013, p. 88). It was during this period when many Arabs such as
Abdullah Azzam and Osama bin Laden came to Peshawar and established their offices there to train Mujahideen for the Afghan war (Abbas, 2014, p. 55). The conflict which took about 1.5 million Afghan lives would come to an end after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 (Rashid, 2001, p. 13). Following the Soviet withdrawal, the US stopped funding to the Mujahideen, leading to a civil war among the different groups to gain control of Kabul, the capital of the country. It is believed in Pakistan that the US deceived Pakistan after its interests were served in Afghanistan, and sanctions were imposed on it (Abbas, 2014).

3.2.2. The Afghan Civil War and Taliban Government (1989-2001)

The nine year Soviet-Afghan war, formally ended after Afghanistan and Pakistan signed the UN-sponsored Geneva Accord on April 14, 1988. The US and USSR served as guarantors in the accord. The accord provided a timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet forces by the end of February 15, 1989, but it did not contain any provision for Afghan national settlement (Rubin, 2013, p. 43). The accord terminated assistance to the Mujahideen via Pakistan, but both the US and the USSR claimed their right to assist the Mujahideen groups and the Najeeb government respectively (Ibid). However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the assistance to the Najeeb government also ended. The civil war started between the Soviet-supported President Najeeb Ullah and Mujahideen groups. To end the deadlock and find a solution, the Peshawar Seven formed an interim government called the Islamic Jihad Council (Feifer, 2009, p. 261). However, the Council failed to bring any stability to Afghanistan, and these groups started fighting among themselves. In March 1992 President Najeeb stopped fighting and took refuge in a UN compound until 1996 when the Taliban captured him and later hanged him (Collins, 2009, p. 35).

After the fall of President Najeeb, the Islamists who were fighting against him now started fighting among themselves for the occupation of Kabul. According to Misdaq (2006, p. 167), ‘The Islamists were the major groups who organised resistance against President Daoud (1973-1978), against Soviet Invasion (1979-1989) against one another for power (1992-1996), and finally against the Taliban (1996-2001).’ Pakistan, while seeing the growing instability and infighting among the different Islamist groups, withdrew its support from them in favour of the Afghan and Pakistani madrassa graduates called the Taliban who wanted to implement Shariah Law (Teachings of
Islam) in Afghanistan (Collins, 2009, p. 36). The word *Talib* (seeker of knowledge) refers to a student who seeks religious knowledge in a madrassa. The civil war ended with the emergence of the second generation of Mujahideen who called themselves Taliban (or the students of Islam) (Rashid, 2001, p. 13).

The Taliban Movement began in Qandahar province in Afghanistan in spring 1994 when Mullah Umer with some of his companions hanged a warlord Mansur on the charge of dishonouring a woman (Misdaq, 2006). The movement received a boost when it successfully attacked and captured the Pasha Arms depot in Spin Boldak province which contained 18,000 AK-47 (Misdaq, 2006, p. 177). After getting control of Qandahar and capturing the Pasha Arms depot, the Taliban Movement gathered momentum, and the number of their volunteers increased to 12,000 by December 1994, when they soon gained control of twelve of the thirty-one provinces (Rashid, 2001, pp. 29-30). Osama bin Laden came to Afghanistan shortly before the Taliban took over Kabul in 1996 (Collins, 2009). He had fought with the Mujahideen against Soviet forces. It was in 1980 when he first visited Afghanistan at the behest of Turki bin Faisal, head of Saudi Intelligence, and he established his base in Peshawar in 1982 to provide infrastructure to the Mujahideen (Tanner, 2002, p. 273).

In a significant development in 1990, the US President George H.W. Bush stopped military and economic assistance to Pakistan by invoking the Pressler Amendment (for details see table 3.1) which was passed in 1985. The amendment noted that the US President was to certify each year that Pakistan does not possess nuclear explosives, and if he does not certify that, the aid would stop (Nawaz, 2009a, p. vii). Pakistan alleges that the US deceived it, after its interest in Afghanistan was achieved. It left Pakistan to deal with the post-war mess, a fear Islamabad still feels that it would face after the US forces left Afghanistan. Michel Mullen, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, argues that this long-time distrust has deprived both countries of the opportunity to cooperate more closely in the war against terrorism. Explaining the impact of the Pressler amendment in his interview with the *Washington Times* (2008), he said, “There’s not a Pakistani junior officer that does not know who former Senator Pressler is, and there’s not a junior officer in the US military that knows who Senator Pressler is.”
From the above history, it can be understood that despite their alliance, an underlying distrust prevailed between the US and Pakistan. This distrust continued even after 9/11 and made both countries pursue different strategies which I will discuss in detail in Chapter 6.

**TABLE 3.1: US LEGISLATION ON PAKISTAN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1990: Pressler Amendment Sanctions</td>
<td>The 1985 Pressler Amendment authorised banning most military and economic assistance to Pakistan if an annual presidential determination that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear device was not given. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush was the first to withhold such a determination.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1998: Pakistani Nuclear Test Sanctions</td>
<td>After Pakistan’s May 1998 nuclear tests, President Bill Clinton imposed additional sanctions on Pakistan, invoking the 1994 Glenn Amendment, which authorizes sanctions on non-nuclear weapons states that detonate nuclear explosions, and the Symington Amendment, which prohibits military and economic assistance to any other country that delivers and/or receives nuclear assistance.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep./Oct. 2001: Sanctions lifted after 9/11</td>
<td>The Glenn, Symington, and Pressler sanctions were waived by President George W. Bush under the authority given him by an earlier piece of legislation known as Brownback II. Congress voted to allow President Bush to waive the “democracy sanctions” imposed on Pakistan through September 30, 2003. These democracy sanctions have since been waived annually.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy 2004: Ackerman Amendment</td>
<td>This amendment to the Intelligence Authorization Act requires the CIA, over a five-year period, to make annual reports to Congress about Pakistan’s nuclear activities, democratic development, and counterterror efforts.</td>
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3.3. The Impact of Security on Politics

The insecurity of Pakistan’s eastern border with India and an unrecognised western border with Afghanistan has left a deep impact on the internal political and democratic struggle of the country. External security concerns compounded with a leadership vacuum after partition in 1947 paved the way for the army’s continuous intervention in politics. Dynastic politics and the vested interests of corrupt political leaders have further increased space for the army’s direct and indirect interference in the country’s political affairs.

3.3.1. The Political System of Pakistan and the role of the Army in Politics

For a nation to prosper, it must achieve a consensus on the constitutional arrangements that define decision making and power-sharing (Fair et al., 2010). Pakistan, since its inception in 1947, has adopted different constitutions to satisfy different ethnic groups and religious segments of the state. The constitutional history of Pakistan has for a long time remained sandwiched between ethnic, religious and secular forces. The conflict over whether to make the state theocratic or secular was very evident in the initial years after independence. The struggle can be seen even today in Pakistan between the same forces with different characters (Z. Hussain, 2013). In fact, the current religious forces are more violent and engaged in open insurgency with the state, which was not the case in the early years following independence.

In 1947, when Pakistan achieved independence, the Indian Independence Act of 1947, with certain amendments, was made the interim constitution of the state. However, the constituent assembly passed the Objectives Resolution in 1949, which provided guidelines for future constitutions. The Objectives Resolution laid down the Islamic foundation of the state, stating that sovereignty belongs to Allah, and it was made a permanent part of the constitution of 1973. However, the resolution was opposed by a minority who declared it contradictory to Jinnah’s vision of a secular Pakistan. The Hindu minority leader from Bengal (now Bangladesh) Sris Chandra Chattopadhyya, in his opposition to the resolution said, “In my conception of State where people of different religions live there is no place for religion in the State. Its position must be neutral: no basis for any religion. If necessary, it should help all the religions equally” (quoted in Dilip, 2012).
The founder of the nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah wanted Pakistan to be a democratic and welfare state, but over the years the inability of the politicians and military interference changed the essence of Jinnah’s vision. In his first speech to the Constituent Assembly, on August 11, 1948, Quaid-i-Azam expressed his ideas about Pakistan being a secular and democratic country:

You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or any other place of worship in this state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste, or creed - that has nothing to do with the business of the state…. We are starting with the fundamental principle that we are all citizen and equal citizens of one state (quoted in Abbas, 2015, p. 18).

However, Jinnah died on 11 September 1948 and with his demise, ‘the chapter on a secular-democratic closed without really have been opened’ (Ahmed, 2004, p. 19). Jinnah’s successors were too self-centred to articulate his vision of a secular state (Ziring, 2003, p. 70). The internal struggle started in the Muslim League (the party which created Pakistan), and every leader was engaged in pursuing his vested interests. In the short span of nine years, the nation witnessed eight different Prime Ministers. For nine years, political parties including the ruling Muslim League failed to make a constitution for the country.

In 1956, the first constitution was adopted after a long constitutional struggle to put the country on a democratic path. Instead of helping democracy to flourish in the newly independent nation, the Muslim League and its inept and corrupt leaders made every effort to make democracy vulnerable. ‘It was during the first decade of independence that the interplay of domestic, regional and international factors saw the civil bureaucracy and the army gradually registering their dominance over parties and politicians within the evolving structure of the state’ (Jalal, 1991, p. 295). The nascent democracy died with the first military intervention in 1958 (Riedel, 2013).

On October 7, 1958, President Iskandar Mirza imposed the first Martial Law and made Ayub Khan the Chief Martial Law Administrator. Three weeks later, on October 27, 1958, Ayub Khan removed the President from his position and sent him into exile in England and declared himself President. Ayub Khan, a graduate of the British Military College Sandhurst, who fought in World War II as a colonel, was elevated to the position of Commander in Chief in 1951. In 1954, he was made Defence
Minister by Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Bogra. His induction in the federal cabinet provided him with an opportunity to observe the political crises first hand.

After assuming power, President Ayub Khan promulgated a new constitution in March 1962. Unlike the constitution of 1956, the Presidential form of government was introduced in this 1962 constitution where the President was to be elected indirectly through a Basic Democracy (BD) system. His period marked a golden era in Pakistan’s economic history. Externally, Pakistan’s relations with the US and China were strengthened, while internally, industrial and agricultural reforms led to economic stability. However, his suppression of political parties, his signing of the Tashkent agreement in 1966 with India, and his neglect of the development of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), finally led to his fall. On March 25, 1969, he resigned and invited Yahya Khan to take over as President. Yahya Khan conducted a general election in 1970 but refused to give power to Mujeeb ur Rehman, the leader of the Awami League from East Pakistan whose party had won 160 National Assembly seats out of 300. The already deprived people of East Pakistan started protests which finally culminated in the dismemberment of Pakistan on December 16, 1971.

After the secession of East Pakistan, Yahya Khan invited Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), whose party won a majority of 81 seats from West Pakistan, to be Prime Minister. Efforts were begun to draw up a new constitution for the newly reconfigured Pakistan. A new constitution was passed unanimously by all the political parties in 1973, and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto became Prime Minister of the country. The Constitution of 1973 was a landmark of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and other political leaders’ time. Although the constitution provided stability and accommodated the concerns of all the political parties, it could not stop the military’s increasing role in politics. It is important to note that despite military interventions and its abrogation, the constitution of 1973 is still the supreme law of Pakistan.

According to the constitution of 1973, Pakistan is a parliamentary democracy based on the United Kingdom’s (UK) Westminster model, but in practice, its political reins have remained in the hands of the army for more than 38 years (Nawaz, 2008). The new constitution was believed to provide political stability and stop military intervention. Under the constitution, elections were held in 1977, and once again the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) won, but the opposition parties alleged that the elections had been highly rigged. They made a political alliance and started mass demonstrations
against the government. The unrest and riots led to yet another declaration of Martial Law on July 5, 1977, by General Zia ul Haq.

With the Zia takeover, a long period of military rule started which finally ended with his death in a plane crash in 1988. Unlike Ayub, Zia was an orthodox Muslim who wanted to reform the society along religious lines. His era witnessed an aggressive promotion of Islamists in the Pakistan army which up until that time had been a secular institution (Bokhari, 2011, p. 84). According to Ishtiaq Ahmed, Zia’s overall ‘transformation of the Pakistani state and society along Islamist lines envisaged the establishment of a garrison state in which the military would stand out clearly as an ideological institution’ (2013, pp. 250-251). During the Zia period, the country’s prime intelligence agency, the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) was responsible for managing Afghan policy and became a powerful organisation in the Soviet-Afghan war, and it is believed that it still controls Pakistan’s Afghan policy.

Zia’s sudden death in a plane crash ended the military rule in 1988, and an era of democracy began. In the general elections of 1988, Benazir Bhutto, an Oxford graduate and daughter of former Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, became the first female Prime Minister of Pakistan. However, her government was dissolved in 1990 on charges of corruption by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. Ayesha Jalal (1990) maintains that the country’s dominant non-elected military and civil bureaucracy were not ready for the transformation to rule by an elected institution, especially a parliament. Elections were held again in 1990, and Nawaz Sharif became Prime Minister, but he had to resign after three years due to the constitutional crisis with the sitting President. Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif once again became Prime Minister in 1993 and 1997 respectively. However, soon the democratic decade came to an end when the Chief of Army Staff Pervez Musharraf toppled the Nawaz Sharif government in 1999 and imposed Martial Law.

Pervez Musharraf, born in Delhi in 1943, was appointed Army Chief by Nawaz Sharif in October 1998. Because of his non-political background there was a belief that he would not be involved in politics. However, on October 12, 1999, Musharraf overthrew the Sharif government and imprisoned him for hatching a conspiracy against him. Nawaz Sharif later signed an agreement with his government and agreed not to take part in politics and went into self-exile in Saudi Arabia, while former Prime Minister and leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party, Benazir Bhutto settled in London. Musharraf was criticised by the US and West for derailing democracy in the country.
However, soon after the 9/11 incident, the US once again needed Pakistan’s support for its war on terror in Afghanistan.

Pakistan became a Non-NATO ally, and Musharraf became a trusted friend of President Bush. Musharraf promised to restore democracy and conducted a referendum in April 2002, where 98 per cent of people according to an official report voted for him to become President, but the opposition parties declared that the referendum had been highly rigged (Burki, 2002). He conducted a general election in October 2002, and his created party of disgruntled politicians, the Pakistan Muslim League - Quaid-e-Azam (PML-Q), formed a national government. The assembly passed a controversial seventeenth amendment, which gave Musharraf the power to dissolve the National Assembly at any time.

However, Musharraf started losing his grip on power in 2007. On March 9, 2007, he suspended the Chief Justice of the Pakistan Supreme Court, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, and levelled corruption charges against him. This sparked the Lawyer’s Movement for the restoration of the Chief Justice which spread across the whole country. On October 6, 2007, Musharraf was once more elected President by the parliament for the next five years. On November 3, 2007, Musharraf declared an emergency to reassert his power in the face of growing opposition from the Pakistan Supreme Court, political parties and religious hardliners (Rohde, 2007). The constitution was suspended, and Supreme Court Judges were imprisoned. Meanwhile, the security situation was further exacerbated when Pakistan’s former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was killed in Rawalpindi on December 27, 2007. Bilawal Bhutto, Benazir’s son, accused Musharraf of his mother’s murder (The Tribune, 2017a). In the general election of 2008, when the Pakistan Peoples Party won a majority and formed a government, they asked Musharraf to resign or face impeachment. Finally, to avoid impeachment, Musharraf resigned from his position on August 18, 2008.

The continuous interference of the army in politics has weakened democracy on the one hand while it has strengthened the military on the other. Aqil Shah – an expert on Pakistan’s civil-military relations notes that ‘In a democracy, the military (or other state institutions) cannot be above the rule of law. However, the Pakistani military operates outside the purview of the civilian legal system with impunity because it considers itself above the law and views its internal accountability system as far more effective than civilian ones (Shah, 2014, pp. 232-233).
3.3.1.1. Political Parties

In a Parliamentary democracy, Parliament is the supreme institution responsible for lawmaking and holding the government to account for its actions. Pakistan has a parliamentary form of government where constitutionally parliament is a supreme law-making institution, but unlike western democracies, parliament in Pakistan exercises much less power in practice. Parliament is empowered through the actions of parliamentarians while making it a debating body for discussing the issues of public interests. But unfortunately, parliament in Pakistan has failed to address the fundamental problems of the citizens and has functioned merely to serve the specific interests of the political parties. Political parties which are the essence of parliamentary democracy lack internal democracy and transparency in Pakistan. Most of the political parties revolve around dynastic politics.

The fundamental problem with the mainstream political parties is that, with a few exceptions, they have failed to aggregate collective interest and instead have pursued their vested personal interests (Fair, 2011, p. 95). Two major political parties ruled Pakistan since 1988, except during the period of military rule from 2001 to 2008. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) was established by the progressive and leftist leader Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1967. The PPP, which was once known as a progressive national party, having representation in all of the provinces, has now been confined to the Sind province where it has a provincial government. In 1979 after Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto’s assassination, his daughter Benazir became party head and was elected Prime Minister twice. On Benazir’s assassination in 2007, her son, who was still studying, became chairman of the party, and her husband Asif Ali Zardari became co-chairman and was later elected as President of the country.

The other mainstream party is the right-wing Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PLM-N). Considering itself the successor of Jinnah’s Muslim League, it won majority seats in the 2013 general elections and formed a national government for the third time, but it could not reform the governance system. The party elected Nawaz Sharif as Prime Minister but he was later disqualified by the Supreme Court in July 2017, for being dishonest and not disclosing his employment in a Dubai based company. He was accused of having offshore companies which were revealed in the leaked Panama Papers in 2016. The PML-N has a stronghold in the country’s most populated province
Punjab, which has 182 seats in the NA out of 342, but its power is now challenged by another right-wing party, Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI).

The PTI emerged as a serious contender for power and challenged the monopoly of the two-party system in Pakistan. Established in 1996 by the cricketer turned politician Imran Khan, the party surprised media and political parties by holding a massive rally in Lahore in 2011 (Paracha, 2013). Khan criticised both established parties for their massive corruption and their dynastic politics, and claimed that his party would end corruption and improve the governance system. PTI remained the second-largest party in terms of votes and third in representation in the National Assembly in the 2013 election. It also won majority seats in the troubled Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and formed a provincial government there. His party has attracted a large number of youths and female supporters, which had never been witnessed before. Besides these mainstream parties, there are regional and religious parties, but they do not enjoy enough support to form a national government. The emergence of the political alternative in the form of the PTI, the development of a vibrant media, and an independent judiciary have created hopes that they can play an important role in mitigating Pakistan’s enduring problems, if not eliminate them entirely.

The failure of political parties to strengthen parliamentary democracy and make parliament a policy-making and debating institution, has created a space for the army to exercise influence, especially over foreign policy. Under the military regimes, the role of parliament was further reduced to that of a rubber stamp. One of the reasons for Pakistan’s lack of a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy to deal with the militancy in the aftermath of 9/11, was the absence of a popular democratic government and weak political institutions. In liberal democracies, elected governments enjoy a certain level of legitimacy and have to take on board the views of parliament while conducting military operations. Conversely, in military regimes, the government is not much concerned about the views of the parliament and political constituencies while launching military operations.
3.3.1.2. The state of society

Since its creation, Pakistan has been searching for its national identity. The country is still divided along ethnic, religious and national lines. Language and religion instead of integrating this highly diverse society, have further divided it (Talbot, 1998, p. 1). Division and conflict are on the rise even after seven decades of independence. In the last few years, Pakistan has witnessed increasing levels of intolerance, violence and hatred against minorities, holy places and liberal thinkers (Bokhari, 2011, p. 82). Unfortunately, all this is done in the name of religion. Pakistan was created in the name of Islam, but successive governments failed to implement the true essence of religion which gives a message of peace, tolerance and love. Instead, groups/parties were let free to use their own versions of religion.

Religion was, in fact, a significant factor in the creation of Pakistan. So, after the independence, the right-wing religious parties including Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) started the struggle to make Pakistan a truly Islamic country. The disagreement over the interpretation of religion led to sectarianism and the persecution of minority groups. In 1953, a protest started over the declaration of Ahmadi Muslims as non-believers, and Martial Law was imposed to ensure the security of the minorities (Shah, 2005). Sectarianism was suppressed temporarily, however, the Islamic revolution in Iran in December 1979 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the same year left a profound impact on the society in Pakistan.

Fearing the spreading of the Shia version of Islam by Iran in the region, Saudi Arabia, a Sunni conservative country, started supporting Sunni groups, and Iran extended support to Shia groups in Pakistan. General Zia ul Haq also provided patronage to some of the sectarian groups. Different sectarian groups such as Sipah-e-Sahaba, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Shia-e-Jafria were established and they began imposing their own interpretation of religious doctrine. After becoming a US ally in the war on terror, the Musharraf Government started a clampdown against these domestic sectarian groups including Sunni Sipah-e-Sahaba and its offshoot Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and Shia Tehrik-e-Jafria Pakistan and its branch Sipah-e-Muhammad (Tellis, 2008, p. 4).

Musharraf’s action was resisted by the religious parties such as Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and Jamiat-i-Ulama-i- Islam Fazal ur Rehman (JUI-F) who accused him of spreading western values in opposition to Islamic values. The US war on terror in Afghanistan further radicalised elements of the society, particularly those religious
groups and parties which viewed him as a puppet of America. Hardcore militant groups such as the TTP started persecuting minorities and targeting political leaders for their secular and liberal views. As noted above, in 2008, the former first woman Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was killed for her liberal democratic views.

3.4. An Overview of FATA

Pakistan’s tribal areas, once part of the 19th century imperial great game between Russia and British empire, have been a training ground for insurgents and home to different national and international terrorist organisations (Zissis and Bajoria, 2007). Popularly known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) it comprises seven tribal agencies and six Frontier Regions (see figure 3.3 for details).

These are:
- Bajaur Agency
- Mohmand Agency
- Khyber Agency
- Orakzai Agency
- Kurram Agency
- North Waziristan Agency
- South Waziristan Agency

However, there are six additional small pockets of tribal areas known as Frontier Regions (FR). They include FR Peshawar, FR Kohat, FR Bannu, FR Tank, FR Lakki, FR Dera Ismail Khan. They are jointly administered by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province and the tribal agencies. (Abbas, 2006). The total population of FATA is 5 million according to the 2017 census, and it covers an area of 27,220 sq. km. FATA shares nearly three hundred miles of porous border with Afghanistan out of the total 1,640 mile Pak-Afghan border which runs from Baluchistan to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (Markey, 2008, p. 5). Ethnically, FATA is dominated by the Sunni Pashtun29

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29 Pashtuns also known as Pakhtuns, Pathan are a race live in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. In Pakistan, they are the second largest ethnic group live in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the tribal areas. In Afghanistan, they are the largest ethnic group.
tribe which shares a common language, race and religion with the Pashtuns living on the other side of Afghanistan border. Historically part of Afghanistan, FATA became part of British India in 1893. After defeat in the first Anglo-Afghan war (1838), the British Empire occupied Afghanistan in the second Anglo-Afghan war (1878) and made it a protectorate of the British Empire (Bahar, 2016).

**Figure 3.3: Pakistan and FATA**

In 1893, the British Foreign Secretary Sir Henry Mortimer Durand demarcated the border between Afghanistan and British India to weaken the major Pashtun tribes along the border, and turn Afghanistan into a buffer state between the Russian and British Empires (Zissis and Bajoria, 2007). The demarcation of the border divided the
major Pashtun tribes which still live on both sides of the border. In Afghanistan, Pashtuns constitute 40 per cent of the total population while in Pakistan they represent 15 to 20 per cent of the country’s population (Bajoria, 2009). The Durand line border between the two countries is viewed with contempt by the Pashtun tribes, and it has been a source of contention between Pakistan and Afghanistan, because Afghanistan officially does not recognise it as an international border (Abbas, 2006).

To control the fierce tribes of the area, the British government enacted a set of laws known as Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) in 1901 which were based on the concept of ‘collective territorial responsibility’ (Shinwari, 2010, p. 7). Tajik (2011, p. 4) notes, that the FCR enacted during British rule in India continued after Pakistan independence while violating the basic democratic rights of the inhabitants of FATA. These include section 21, which empowers the local administration to punish the whole tribe for individual misconduct. Similarly, section 22 empowers the administration to impose a fine on an entire village for an individual’s offence under territorial responsibility. Under section 40, an individual can be detained for years without recourse to an appeal. According to Gul (p. 30) ‘The main reason for the popularity of successive Islamist movements in the tribal areas stems from the draconian system of the FCR…. the search for a fair justice system and the craving for equal citizenship has come to be synonymous with Shariah.’

After its independence in 1947, Pakistan continued to rule FATA with the old system of FCR. According to articles 1 and 2 of the Constitution of 1973, FATA is part of Pakistan, but according to articles 51, 59 and 247, it remains under the direct executive authority of the President of Pakistan (Dawn, 2016a). The President administered the area through the auspices of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provincial governor and political agents. Every tribal agency is administered by a political agent, who is a federal government official representative, and exercises huge legislative, executive and judicial powers. Article 247 (7) of the Constitution of 1973 reads that ‘Neither a Supreme Court nor a High court shall exercise any jurisdiction in relation to Tribal Areas unless Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) by law otherwise provides’ (Niazi, 2012, p. 146). This has made the political agent a judge and jury at the same time.

The link between Political Agent and tribal structure is through the local tribal leaders who hold the title of Malik or Lungi (Shinwari, 2010, p. 7). The system was introduced in the British period where the Malik would receive an allowance and in return, he was responsible for maintaining peace in the area. In addition to the above
two pillars of authority, the *Mullah* (a religious leader) has played an important role in tribal affairs. Traditionally, the *Mullah* was dependent of the *Malik* and did not enjoy any autonomous powers in the tribal areas, but after the Islamic revolution in Iran and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the role and importance of the *Mullah* was significantly increased (Nawaz, 2009a, p. 14).

FATA has remained one of the most underdeveloped areas. The socio-economic conditions of the tribal areas reveal a stark difference with the rest of the country. Sixty per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, and per capita income is 50 per cent of the national per capita income (Shinwari, 2010, p. 27). The literacy rate of FATA is 17.42 per cent in comparison with the overall 55 per cent in the rest of the country in 2010 (Shinwari, 2010, p. 28). The area was left underdeveloped by different governments after independence. The adult franchise was only extended to FATA in 1996. The people from the tribal areas can elect their members to Parliament, but the laws made by the members do not apply to FATA inhabitants.

This mountainous terrain was used as a training ground for Mujahideen in the Afghan war. The US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) with the help of the Pakistan Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) mobilised and trained tribal people to wage jihad against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Most of the current leadership of the militant groups in Pakistan are the Mujahideen of the Afghan war. Following the ouster of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, the tribal areas again became home to numerous foreign fighters from the Arab World, Central Asia, Far East and even from Europe (Nawaz, 2009a, p. 1). To escape the US attacks in Afghanistan these groups established safe sanctuaries in the tribal areas and continued cross-border infiltration to attack US and NATO forces. Pakistan conducted the military operations in the area and signed peace deals with the militants, but militancy continued to grow (see Chapter 4 and 5 for more details).

### 3.4.1. Profile of FATA

The tribal areas of Pakistan has remained centre of conflict and witnessed as many as 70 major conflicts in the last 800 years (Shakirullah et al, 2020, p. 114). As said earlier the tribal areas and Afghanistan were used as a buffer zone between the British and Russia empires in the 19th century (Khan, 2011). The British made first contact with
Waziristan after they defeated Sikh empire in 1845 and 1846 but they did not take full responsibility for Waziristan until annexing Punjab in 1849 (Williams, 2013, p. 2). In order to avoid the Russian expansion and consolidate her colonial possessions further increased the importance of the tribal areas for British government. The British got control of the tribal agencies including Khyber and Kurram after the second Afghan war (1878-1880). In order to settle the borders dispute both the British government of India and Afghanistan signed Durand Line agreement on November 12, 1893. However, the agreement did not bring peace in the British Indian border and the British government had to introduce Frontier Crimes Regulations in 1901 to control the tribal areas.

Pakistan after independence in 1947 continued to rule the tribal areas through the legal system it inherited from British government. The tribal areas was ignored and was used for vested interests. According to International Crisis Group Report (2009, p. 2):

Pakistan [since] independence used this strategic region as a base to promote perceived interests in neighbouring Afghanistan through local and Afghan proxies…. The centrally administered bureaucracy [is not] inclined to give up the perks and privileges – financial and political – of overseeing FATA’s governance, absent legislative or judicial oversight. Islamabad’s refusal to integrate the tribal areas into the constitutional framework has created a no-man’s land where militants and criminals easily find a safe haven”.

3.4.1.1. Waziristan

Waziristan has rightly been described as ‘a fortress built by nature for herself, guarded by mountains which serve it in the office of a wall’ (A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 55). Waziristan was given its present name by British administration due to the majority of Wazirs (Shakirullah et al, 2020, p. 118). ‘Waziristan is one of the most enigmatic areas of the world. It is located in desolate, broken terrain and is inhabited by fiercely independent tribes governed by a martial ethos’ (Williams, 2013, p. 10). Waziristan has remained isolated and different from other tribal agencies and has avoided the rule of different regimes. ‘Even if the imperial armies marched south of Peshawar toward the settled towns of Kohat and Bannu, they avoided Waziristan deep in the mountains. Therefore,
the area was left largely undisturbed. Even the triumphant Pakhtun warrior from Kandahar, Abdali, who in the eighteenth century united the tribes of Afghanistan into a kingdom that included the lands up to the Indus River, left Waziristan alone’ (A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 58).

Administratively, Waziristan is divided into North Waziristan and South Waziristan agencies. Over 97 per cent of the people speak Pushto and over 99 per cent are Muslim and the remaining population is either Ahmadi or Punjabi and speak mostly Punjabi and Urdu (Williams, 2013, p. 6). North Waziristan has a population of 362,000 and shares borders with Afghanistan provinces of Paktika and Khost. Meeran Shah is the capital of North Waziristan. North Waziristan is dominated by Uthmanzai Wazir and Daur tribes. In North Waziristan, Hafiz Gul Bahadur (Uthmanzai Wazir) established parallel Shariah government in 2006. He issued a pamphlet announcing new taxes and harsh penalties for various offences such as Rs. 500,000 for robbery and new unit to maintain law and order (Siddique, 2010, p. 31). Taliban levied taxes on transports, imposed charges on smugglers for safe passage and took protection money from non-Muslims living in the area (Siddique, 2010, p. 53-54). Hafiz Gul Bahadur and Maulvi Nazir established a Muqami Tehrik-i-Taliban (The Local Movement of Taliban) against Bait Ullah Mehsud. They were allegedly supported by the security forces to oust Bait Ullah Mehsud from the region. Another important leader in North Waziristan was Jalal Uddin Haqqani (head of Haqqani group). They were also called good Taliban because they were involved against the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan not against Pakistan security forces.

South Waziristan has a population of 430,000 and shares border with the Paktika province of Afghanistan (Siddique, 2010, p. 30). The capital city and headquarter of South Waziristan is Wana. Wana is dominated by Ahmad Zai wazir which historically has remained rival to the neighbouring Mehsud tribe to which Bait Ullah Mehsud (head of TTP) belonged (Yusufzai, 2008, p. 3). According to A. Ahmed (2013, p. 48) ‘the Afridi, the Mohmand, and other FATA tribes had as fierce a reputation as Waziristan’s Wazir and Mehsud, only South Waziristan Agency had an international border to the west and a provincial border to the south, and abutted the settled districts in the east.’

The first commander of Pakistani Taliban Nek Muhammad Wazir who fought Pakistan army and signed peace agreement in 2004 belonged to Yargul Khel of Ahmed Zai Wazir. After his killing, five members Shura (council) was created to lead the Wana
Taliban. It included Haji Omar, Haji Sharif Khan, Javed Karmazkhel, Maulana Abdul Aziz and Maulana Muhammad Abbas. According to Hassan Abbas (2014, p. 110), ‘Nek Muhammad became a hero in the eyes of the local populace; and although he was killed after he backed out of the deal, he created a new model of defiance for young radicals of the area. The recent history of FATA had witnessed many fighters, but hardly anyone had challenged Pakistan’s military: in this sense Nek Muhammad had set a precedent.’ Sir Olaf Caroe (a British administrator who remained governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) compared Wazir to a panther and the Mehsud to a wolf: ‘Both are splendid creatures; the panther is slier, sleeker and has more grace, the wolf-pack is more purposeful, more united and more dangerous’ (quoted in A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 56).

According to Williams (2013, p. 14) Waziristan posed greatest challenge to the British government after 1849 and the Mehsud caused the most trouble. In 1937 the Mehsud tribe ambushed a British brigade, killing nine officers and forty-five soldiers while wounding another forty-seven. The British had more troops in 1930 in Waziristan alone than the rest of the India Empire (A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 59). Waziristan was particularly important for the US because the tribesmen remained sympathetic to Osama bin Laden and his associates (Williams, 2013, p. 1). Pakistan and the US forces conducted targeted military operation against the foreign militants which created strong resentment among the tribes. ‘Not only were the local tribes hostile to these incursion and uncooperative, but the Islamist groups turned out to be well equipped against an army poorly trained in counterinsurgency methods and whose indiscriminate bombings further infuriated the civilian populations’ (Jaffrelot, 2015, p. 563). However, both America and Pakistan were not learning from the history of Waziristan as pointed by Caroe that ‘no empire of which we have any record has ever succeeded in making subjects of the tribes of Waziristan’ (quoted in A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 49). The British General Staff considered the tribes of Waziristan ‘the best umpires in the world as they seldom allow a tactical error to go unpunished’ (A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 59).

The fundamental goal of Wazir tribe was to fight the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. Therefore, they extended support to Haqqani network which was based in Afghanistan. Mehsud on the other hand were focusing on fighting Pakistan security forces. They set aside their differences after Lal Masjid operation however it proved short-term. Wazir were influenced by Mullah Umar (Taliban leader in Afghanistan). Wazir differences with Mehsud tribe further intensified when the later refused to expel
Uzbek militants who were involved against Pakistan security forces. Mullah Umar believed that this can turn the population in Pakistan against the Taliban and will have an impact on the cross border support of the Taliban. Therefore, under his support the Ahmadzai tribe of South Waziristan led by Maulvi Nazir and Uthmanzai tribe of North Waziristan led by Hafiz Gul Bahadur created Muqami Tehrik-i-Taliban (Local Movement of the Taliban) to expel the Uzbek militants and were also called ‘good Taliban’ (A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 73).

In North and South Waziristan various militant factions were divided along tribal lines and they were operating in their tribal territories without crossing another tribe’s territories. According to Siddique (2010, p. 32):

Tribal and caste affiliations resonate jarringly along the Pashtun belt of Pakistan, accentuated more in the Waziristan context than in other agencies. For example, in the Bajaur, Orakzai and Mohmand agencies of FATA, clan identity is not as strong, and it is partly on account of this that Mehsud extremists managed to secure influence in these agencies. On the Waziristan arena, one sees clear tribal differences between the Mehsud and Waziri tribes: Gul Bahadur and Maulvi Nazir, belonging to the Waziri tribe, find their support base amongst the Waziri tribesmen, whereas most Mehsuds are loyal to Baitullah Mehsud’s group.

An important difference between South Waziristan and other tribal agencies was that foreign militants were welcomed in the former. The presence of foreign militants not only deteriorated the relations between the local Taliban and Pakistani government, but it also significantly impacted the relations between the US and Pakistan. The US government pushed Pakistan to take actions against the foreign militants and stop their cross-border attacks on the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. The presence of foreign militants in Waziristan thus posed serious threats not only to the US and NATO forces but to other countries as well. Due to the presence of foreign militants, Waziristan remained in the limelight of local and international media.

In 2007, serious differences emerged between Pakistani Taliban over Uzbeks militants in Wana. Ahamdzai Wazir tribesmen along with the pro-Pakistani Taliban expelled militant group of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) led by Tahir Yuldashev from Wana and Shakai in South Waziristan (Yusufzai, 2008, p. 3). A young pro-Pakistan Taliban leader Maulvi Nazir led the campaign. Maulvi Nazir belonged to a weaker tribe of Kaka Khel. Pakistani Taliban along with the Uzbeks militants took refuge in the Mehsud tribe dominated area of South Waziristan.
Bait Ullah Mehsud created TTP in December 2007 and expressed its loyalty to Afghan Taliban, however, the latter had distanced itself from the fight against Pakistan’s security forces (Siddique, 2010, p.). TTP developed their distinct identity. From their own perspective, they intelligently created space for themselves in Pakistan by engaging in military attacks while at other times cutting deals with the Pakistani government to establish their autonomy in the area. By default they were accepted as a legitimate voice in at least two FATA agencies – South Waziristan and North Waziristan (Abbas, 2008, p. 1). TTP leader Hakim Ullah Mehsud in 2009 confessed that he has given refuge to Al-Qaeda and its affiliates Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). In return for a refuge, the IMU joined the TTP against their war against Pakistan security forces (Siddique, 2010, p.34). Similarly, his predecessor Nek Muhammad had also given shelter to foreign militants from Afghanistan, Chechnya, Uzbekistan and Middle East.

In South Waziristan Bait Ullah Mehsud remained the most powerful Taliban leader before his killing in 2009. Under his leadership Taliban divided each tribal area into administrative zones and collected revenue and TTP leader Bait Ullah Mehsud would decide how and where the money will be distributed (Siddique, 2010, p. 53). The government response varied in South and North Waziristan. For instance, Chief of Army Staff General Kayani convinced the PPP government in 2009 to initiate and own the military operation against TTP and foreign militants inside South Waziristan, however, the government was unwilling to take similar action in North Waziristan against Afghan based Haqqani network (Nawaz, 2016, p. 4). The government also remained reluctant to take indiscriminate action against Mullah Nazir and Hafiz Gul Bahadur groups in North Waziristan.

3.4.1.2. Bajaur Agency

Bajaur is the smallest agency in the tribal areas having population 600,000. Its capital city is Khar. Bajaur agency share border with Kunar province of Afghanistan. To its east Bajaur shares border with Malakand and Dir districts of KP. Bajaur agency is dominated by Uthman Khel and Momand tribes. Like Waziristan, the TTP in Bajaur had a strong presence of thousand fighters led by Maulana Faqir Muhammad (third in command when TTP was established in 2007). The TTP had established Shariah Court
in Sewai the home village of Maulana Faqir with six branches in different parts of the agency before military operation was conducted in 2008 (Yusufzai, 2009, p. 2). In 2007, the militants killed the head of Polio vaccination campaign and declared the vaccination a US plot to sterilise Muslim children which deprived 24,000 children of polio vaccination (Siddique, 2010, p.35). In August 2008, the army launched military operation in Bajaur against the militant group led by Faqir Muhammad which led to the displacement of approximately 500,000 people (ICG, 2009, p. 5). Another important group in Bajaur was Jaish-i-Islami led by Wali ur Rehman which had differences with TTP but agreed to fight against Pakistan army together (Yusufzai, 2009, p. 2). Many of its fighters belonged to Damadolla – a village hit three times by the US drone strikes. In Bajaur agency a tribal lashkar was formed by Haji Niamatullah of Salarzai tribe. The lashkar was supported by the government to expel the militants.

3.4.1.3. Mohmand Agency

The challenge of militancy was no longer confined to Waziristan region. After establishing their stronghold in South and North Waziristan militants made deep inroad to Mohmand Agency (Ali, 2008). Mohmand Agency shares its border with Bajaur to its north and to Khyber to its south. It also shares border with Afghanistan’s Kunar and Nangarhar province to its west (Siddique, 2010, p.36). The rugged mountainous region of Mohmand Agency is inhabited by Mohmand tribe. In Mohmand agency two groups remained active. However, a group led by Shah Sahib was expelled by another TTP leader Omer Khalid who belonged to the Qandharo tribe (Yusufzai, 2009, p. 2). Omer Khalid groups was affiliated with Bait Ullah Mehsud (the head of TTP). They established Shariah court and a militant base in the shrine of Haji Sahib Taurangzai (a social reformer 1858-1937). They tried to force people to obey Islamic law, threatened barbers to stop shaving beards, banned music and stopped women from receiving education (Ali, 2008).

3.4.1.4. Kurram Agency

Kurram, Orakzai and Khyber Agency are packed together where North Waziristan lies to their South and Mohmand to its North. Kurram Agency also shares border with
Khost, Paktika and Nangarhar provinces of Afghanistan to its West. Parachinar is the capital of the Kurram Agency. Kurram Agency has the population of about 450,000 people who belong to the Shia sect of Islam (Siddique, 2010, p. 37). Kurram Agency played a significant role in the jihad against the Soviet in Afghanistan in 1980s. Consequently, many Sunni Afghan Mujahideen came to Kurram Agency while bringing militant ideology along with them (Dressler and Jan, 2011, p. 2). Similarly, the Shia population was radicalised by the Iranian revolution. Sectarian clashes have been continued since then.

After insurgency began against the government of Pakistan in Waziristan, it also spread to other tribal agencies including Kurram. Until 2007, clashes between Sunnis and Shias were caused by sectarian disputes and historical animosities but the entrance of Taliban from other parts exacerbated the security situation and raised to unprecedented level (Dressler and Jan, 2011, p. 2). The TTP also established its base in lower Kurram valley under the leader of Hakim Ullah Mehsud (a deputy to Bait Ullah Mehsud) in 2008. They also attacked the Shia community in upper Kurram valley. ‘The Shia population of Kurram is accused by TTP factions of being pro-Northern Alliance and active against the Taliban, and as such suffers the wrath of the TTP’ (Siddique, 2010, p. 38). The security forces conducted Operation Koh-e-Safaid against the militants in 2011, however the operation did not completely clear the area of the militants.

3.4.1.5. Orakzai Agency

In the wake of military operations in North and South Waziristan in 2004 many militants took refuge in the Orakzai Agency. Orakzai Agency has population of 250,000 and it was strategically important for both Taliban and security forces (Shah, 2010, p. 1). Orakzai agency is the only tribal agency which does not share border with Afghanistan. It has majority of Sunni population and was controlled by Hakimullah Mehsud (the head of TTP for Orakzai agency) in 2008. In addition to TTP, sectarian groups such as Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and Jaish-i-Muhammad also operated in Orakzai Agency. Taliban after consolidating their position in Orakzai Agency announced the establishment of Shariah, Islamic courts. In December 2008, the Taliban in Orakzai Agency banned women from going to bazaars, imposed complete ban on television and CDs and video centres (Siddique, 2010, p.37). Taliban established complaint centres
and urged people to settle their disputes according to the Islamic laws (Shah, 2010, p. 13). They set on fire 63 houses of tribesmen who refused to support Taliban against security forces (Ibid). Pakistan security forces conducted military operation ‘Khwakh Bade Sham’ in March 2010 and announced on June 1 that the operation has achieved its targets, however, peace was not restored completely, and militants continued attacking security forces.

3.4.1.6. Khyber Agency

Khyber Agency also shares border with Afghanistan’s Nangarhar province to its west. Peshawar the capital of KP lies in its east. The famous Khyber Pass in the agency worked as a gateway between Central Asia and South Asia. It was historically used by many invaders to occupy India. Khyber Agency is home to half a million ethnic Pushtun from four major tribes: Afridi, Shinwari, Mallagori, and Shalmani (Samdani, 2011, p. 1). The strategic importance of Khyber was increased after Soviet invasion and Torkham border was used to transport fighters, arms and equipment to Afghanistan (Ibid). Militancy began in Khyber Agency when Haji Namdar after returning from Saudi Arabia established an organisation called Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (Samdani, 2011, p. 8). He banned music, forced people to grow beards and attend the congregational prayers. He established his own FM radio station to propagate his interpretation of religion.

There was another Deobandi outfit called Lashkar-i-Islam (LI) headed by Mufti Munir Shakir. Another important organisation of Brelvi sect at that time was Ansar ul Islam headed by Pir Sai fur Rehman. Both Lashkar-i-Islam and Ansar ul Islam were involved in violent conflict to expand their area of influence. Munir Shakir and Saif ur Rehman were later replaced by Mangal Bagh and Mehbub ul Haq respectively. TTP after its establishment in December 2007 tried to make inroads into the Khyber Agency by convincing Mangal Bagh to merge his organisation with TTP. Having sympathies with the TTP, he however maintained his own independent organisation. TTP in Khyber Agency was headed by Kamran Mustafa Hijrat a deputy to Hakimullah Mehsud and was reportedly responsible for many attacks on trucks carrying supplies for NATO forces in Afghanistan (Yusufzai, 2009, p. 4). In Khyber Agency, the militant group Laskhar-e-Islami led by Mangal Bagh established his own Shariah courts and prisons
Pakistan’s security forces conducted military operation in 2008 in Khyber and achieved some success against TTP, however Lashkar-i-Islam remained intact even after the operation. It is alleged that like North Waziristan, the government response against Mangal Bagh group remained half-hearted.

Conclusion
Pakistan’s bitter history with India and the unresolved issue of Kashmir has left a far-reaching impact on the security situation in the region. Wars over the state of Kashmir and the dismemberment of East Pakistan from its western part have generated a deep-rooted hatred against India, which still occupies the strategic thinking of Pakistan’s security institutions. The immediate threats from its neighbours on multiple fronts have increased the role of its security forces. Pakistan’s relations with India have also influenced its Afghan policy.

Pakistan believes that India’s increasing influence in Afghanistan to use the Durand line border against it can aggravate its internal security. Therefore, the core principle of Pakistan’s foreign policy with regard to Afghanistan has remained to have a pro-Pakistani government in Kabul to avoid the exploitation of its western border. Pakistan's support of different Mujahideen groups during the Soviet-Afghan war was the continuation of the same policy. Islamabad was also blamed for having covert relations with the Afghan militant groups even after 9/11.

The security dominated milieu had left significant impact on the internal politics of the country. Had Pakistan had a democracy and independent parliament after 9/11, the situation would be entirely different. Autocratic regimes are less concerned about public opinion than democratic ones, and perhaps this was an important reason that the then autocratic government failed to make an effective counterinsurgency policy, which I will discuss in detail in chapter 4. Dynastic politics in political parties, lack of transparency and democratic values are some of the common features of politics in Pakistan. Elected governments in the country have failed to reform the governance system thus not only providing space for military interference in politics but also fuelling the rise of religious extremist groups who have been able to penetrate into the society. The political parties focus their attention on urban constituencies from where they receive a majority of their votes while ignoring the rural areas. FATA, which has a formal representation in the National Assembly (NA), has been poorly served by the
civilian and military governments. Both elected and military governments failed to improve the governance system in the tribal areas and its citizens were deprived of their fundamental constitutional rights.

In empirical chapters (4, 5, 6), I demonstrate that the above factors were not fully considered in the formation of the counterinsurgency strategy, which contributed to the beginning and expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas. The US ignored the fact that unless Pakistan’s relations with India are improved, her increasing role in Afghanistan would allow Islamabad to maintain relations with militant groups. Internally, Pakistan failed to realise that due to the previous state policies the society in general and tribal areas in particular was radicalised, and a comprehensive strategy was warranted to undermine the existing support for militants. The then autocratic regime of Pervez Musharraf failed to measure the consequences of addressing an ideological problem through the use of coercive means, which I discuss in the subsequent Chapter 4.
Chapter 4: Beginning of Insurgency: Building a Counternarrative against the Insurgents

This chapter aims to examine the onset of insurgency in the tribal region of Pakistan in the aftermath of 9/11. There is substantial agreement in the existing empirical literature that the root cause of the current insurgency lies in Pakistan’s support for the Mujahideen during the Afghan jihad. For instance, Weinbaum and Harder, 2008, p. 29) observes that the ideological and organisational support extended to militants during Soviet-Afghan war left far reaching impact on the internal security of Pakistan. Similarly, Ghufran (2009) considers Pakistan’s policies during Soviet-Afghan war a key factor responsible for the current insurgency. Murphy and Malik (2009) maintain that the social, political and economic impacts of Afghan war 1977-88 contributed to the current militancy in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Similarly, Bukhari (2011) and Brown (2013) support the views that Pakistan’s Afghan policy during 1980s was the most important factor which left significant impact on the country. The literature also suggests that India’s funded groups are responsible for the current militancy in the tribal areas (Ahmad, 2013; Afridi, 2016). This study, however, provides a different explanation regarding the origin of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. It demonstrates that the insurgency began in the tribal areas when the government tried to address the issue of militancy without obtaining the support of the tribal people. The key argument of this chapter is that despite Pakistan’s shift in policy, the government could not develop an effective counternarrative, which became the most important factor in the outbreak of insurgency in the tribal areas.

4.1. Understanding the Narrative and Counternarrative

Numerous world leaders and scholars have discussed the importance of narrative and counternarrative in the battle of ideas. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair in an interview with the BBC stated that “the problem that we have is that the narrative that they have, the story about Islam and its relations with the West, and the role of religion in society; that narrative has far greater reach and scope than we thought” (quoted in Fink and Barclay, 2013, p. 2). President Obama (2015), denounced the Jihadist narrative by saying that “the lie that we are somehow engaged in a clash of
civilizations; that America and the West are somehow at war with Islam or seek to suppress Muslims; or that we are the cause of every ill in the Middle East….That narrative becomes the foundation upon which terrorists build their ideology and by which they try to justify their violence.” Tony Blair further observed that “[w]e need to build up grassroots Muslim responses which challenge the Jihadi narrative with simple competing and clear messages which are equally forthright and scripturally based” (quoted in Glazzard, 2017, p. 3). The Quilliam Foundation, a UK based counterterrorism think-tank, in its strategic briefing to the UK parliament wrote:

Narrative is central to radicalisation, extremism and terrorism. In its simplest incarnation, the Islamist narrative is “Islam is under attack and we must defend it”. In terrorism, it is used to promote violence, in extremism it is used to promote values that are antithetical to human rights norms, and in radicalisation it is used to exploit vulnerable people and recruit them to the cause. This narrative is sufficiently broad to apply to populations all over the world, to local and international conflicts, and to oppose domestic and foreign policies. It is sufficiently malleable to apply to group and personal grievances, both real and perceived (Russell and Rafiq, 2016, p. 3).

They further observed that ‘The Islamist narrative must be tackled as a counter-extremism priority, because failure to do so will make other counter-extremism work less effective, and operations in other spheres less effective too’ (Ibid).

Narratives, as stated above, are stories consistently told in a way that leads people to believe them to be real. Kilcullen (2006b, p. 106) defines narrative as a ‘simple, unifying, easily expressed story or explanation that organises people’s experience and provides a framework for understanding events.’ The US Field Manual (2006, p. 14) explains that ‘The central mechanism through which ideologies are expressed and absorbed is the narrative.’ Vlahos (2006) argues that ‘In war, the narrative is much more than just a story. ‘Narrative’ may sound like a fancy literary word, but it is actually the foundation of all strategy, upon which all else – policy, rhetoric and action - is built.’ The principal functions of narrative ‘is to tell great sweeping stories that will inspire and instruct us all’ (Fulford, 1999, p. 30). In the words of Johnson (2017, p. 2) ‘narrative often represents a kind, or series, of “story (ies)” and reflects foundational beliefs that articulate a group’s views toward the world (Johnson, 2017, p. 2).
Halverson, Goodall and Corman (2011, p. 1) mention that ‘narratives are essential to understanding Islamic extremism in the war of ideas.’ A narrative ‘is a system of stories that share themes, forms, and archetypes’ (Corman, 2015, p. 36). In their narratives, insurgent groups referred to ‘certain stories from religious texts and Muslim history to interpret events, justify their actions, and influence the behaviour of their followers (Corman, 2015, p. 37). The term ‘narrative’ is used interchangeably with story in conventional usage; however, it is a system of stories that ‘desire to resolve a conflict by establishing audience expectations according to the known trajectories of its literary and rhetorical form’ (Halverson, Goodall and Corman, 2011, p. 14). Narrative is an art of storytelling in a ‘sequential and cohesive manner to build and convey your own version of reality’ (Iqbal, Zafar and Mehmood, 2019, p. 150). Halverson, Goodall and Corman (2011) have discussed a number of “master narratives” from Islamic history (e.g. The Pharaoh, The Battle of Bar) and have argued that these can be challenged.

Iqbal, Zafar and Mehmood (2019) mention three types of narrative – collective narrative, ontological narrative and public narrative. The collective narrative evolved organically and has widespread acceptability in society. Ontological narratives (stories told by ordinary people) differ from the collective narrative on the basis of their widespread acceptance. ‘When a certain ontological narrative plot becomes widely established as standard explanations, these evolve into collective narratives’ (Hsu, 2001, p. 32). The third narrative is called the public narrative. Public narratives deal specifically with the stories which are published or disseminated by actors in the public sphere, such as government, journalists, intellectuals, media, clergy or political activists’ (Hsu, 2001; Iqbal, Zafar and Mehmood, 2019). Public narrative is specifically important from the perspective of this study.

According to Braddock and Horgan (2016, p. 400), the extensive and effective use of narratives by terrorists indicate that ‘we are locked in a duel in which our most effective weapons for reducing the efficacy of terrorist narratives are counternarratives.’ Briggs and Feve (2014, p. 14) suggest that counternarratives play an important role. ‘They do not tend to challenge extremist messaging directly, but instead attempt to influence those who might be sympathetic towards (but not actively supportive of) extremist causes, or help to unite the silent majority against extremism by emphasising solidarity, common causes and shared values.’ Countering narrative is
critical to ‘prevent and defeat the violence’ that emerges from the extremist ideology (Jacobson, 2009, p. 12). According to Iqbal, Zafar and Mehmood (2019, p. 147) counternarrative refers to any effort ‘that seeks to deconstruct the militants’ ideology and effectively challenge it with an aim to create an environment that counteracts the militants’ narrative.’ Counternarratives are designed to ‘contradict the themes that fuel and sustain terrorist narratives, and by extension, discourage the support for terrorism they foster’ (Braddock and Horgan, 2016, pp. 381-382).

Kate Ferguson (2016, p. 9) challenges the key assumptions of counternarrative strategy – that violent words lead to violent deeds, that counternarrative is crucial to counter violent extremism, and disrupting violent extremism media, removing online contents and providing counternarrative can counter the actual extremist threat. Ferguson’s (2016, p. 2) findings challenge the claims that “counternarrative” can be an effective strategy to respond to the propaganda strategies of violent extremists. Similarly, Glazzard (2017, p. 1) maintains that the whole counternarrative approach has been ‘built on very shaky theoretical and empirical foundations.’ The critics of counternarrative reject its importance for two reasons. Firstly, they maintain that terrorists are brainwashed and cannot be rehabilitated through the use of counternarrative, and secondly according to them, without addressing structural issues such as governance, poverty and justice, cosmetic changes would be meaningless (Iqbal, Zafar and Mehmood, 2019, p. 150). However, these objections fail to account for the fact that insurgency and terrorism are supported by different types of participants. There are often active combatants, sympathisers and supporters (Ibid). Insurgency cannot be sustained if it loses the support of the people. As stated by Galula (1964), the key battleground in revolutionary warfare is the population, support of which would lead to victory.

The above studies have discussed the importance of narrative and counternarrative in the battle of ideas. Some of these studies (e.g. Briggs and Feve, 2014; Russel, and Rafiq, 2016) have focused on how to counter the online literature of extremists. This study, in contrast, stresses the vital importance of counternarrative in combating insurgency and demonstrates that lack of counternarrative was the most important reason for the outbreak of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Pakistan decided to become an ally of the US in the war against terror but failed to develop a counternarrative against the militants.
4.2. Departure from History without Developing an Effective Counternarrative

As an immediate neighbour of Afghanistan and former supporter of the Mujahideen, Pakistan had to make a choice after the 9/11 incident. On the morning of September 12, the US deputy secretary of state, Richard Armitage, in a ‘hard-hitting conversation’ told the ISI chief General Mahmood (who was on an official visit to the US) that Pakistan should decide that: “You are either 100 per cent with us or 100 per cent against us – there is no gray area.” (quoted in Abbas, 2015, p. 217). On September 13, the US ambassador to Pakistan, Wendy Chamberlain brought Musharraf a set of seven demands:

1. Stop Al-Qaeda operatives coming from Afghanistan to Pakistan, intercept arms shipments through Pakistan, and end ALL logistical support for Osama bin Laden.
2. Provide the United States with blanket overflight and landing rights to conduct all necessary military and intelligence operations.
3. Provide territorial access to the United States and allied military intelligence as needed, and other personnel to conduct all necessary operations against the perpetrators of terrorism and those that harbor them, including the use of Pakistan’s naval ports, air bases, and strategic location on borders.
4. Provide the United States immediately with intelligence, immigration information and database and internal security information, to help prevent and respond to terrorist acts perpetrated against the United States, its friends, or its allies.
5. Continue to publicly condemn the terrorist acts of September 11 and any other terrorist acts against the United States or its friends and allies, and curb all domestic expression of support for terrorism against the United States, its friends, or its allies.
6. Cut off all shipments of fuel to the Taliban and any other items and recruits, including volunteers en route to Afghanistan, who can be used in military offensive capacity or to abet a terrorist threat.
7. Should the evidence strongly implicate Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda in Afghanistan and should Afghanistan and the Taliban continue to harbor him and his network, Pakistan will break diplomatic relations with the Taliban government, end support for the Taliban, and assist the United States in the aforementioned ways to destroy Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda network (Musharraf, 2006, pp. 204-205).

On September 14, Musharraf called a meeting of Corps Commanders and other senior staff officers at General Headquarters (GHQ) to convince them that Pakistan should join the US war on terror. Most of his generals agreed with him but some of them expressed their concerns and disagreements. For instance, lieutenant general Muzaffar Usmani, the number two man in the army, argued that without any specific American incentive Pakistan should avoid abandoning its long-standing support for the Taliban (Abbas, 2015, p. 220).
Musharraf took the decision under tremendous pressure and argued that if Pakistan did not support the US, ‘direct military action by a coalition of the United States, India, and Israel against Pakistan was a real possibility’ (Abbas, 2015, p. 221). Additionally, he believed that becoming a partner of the US would help Pakistan to (a) safeguard the cause of Kashmir, (b) secure Pakistan’s strategic interests, and (c) help the economic infrastructure (Musharraf, 2006, p. 202). However, to get the US support, Pakistan had to end support for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan (Haqqani, 2005, p. 261). According to Musharraf, without accepting the US demands two and three, he agreed to curb terrorism in all its forms and manifestations (Musharraf, 2006, p. 206).

Similar to Central Asian local elites (as suggested by Matteo Fumagalli (2010, p. 191) that they exaggerated the significance and impact of the threat ‘for regime security purposes and, in Moscow’s case, for justifying closer cooperation and enhancing Russia’s strategic re-assertion in the region’ the Musharraf government also overstated the domestic threat to the US and presented himself indispensable to counter the militant threat. Pakistan’s current Prime Minister, Imran Khan, in his account writes that Pervez Musharraf exactly like Bush and Blair used ‘fear’ as a weapon to galvanise public support (Khan, 2011, p. 120). According to Akbar Ahmed (2013, p. 135), Musharraf ‘cleverly convinced Washington that if he were removed, the dreaded Muslim fanatics with long beards, wearing shalwar-kameez and brandishing Kalashnikovs, would take over Pakistan’s nuclear assets; in effect, Al-Qaeda would have access to nuclear bombs.’ Musharraf described the situation in Pakistan in a similar way to what Brian Job called an ‘insecurity dilemma’ which regards that internal threats undermine the capacity of the state and only external support can help the regime to fight them (Job cited in Fumagalli, 2010, p. 194). Khan (2011, p. 129) further notes that:

Musharraf modelled himself on two other military men – Iran’s Reza Shah and Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. They too believed that by imposing the outward manifestations of westernisation they could catapult their countries forward by decades. For Musharraf westernisation was modernisation, but he used westernisation selectively. The West’s success lay in genuine democracy, strong institutions, education, an independent judiciary, a free media and free speech, whereas Musharraf was doing the opposite.

Making himself indispensable and agreeing to the US demands, he made Pakistan a frontline state in the war against terror.
However, the key challenge for the Musharraf government was to build a political and religious consensus against the militants because after joining the war on terror, he was perceived as a traitor not only to Pakistan but to Islam and Muslim Umma (I. Ahmed, 2013, p. 244). Most importantly, the people of tribal areas considered the US war on terror as foreign invasion and gave shelter to those who managed to escape to the tribal region in accordance with their tradition of Melmastia (hospitality). Melmastia is one of the codes of Pashtun life where it is the responsibility of the host to provide the best to the guest and defend his life at the cost of his own. Additionally, many local Pakistani Taliban leaders had participated in the Soviet-Afghan war in the 1980s and had relations with the Afghan Taliban. However, for Musharraf it looked natural, as he maintained (2006, pp. 222-223) in his book:

Twenty-one years earlier it was natural for us to join the jihad against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, because we did not want the Soviet Union to consolidate its position and turn its attention toward our warm waters. In 2001 it was just as natural for us to join the war against terror because Pakistan has been a victim of sectarian and external terrorism for years, and certainly had no desire to be “Talibanised.”

However, as stated earlier, what looked normal for Musharraf was not for the tribesmen because they were told for a long time that fighting foreign forces especially in Afghanistan was their religious duty. Now a decade later they were being told that fighting another foreign occupation was terrorism. The government needed to develop political and religious consensus to win the trust and confidence of the tribesmen convincing them that the militants are not only a threat for the US but to Pakistan as well. However, instead of winning the support of the tribesmen, the Musharraf government ordered the deployment of the Pakistan army into Waziristan to crush and pacify the tribes: a decision which according to Akbar Ahmed (2013, p. 134), Lord Curzon (the British viceroy in India at the time) was reluctant to take one hundred years ago. It is important to note here that in revolutionary warfare, the support of the population is tantamount to victory. It is imperative for the military to know the importance of gaining the support of the population as this is the real terrain where the insurgency is fought (Galula, 1964). Revolutionary wars, unlike conventional war, have special rules because most of those applicable to one side may not necessarily work for others. ‘In a fight between a fly and a lion, the fly cannot deliver a knockout blow and the lion cannot fly’ (Galula, 1964, p. xii).
After having the support of the US, Musharraf according to former Director-General ISI Asad Durrani (2018, p. 99), ‘had convinced himself that he was infallible …. He was, therefore, unlikely to be impressed by the ways of tribesmen or the romance of their history.’ Therefore, he ordered the deployment of security forces to flush out the foreign militants from the tribal areas. Consequently, hundreds of suspects including Pakistani citizens were arrested without due process of law and were handed over to the US in return for dollars (Durrani, 2018, p. 98). Supporting Durrani’s account, Imran Khan (2011, p. 120) notes further that ‘after being strong-armed by the Americans, Pakistan’s political elite shamefully accepted dollars in exchange for turning on its own people.’ Musharraf himself wrote (2006, p. 237):

We have captured 689 [militants] and handed over 369 to the United States. We have earned bounties totalling millions of dollars. Those who habitually accuse us of ‘not doing enough’ in the war on terror should simply ask the CIA how much prize money it has paid to the government of Pakistan.

A story recounted by Mullah Zaeef (2010, pp. 172-173), who was Afghanistan’s ambassador to Pakistan from 2000-2001, explains the clampdown of the Musharraf government in the country:

They ripped the black cloth from my face and for the first time I could see where I was. Pakistani and American soldiers stood around me. Behind these soldiers, I could see military vehicles in the distance, one of which had a general’s number plate. The Pakistani soldiers were all staring as the American hit me and tore the clothes off from my body. Eventually I was completely naked, and the Pakistani soldiers – the defenders of the Holy Qur’an – shamelessly watched me with smiles on their faces, saluting this disgraceful action of Americans. They held a handover ceremony with the Americans right in front of my eyes. That moment is written in my memory like a stain on my soul. Even if Pakistan was unable to stand up to the godless Americans I would at least have expected them to insist that treatment like this would never take place under their eyes or on their own sovereign territory.

When the tribesmen resisted the handover of foreign militants, the army conducted a military operation in March 2004 in South Waziristan. After the heavy loss to the security forces, the army in its response ‘bulldozed about eighty houses, overrunning decades-old irrigation channels; levelled wells and tube wells; arrested more than two hundred locals; and according to one of them, killed scores of people as well’ (Gul, 2009, p. 22). The government signed a peace agreement with the militants but according to Aurakzai who remained governor of KP from 2006-2008, all the
agreements were broken under American pressure (quoted in Khan, 2011, p. 138). Lt. General Aurakzai reported that they told the Americans that the military operations were causing collateral damage and contributed to militancy, but one of the Americans replied, ‘We are paying you to fight, not to draw up peace agreements’ (Ibid).

The army deployment without winning the trust of the tribal people created strong resentment amongst the local inhabitants. This resentment and criticism reinforced the narrative that the government was conducting military operations under US pressure. The tribal leaders of seven agencies gathered in 2004 in Bara (Khyber agency) and they warned the government not to play with the lives of innocent people. The grand jirga\(^\text{30}\) was attended by notables from all the tribal agencies including Senator Hamid Ullah from the Khyber Agency and Senator Abdur Rashid of the Orakzai agency. The speakers of the jirga said that the ongoing military operations in the tribal areas had created a sense of insecurity amongst the tribal people who are now compelled to think about other options. The jirga declared that ‘We are sure that there are no Al-Qaeda and Taliban members in the tribal areas, however, if the government thinks so, even then we cannot allow them to transgress the cultural norms of the tribal areas’ (quoted in Yousafzai, 2004a, p. 2). The Senators in the jirga, Hamid Ullah and Abdur Rashid, said that ‘if the military believes foreign nationals are hiding in tribal areas even then we will recommend that direct action against them should be avoided’ (Ibid).

4.3. The Role of Political and Religious Parties in the Narrative Building

After the US invasion of Afghanistan, the hatred against America was on the rise in Pakistan. The Musharraf government’s support for US and NATO forces further intensified the hatred. The autocratic regime of Musharraf failed to make a joint strategy with political and religious leaders who had ground support in the tribal areas. His coercive government policy led almost all the major political parties to criticise the government for what they called unnecessary operations to please the US. Muttahida

\(^{30}\) Jirga is a council of elders. In the tribal areas, jirga decides cases according to the code of Pakhtunwali.
Majlis Amal (MMA), an alliance of six major religious parties which had formed a government in the adjacent KP province, played a more active role in criticising the government policy and organising a protest.

In a protest organised by the tribesmen against the ongoing military operation in 2002, Maulana Nasib Ali Shah, MMA leader from Bannu stated that the US and Pakistan military operations in the area were ‘oppressive, unjust and anti-Muslims’ (*The Frontier Post*, 2002a, p. 1). In an interview with the BBC, the Secretary-General of MMA, Maulana Fazal ur Rehman, said that ‘the United States has expanded its operations all over the world and I think, the demands of justice during these operations have not been fulfilled. The feeling of mistrust and hatred against the United States is on the rise’ (*The Frontier Post*, 2002b, p. 1).

The MMA organised a countrywide protest in 2003 against a possible US attack on Iraq, and FBI operations in Pakistan. Maulana Fazal ur Rehman observed that ‘US is the biggest terrorist of the world, and demanded the Islamic world to unite against the US and save the world peace’ (*The Frontier Post*, 2003a, p. 1). Lawmakers from the provincial KP assembly in 2003 expressed their concerns over the military operation in Bannu district and adjoining areas and termed them interference in the affairs of the province and a violation of Pashtun traditions which can cause an anti-government backlash. (Yousafzai, 2003, p.1). Another member from the ruling coalition in KP questioned the sovereignty and independence of the country where American forces are conducting operations in broad daylight in the country (Yousafzai, 2003).

Addressing a student convention, the leader of Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP), Mehmood Khan Achakzai, said that there are no terrorists and foreign nationals in the tribal areas and the government should stop the military operation (Razarwal, 2003). Flanked by leaders of PPP and PML-N, the MMA chief Qazi Hussain Ahmad warned the government that ‘if the operation in the tribal areas is not stopped forthwith, we will launch a movement in FATA after Ramadan…. The military crackdown is detrimental to our national cohesion’ (*The Frontier Post*, 2003b, p. 1). Qazi Hussain Ahmad and the parliamentary leader of MMA again alleged that the

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31 Muttahida Majlis Amal was an alliance of six religious parties formed after 9/11 to resist the Musharraf government and establish Shariah government.
government was undertaking military operations at the behest of the Americans (The Frontier Post, 2003c, p. 1). The Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) supported the MMA stance and demanded that the matter of military operations should be brought before parliament for discussion.

The JI tribal leader Zar Noor Afridi while condemning the unnecessary military operations in the tribal areas, asked the law enforcement agencies to tell how many people they had arrested on charges of having links with Al-Qaeda during the previous few months (The Frontier Post, 2003d, p. 2). Awami National Party (ANP) central president Asfandyar Wali Khan in his address to the students in Bolan medical college said that the rulers of the country would pay the price of innocent lives of Pashtuns from South Waziristan (The Frontier Post, 2004b, p. 2). Speaking at the conference, the leaders of MMA and ARD demanded that the government should stop the military operation in the tribal areas and should resolve the issue through political dialogue (Dawn, 2004a). The chief of ARD, Amin Fahim, alleged that the government was conducting a military operation to safeguard US interests (The Frontier Post, 2004g, p. 12). The Chairman of the Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N), at a conference held in 2004, criticised the government for conducting military operations in tribal areas under US pressure, a country he argued which was supporting Israel in its atrocities against Muslims in Palestine, referring to the killing of the Hamas chief Shiekh Yasin Ahmad (Dawn, 2004b).

Addressing a huge rally in Spinkai Raghzai, Maulana Mairajud Din, a Member of the National Assembly (MNA) from North Waziristan stated that the government had killed many tribesmen in the name of Al-Qaeda (Ahmad, 2004, p. 4). In his interview with the BBC, the local Taliban commander Nek Muhammad said that ‘it is totally wrong that Al-Qaeda members are hiding here. Those foreigners who are living here are not terrorists – rather they are Mujahideen who took part in the Afghan jihad’ (quoted in The Frontier Post, 2004e, p. 3). He further maintained that these foreigners had lived there for 15 years, were married to local women and had built their own houses, and now under US pressure, the government was calling them Al-Qaeda suspects (Ibid). The then opposition leader in the National Assembly, Maulana Fazal

32 The Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) was formed in 2000 by Pakistan Peoples Party and Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N) to restore democracy after Musharraf declared an emergency in 1999.
ur Rehman declared that the government was massacring people in the tribal areas under US pressure (The Frontier Post, 2004f, p. 1).

Lamenting the government for military action, Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf chief Imran Khan demanded the setting up of a parliamentary committee to probe the massacre of tribesmen at the hand of their own army. If there was any criminal activity where the tribesmen were involved, the government should collect evidence and prosecute them according to the prevalent laws (quoted in The Frontier Post, 2004c, p. 1). Imran Khan maintained that there might be few militants in the area, but it is the responsibility of the government to identify and alienate those people with the support of the tribesmen. He further said that keeping in view the lessons learnt from history, using force will only cause the situation in the area to deteriorate.

Senior Khyber Pakhtunkhwa minister and Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) leader Siraj ul Haq, while expressing his concerns regarding the operation, noted that the government had turned Waziristan into a laboratory for US weapons (The Frontier Post, 2005, p. 2). In a protest against the US airstrike in the tribal areas, the MNA from Bajaur Haroon Rashid said that the Musharraf government first betrayed the Taliban regime by standing with the US and ‘now he has betrayed his own people by allowing US forces to attack Bajaur Agency’ (The Frontier Post, 2006, p. 2). The JI leader from the Khyber Agency, Muhammad Hassan Shinwari, argued that ‘the ongoing bloody military operation is in progress just to please our American Masters (quoted in Afridi, 2006, p. 3).

Parliament, which should have played a key role in building a consensus regarding the challenges posed by militancy and the military operations in the tribal areas, was never consulted by the President (Perlez, 2008a). Instead, parliament was discredited and the National Assembly remained the most ineffective in the country’s history during the Musharraf period (Rashid, 2008). The political parties also failed to develop a coordinated strategy because they were divided into factions and lacked a dominant ideology to unite the society fragmented along class, ethnic, and cultural lines (Hussain and Malik, 2014). The lack of any effective counternarrative in the political

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33 On January 13, 2006, the CIA fired missiles into the village of Damadola in Bajaur Agency. The attack killed at least 18 people including six women and six children. For more details see ‘Burning the Barn to Roast the Pig? Proportionality Concerns in the War on Terror and the Damadola Incident by Gul and Royal (2006).
parties made people believe that ‘America’s war is against them and not the militants in the tribal areas’ (Feyyaz, 2015, p. 75).

The above evidence suggests that the Musharraf government undertook a strategy without the support of the political and religious parties thus neglecting the population, which proved beneficial for insurgents. The lack of any comprehensive counternarrative against the militants made the soldiers reluctant to fight their ‘co-religious and, in many cases, their fellow Pashtuns’ (Gregory and Revill, 2008, p. 46). The Pakistan soldiers were also seen as proxies for the US in the tribal areas (Khan, 2011). The US presence in Afghanistan, the military offensive of the Pakistan army and the active opposition of political parties strengthened the narrative that the government was pursuing an unjust war which had to be resisted. This narrative was accepted at large in the light of Pakistan’s historical narrative and the one employed in the Soviet-Afghan war (see Chapter 3).

4.4. The Narrative of Insurgents

As noted above, political and religious parties condemned and criticised the government policies after 9/11, which helped the militants to create a strong narrative against the latter. Additionally, the conservative nature of tribal society and the use of religion by the state for national interest (as discussed in Chapter 3), economic instability, bad governance and corruption, made common people believe that the country’s democratic system had failed to solve their problems and that only the implementation of Sharia (Islamic rule) could address their grievances. A survey conducted by Fair and Shapiro (2010) in Pakistan demonstrates that 70 per cent of the population wanted Sharia, which they understand as good governance, and that it should play a more prominent role.

In unconventional warfare, a narrative is a powerful tool used by insurgents to attract people to a cause. According to Galula, insurgents cannot embark on an insurgency unless they have a strong and well-grounded cause which can attract a large number of people (1964, p. 8). Counterinsurgents ought to offer an alternative narrative to undermine the support of insurgents (FM, 2006), otherwise the failure to provide an alternative narrative will lead to abject failure. For instance, one of the reasons for the
Soviet Union’s failure in Afghanistan was that they pursued their conventional policy of pushing the opponents with force without considering the culture and popular sentiments of the people, thereby enabling the Mujahideen to evolve a strong narrative against them (Paul, Clarke and Grill, 2010). Similarly, members of the US and NATO forces after 9/11 failed to counter the Taliban’s dominant narrative in Afghanistan. The Taliban simply but effectively projected the foreign forces as ‘crusaders’ and ‘infidels’ to the local audience (Nissen, 2007). Johnson (2017, pp. 21-22) notes that the Taliban garnered local support in Afghanistan through their narrative which included the following overarching themes:

- Taliban victory in cosmic conflict is inevitable;
- Islam cannot be defeated;
- The Taliban are “national heroes” and willing to sacrifice all for Allah and country;
- Foreign invaders as well as their Afghan puppets are attempting to destroy Afghan religion and tradition;
- All Afghans have an obligation to join the jihad against the foreigners and apostates.

The Pakistani Taliban likewise used the narrative portraying the government as a puppet of the US, invading the tribes, and challenging the traditional and religious roots of the country. Furthermore, the roller coaster relations between US and Pakistan and the post 9/11 engagements followed by Pakistan’s military operations in the tribal areas, together with the US drone attacks, provided strong support to this narrative against the state (Sajjad, 2015). They maintained that ‘There is a war going on against Islam, and the West is a major enemy. Muslim rulers are agents of the West’ (A. Khan, 2013, p. 3). It was, therefore, the duty of every tribesman to protect his religious and tribal pride. This narrative was further reinforced by the complex global, regional and domestic security concerns which transformed the traditional conservative Pakistani society into a radical and hostile one (Sajjad, 2015).

After entering Pakistan successfully, Al-Qaeda subsumed this narrative and presented the country as a poster child for its extremist cause (A. Khan, 2013). Al-Qaeda’s narrative was strengthened by a campaign against the militant groups and registration of madrassas (religious school). Khan (2013, p. 3) outlines the Al-Qaeda narrative for Pakistan:

- An Islamic refuge for persecuted Muslims.
• Hope for a strong Muslim government.
• A bastion against the ‘anti-Islam crusade’.
• A victim of greedy rulers who betray Islam and Pakistan.
• The home of a population that supports and welcomes Al-Qaeda.

The TTP narrative was similar to Al-Qaeda as far as anti-Americanism is concerned, but maintained its individuality by focusing on the national environment. Feyyaz (2015, p. 71) outlines the main points of the Taliban narrative:

1. The Pakistan state is un-Islamic, murderous, and is the enemy. The Pakistan government is an apostate and a US protégé that usurps the people’s power.
2. The Taliban are the knights of Tawhid and jihad.
3. Democracy is kufur (un-Islamic) and needs to be replaced by sharia dispensation.
4. Being heretics and sinners, Shias are kafir.
5. The war on terror is based on a false perception of tribal Muslims by the Pakistan army and will be avenged.
6. The media is dajjal – false messiah – and engaged in misleading the masses.

The Taliban insurgency received ideological inspiration and logistic support from international terrorist organisations to achieve the following objectives (Rana, 2009a, p. 18):

1. To destabilise the state’s security apparatus so that people should look towards the Taliban for protection.
2. To force the government not to interfere in Taliban-controlled areas so that they can continue their activities unhindered.
3. To force the government to bring some structural changes in laws or the constitution, or to introduce a new system according to the Taliban’s agenda.

The insurgents, on the one hand, projected the government as a puppet of the US pursuing an anti-religious agenda against the tribesmen, while on the other hand they presented themselves as the saviours of religion and tribal traditions. To achieve their objectives the local insurgents employed a strategy helping them to win the sympathy of the people. Rana (2009a) explains the four-point strategy of the Taliban under Bait Ullah Mehsud. Firstly, his fighters took actions against criminals and began to collect taxes. In 2006, Taliban distributed pamphlets in North Waziristan inviting people to alert the Taliban ‘if any incident of robbery, dacoity [banditry] or any other criminal act took place in the area’ (Zaman, 2018, p. 246).
Secondly, they killed the influential tribal elders who could potentially challenge their authority. Thirdly, they established a parallel justice system to resolve disputes and dispense prompt justice. The Taliban in Pakistan ‘represented rough and ready, Robin Hood-like forms of social justice, though that imagery is not peculiar to them in contemporary Pakistan’ (Ibid). Finally, they appointed trusted men to the offices which contributed to the welfare of the local population, which helped them to win the hearts and minds of the people. In Bajaur Agency, Tehrik-i-Taliban established a court in July 2008 and enacted decisions on 1,000 cases out of 1,400 by August 2008 (Rana, 2009a, p. 13). The insurgents’ increasing role and their quick dispensation of justice attracted support from the people. These measures in areas of high unemployment and lack of development paved the way for Taliban support, where they offered the tribal youth money, power and respect (Qazi, 2011).

The renowned expert on militancy, Khadim Hussain (2013, p. 45) maintains that the militant groups ‘managed to bring about a shift in the concept of jihad – once regarded in the light of a struggle for spiritual purity, and even in the use of war requiring the state’s blessing, and now viewed [it] as a privatised entity in conflict.’ Siddiq (2010, p. 13) rightly argued that youth were vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation ‘not necessarily because they understand the underlying ideology or comprehend the religious principles, but because such ideas have become popular in the society and are not challenged by an alternative discourse.’ In contrast to the insurgents’ narrative, the government counternarrative suffered from lack of clarity, confusion and cohesion.

4.5. A Fractured/Fragile Counternarrative of Government

It was demonstrated in chapter one that the population-centric approach of counterinsurgency focuses on political measures to win the hearts and minds of the people. Counternarrative – a category of population-centric approach – required the government to win the ideological support of the people. However, the government policy in the aftermath of 9/11 focused more on eliminating the insurgents than in countering their narrative. A counternarrative refers to the ways to counter the violent propaganda of the insurgents and replace this with a more peaceful narrative (Sajjad, 2015). Johnson (2017, p. 13) argues that ‘insurgency and counterinsurgency is
primarily an information war supported by military or kinetics actions.’ Pakistan’s post 9/11 policy to deal with militancy suffered immensely due to the lack of a clearly defined narrative. The mindset and confusion of government and society made it difficult to evolve a joint strategy against the militants (Siddiqa, 2011).

Scholar Madiha Afzal (2018, p. 37) observes that ‘the Pakistani state has never engaged in a clear conversation with its citizens about the terrorist groups targeting the country – explaining who they were, where they came from, what they say they want, and why they are wrong.’ Another scholar notes that the confusing narrative of the government enabled the elites and the common people to tolerate the Taliban activities (Feyyaz, 2015). The government lack of investment in ideas to prevent extremism allowed the narrative of insurgents to grow unchallenged (Abbas, 2016, p. 13). According to Feyyaz (2015, p. 78), there was no professional approach to counter the insurgents’ narrative, which provided a space for the militants to propagate their ideology. Sajjad (2015, p. 89) notes that:

Pakistan faces an enemy today which has cleverly borrowed from the ideological narrative of the country to promote its radical extremist worldview. The Pakistanis seem confused in a war that is fought in the name of Islam on both sides. Many seem inclined to support the extremist groups who claim to be more Islamic than the state.

Renowned Pakistani expert Ayesha Siddiqa (2015) maintains that one of the most significant flaws in strategies of the US and Pakistan was the excessive use of force to fight an ideological war. Ideological wars can only be defeated with a more powerful ideology.

Dealing with this extremist ideology, Musharraf presented his concept of ‘enlightened moderation.’ In his article published in The Washington Post, he explained that enlightened moderation has two sides, ‘for the Muslim world to shun militancy and extremism and adopt the path of socioeconomic uplift’ and ‘for the West, and the United States, in particular, to seek to resolve all political disputes with justice and to aid in the socioeconomic betterment of the deprived Muslim world’ (Musharraf, 2004). But unfortunately, Musharraf — himself an authoritarian ruler — was more committed to maintaining his own power rather than bringing change to the country’s religious education system which would invite the ire of Ulema (religious scholars). Enlightened moderation was his desire, not a commitment (Syed, 2004). Furthermore, as Syed notes,
society accepts moderation only when its rulers are committed practically to the same principle (2004). According to Haider (2010, p. 33), Musharraf ‘failed to successfully anchor enlightened moderation in Pakistan, largely due to policies that empowered the Islamic parties and tolerated militant groups.’

Feyyaz (2015) explains two factors responsible for Pakistan’s inability to have an effective counternarrative: 1) Pakistan’s commitment to tackle terrorism was not viewed as very serious and was seen as rather rhetorical by a certain segment of society; 2) there was a lack of the specialised skills required to craft a counternarrative which is culturally assimilated. As far as the specialised skills are concerned, the militants were manipulating the simple message which could be countered with the support of mainstream Ulema, but unfortunately, under the authoritarian regime, the government preferred to counter the narrative through the use of force.

For instance, Rana (2009a, p. 23) identified four major weaknesses of the insurgency in Pakistan and argued that the counterinsurgents (government) should have exploited these. Firstly, the Taliban insurgency in Pakistan had an anti-democratic agenda and they failed to align themselves with political parties. Secondly, the sectarian differences among the Taliban made them unable to obtain the support of all sects. Thirdly, there were ethnic divisions among the different groups. Lastly, their extreme interpretation of Shariah and the system they wanted to impose lacked the full support of the major religious scholars and parties. However, despite the Taliban’s anti-democratic and anti-religious agenda, the government failed to aggregate public opinion against them.

Until the Army Public School (APS) incident in 2014, civil society seemed polarised even over the condemnation of militant attacks. Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) chief Munawar Hassan in one of his controversial statements in 2013 said that the chief of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Hakeem Ullah Mehsud, who was killed in a drone attack was a Shaheed (martyr). Hassan adhered to his view even after the army officially demanded his apology. Similarly, the head of the other major religious party, Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam - Fazal (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazal ur Rehman stated that even a dog killed in US attacks is a martyr (The Tribune, 2013a).

Some religious scholars such as Tahir Ashrafi and Dr Tahir ul Qadri issued fatwas against the militancy. For instance, Tahir Ashrafi, who headed the Pakistan
Ulema Council (PUC), issued a fatwa in 2016 which proscribed the use of religious terms ‘jihad fi Sabi Lillah’ (jihad for the sake of God) and ‘Qital fi Sabi Lillah’ (murder for the sake of God) and any other activity related to extremism and terrorism in the name of religion (*The Nation*, 2016). Similarly, Dr Tahir ul Qadri in a 600-page fatwa criticised Islamic extremists who use religion for violence, and declared in his religious ruling that suicide bombers are destined to hell (CNN, 2010). However, the dubious and tarnished reputation of both the speakers could not effectively build an effective counternarrative (Iqbal, Zafar and Mehmood, 2019).

The lack of any consensus among political and religious leaders, polarisation and confusion, left few voices brave enough to openly condemn the suicide attacks let alone religious extremism. Those religious scholars who raised their voices were either killed or forced to leave the country. In 2009, a renowned religious scholar and principal of Jamia Naeemia, Dr Sarfaraz Ahmad Naeemi, was killed in Lahore in a suicide bomb attack for his anti-suicide views. Similarly, in 2010, Dr Muhammad Farooq, another moderate scholar and vice-chancellor of Swat University, was killed for his views against the activities of the Taliban (*Dawn*, 2010a). Another great scholar, Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, had to leave the country after his life was threatened.

As stated above, the government policy to deal with the insurgents remained confused until the APS attack, which kept the society polarised, thus providing them with an opportunity to gain the sympathy and support of the people. The government and opposition parties only came up with a clear narrative and evolved a National Action Plan in 2014, deciding to take indiscriminate action against all the groups (for more details see Table 4.1). The inability of the government to develop a consensus and make a distinction between jihad and armed struggle against the state significantly affected the military operations against the insurgents which I discuss in Chapter 5.
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<td><strong>TABLE 4.1: NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2014</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td>Implementation of death sentence of those convicted in cases of terrorism.</td>
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<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td>Special trial courts under the supervision of Army. The duration of these courts would be two years.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td>Militant outfits and armed gangs will not be allowed to operate in the country.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong></td>
<td>NACTA, the anti-terrorism institution will be strengthened.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong></td>
<td>Strict action against the literature, newspapers and magazines promoting hatred, extremism, sectarianism and intolerance.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong></td>
<td>Choking financing for terrorist and terrorist organizations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7.</strong></td>
<td>Ensuring against re-emergence of proscribed organizations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8.</strong></td>
<td>Establishing and deploying a dedicated counter-terrorism force.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9.</strong></td>
<td>Taking effective steps against religious persecution.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10.</strong></td>
<td>Registration and regulation of religious seminaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.</strong></td>
<td>Ban on glorification of terrorists and terrorist organizations through print and electronic media.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12.</strong></td>
<td>Administrative and development reforms in FATA with immediate focus on repatriation of IDPs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>13.</strong></td>
<td>Communication network of terrorists will be dismantled completely.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>14.</strong></td>
<td>Measures against abuse of internet and social media for terrorism.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15.</strong></td>
<td>Zero tolerance for militancy in Punjab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>16.</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing operation in Karachi will be taken to its logical end.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>17.</strong></td>
<td>Baluchistan government to be fully empowered for political reconciliation with complete ownership by all stakeholders.</td>
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</table>
18. Dealing firmly with sectarian terrorists.

19. Formulation of a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees, beginning with registration of all refugees.

20. Revamping and reforming the criminal justice system.

Source: National Counter Terrorism Authority, Pakistan.

4.6. An Effective Counternarrative

The exploitation of religion by extremist groups and the threats confronted by Islam and Muslims today is the result of the ideology being taught in the religious institutions and propagated by religious movements and parties (Ghamidi, 2015). In Pakistan, as discussed above, the state’s lack of control over religious institutions, and sometimes its exploitation for national interests, allowed the emergence of militant groups. These militant groups began to challenge the authority of the state while using religious ideology. As argued in this study, this ideology could only be effectively countered with the true manifestation of religion, and therefore the state should have held the power to interpret its message. This chapter will put forward the counternarrative which this study argues should have been made part of the counterinsurgency strategy to control the insurgency.

It is important to note here that Islam was brought to the South Asian sub-continent through the work of great Sufi saints who conquered the hearts and minds of the people with a message of love. After the British occupation of the sub-continent, Muslims demanded an independent country where they could practise the principals of Islam such as equality, equity, justice and freedom for all citizens, irrespective of caste and creed. This message was evident in the first speech of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah when he declared that you may belong to any religion, caste and creed, the state has nothing to do with this.

During the Soviet-Afghan war, both the US and Pakistan became heavily embroiled in promoting militant groups against the Soviets. Madrassas were opened, and curricula were designed to promote jihad. After becoming an ally of the US in the
war on terror, Pakistan initiated a crackdown against the groups previously engaged in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Although these groups were banned, and their leaders were arrested, their narrative was left unchallenged. The renowned scholar Istiaq Ahmed suggests that Pakistan can learn from Singapore while countering radicalisation. According to him ‘Singapore remained consistent and constant in the realisation of the vision of a state with equal right for all citizens, in Pakistan the governments that followed deviated from Jinnah’s vision’ (Ahmed, 2011, p. 11).

This study combines the key points of counternarrative of the renowned Pakistani scholar Javed Ahmad Ghamidi (2015) with the joint declaration of 1,800 religious scholars arguing that the religious insurgency can be effectively challenged by applying the below points.

The key points of Javed Ahmad Ghamidi’s (2015) counternarrative are discussed below:

1. Negating the rallying cry of the militants to make an Islamic state, Javed Ahmad Ghamidi (2015) maintains that it is baseless to think that the state has any religion; rather the message of Islam is primarily addressed to an individual and it wants to rule the hearts and minds of the people. This negates the whole idea of militant groups who consider it their religious duty to fight for the establishment of an Islamic state. Rebelling against the state is a grave crime according to the Muslim faith. Thus for example, the Prophet Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH) was quoted as saying that ‘a person who does so dies with the death of jahiliyyah (ignorance)’ (quoted in Ghamidi, 2015).

2. No person or group has any right to declare a person or group a non-Muslim if they claim themselves as Muslims. If they deviate or depart from any principle of Islam, it is up to the religious scholars to point out their mistakes and invite them to a debate and warn the people regarding those mistakes. It is upon Allah Almighty to decide on the day of judgment who is right and who is wrong. The militant groups effectively established the narrative that the rulers of Pakistan were pursuing a non-Muslims agenda and it was therefore incumbent upon every Muslim to fight against them. Religion does not give this authority to any Muslim to judge the faith of others.
3. Similarly, jihad is one of the most important directives of Islam and asks its followers to wage jihad against injustice and oppression if they have strength. However, no group and individual can wage jihad on their own, and it is the responsibility of the ruler. The Prophet (PBUH) was reported to have said that ‘A Muslim ruler is a shield; war can only be waged under him.’

4. Jihad is only fought for the cause of Allah; therefore, it is significantly important to regard the moral and ethical principles defined in the Quran and Sunnah. The Quran clearly states, ‘Fight in God’s cause against those who fight you but do not overstep the limits: God does not love those who overstep the limits’ (The Quran, 2: 190).

5. Islam clearly defines the principles of government. ‘The affairs of the Muslims are run on the basis of their mutual consultation’ (The Quran, 42: 38). This means that the Islamic government will be formed on the basis of the principle where everyone has equal rights. All the decisions will be made through mutual consultation. The principle defined in The Quran is precisely democratic.

6. Lastly, Islamic Shariah (Teachings of Islam) defines two kinds of directives if an Islamic state is established anywhere in the world. The first kind of directive is between God and individuals, and the state has no right to force individuals to obey them. ‘Hence, no government, for example, can force a person to fast or go for Hajj or Umrah or to circumcise himself or to keep his moustaches trimmed or in the case of a woman to cover her chest, refrain from displaying her ornaments or to wear a scarf when going out’ (Ghamidi, 2015). The second category of directives is given to government because it represents society as a whole. For instance, Muslims in the Islamic state will be equal citizens not subject to their rulers. Their lives, liberty and honour, shall hold sanctity, and they will be ruled through justice and fairness. Again, in this category, all decisions will be made through the principle of mutual consultation.

It is significant to mention here that in 2018, the Pakistani government produced a counternarrative signed by 1,800 religious scholars representing all the schools of thought, which reinforced a number of the points made above. The joint declaration
issued in 2018 was the first of its kind since the war on terror began on Pakistani soil, and played a significant role in challenging extremism and terrorism in the society (Ahmad, 2019). It has created consensus among political and religious leaders; however, it is important that the government effectively communicate its message to the masses at large because that is the only way forward and key to countering the militants’ narrative. The key points of the Pegham-i-Pakistan (2018) are discussed below:

4.6.1. Waging war against the state

The joint declaration declared that ‘the use of force, armed escalation against the state, terrorists’ activities and all forms of anarchy that our country is facing are strictly prohibited in Shariah and are rebellion. This sort of conflict is not only against the Islamic State but also against Allah and His Messenger Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH)’ (Pegham-i-Pakistan, 2018, p. 26). Punishment for those who wage war against Allah is mentioned in The Quran:

Those who wage war against God and His Messenger and strive to spread corruption in the land should be punished by death, crucifixion, the amputation of an alternate hand and foot, a banishment from the land: a disgrace for them in this world, and then a terrible punishment in the Hereafter. (The Quran: 5:33).

Therefore, it is the duty of all Muslims particularly Pakistanis to struggle against those elements who are fighting against the security forces of the country (Pigham-e-Pakistan, 2018). Similarly, the Holy Quran clearly explains that every Muslim must obey their Muslim ruler if they rule according to the principles laid down in the Quran and Sunnah (sayings and practices of the Prophet PBUH).

You who believe, obey God and the Messenger and those in authority among you. If you are in dispute over any matter, refer it to God and the Messenger, if you truly believe in God and the Last Day: that is better and fairer in the end. (The Quran: 4:59).

4.6.2. Suicide Attacks and Killing Innocent People

Militants in Pakistan engaged in a series of suicide bombings, killing hundreds and thousands of security personnel and innocent people. Religious scholars who issued fatwas (decrees) against the suicide attacks were brutally killed. The lack of any joint
declaration from religious scholars provided an opportunity for the militants to exploit the youth and recruit them to carry out such attacks. They were persuaded to believe that they would enter paradise where *hores* (virgin women) will wait for them. The Pigham-e-Pakistan (2018) joint declaration declared the killing of oneself and another human being including non-Muslims is *haram* (forbidden). The Quran maintains:

* Spend in God’s cause: do not contribute to your destruction with your own hands, but do good, for God loves those who love good. (The Quran, 2: 195).

On another occasion Allah Almighty says:

* If anyone kills a person – unless in retribution for murder or spreading corruption in the land – it is as if he kills all mankind, while if anyone saves a life it is as if he saves the lives of all mankind. (The Quran, 5:32).

### 4.6.3. Sectarianism

Sectarianism has remained a great challenge for Pakistan. The killing of innocent people in the name of religion increased after militancy. The Taliban, who belonged to the majority Sunni sect, waged war against the Shia minority in the tribal agencies of Orakzai and Kurram. The constitution of the country, however, allows every sect to follow their respective school of thought. The Glorious Quran also clearly forbade its followers to engage in conflict and divide religion. It says:

* As for those who divide their religion and broken up into factions, have nothing to do with them [Prophet]. The Quran, 6:159).

It further says:

* Do not like those who, after they have been given clear revelations, split into factions and fall into disputes: a terrible punishment awaits such people. (The Quran, 3: 105).

### 4.6.4. Declaration of Jihad

The main narrative of the insurgents in Pakistan was that the government was conducting military operations in the tribal areas at the behest of the US, and therefore fighting the government and security forces is the religious duty of every Muslim. Instead of implementing Shariah in the country, the government were taking steps to secularise the country. However, the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) clearly demonstrate that waging jihad is the sole responsibility of
the Muslim ruler. Jihad cannot be waged against a ruler even if he is not implementing Shariah.

It is clear from the above discussion that neither the Holy Quran nor the sayings of the Prophet allow any individual or group to fight against the state. But unfortunately, it took the state seventeen years to collectively respond and reject the insurgents’ narrative in the light of the Holy Quran. Pakistan is an Islamic state, and the constitution explicitly expresses this in the ‘Objectives Resolution’ that sovereignty belongs to Allah Almighty and the power conferred upon the people will be used as a sacred trust. The constitution also maintains that no law shall be made repugnant to the Islamic principles, and efforts will be made to bring the existing laws into conformity with the tenets of Islam. Islam does not allow an individual or group to impose his/her ideology on others, thus making the whole insurgency in the name of religion unjustifiable. Creating tribulation in the land of Allah is strictly forbidden and the punishment for this is death. Ironically, despite these clear and explicit messages of the Quran and Sunnah, the insurgents used religion for their extremist activities and garnered support only because of the state’s inability to build an effective counternarrative in the light of the teachings of the Quran.

Conclusion

The chapter discussed the key perspectives on the origin of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. The existing empirical literature stresses that Pakistan’s foreign policy during the Soviet-Afghan war was a key factor responsible for the origin of the current insurgency. It also emphasises that foreign presence in Afghanistan and India’s intervention in Pakistan are the significant causes of insurgency in the area. This chapter concluded that the most important factor for the origin of insurgency in the tribal areas was fighting an ideological war militarily. The government failed to build a political and religious consensus in the aftermath of 9/11 and to win the trust and confidence of the tribal people. This would have helped the government to undermine public support and sympathy for militants and could have prevented the onset of insurgency.
The lack of consensus led all the political and religious parties to condemn and criticise the military deployment in the tribal areas. They allege that the government were conducting military operation under external pressure. Furthermore, they unanimously demanded that the government should resolve the issue of militancy through dialogue. The anti-government stance of the political and religious parties created support for the narrative of insurgents.

The local Taliban of Pakistan combined their religious narrative with tribal traditions. They maintained that the incumbent government was advancing a US agenda in the region, thus destroying the religious and ethnic bases of the country. Therefore, every tribesman must protect its religious and ethnic identity. As noted above, Islam explicitly and unequivocally denies any person or group the right to rebel against the state; instead, it declares such rebellion to be a heinous crime, punishment for which is death.

Despite these facts, the government, as discussed earlier, instead of alienating the insurgents through an effective counternarrative, preferred to use force to contain the insurgency in the tribal areas. The government’s inability to forge a successful counternarrative was influenced by different factors such as the historical use of religion for political purpose, the weak rubber-stamp role of the parliament, the poor legitimacy of the autocratic regime of Pervez Musharraf, and international pressure. The importance of narrative and counternarrative has been discussed by different scholars to counter extremism (Iqbal, Zafar and Mehmood, 2019; Abbas, 2016; Russell and Rafiq, 2016; Braddock and Horgan, 2016; Sajjad, 2015; Feyyaz, 2015; Briggs and Feve, 2014; Halverson, Goodall and Corman, 2011; Jacobson, 2009). However, this chapter enhances our understanding by arguing that counternarrative was the most important factor in the origin of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. This chapter also concluded that counternarrative needed to be a key constituent of the government’s counterinsurgency strategy to deal with the reactionary-traditionalist insurgency in the tribal areas. This inability, along with other factors such as poor administrative control and disproportional use of force, were key factors that led to the expansion of the insurgency in the tribal areas which I will discuss in the subsequent chapter.
Chapter 5: The Expansion of the Insurgency: Winning Battles and Losing People

The question of insurgency expansion in the tribal region of Pakistan has been discussed by various scholars. Most of these scholars have argued that the unwillingness of the Pakistani government was the most important factor responsible for the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas (see Chapter 1 for more details). They observe that Pakistan’s security forces and its intelligence agencies continued maintaining relations with the militant groups, which undermined the efforts against insurgency. For instance, Ahmad Rashid (2012, p. 55) notes that the tribal areas turned into a battleground but ‘the army remained extremely selective about whom it went after. It hunts down only those who oppose the Pakistan state; it allows Afghan Taliban such as Jalaluddin Haqqani, who remains loyal to Pakistan, to thrive in North Waziristan.’ Pakistan’s former ambassador to the US and renowned author Hussain Haqqani (2005, pp. 299-300) argued that after 9/11 ‘the government banned militant groups with much fanfare and even detained their leaders only to allow their re-emergence under different names.’ Jessica Stern (2000, p. 1) noted that ‘Pakistan’s continued support of religious militant groups suggests that it does not recognise its own susceptibility to the culture of violence it has helped create.’ Similarly, Weinbaum argued that ‘Pakistan has similarly largely ignored a network of Afghan militants based in North Waziristan loyal to dissident Mujahideen leader Jalaluddin Haqqani and his family’ (2009, p. 76).

The other key argument advanced in the literature (see Chapter 1) suggests that the lack of capacity and capability of the security forces was the key reason which led to the expansion of the insurgency. For instance, a scholar such as Nawaz (2011) has argued that the security forces deployed in the tribal areas were primarily trained for conventional warfare and lacked the necessary training for counterinsurgency warfare. This argument is supported by Rashid (2009) and Weinbaum and Harder (2008) who maintain that lack of counterinsurgency training was a key factor which undermined the government efforts to contain the insurgency. Lieven (2017) has similarly maintained that the capacity of the Frontier Constabulary (FC – a para-military force to control the border in tribal areas) was also a key reason for the expansion of the insurgency.

The above arguments are important; however, there are some key shortcomings in them. For instance, the ‘lack of will’ argument can be applied to the Afghanistan based militant groups, but as far as Pakistani Taliban were concerned the government
undertook major operations against the local Taliban. The literature does not answer why the insurgency expanded despite these military operations. Secondly, the capability argument has also been questioned by scholars who maintain that Pakistan never ‘lacked raw military superiority over insurgent groups’ (Watts et al., 2014, p. 120). The question, therefore, remains unanswered as to why the Pakistan government failed to contain the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas.

This chapter examines the subsequent expansion of insurgency in the tribal region of Pakistan in the light of the second stage of the framework. The key argument of the chapter is that there were a mixture of factors which led to the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas. Firstly, the military operations against the insurgents were not complemented by an effective counternarrative (as I demonstrated in Chapter 4). Secondly, they were conducted in an area of limited statehood. Thirdly, the enemy-centric approach of the government and the collateral damage helped the insurgents to obtain the sympathy of the people, and increase their area of influence.

5.1. The inability of the State to Develop an Effective Counternarrative

Before discussing the major military operations in the tribal areas, a summary of what people thought of government policies is important here. A tribal elder was quoted in Tohid (2004) saying ‘Till yesterday, the Americans and Pakistanis were supporting these jihadis and calling them Mujahids. Now they dub them ‘terrorists.’ Washington and Islamabad can change their policies overnight, but we cannot change our hearts.’ Not only the tribesmen but the security forces who were ‘told for three decades that supporting jihad in Afghanistan and India was part of state policy, it is naturally proving contradictory for them now to be told that the same jihadist are enemies of the state’ (Rashid, 2009, p. 1).

Consequently, the common Pakistani remained confused regarding government policies. Despite the atrocities and suicide bombings of the Pakistani Taliban across the country, the citizens of Pakistan were reluctant to own the war against terror (Fair, 2009). In 2007, only one in three considered them a critical threat and one in four considered them an important threat (Ibid). An IRI survey in 2008, showed that 89 per cent of people opposed Pakistan’s cooperation with the US in the war against terror which slightly declined to 80 per cent by July 2009 (Fair, 2009). Regarding Pakistan’s
decision to become an ally of the US in the war against terror, 64 per cent of the people considered it wrong (Sial and Anjum, 2010). It is evident from the above facts that the government lacked the necessary support required for unconventional warfare.

The lack of clarity in the government’s narrative after 9/11 made the tribesmen believe that the government had waged war against Islam under external pressure. Most importantly, the government had weak control in the tribal areas, which was further weakened in the aftermath of 9/11. The three pillars of authority, i.e. the political agent (a senior government officer), the Malik (a tribal elder) and the Mullah (a religious leader) were either made dysfunctional or incapacitated. The underdevelopment, distinct administrative system, poor governance, had increased the grievances of the people thus undermining the legitimacy of the government.

5.2. Limited Statehood

The second most important factor was not the state capacity (as suggested in the literature) but more accurately, limited statehood in the tribal areas, which led to the expansion of insurgency. According to Krasner and Risse (2014, p. 549), there are some areas of state which have what they term “limited statehood”. ‘The opposite of ‘limited statehood’ is ‘consolidated statehood’ that is, those ‘areas of a country in which the state enjoys the monopoly over the means of violence and/or the ability to make and enforce central decisions’ (Ibid). It is a state’s poor territorial control, according to Koren and Sarbahi (2017) which contribute to the outbreak of civil unrest.

Risse (2011, p. 4) defines statehood as an ‘institutionalized rule structure with the ability to rule authoritatively (Herrschaftsverband) and to legitimately control the means of violence.’ Areas of limited statehood according to Krasner and Risse concern those areas of a country in which central authorities (governments) lack the ability to implement and enforce rules and decision and/or in which the legitimate monopoly over the means of violence is lacking’ (2014, p. 549). Risse (2011) distinguishes limited statehood from fragile, failing and failed states. Furthermore, limited statehood is not confined to developing states. For instance, New Orleans in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina constituted ‘an area of limited statehood in the sense that US authorities were
unable to enforce decisions and to uphold the monopoly over the means of violence for a short period of time’ (Risse, 2011, p. 5).

Pakistan has been described as a weak state (Kfir, 2007), or a fragile state (Bajoria, 2009), but this study uses Thomas Risse’s (2011) concept of ‘limited statehood’ to explain the expansion of insurgency in the tribal region. I argue that the Pakistani state had a monopoly over the use of violence in other parts of the country, but its tribal areas constituted an area of limited statehood where the Government lost the ability to rule and the legitimacy to control the means of violence. According to Risse, there can be different causes of limited statehood ranging from ‘particular colonial histories, resource constrains, failure of nation building, histories of internal warfare, and the like’ (2011, p. 9). Analysing the situation in the tribal areas, the colonial history and the failure of nation building were the key reasons which contributed to the limited statehood.

According to Chojnacki and Branovic, the state’s lack of authority ‘in such areas leaves space and time for nonstate armed actors to recalibrate their interaction with the civilian population and invest in the provision of security’ (2011, p. 91). Matteo Fumagalli (2007, p. 2) rightly suggests that ‘the state’s limited capacity to provide social welfare and means of interest articulation to its citizenry exposes it to a crisis of legitimacy.’ Analysing the situation in the tribal areas of Pakistan, it can safely be concluded that the state lost the ability of effective control as well as legitimacy. Before 9/11, three different, yet overlapping and mutually interdependent sources of authority existed in the tribal areas: (1) the tribal elder, or malik; (2) the religious leader, or Mullah; and (3) the political agent representing the central government (A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 49).

The political agent would closely work with both the tribal elders and religious leaders to ensure law and order in the area. However, after the arrival of the army, the office of the political agent was made irrelevant. This made the tribal elders who were responsible for ensuring law and order in their respective areas the primary target of the militants. The already weak monopoly over the use of violence shifted to the insurgents. According to an estimate, after 9/11 some 400 elders were assassinated in Waziristan alone, and 800 in the whole of the tribal areas (A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 77). Similarly, the traditional religious clerics who were close to the government were targeted after military operations (A. Ahmed, 2013). Furthermore, the collapse of the existing
administrative structure led the state to rely on coercive power which further weakened the government legitimacy and undermined the support of the population.

Hendrix (2010) argues that if the state is capable of addressing the grievances of the people through an institutionalised mechanism, the motivation for violent rebellion is lessened. However, contrary to the above argument, the limited statehood in the tribal areas increased the chances of violent rebellion. It was this inability of the government to provide justice to the people which created governance space. Many people supported insurgents partially because the latter established law and order, provided easy and swift justice, and resolved disputes among common people (Qazi, 2011). This argument is supported by Siddique (2010) who maintained that the underlying cause behind the above factor was the injustice committed against tribal people, which led them to sympathise with the local Taliban.

Legally and constitutionally, the tribal areas were considered highly autonomous, operating outside the constitution and court system, but in practice their citizens did not enjoy the basic fundamental rights which were enjoyed by fellow citizens in the rest of the country (Ali, 2018, p. 4). According to one of the tribal leaders (quoted in Yousaf, 2019, p. 178):

The people sitting in Islamabad have made a fool of us, time and again with phrases like brave people, Azad Qabayal (free tribes), saviour of the borders. Except such phrases they have done nothing for us. Everyone is aware of the miseries of the people of FATA but they have done nothing.

The limited statehood in the tribal areas can be understood from the fact that soon after military operations were conducted, the government started appeasing the militants by signing peace agreements with them. The appeasement allowed the insurgents to increase their area of influence in the tribal areas. For instance, the first peace agreement known as the Shakai Peace Agreement was signed on April 24, 2004, and brokered by Maulana Fazal ur Rehman, chief of Jamiat-i-Ulama-i- Islam. The agreement was signed in a jirga held in a madrassa. Commenting on the agreement, Jones and Fair (2010, pp. 51-52) maintained that traditionally, tribal jirgas are not held in a mosque or madrassa but rather in public places. Holding the jirga in a madrassa indicated the growing role of local religious actors on one side and the limited statehood in the tribal areas on the other. The militants were granted amnesty and financial
compensation. The militants renounced violence and they were asked to surrender or register foreign militants which they later refused. This was again against the laws of counterinsurgency mentioned in Galula (1963, p. 246) which maintains that for early success, a counterinsurgent needs to be resolute and should be seen as a victor; only then will the majority follow him.

Using coercive measures, Musharraf paid little heed towards development, compensation and rehabilitation of displaced persons after military operations, which further eroded the government legitimacy. Instead of alienating foreign militants with the support of the people, the government’s confused strategy further pushed the local tribesmen to join the ranks of militant groups. Musharraf was convinced that using force would defeat the insurgents, ignoring the fact of unconventional warfare that material superiority is not enough for controlling the population. The Pakistan army’s reliance on a heavy-handed approach to punish people further undermined the support of the people (Jones and Fair, 2010). The Pakistan army applied collective punishment under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) - a century-old colonial law which governed FATA (Ibid). Despite the resentment and backlash of tribal people, the government nevertheless imposed an economic blockade and sealed off the entire Wana bazaar, closing about 6,000 shops (Dawn, 2004c). Furthermore, the peace agreement broke up, and the government revoked the amnesty deal and started military operations (Khattak, 2012).

The poor administrative control allowed the militants to move from the Wazir area to the Mehsud region in South Waziristan, where the Bait Ullah Mehsud regrouped these militants and emerged as a strong local leader. The government signed yet another agreement in Sararogha in February 2005 to appease the new group of Bait Ullah. The Sararogha peace agreement mediated by JUI-F leader Maulana Sirajuddin was signed by both the Pakistani government and the Bait Ullah Mehsud group in South Waziristan. According to the peace agreement, Bait Ullah and his groups agreed not to attack Pakistan security forces and officials, or to give shelter to Al-Qaeda and foreign militants, and it pledged to help the government in the war on terror (ICG, 2006). It was

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34 Wana is the largest town in South Waziristan.
35 A subdivision in South Waziristan.
also specified in the agreement that the government would compensate the damage to property and would not attack Bait Ullah and his supporters (Khattak, 2012).

One of the key flaws in the peace agreement was that the government did not involve major political parties in the process. Had the government debated this in the parliament, the result would have been different. Despite the agreement and the government’s claims, the militancy continued to spread. Former DG ISI Lt. General Asad Durrani maintained that ‘Two years down the road after military operations, the situation is much worse than it was when the military entered the tribal areas…. strategic errors are not always easy to correct but there is a failure on the part of the Pakistani authorities to even recognise failure’ (quoted in ICG, 2006, p. 17).

The government allowed Meshud to enforce Shariah law, provided that he stopped cross border infiltration into Afghanistan. Rana (2009a) maintains that Bait Ullah Mehsud’s agreement with the government helped him to enforce Shariah in the areas which provided cause to other militant groups to follow him. The agreement provided him with an opportunity to increase his influence. Secondly, the government was unable to ensure the security of the tribal people, and especially the elders. The role of local tribal leaders was diminished when the Taliban announced the implementation of Shariah in South Waziristan in March 2006 (Nawaz, 2009a, p. 27).

In May 2006, Musharraf appointed Lt. Gen (retd) Ali Muhammad Jan Orakzai, who belonged to the tribal agency of Orakzai, as governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On September 5, 2006, the government signed another peace agreement with pro-Taliban leaders in the town of Miranshah, in the troubled North Waziristan agency. The deal was signed by a Political Agent from the government’s side in the presence of army commander Major General Azhar Ali Shah (ICG, 2006). From the Taliban side, the deal was reciprocated by Hafiz Gul Bahadar, Maulana Sadiq Noor, Maulvi Ahmad Jehan, Azad Khan, Maulvi Saifullah, Hafiz Amir Hamza, Azmat Ali and Mir Sharif (Khan, 2006). The government appeasement policy benefited the militants where they emerged as serious contenders for power and at the same time exposed the limited statehood of the government in the tribal areas. The weak control in the tribal areas followed by major military operations and their collateral damage further helped the insurgency to expand.
5.3. Military Operations in the tribal areas

On October 7, 2001, US and British forces began the aerial bombing of Taliban strongholds and occupied the capital Kabul on November 13, 2001. Taliban and Al-Qaeda operatives left Kabul and began to disperse to other parts of the country. The eleven days search operation in Tora Bora in Eastern Afghanistan by the US forces resulted in the killing of about 250 Al-Qaeda operatives but they failed to capture Osama bin Laden. Consequently, Osama bin Laden along with some eight hundred men crossed the adjacent porous border (see figure 5.1) to Pakistan (Lamb, 2015, p. 86). Pakistani officials maintained that 500-600 foreign fighters (mostly Arabs, Uzbek and Chechens) took refuge in the tribal areas after the US-led military operation in Tora Bora in December 2001 and operation Anaconda in Shahikot valley in March 2002 (ICG, 2006, p. 13).
As explained in Chapter 3, the tribal region had a unique administrative system inherited by Pakistan from the British in 1947. The people of the tribal region strictly adhere to their centuries-old code of life known as ‘Pakhtunwali’. Pakhtunwali provides that if a person takes refuge in the areas, it becomes the responsibility of the tribesmen to protect his life at the cost of their own. The history, terrain and tribal structure of the area were naturally favourable for Al-Qaeda and Taliban. The number of Al-Qaeda operatives suggested by various accounts was not more than a few hundred. At one
point in 2004, KP governor Iftikhar Hussain Shah estimated that at that time there were 100-150 foreigners in the area, and tribesmen were reluctant to hand them over to the government fearing that they would be handed over to the US (The Frontier Post, 2004h, p. 1).

Tracing Al-Qaeda, the US government asked General Pervez Musharraf to stop the terrorists’ access to Pakistan, permit a blanket US overflight permission, and provide necessary military intelligence against the perpetrators and those who harboured them (see Chapter 4 for more details). Pakistan agreed to assist the US and permitted overflight and landing rights near Jacobabad in Sind province, and Shamsi airbases in Baluchistan province (Jones and Fair, 2010). Pakistan provided intelligence, and personnel of the regular army, the Frontier Corps (FC), the Special Services Group (SSG), and Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) were sent to the border to conduct operations against Al-Qaeda operatives (Ibid). Security forces were also deployed in the Khyber and Kurram agencies during the Tora Bora operation, and many Al-Qaeda and Taliban members were captured while they were crossing the border (Yusufzai, 2001).

In March 2002, Pakistan increased its security forces in North and South Waziristan to target militants if they cross the border ‘during US-led Operation Anaconda, which took place in the Shah-i-Kot Valley of Paktia Province in Afghanistan’ (Jones and Fair, 2010, p. 43). Between 40,000 and 60,000 Pakistani troops were reportedly deployed during this period in the tribal areas (Yusufzai, 2002). Despite the huge number of troops sent to the tribal areas, the Pakistan army lacked effective counterinsurgency training, equipment and motivation (Weinbaum and Harder, 2008). It is important to note that it was the first time since Pakistan’s independence that regular forces had been deployed in the tribal areas.

The Pakistan intelligence agency ISI and the CIA conducted intelligence-based operations in the major cities and captured key Al-Qaeda members. This led the CIA to expand its operation to the tribal areas. Publicly the Musharraf government denied this, but the CIA was covertly allowed to work on selected targets (Crilly, 2013). The government of General Pervez Musharraf believed that applying conventional means would solve the problem. Galula maintains that ‘[C]onventional operations by themselves have at best no more effect than a fly swatter. Some guerrillas are bound to be caught, but new recruits will replace them as fast as they are lost’ (1964, p. 51). It is important to understand that insurgency and counterinsurgency are fundamentally
different from conventional state-on-state conflict (Courm, 2009, p. 15). The discussion below will analyse how the military operations led to the expansion of the insurgency in the tribal areas.

5.3.1. Operation Al-Mizan (2002-2006)

Speaking to a huge tribal jirga in Peshawar, General Pervez Musharraf took great pains to convince the tribal leaders to extend their full support to the government in the upcoming military operation (The Frontier Post, 2004a, p. 1). Despite warnings from the tribal elders, the military continued its traditional approach of using force and conducted its first major operation “Al-Mizan” (The Balance), in South Waziristan in early 2002. Traditionally, Pakistan has used an enemy-centric approach seldom focusing on socio-economic development to win the trust of the people (Mullick, 2009a). The same approach was adopted in the tribal areas without any well-planned counterinsurgency strategy, ignoring the importance of gaining the support of the population and instead adopting a search and destroy strategy (Ibid).

It is essential to know that after the withdrawal of the military forces from the tribal agency of South Waziristan in 1948, for the first time Musharraf ordered deployment of the army in the tribal areas in 2002. According to the International Crisis Group (ICG) Asia report (2006), the government installed 80,000 military and paramilitary troops in the tribal area and launched a “search and destroy” drive against militants in South Waziristan in March 2004.

The first major military offensive in Kalosha II took place on March 16, 2004, in 50 square kilometres of Wana, in the villages of Schin Warsak, Kalosha, Daza Gundai, Ghaw Khawa and Kari Kot (see figure 5.2 below) where 400-500 Al-Qaeda fighters supported by some 2,000-2,500 local tribesmen engaged in a fierce battle with security forces (Tohid, 2004). The area was primarily controlled by five commanders, Noor ul Islam, Mohammad Sharif, Naik Muhammad, Maulvi Abdul Aziz and Maulvi Abbas who had fought in Afghanistan against Soviet forces in 1980. The operation began with 700 security personnel, but the number increased roughly to 7,000 within three days, along with dozens of Cobra helicopters and jet fighters of the Pakistan Air Force (Jones and Fair, 2010, p. 49). Furious at the raids, the security forces faced stiff resistance from villagers. The exchange of heavy fire led to the killing of 20 paramilitary troopers and four villagers, creating fear and tension in the area (Wazir,
Nawaz (2011) argues that the forces deployed had little knowledge of the terrain and people in the tribal areas.

**Figure 5.2: Military Operation in South Waziristan in 2004**

![Map of South Waziristan Agency, Pakistan with key locations including Afghanistan, Dzha Ghundai, Kalosha, Karikot, Shin Warsak, and Wana.](image)

Source: Counterinsurgency in Pakistan (2010, p. 48).

Government officials in Waziristan claimed that the operation was conducted because tribal people failed to keep their promises of delivering those tribesmen who harboured militants (Tohid, 2004). However, off the record, the military generals confessed that the operations started under US pressure, before exhausting all political means (ICG, 2006). A tribal elder from Ahmed Zai Wazir tribe was quoted as saying, “We were stabbed in the back. We were promised dialogue and development funds, while places for military operations against our tribes were well underway” (ICG, 2006, p. 14). The operation, however, resulted in a huge loss on both sides, and the government decided to negotiate with the militants (Tajik, 2011).

Former Director General Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) Asad Durrani maintained that ‘military action was taken in haste. Regular channels of conflict resolution and dialogue should have taken precedence over the use of military forces, which undermined the capacity of the administration and local tribesman to neutralise, contain and de-weaponsicize the militants through non-military means’ (quoted in ICG
The government claimed that the operation was a major success as it dismantled the command and control system of Al-Qaeda. In twelve days of operation, the government claimed to have killed 63 terrorists among Al-Qaeda intelligence chief and arrested 167 foreign and local suspects (The Frontier Post, 2004i, p. 1). The operation also resulted in the loss of 46 military and paramilitary personnel (ICG report, 2006).

However, the subsequent events contradict the government’s claims. The operation was seen by tribesmen as a sheer violation of their tribal traditions. The Pakistan army which is largely composed of Punjabi (60 per cent or more) was seen as an ‘alien’ force in the tribal areas (Nawaz, 2009b, p. 2). A tribal elder Mehbut Khan was quoted (in Tohid, 2004) as saying that ‘It is an attack against Pakistan-loving tribesmen and motherland…. Our forefathers would tell us how British forces tried to occupy our land, but we never expected it from our own forces…. Not every tribesman is involved with Al-Qaeda, and they cannot all be punished for somebody else’s sin or crime.’ Gaining the support of the population according to Galula plays a key role in the defeat of an insurgency. After the operation, former federal law minister Iftikhar Gillani in an interview stated that, ‘There is seething anger amongst the locals which might well be fuelling support for the militants amongst even those [who] were otherwise indifferent and whose support could have critical to the success of the anti-terrorist campaign (quoted in ICG report, 2006, p. 15).

The search and destroy operation which started under international pressure was not only against the tribal traditions but also against the basic norms of counterinsurgency strategy. The history of the tribal areas warranted a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy to win the hearts and minds of the people against the insurgents. Shahid Javed Burki (2012, p. 14), Pakistan’s former Finance Minister summarises the tribal history and notes that the Pashtun belt in Afghanistan and Pakistan is inhabited by people who have preferred to be ruled by the ancient code of life rather than modern state laws. The combination of this code with Islamic laws has produced a way of life practised for centuries. The key features of this way of life according to Burki (2012) are an abhorrence of external interference and distant central authority and confidence in the local tribal leadership where they can practise their own laws. The Pashtuns have adhered to these traditions even when they were on the move.
However, as discussed previously, neither Musharraf nor the army was concerned about the resentment of the people.

James Corum (2009, p. 240) rightly observed that ‘Armed forces and national intelligence agencies tend to be very good at conventional military intelligence…. but dealing with insurgencies is not so simple and straightforward, and civilian and military intelligence agencies are often unequal to the task.’ Galula (1963, p. 178) towards the end of his book summarised the situation thus, ‘I am not writing all this to show what a genius I was, but to point out how difficult it is to convince people, especially the military, to change traditional ways and adapt themselves to new conditions.’ His observation is still relevant to understanding the challenges faced by the Pakistan army in the tribal areas. The literature on counterinsurgency suggests that the learning capability of the military plays a significant role in the success and failure in unconventional warfare. Citing the example of British and the US experience in Malaya and Vietnam respectively, John Nagl (2002, p. xiv) explains:

[T]he better performance of the British army in learning and implementing a successful counterinsurgency doctrine in Malaya (as compared to the American army’s failure to learn and implement successful counterinsurgency in Vietnam) is best explained by the differing organisational cultures of the two armies; in short, that the British army was a learning institution and the American army was not.

Similarly, Trinquier (1964) while explaining France’s failure in Indochina and Algeria stated that the main reason was the inability of the French army to adapt to the local culture. Success, he maintains, depends on the external army’s ability to adapt to the changing strategies of the insurgents. Similarly, Kitson (1971), who participated in counterinsurgency campaigns in Asia, Africa and Europe, argues that insurgency has three essential components: a political structure, a military structure and the population. He argues that counterinsurgents should target the political and military structure to win over the population. In Pakistan, unfortunately, the army continued with its traditional enemy approach and only changed the strategy in Swat and Bajaur (see section 5.4 for more details).
5.3.2. Operation Silence in Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) and its Impact on Insurgency in Tribal Areas

Lal Masjid (Red Mosque), located in the centre of Islamabad, was founded in 1965 and played a key role in promoting jihad in the Afghan war in 1979. The cleric of the mosque began to challenge the authority of the government during 2006 and 2007 by first criticising and then implementing its extremist agenda. The crisis began when the government decided to demolish illegally built mosques in Islamabad. After the demolition of the mosques, the students of Lal Masjid and the adjacent female madrassa Jamia Hafsa started a protest by not letting the government officials work on the site.

On April 6, 2007, the cleric of the mosque announced the creation of a parallel Shariah court system in the capital and threatened that the government would face suicide attacks if any action was taken against the mosque. The students of the madrassa continued the occupation of a public library and kidnapped Chinese citizens. Pressure increased on the government for its inability to diffuse the tension and establish the writ of law of the state. The government finally decided to launch an operation against the authorities of the mosque. On July 3, 2007, the security forces cordoned off the mosque and warned the mosque authorities to surrender. The refusal to surrender led to the clash between the security forces and armed militants in the mosques. Eleven people died during the first clash, including four militants.

The interior ministry in its briefing on July 5, 2007, revealed that there were 50 to 60 hardcore militants in the mosque who continued to resist the entry of the forces (quoted in Minhas, 2007a, p. 1). ‘Operation Silence’ (code name) continued for almost a week and ended on July 11, 2007. Independent sources reported that the death toll was over 500; however, ISPR in its briefing claimed that estimated casualties were between 150 and 250 (Ibid). The backlash after the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) operation was unprecedented: a series of unending suicide attacks started which left a profound effect on the society. The very next day after the operation, three suicide bombers attacked an army convoy in the Swat district of KP which killed three policemen (Shafiullah, 2007, p. 1). Three days after the operation on July 14, 2007, a suicide bomber rammed a packed-explosive into an army convoy in North Waziristan leaving 24 soldiers dead (The Frontier Post, 2007a, p. 1). The killing of children sparked strong protest in the country. On July 13, 2007, thousands of people came out onto the street...
in all major cities of the country, including Karachi, Lahore, and Peshawar, chanting slogans, ‘bloodshed of martyrs will bring revolution’ (The Frontier Post, 2007b, p. 1).

The last five months of 2007 witnessed a wave of indiscriminate suicide bombings killing hundreds of innocent people. In 2006, only 7 suicide attacks took place while the number reached 54 in 2007 (For details see table 5.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Incidents</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Injured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>321</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>219</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>1677</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: South Asian Terrorism Portal Report on Suicide Attacks on Pakistan

The Lal Masjid operation also ended the peace agreement with the militants. After the truce, militants destroyed 15 checkpoints in North Waziristan and on July 23, 2007, distributed a pamphlet in the area which termed the troops as slaves of America and traitors to their religion (The Frontier Post, 2007c, p. 1). The pamphlet further noted that the troops were living ‘impure’ lives and would face death if they continue to serve the government which was fighting a war in the interest of infidels (Ibid). The governor of KP tried to save the deal by convening a jirga on July 23, 2007, but all the tribal elders who previously participated in the agreement did not come this time and those who participated also blamed the government for its policies (Yousafzai, 2007).

The pro-government tribesmen who facilitated the peace deal were now reluctant to support any move led by the government, as they felt betrayed at the hands of the government. Support began to shift towards the Taliban. Galula (1963, pp. 246-247) rightly argues that at the beginning of a war, the population’s attitude is dictated by two simple questions: a) which side is going to win and (b) which side threatens the
most, and which offers the most protection.’ The government badly failed to protect its own security personnel, let alone the tribesmen. According to independent sources, the Taliban abducted more than 1,000 security forces personnel and other state officials during 2007 and liberated 500 militants in return (Rana, 2008b, p. 2). This new wave of suicide bombing began to spread to other tribal agencies, and on August 1, 2007, two suicide bombers attacked Bajaur scout, killing three security personnel (Ahmad, 2007). On August 14, 2007, the citizens of the tribal agencies observed a black day instead of celebrating the Independence Day of the country.

Meanwhile, the US military expressed its apprehensions about the re-emergence of Al-Qaeda in the tribal areas. Major Tim Willian of US forces in Afghanistan said that ‘this area remains a support and sanctuary area for the insurgency as a result of those peace accords’ (quoted in The Frontier Post, 2007d, p. 1). The renowned lawyer and leader of the PPP, barrister Aitzaz Ahsan, while addressing lawyers in Peshawar, declared that resolving the issue through the barrel of the gun would lead the country nowhere but to anarchy and launching airstrikes on one’s own countrymen would bring a disastrous result, the flames of which would spread across the whole country (quoted in The Frontier Post, 2007e, p. 1). However, General Musharraf’s government, instead of developing a political consensus decided to conduct another operation in South Waziristan.

5.3.3. Operation Tri-Star/Zalzala (Earthquake) in South Waziristan in 2008
In 2008, the regrouping of different militant groups in South Waziristan and their relentless suicide attacks alarmed the US government, whose forces were engaged in Afghanistan. The US government expressed its displeasure over Pakistan actions which failed to eliminate Al-Qaeda. Director of National Intelligence, Michael McConnell testified before the US Senate select committee for Intelligence that despite efforts taken by Pakistan, Al-Qaeda had been able to retain its safe havens in the area and was able to use its recruitment and training ground as a springboard to carry out attacks in different parts of the world (The Frontier Post, 2008a, p. 1). The US Defense Secretary Robert Gates maintained that Al-Qaeda and Taliban in the tribal areas were not only posing a threat to Pakistan but to other countries including the US and therefore, time had come for Pakistan to conduct an anti-insurgency sweep in the troubled border region (The Frontier Post, 2008b, p. 1). The CIA also concluded that Al-Qaeda and
Bait Ullah groups had been involved in the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in December 2007 (Warrick, 2008).

Tension between Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) head Bait Ullah Mehsud and the security forces increased in January 2008. On January 16, 2008, some 1,000 tribal fighters attacked the fort of Sara Rogha in South Waziristan, capturing 30 soldiers and weapons from the fort (The Frontier Post, 2008c, p. 1). Bait Ullah Mehsud later revealed in an interview that the weapons should have been used against the enemies of the country, not against fellow Muslims. In order to destroy the hideouts of the insurgents and stop their continuous assault on security forces, the army decided to start operation Zalzala (Earthquake) in South Waziristan. In January 2008, the security forces dropped leaflets, warning people to vacate the area before the operation began. On January 24, the army launched a series of attacks against the Bait Ullah Mehsud group in different parts of South Waziristan including Spinkai and Kotkai (Jones and Fair, 2010).

In the fierce fighting, the Pakistan army used infantry, artillery and the air force to dismantle the strongholds of the militants in the town of Spinkai in South Waziristan. After the operations, houses and shops were demolished under the law of collective punishment. Dawn (2008b) reported that not a single shop was left intact and even local factories and petrol stations were destroyed. Major Gen. Tariq Khan who led the operation said that a training camp recruiting 9-12 year old boys and turning them into suicide bombers had been destroyed. Declaring the operation successful, Tariq Khan further maintained that the entire area from Dera Ismail Khan to Jhandola had been made weapon free and if required, the operation could be conducted in the rest of the area (Dawn, 2008b).

The primary purpose of a counterinsurgency operation is to eliminate the main body of insurgents and ensure the protection of the population. An official committee report published in Dawn (2008c) revealed that 4,007 houses were destroyed, causing a loss of Rs 1.32 billion to the tribesmen. The report further stated that the military operation damaged over 60 government school buildings, healthcare and telecommunication centres along with other infrastructure, displacing over 200,000 tribespeople from the area (Dawn, 2008c). Although some 70 militants were reportedly killed in the operation, the colossal collateral damage created further resentment against
the government. The operation compelled the people to leave the area in a miserable condition. They travelled on foot, without any help and life sustenance and many people perished. Hussein Khan, a tribesman who owned a medicine shop in South Waziristan reported:

Mehsud [leader of TTP] is gaining the advantage of indiscriminate bombing and killing of common tribesmen. Sympathies are increasing for him with every passing day. I am not a literate person, or a security expert, but I know that no military operation will succeed against him...Those who are not supporters of Osama [bin laden] or Bait Ullah, even they have been forced by the indiscriminate military operation to harbour sympathies for them (quoted in Latif, 2008).

The government came under immense criticism for not resolving the issue with the support of tribal people and with better-targeted operations. A tribal elder was quoted as saying that the Musharraf regime could not obtain dollars if it stopped killing innocent tribeswomen and children, which were providing oxygen to his illegal and unconstitutional rule of the country (Afridi, 2008, p. 9). The insurgents in their sophisticated propaganda discredited the army by telling people that the military was composed of non-Muslims who were fighting for the US (Jones and Fair, 2008). The religious Mullahs refused to lead the funeral of slain military personnel.

Instead of containing the insurgency, military operations increased the levels of violence and the militants’ area of influence. The year 2008 witnessed a 746 per cent rise in terrorist attacks in comparison to 2005 (PIPS, 2008, p. 3). It was also believed that many insurgents dispersed and moved to other tribal agencies, most notably Bajaur. Despite military operations, the number of foreign militants from the Middle East, Central Asia, East Africa and Europe increased in 2008 (Iqbal, 2010, p. 135). The security forces killed 3,182 militants in 2008, as opposed to 2,267 people who were killed in terrorist attacks (PIPS, 2008, p. 3). Similarly, in 2009, the insurgents conducted 559 terrorist attacks in tribal areas which killed 644 people including 390 civilians and 244 security personnel (PIPS, 2009, p. 7). In the same year, 1,137 terrorist attacks took place in the adjacent province of KP which killed 1,438 people including 1,005 civilians (PIPS, 2009, p. 6).
5.3.4. Operation Rah-i-Nijat (Path to Salvation) in South Waziristan- 2009

After the failure of ‘operation Zalzala/earthquake’ in South Waziristan in 2008, the Pakistan army launched operation ‘Rah-e-Nejat’ on October 17, 2009. The operation took place in the area of Makin, Ladha and Sararogha, a stronghold of TTP. The purpose of the operation was to eliminate the TTP and its infrastructure in South Waziristan and secure the Line of Communications (LoCs) in the area (Jones and Fair, 2010). There were 4,000 to 5,000 insurgents operating in the Mehsud dominated area of South Waziristan, and according to ISPR 30,000 security personnel from three divisions, under the overall command of the 11th Corps, were deployed to root them out (Shahid, 2009b, p. 1). Besides regular troops, personnel of the Special Service Group (SSG) and the Frontier Corps (FC), supported by the air force were involved in the operation. A Taliban spokesperson Azam Tariq told the associated press that ‘We know how to fight this war and defeat the enemy with the minimum loss of our men. This is a war imposed on us, and we will defend our land till our last man and last drop of our blood. This is a war bound to end in the defeat of the Pakistan army’ (The Frontier Post, 2009a, p. 1).

One of the significant differences between the operation conducted in the Swat district of KP and South Waziristan was that in the former, the government developed a consensus by signing a peace agreement which brought all political parties on board, after the militants violated the agreement. In Waziristan, like earlier military operations, there was still no consensus. The general perception that the army was fighting the US’s war had a significant impact on the legitimacy of the operation. To seek the support of the tribesmen, the Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Pervez Kiani wrote a letter to the tribal elders, making clear that the purpose of the operation was not meant to target the patriotic Mehsud tribes but was aimed against those who were destroying peace in the region (Dawn, 2009a). Despite the army’s efforts, the lack of political and religious division made it difficult to obtain public support. Sherry Rehman, a ruling party lawmaker, was quoted as saying that ‘There has to be a consensus in the face of what is clearly now our war. We have to treat this as a battle for Pakistan’s survival’ (The Frontier Post, 2009b, p. 11).

As a result of the operations, some 150,000 people migrated to the adjacent district of Dera Ismael Khan (DI Khan) and Tank. By December, the security forces had gained control of most parts of Sararogha, Ladha and Makin. The ISPR, reported on 9 December 2009, that as result of the ongoing operation in South Waziristan, 589
terrorists were killed, and 79 soldiers also embraced martyrdom (The Frontier Post, 2009c, p. 1). In addition, a huge cache of arms and ammunition was recovered which included 49 anti-aircraft machine guns of 12.7 mm calibre, 15 machine guns of 14.5 mm calibre, 16 heavy machine guns and 592 rifles all type (Ibid). Regarding the damage and destruction made by Pakistan army operations, Hakeem Ullah Mehsud in his interview in 2009 said that, ‘If the goal of the Pakistani Army is to make a helpless people cry, make orphans cry, force the displacement of the population, orphan children, martyr old and young men, humiliate the people, and bomb madrassas and mosques, then it has achieved its target’ (quoted in Qazi, 2011, p. 595).

Despite the government’s claim that South Waziristan had been cleared, the militants were able to carry on their attacks in different parts of the country. Indeed, 2009 remained the deadliest year in terms of terrorist attacks and violence. There were 3,816 terrorist attacks which killed 12,632 people, and injured 12,815 (Rana, 2010, p. 3). Insurgents relocated their positions and moved to the adjacent tribal agencies of Orakzai, Kurram and the Paktia province of Afghanistan. Explaining the hasty withdrawal of insurgents, TTP official Qari Hussain Mehsud maintained that they wanted to save manpower and weapons for fighting a guerrilla war against the Pakistan security forces in South Waziristan (Jones and Fair, 2010).

The situation was further exacerbated by the government military operations. Collateral damage in military operations and the huge levels of displacement in the tribal areas created strong resentment against the government. The over-reliance on coercive powers and lack of an institutionalised system in the tribal areas to address the grievances of the people created a power vacuum filled by the insurgents. The insurgents established their own administrative system where the cases of people were often decided expeditiously. The innocent killing of tribal people compelled the people to look towards insurgents. Consequently, the insurgents found support in different parts of the tribal agency and expanded their area of influence.

5.4. Change of Strategy – Bajaur and Swat

In 2008, the government adopted a multi-dimensional approach in the tribal areas of Bajaur and Swat which included military operations and peace agreements and the
formation of tribal *lashkars* (private militias) to defeat insurgency (PIPS, 2008). The government also tried to enhance the capability of the security forces to effectively contain insurgency (Ibid). One of the key reasons for successful military operations in Bajaur and Swat in 2009, was the changing counterinsurgency approach from coercion to ‘winning hearts and minds’ (Mullick, 2009b, p. 10). Despite the increasing atrocities of the militants in 2009, the Pakistan army was finally willing to learn lessons from its past failure, and apply a counterinsurgency strategy in Bajaur and Swat (Mullick, 2009a, p. 54).

Bajaur remained an important hub of local and foreign militants until 2008. Its proximity to Afghanistan’s provinces of Kunar and Nuristan made it strategically important for both Pakistan and US forces across the border. The Afghan Taliban had established safe havens in both Kunar and Nuristan from where they continued attacking US and NATO forces. The militant leaders in Bajaur, Maulvi Faqir Muhammad, a deputy to TTP leader Bait Ullah Mehsud, and Qari Zia Rehman, were believed to have close links with Al-Qaeda (M. Khan, 2009). At the beginning of 2007, local militants gained control of many parts of Bajaur Agency and they intensified their attacks against security forces. In early 2008, the militant group led by Qari Zia Rehman gained control of Loi sam area. By June, the insurgents destroyed more than half of 72 check posts and disrupted the civil administration through continued suicide attacks (Jones and Fair, 2010).

On September 2, 2008, the tribal elders of Salarzai tribe warned the local supporters of the Taliban of strict action. Munsib Khan, the leader of the 20,000 tribal Lashkar, said that those who were found supporting Taliban would be fined one million Rupees, their houses would be put on fire, and they would also be thrown out of the area (*The Frontier Post*, 2008d, p. 1). On September 9, 2008, the security forces initiated the operation Sher Dil (Loin Heart) in the area Loi sam, Khar, Nawagai and Alizai. Some 8,000 troops of the army and Frontier Corps (FC) along with Pakistan Air Force fighter jets took part in the operation (see figure 5.3 for details). The security forces faced tough resistance from the militants. A security official was quoted saying that ‘They have good weaponry and a better communication system (than ours) …. It does not look as though we are fighting a rag-tag militia; they are fighting like an organised force’ (I. Khan, 2008a).
The Chief of Army Staff General Pervez Kiani visited Bajaur agency in September 2008 and met the tribal elders. He reiterated that the success of the operation was directly linked to the support of the people. On October 25, the head of the paramilitary Frontier Corps (FC) Tariq Khan said that security forces had completely cleared Loi Sam, a stronghold of the insurgents. By the end of 2008, the security forces had also gained control of Utmankhel, Nawagai, Torghudai and Salarzai area. The security forces in a briefing to a joint session of parliament said that around 2,744 militants were killed including 321 foreigners, and 1,400 were injured (Bano, 2008).
In Bajaur operation, the security forces demonstrated not only capability but determination. A senior politician from KP commented on the operation. “They [security forces] seem serious. As to what caused this change of mind, we really have no idea” (quoted in I. Khan, 2008a). The security forces won the support of the population, which played a key role in the success of the operation. The local tribes such as the Salarzai played a significant role in defeating the insurgency. The security forces initially relied on the enemy-centric approach but shifted to population security by supporting tribal lashkars and jirgas (tribal councils), which helped them to identify the irreconcilable Taliban on one side and build the morale of the troops on the other side (Mullick, 2009a). The trend of anti-Taliban Lashkars started in Buner district of KP, but in tribal areas it was the Salarzai Tehsil of Bajaur agency which first formed a tribal Lashkar against the insurgents (PIPS, 2008). The government capitalised on the tribal support as suggested in Galula’s second law (see Chapter 1 for more details).

Secondly in Bajaur, the junior officers were made part of the decision-making process, which not only helped to boost the morale of the army but was significant in helping them obtain popular support. Unlike South Waziristan, in Bajaur the military negotiated with the Momond tribe from a position of strength (Lalwani, 2010), which led to the success of their military operation in March 2009. Military operations in Bajaur, Swat and Waziristan in 2009, show that the Pakistan army had learned from its past blunder of using indiscriminate forces which killed innocent people and contributed to insurgency (Ibid).

Learning from the Bajaur experience, the Pakistan army needed to apply the same counterinsurgency in Swat in 2009, while developing a political consensus. The opportunity came when the Taliban occupied the Swat, Buner, and Shangla districts of KP and were only 60 miles away from the capital Islamabad. In Swat, the militants were able to exploit the vacuum of governance. Moreover, Pakistan’s alliance with the US and its drone strikes also helped them to garner public support. The RIPORT in its survey (2010) demonstrated that 78 per cent of people in Swat agreed that Pakistan’s alliance with the US in the war against terror encouraged people to support militancy (Aziz and Luras, 2010).

In Swat, the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa signed a 16-point peace agreement with the Taliban on May 21, 2008. However, unlike Waziristan, the
government was able to forge a political consensus by taking all political parties into its confidence. According to the IRI survey, 80 per cent of citizens supported the peace deal with the Taliban in Swat (Fair, 2009, p. 51). The agreement showed the government’s desire for peace. However, the Taliban refused to surrender arms before the withdrawal of security forces from the Swat valley (Khattak, 2012, p. 12). They also demanded the release of the Taliban apprehended by security forces, and began to attack the government officials and installations (Ibid). In 2009, after Sufi Muhammad, the leader of Tehrik-e-Nifiaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) declared the whole political system un-Islamic, sentiments against the Taliban increased. The increasing suicide attacks on public places, including markets, mosques, schools also shifted the threat perception against the militants. This helped support for military actions. A Pew research poll in 2009 showed that 77 per cent of the respondents supported the military operations against the militants (cited in Akhtar, 2019).

Unlike past operations where the army only cleared the area, this time the military applied a ‘corner, choke, and contain’ strategy in Swat, which forced the Taliban to hide in schools, mosques and houses (Mullick, 2009b, p. 20). This enraged the common population, which helped the army to gather intelligence and popular support. Secondly, since 2001, the army for the first time executed a ‘presence-oriented approach’ by establishing small bases within the population, enforcing curfews and helping the local government (Ibid). Thirdly, as in Bajaur, the encouragement of junior officers in decision making helped them to use their available weapons and resources more innovatively. For instance, in Buner, Major Bilal helped the local refugees to escape to safety, before using heavy artillery against the Taliban (Ibid). After the military operation in June 2009, the army adopted a more population-centric approach by merging with people and helping the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), building the local economy and improving governance (Lalwani, 2010).

Conclusion

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that not one single, but a mixture of factors was responsible for the expansion of insurgency in the area. Firstly, the government went after militants without undermining their ideological supported. Secondly, the government adopted an enemy-centric approach which created resentment against the
The government and helped the militants to expand their area of influence. Most importantly, the military operations were conducted in area where the government had limited statehood. The limited statehood undermined the government legitimacy and support required for successful military operations. Furthermore, the government had to sign peace agreement after every military operation which helped the militants to expand their area of influence.

The government’s change of strategy from an enemy-centric approach to a population-centric approach in Bajaur and Swat contributed to the containment of insurgency. In Bajaur Agency, the government established tribal *Lashkar* (militia) which played a key role in controlling the expansion of the insurgency. In addition to the tribal Lashkar, the government included the junior field officers in decision making, which not only boosted the morale of the security forces but helped the officers to take a situation-based decision in the field. Similarly, in Swat, the government first built a political and religious consensus and passed the Nizam-e-Adl regulation (order of justice) which was being exploited by the insurgents. Passing the act exposed the insurgents and helped the government to obtain the support of the people before launching a military operation in 2009. However, despite the successful military operations in Bajaur and Swat, the insurgency not only remained in different parts of tribal areas but continued to escalate. The key question of insurgency *escalation* will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.
Chapter 6: Escalation of Insurgency: One Problem many Solutions

This chapter turns to an examination of the escalation of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. The existing literature has discussed the role of external support to insurgents, the inefficiencies of the allies, and the role of repressive state policies in the escalation of insurgencies. However, they have neglected how the external support to counterinsurgents escalates insurgencies. For instance, Melshen (2007, p. 685) argues that external support to insurgents plays a key role in the success and failure of insurgencies. Insurgencies (as mentioned in Chapter 1) in the Philippines, Malaya and Kenya failed because they did not receive outside support. As opposed to the above-stated examples, insurgencies in Rhodesia and Afghanistan, as well as the Viet Cong insurgency in Vietnam received external support and were successful (Ibid). His study provides a good account of external support to insurgencies but has not discussed the role of external support to counterinsurgents. Byman (2006) stresses that the role of a country’s allies is an important factor in the success and failure of some insurgencies. He notes that the allies of the US, who fought Al-Qaeda-linked insurgencies, suffered from four categories of structural problems: ‘illegitimate (and often repressive) regimes; civil-military tension manifested by fears of a coup; economic backwardness; and discriminatory societies.’ He further observes that the allies also have distinct interests which influence their fight against insurgents, and therefore the US should spend more of its resources to improve their domestic security instead of helping allies to deal with insurgencies.

Likewise, Goswami’s (2013, p. 29) study specifically discusses the escalation process in insurgencies. She suggests that several factors such as ‘political motivation of insurgents groups, the availability of arms, the response of the state, popular support, legitimacy, external support, time, space, organisational dynamics, the issue of spoilers, and factionalism’ contribute to the escalation of insurgencies. According to her, the state’s use of massive force to deal with insurgencies in Assam, Manipur and Nagaland in India was a key factor in the insurgency escalation (2013, p. 35).

Kubo maintains that there is a strong relationship between the repressive measures taken by a state and the escalation of insurgency, and that ‘state repression is the key intervening factor which explains the occurrence (or non-occurrence) of the escalation of rebellion’ (2007, p. 183). Furthermore, he stresses that states with weak
democracy and low GDP per capita often tend to use repressive measures (2007, pp. 184-185). Bose (2003, p. 116) cites an example from India and maintains that a ‘regime of repression had the effect of further radicalising public opinion and of convincing thousands of Kashmiri youths to take up arms to fight the Indian state.’ Hibbs (1973, p. 116), advancing the same argument, demonstrates that ‘the nearly instantaneous response to repression is most often more mass violence…. Meeting mass protest or rebellion with repression frequently only exacerbates the situation, at least in the short term.’

The empirical literature on the insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas also supports the view that the state’s repressive measures in the tribal areas alienated the tribal leaders and created animosity and anti-military feelings among the tribesmen (Wilson and Akhtar 2019, p. 715). The army was accused of killing innocent civilians rather than the militants (Rashid, 2009, p. 2). S. Ahmed (2013, p. 159) shares the same argument and maintains that the excessive use of force destroyed civilian homes and livelihoods in the tribal areas, which forced the people to join the militant ranks. Khan (2012, p. 141) argues that military operations inside the country have increased terrorism and militancy before. Pakistan’s military operation in the Red Mosque, Islamabad, has been described by many scholars (Bokhari, 2011; Lieven, 2011; Rashid, 2012; Abbas, 2014; Watts et al., 2014) as a significant factor which intensified the insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan.

The above factors are immensely important and they influence the escalation of an insurgency. As stated above, this study suggests a different explanation for the escalation of insurgency in the tribal areas. In addition to the above factors, I demonstrate in this chapter that the intervention/support to counterinsurgent forces also determines the escalation of an insurgency provided that it reinforces the insurgents’ narrative. I will argue that the US intervention and its extensive and indiscriminate employment of drone strikes in Pakistan strengthened the narrative of the insurgents and escalated the insurgency. I will analyse the problem in light of David Kilcullen’s global counterinsurgency theory.
6.1. Brief History of Pak-US Relations

As explained earlier (see Chapter 3), Pakistan and the US have a chequered history of bilateral relations. Their relations were at their lowest ebb before the 9/11 incident. However, after the initiation of the war on terror in 2001, their relations resumed, and Pakistan became a frontline state, receiving a total of $33 billion in aid (Iqbal, 2018). However, Islamabad claimed that the losses were greater than the amount received in US aid. According to the Pakistan government, 44 per cent of the above amount was received on account of Islamabad’s support to US operations in Afghanistan (Rana, 2017). It is significant to highlight here that most of the US aid was provided to the military regimes in Pakistan.

Instead of establishing a long-term strategic relationship with Pakistan, Washington preferred to have better relations with Pakistan’s dictators – Field Marshal Ayub Khan in the 1950s, General Zia ul-Haq in 1980s, and with General Pervez Musharraf after 9/11 (Schaffer, 2002, pp. 169-170). The support of military dictator Musharraf in Pakistan was particularly hard to fathom, as ostensibly, the US invaded Afghanistan and Iraq to restore democracy (Fair et al., 2010). The general perception in Pakistan is that the US used Pakistan, but when her interests were fulfilled, the relationship deteriorated. The US government, on the other hand, believed, especially after 9/11 that Pakistan played a double game by taking action against some groups while covertly protecting others. The fundamental difference between the two countries at the strategic level was that the US wanted a uniform policy and action against all Taliban groups, whereas Pakistan wanted to dismantle the groups undermining its internal security (Basit, 2013).

It was partly this distrust, and differences in policy, that led the US government to conduct drone strikes inside Pakistan’s tribal areas to target the high-profile militants. According to Yousaf (2017), after the Pakistan government began to sign peace accords with the militants, questions were raised regarding the seriousness of the army in fighting militancy. Secondly, after FATA became a sanctuary for international terrorists and a major flashpoint, it also made the US increase drone strikes. However, the historical differences between the two countries and the collateral damage of the drone strikes provided an opportunity to the insurgents to escalate the insurgency.
6.2. The Debate Over Drone Strikes in Pakistan’s Tribal Areas

The Musharraf government assisted the US after 9/11, and according to Mahnaz Ispahani (a South Asian scholar), he was seen ‘as the best alternative in Pakistan (quoted in Otterman, 2005). However, the tensions between the US and Pakistan increased after the resignation of President Musharraf in 2008. Sceptical about Pakistan’s capacity and will to effectively eliminate the militants, the US government decided to use its Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) commonly known as ‘drone’ to target operatives of Al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups. The drone has remained one of the most controversial aspects of modern warfare. The US Department of Defence defines a UAV as a ‘powered aerial vehicle that does not carry a human operator, …can fly autonomously or be piloted remotely, can be expendable or recoverable, and can carry a lethal or nonlethal payload’ (quoted in O’Connell, 2010, p. 2).

Therefore, in early 2008, President Bush in a unilateral decision authorised drone strikes in Pakistan without prior permission of the Pakistani government (Bergen and Tiedemann, 2009). Between 2006-2007, only 10 drone strikes were reported while in 2008, 32 strikes were carried out which killed 355 including 301 innocent citizens (A. Khan, 2008, p. 1). (see Table 6.1 for details). A majority of the drone strikes were conducted during the tenure of the Pakistan Peoples Party, between 2008 and 2012. Under President Bush, the drones concentrated their attacks on high profile leaders of Al-Qaeda, but President Obama widened the scope of the attacks to include local Taliban leaders. A Dawn report in (2016c) reveals a 631 per cent increase of drone attacks under the Obama administration which reportedly killed 2,500 people, including 350 innocent people. The report (2016c) further notes that since 2001 the US government conducted 910 drone strikes in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yamen and Somalia out of which 424 were carried out in Pakistan (for year wise drone strikes, see table 6.2).
### TABLE 6.1: TOTAL DRONE STRIKES AND FATALITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Total Strikes</th>
<th>Civilian Casualties</th>
<th>Militant Casualties</th>
<th>Unknown Casualties</th>
<th>Total Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bush</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>116-137</td>
<td>218-326</td>
<td>65-77</td>
<td>399-540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obama</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>129-162</td>
<td>1,659-2,683</td>
<td>146-249</td>
<td>1,934-3,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trump</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>33-62</td>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>33-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Presidents</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>245-303</td>
<td>1,910-3071</td>
<td>211-328</td>
<td>2,366-3,702</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New America Foundation

### TABLE 6.2: DRONE ATTACKS IN PAKISTAN: 2005-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Incidents</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Injured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>85+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>2651</td>
<td>354+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SATP Data until December 2017
President Obama, like his predecessor, remained ruthless and indifferent to the rules of international law, embraced the drone policy which had the advantage of the need for high numbers of personnel on the ground (Boyle, 2013). In the year 2009, Obama ordered 50 drone strikes, which reportedly killed between 517 and 729 people, among them, 98 to 207 were civilians (Zakaria, 2015, p. 204). Al-Qaeda operative Zabu Al Taifi, and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) commanders, Bait Ullah Mehsud and Malvi Gul Nazir, were also killed in 2009. Approximately 50 per cent of drone strikes were conducted in South Waziristan and 38 per cent in the North Waziristan Agency (Williams, 2010, p. 876). A small number of attacks were also carried out in the Bajaur, Kurram and Orakzai agencies.

The US, according to Noam Chomsky (2015), orchestrated the worst global assassination campaign that the world had ever witnessed. Pakistan’s tribal areas remained a significant testing ground for the employment of drone operations. Commenting on the employment of drones in Pakistan, Shane (2009) declared that for the ‘first time in history, a civilian intelligence agency [CIA] is using robots to carry out a military mission, selecting people for killing in a country where the United States is not officially at war.’

The increasing use of drone technology to kill the high-value targets and its collateral damage left a profound impact on Pak-US relations and the ongoing efforts against insurgency in the tribal areas. It is difficult to gain accurate information on the number of civilians who have been killed or wounded in drone attacks. The US government and CIA do not acknowledge the civilian casualties, but there is substantial evidence suggesting that a high number of civilians were killed in the strikes.

Boyle (2013) questions the claim of the US government regarding the precision of the attacks and argues that it is virtually impossible to verify who was killed in the inaccessible tribal areas of Pakistan. Secondly, those who are killed in drone strikes are removed from the place and are buried by sunset as per Muslim law (Zenko, 2010). The International Crisis Group (ICG) report (2013a) revealed that in addition to killing high-profile leaders of Al-Qaeda and its associated groups, the strikes have also reportedly killed a score of civilians due to the ‘signature strike’ which targets people based on their behaviour patterns instead of their known identities. The report (2013a) further argued that even the so-called ‘personality strike’ which target individuals based
on evidence of identity, it is impossible to make accurate assessments of civilian casualties.

In 2012, a team of law students from New York and Stanford University published a report based on nine months of data analysis of field interviews regarding the use of drone attacks in Pakistan. The report (2012, p. v) concluded, ‘the dominant narrative about the use of drones in Pakistan is of a surgically precise and effective tool that makes the US safer by enabling “targeted killing” of terrorists, with minimal downsides or collateral impacts’ – is false. The report (2012) further indicated that despite the US administration’s denial, there is significant evidence which demonstrates that drones have killed and injured civilians. The study revealed that the claim that drones have made the US safer is ambiguous at best. Bergen and Braun (2012) contest the accuracy and precision of drone strikes and argue that the number of high-value targets killed in the drone strike is only 2 per cent as compared to the percentage of total casualties.

A local newspaper in Pakistan reported that between January 14, 2006, and April 8, 2009, only 14 Al-Qaeda wanted leaders were killed in 60 drone strikes while killing 687 innocent civilians (The News, 2009). Another Pakistan leading newspaper reported that in 2009, among 44 drone strikes only five Al-Qaeda leaders were targeted at the cost of over 700 innocent civilians (Dawn, 2010b). The report published in another local newspaper suggested that the CIA operated drones killed 221 people including 103 children, in the hunt for four men who were on Obama’s Kill list. (The Tribune, 2014). The report further revealed that from 2004-2013, 142 children were killed while pursuing 14 high value targets.

It is extremely difficult to distinguish between high-value targets and common tribesmen. A resident from tribal areas described this dilemma faced by common people.

There is always peer pressure, tribal pressure to be hospitable. If you say no, you look like a coward and you lose face. Anyway, you can’t say no to them. If a drone strike does take place, you are a criminal in the courts of the Taliban, because you are suspected of espionage and betrayal. You are also a criminal to the government because you let the commander sleep in you hujra, (quoted in Coll, 2014).

This argument was further substantiated by Brandon Bryant - the former drone operator (2006-2011) who revealed the shocking reality of drone strikes. In his
interview with ABC (2015), Bryant declared, ‘You never know who you are killing because you never actually see a face, you just have a silhouette.’ Responding to a question whether any record is kept of mistaken killings, he maintained, ‘Everyone was considered either a military-aged male, a child or a woman, and if the children weren’t with the women, then they were considered military-aged males, which makes them lawful combatants’ (quoted in an interview with ABC, 2015). It is also reported by ICG in its 2013 report, that tribesmen provided information to the US to settle their personal vendettas with local rivalries (ICG, 2013a).

Some writers have stressed the effectiveness of drone strikes. For instance, Williams (2010) argues that after successfully targeting Nek Muhammad on June 18, 2004, a drone strike killed Haitham al Yemeni, a high-profile weapon expert of Al-Qaeda in North Waziristan on May 14, 2005. On December 3, 2005, another CIA drone strike killed Al-Qaeda number three Abu Hamza Rabia in the same tribal agency of North Waziristan. Despite the exact number of Al-Qaeda and Taliban operatives killed in the drone strikes, the constant drone threats have significantly damaged the enemy (Williams, 2010).

Zakaria (2015) however, argues that the increasing drone attacks between 2009-2012 in the tribal areas have merely led to the relocation of militant groups to the urban cities such as Karachi and did not affect their capacity to conduct terrorist attacks. Boyle (2013, p. 13) concludes that ‘the most common claims for the effectiveness of drones is based on shaky empirical evidence, questionable assumptions and logical fallacies.’ He further observes that drone strikes have significantly damaged Al-Qaeda in Pakistan, but their operatives have not stopped fighting, and many of them have moved to other countries such as Yemen, Iraq, Somalia and Syria. Drone strikes have also killed local Taliban commanders, but these have soon been replaced by new ones.

Drone strikes focused on killing the high-profile leaders of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. How far the strategy of killing the leaders of these organisation was successful? Jenna Jordan (2009) in her extensive research study from 1945 to 2004 found that the policy of removing the leader of the organisation (decapitation) is often counterproductive. According to Jordan (2009, p. 746) ‘decapitation is not a productive counterterrorism strategy…. Decapitation is actually counterproductive against large, old and religious groups.’ She argues that a small group having less than 500 members and not older than ten years are more vulnerable to decapitation. The age of Tehrik-i-
Taliban Pakistan (established in December 2007) made it vulnerable to decapitation, but its religious ideology and huge membership made it less vulnerable (Enemar, 2011).

### 6.3. The legality of Drone Strikes

Mary Ellen O’Connell, a Professor of Law at the University of Notre, questions the use of a drone on legal grounds and argues (1) that the drones are battlefield weapon and can be used only in a combat zone. It is unlawful to use it outside the combat zone. The US legally justifies the use of drones in Iraq and Afghanistan, pointing to internal violence inviting the assistance of another state. However, the US cannot point to any such invitation in Pakistan and in many cases, drone strikes took place when there was no armed conflict. Even the express consent by the Pakistani government cannot justify its use because states cannot give consent to a right they do not have. She further observes (2), that the principle of necessity and proportionality must be respected by the US when employing drones. ‘Proportionality prohibits that “which may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to concrete and direct military advantage anticipated’ (O’Connell, 2010, p. 5). Keeping this principle in mind, the drone attacks fuelled anti-Americanism helping the militants to attract more recruits to take revenge.

O’Connell further argues that (3) drones operating in Pakistan are clearly violating the humanitarian law identified by the International Committee of the Red Cross. The drone attacks in Pakistan are conducted by CIA operators and civilian contractor who are hardly trained in the laws of armed conflict. O’Connell (2010, p. 6) concludes that ‘given the negative impact of that unlawful conduct on American’s standing in the world and our ability to promote the rule of law, it is difficult to fathom why the Obama administration is using the CIA to carry out drone attacks, let alone civilian contractors.’

The failure of the US government to publish information regarding drones and to allow independent scrutiny, undermines the assertion that the strikes were conducted in accordance with international law (ICG, 2013a). Article of 2 (4) of the UN charter refrains a member state from using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other member state. However, there are two exceptions to this rule. The Security Council has been given authority to act if there is any threat to peace
and during an act of aggression (O’Connell, 2010). Secondly, article 51 of Chapter VII also provides that state may act in response to self-defence in case of an armed attack against it, until the Security Council acts. Murphy (2009, p. 18) maintains that drone strikes in Pakistan can be justified under the following circumstance: (1) consent by the Pakistani government; (2) authorisation by the UN Security Council; (3) inherent self-defence against non-state actors operating from Pakistan; or (4) inherent self-defence against Pakistan itself.’

It is significant to note here that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) does not authorise any state to intervene and take action against non-state groups in another sovereign state (Peron, 2014, p. 88). O’Connell (2010, p. 89) argues that the targeted killing of people through drone strikes has no legal basis and should be ‘characterised as an indiscriminate and disproportional use of force that violates the sovereignty of Pakistan.’ The Pakistan government denied any agreement with the US which allowed the drone strikes in the country. The Peshawar High Court in Pakistan in 2013 declared that the drone strikes were illegal and that they violate the country’s national sovereignty and therefore must be declared war crimes as they kill innocent people.

Amnesty International in its report (2013) titled ‘Will I be next’ maintained that the innocent killings in the tribal areas of Pakistan may be considered as war crimes and extrajudicial killings. The report revealed how 68-year-old Mamana Bibi was blown into pieces in October 2012 when she was gathering vegetables in the field, and how 18 male labours were killed in a series of drone strike when they were gathered for an evening meal after a hard day’s work. Aslam (2011, p. 326) observes that the US policy of drone strikes cannot be categorised as a ‘responsible position when measured against the benchmarks of legality, legitimacy and prudence.’

The above writers have largely engaged in legal and human rights debate ignoring the role of the drones in the support of the insurgency. The empirical data collected for this study suggests how collateral damage of drones helped the insurgents to garner public support. Classical theorists such as Galula argue that the sole purpose of a counterinsurgency strategy is to win the hearts and minds of the neutral majority which will, in turn, provides information and intelligence to contain the insurgency. The killing of innocent people and children in tribal areas reduces the chances of a successful counterinsurgency strategy. The government’s efforts were, therefore,
jeopardised by the loss of human lives caused by drone strikes. According to post-global counterinsurgency theory, insurgents deliberately provoke and invite the attacks of the government and its allied forces and they use the public resentment as a tool to garner the support of the people. Furthermore, the disagreement and differences over the drone strikes also left a significant impact on the effectiveness of counterinsurgency efforts.

The illegality of drone strikes weakened the moral justification of these attacks. Many Pakistani politicians questioned the strikes on legal ground. Leaders of political parties such as Imran Khan, questioned that under what law the drone strikes are being conducted. Consequently, ordinary Pakistanis also started questioning that why drones are being used in the tribal areas if they are not legally authorised. The debate on drone strikes therefore informed the public opinion and increased anti-American sentiments in Pakistan while making it difficult to win the support of the people against the insurgents. Pakistan’s Ambassador to United Nations Masood Khan told the 15-nation council during a discussion on the situation in Afghanistan that ‘Drone strikes infringe our sovereignty, violate international law, including international human rights and humanitarian law, cause civilian casualties and are detrimental to the combined efforts to fight terrorism’ (Dawn, 2013). The illegality of drone strikes not only affected the combined efforts against militancy but made the victims martyrs in the sight of common people thus making it difficult to win the support of the people.

6.4. The US Perspective on Drone Strikes

Former chief counterterrorism advisors for both President Bush and Obama endorsed the use of drone strikes and declared them ethical, wise and necessary as they were able to kill high-profile leaders of Al-Qaeda in a remote, inaccessible region (Boyle, 2013). Juan Zarate, President Bush’s counterterrorism advisor, stated that ‘Al-Qaeda is on its heels’ partly because ‘so many bigwigs’ have been killed by drones (quoted in Mayor, 2009). On May 1, 2012, John Brennan Obama’s chief counterterrorism advisor (2009-2013) maintained that since the US is engaged in a conflict with Al-Qaeda and its associates post 9/11, the use of lethal forces against these organisations is legally justifiable in a country which is unable to take actions against them (quoted in Zakaria,
He further asserted that due to the existing threat to the US, the use of drone strikes which avoid unnecessary civil casualties are ethical (Ibid).

In a meeting with Pakistani officials in 2008, US Central Command chief Gen. David Petraeus told them that we are helping Pakistan through our drone strikes which kill the bad guys with minimal collateral damage (quoted in I. Khan, 2008b). Former CIA Director Michael Hayden (2006-2009), advocating the excessive use of drone strikes in the tribal areas of Pakistan, argued that due to drone strikes the tribal region has remained ‘neither safe nor a haven’ for Al-Qaeda and its affiliated network’ (quoted in CNN, 2009). Former Director CIA Leon Panetta (2009-2011), while supporting the use of drones, argued that they were effective in terms of their precision and collateral damage and were ‘the only game in town in terms of confronting or trying to disrupt the Al-Qaeda leadership’ (quoted in CNN, 2009).

Speaking for the first time regarding the controversial use of drones, President Obama in 2012 rejected the perception that ‘we’re just sending in a whole bunch of strikes willy-nilly …. This is a targeted, focused effort at people who are on a list of active terrorists, who are trying to go in and harm Americans’ (quoted in De Young, 2012). Justifying US strikes in other countries, the then US Secretary of Homeland Security argued that international law should allow and accommodate a country’s needs to deter any possible threat abroad by taking pre-emptive actions (The Dawn, 2008d).

Writers such as Plaw, Fricker and Williams (2011) also conclude that the US has no other alternative than drone strikes, which are more humane and reasonable, to pre-empt any terrorist strike emanating from tribal areas of Pakistan. Ullman and Wade (1996) suggest that the best way to fight asymmetric threats is to undertake destructive operations to incapacitate the enemy. This could be achieved by effectively using information technology, in order to ensure the accuracy of the target. Fair (2010) argues that the drone strikes have been well-planned, intelligence-based operations conducted with minimum civilian deaths. It is interesting to note that the US government does not provide any information on how civilians and ‘combatants’ are distinguished in drone strikes (Peron, 2014). The most important yet overlooked aspect of the drones is how far the attacks have made the tribal areas inhospitable for foreign as well as local militants. The evidence suggests that drone strikes, and their collateral damage have made it difficult for the government to win the support of the people and increased sympathy for the insurgents.
6.5. The Perspective of the Pakistani Government

An ICG report (2013a), claims that Pakistan’s military dictator General Pervez Musharraf and the subsequent government of Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani, had entered into tacit agreement with the US regarding drone strikes. Gilani for the first time in 2010 acknowledged that the Musharraf government permitted the US government to use the drones for ‘surveillance and reconnaissance’ in Pakistan (The Tribune, 2010). Musharraf, in an interview with CNN in 2013, acknowledged that the government has signed off on strikes “only on a few occasions, when a target was absolutely isolated and [there was] no chance of collateral damage” (quoted in Robertson and Botelho, 2013).

Publicly, however, the PPP government expressed their concerns over the excessive use of drone strikes, and also conveyed these concerns to the US government. In a meeting with US Central Command chief Gen. David Petraeus, the then President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, termed the drone attacks counterproductive. The President stated that ‘continuing drone attacks on our territory, which results in loss of precious lives and property are counterproductive and difficult to explain by a democratically elected government. It is creating a credibility gap’ (quoted in The Frontier Post, 2008e, p. 1). President Asif Ali Zardari also reiterated in his interview with CBS that the US drone attacks were undermining the efforts to win the hearts and minds of the people against the militants (The Frontier Post, 2008f, p. 1). The Pakistan defence minister Ahmad Mukhtar in 2008 observed that the US drone strikes were generating ‘anti-American sentiments’ and creating ‘outrage and uproar among the people’, (quoted in Perlez, 2008b).

In 2009, the Pakistan Prime Minister said that ‘We are trying to separate militants from tribesmen, but the drone attacks are doing exactly the opposite’ (Pak Tribune, 2009). The Prime Minister of Pakistan in his meeting with the British Minister of Defence asked for help to stop the drone attacks as they were counter-productive and negatively affecting the government’s campaign against the militants (The Frontier Post, 2009d, p. 1). The Pakistan Foreign Office reiterated that differences existed over the use of drone attacks stressing that a ‘holistic approach is needed to resolve the problem being faced by the region’ (T. Khan, 2009, p. 1). The government repeatedly expressed its concerns over the excessive use of drone attacks and requested that the US should give the drone technology to Pakistan to boost its indigenous capacity to
eliminate insurgency in the area. However, the request was turned down despite the fact that they were supposed to be allies in the war against terrorism.

On October 7, 2010, Pakistani foreign office spokesman Abdul Basit maintained that the drone strikes in the tribal areas of Pakistan had ‘neither justification nor understanding.’ He further said that the strikes were ‘not serving the larger strategic interests, especially in the context of our efforts to win hearts and minds, which is part and parcel of our strategy against militants and terrorists’ (quoted in BBC, 2010). The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar, speaking at the Asia Society in 2012, stated:

This has to be our war. We are the ones who have to fight against them. As a drone flies over the territory of Pakistan, it becomes an American war again. And the whole logic of this being our fight, in our own interest is immediately put aside, and again it is a war which is imposed on us (Asia Society, 2012).

On April 12, 2012, the National Assembly of Pakistan passed a resolution which called for the immediate halt of drone strikes and a review of relations with the US. The resolution stated, ‘Pakistan’s sovereignty shall not be compromised…. relations with the USA should be based on mutual respect for the sovereignty, independence and the territorial integrity of each other’ (NA resolution 9, 2012).

6.6. Global Counterinsurgency Theory

Global Counterinsurgency Theory, propounded by David Kilcullen (2005), suggests that global jihad is insurgency which aims to change the existing world order through the use of violence and subversion. This study, however, applied classical theory to understand the internal military operations against the insurgents. The classical theory is relevant because the insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan was primarily reactionary-traditionalist. The insurgents in tribal areas relied on the population for logistical support. However, the local Taliban had established links with international organisations such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). The US government used drone strikes to kill Al-Qaeda, and Taliban operatives in the tribal areas, creating a backlash which was exploited by the militant organisations. To deprive international terrorist organisations such as Al-Qaeda of local support, Kilcullen (2005) argues that the traditional counterinsurgency model of the 1960s had to be revised to
create what he calls ‘counterinsurgency redux’. Therefore, in 2005 he proposed the idea of ‘disaggregation’ to counter the global insurgency.

A strategy of disaggregation according to Kilcullen (2005, p. 610) should cut the links between global, regional and local actors. This would deny the exploitation of local actors by the global and regional actors. Similarly, the strategy focuses on isolating Islamists from the local population, while winning their hearts and minds. Kilcullen disaggregation strategy primarily focuses on delinking global and regional actors from local operatives. The most important aspect of the theory which is relevant to address insurgency in the tribal areas is how to alienate the local population from militants. However, instead of applying the disaggregation strategy to alienate the local insurgents from the international terrorist groups, the US used its drone strikes, which contributed to the escalation of insurgency in the tribal areas.

Kilcullen (2009a) argues that the war on terrorism can best be understood as being against a transnational globalised insurgency instead of the traditional terrorism problem. In this globalised insurgency, Al-Qaeda ‘seeks to use the tools of globalisation to aggregate the effects of diverse actors separated in time and space’ (Kilcullen, 2009a, p. 29). To support his argument, he quotes Osama bin Laden, who outlined the Al-Qaeda strategic approach, stating that “All we have to do is to send two Mujahideen to the furthest point East to raise a cloth on which is written Al-Qaeda, in order to make the [US] generals race there to cause America to suffer human, economic and political losses” (Ibid).

Kilcullen (2009a) also mentions that seeing the immediate failure of a mass uprisings in the Muslim world after 9/11, Al-Qaeda’s strategy changed from terrorism to the new guerrilla model. Currently, both of these models coexist, and Al-Qaeda now exploits the alienated Muslim population. As stated above, Al-Qaeda exploits the backlash against Western intervention to obtain public support. According to Kilcullen (2009a) Al-Qaeda first provokes insurgency, then exploits it in its favour. To achieve its organisational objectives, Al-Qaeda applies four basic tactics essential for any insurgent movement (as discussed in Chapter 1). The insurgents commit atrocities to provoke the government. They intimidate those people who cooperate with the government. According to Kilcullen, the key purpose of the insurgents is to protract the conflict, and exhaust the government.
Kilcullen (2010, p. 2) argues that ‘the whole art of counterinsurgency is to develop specific measures, tailored to the environment, to suppress a particular insurgency and strengthen the resilience of a particular threatened society and government.’ The theory suggests that disaggregation would involve supporting the local governments, strengthening their security framework, providing them with training, and enabling them to resist the jihadist threat which aims to overthrow them. The disaggregation strategy proposed by Kilcullen (2009a) is helpful to understand the external dimension of insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas; had it been applied it could have alienated the local militants from Al-Qaeda.

6.7. The Impact of Drones on the Escalation of Insurgency

Analysing the impact of drones, Hudson, Owens and Flannes (2011, p. 123) argue that the drone strikes have led to blowback and have created hatred and retaliation against the US in Pakistan. Instead of eliminating insurgents, the attacks created new insurgents. Thirdly, the excessive use of drone strikes has complicated the US relations with Pakistan. A Pew Research Centre survey of Pakistanis in 2010 found that 93 per cent of people considered drone strikes a bad thing and 90 per cent believed that they kill too many innocent people (Enemark, 2011, pp. 226-227). A Pew Research Centre poll in 2012 revealed that 74 per cent of Pakistanis consider American to be an enemy. The poll further says that only 17 per cent support drone strikes against militants, but even then, only if conducted with the support of the Pakistan government.

Mahmood (2015, p. 26) argues that the US and Pakistan decapitation attacks against the Taliban not only created anti-US sentiments but also sympathies for militant groups. Initially, the Taliban focused their targets against the Pakistan government, but after the introduction of the decapitation policy, the Taliban increased their attacks against the US (Ibid). Similarly, Aslam (2011, p. 323) maintains that ‘the drone attacks that kill the innocent civilians may lead victims, (usually male) family members and friends to join militants active in those areas in order to take revenge upon the United States and its allies, the entities which they see as deserving of it.’ Furthermore, Aslam argues that drone attacks create more enemies than they eliminate. Boyle (2013, p. 14) further observes that the government inability to stop drones could potentially cripple
the government and strengthen the militant groups to challenge the authority of the state through violence.

Boyle (2013) maintained that drone attacks corrode and undermine the credibility of local governments, and help the militant organisation to attract new recruits which fight to overthrow these governments. In his interview, Bait Ullah Mehsud, commander of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), maintained that every drone attack brings him 150 volunteers (Nawaz, 2009a, p. 18). Kilcullen and Andrew Exum (2009) in their study suggest that drone costs outweigh their benefits. In their opinion, the non-combatant victims of the drones have alienated families, which are then intent on revenge, thus helping militants to attract more recruits. Like in Somalia, militancy grew exponentially with the increase in drone strikes. But the question is why then the US government continued its drone policy if it was counterproductive. Cameron Munter, who remained the US ambassador in Pakistan from 2010-2012, raised the issue with the CIA and tried to convince them that the drone attacks were increasingly destabilising Pakistan. He was told that ‘You know this is a never-ending war. Whose side are you on?’ (quoted in Coll, 2014).

As noted above, the drone strikes not only influenced Pakistan’s counterinsurgency efforts but also contributed to the escalation of insurgency in the tribal areas. The tribal areas (as demonstrated in Chapter 3) are ruled by the centuries-old tradition known as Pakhtunwali (code of Pashtun life). Badal (revenge) is one of the key features of Pakhtunwali, where it is incumbent upon a person whose family or relative has been killed to take revenge. The drone strikes and their collateral damage helped the insurgents to attract more support and take revenge on both the US and Pakistan governments. For instance, on November 19, 2008, the first drone missile was fired in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) settler district of Bannu, which killed 13 people. To take revenge on drone strikes, insurgents started attacking NATO supply vehicles to Afghanistan. The supply line passed through the Peshawar and Khyber Agency. On December 8, 2008, some 200 Taliban attacked and destroyed 50 NATO supply trucks near Peshawar (The Frontier Post, 2008i, p. 1). Due to the increasing insecurity and threats to the truckers, some 3,500 drivers stopped supplying the NATO forces (The Frontier Post, 2008j, p. 1). Instead of containing the capacity of insurgents to undertake attacks, the drone attacks intensified the insurgents’ brutality against pro-government suspects. On January 20, 2009, the Taliban killed six tribesmen over charges of spying...
for the US and warned that anyone found spying for the US, Pakistan and Afghanistan would face the same fate (*The Frontier Post*, 2009d, p. 1).

On January 23, 2009, only three days after Obama was sworn in as a President, three missiles were fired in North and South Waziristan, killing 20 people (*The Frontier Post*, 2009e, p. 1). While burying the victims, people expressed the deepest anger over the government’s inability to protect the lives of its citizens. A tribal elder was quoted as asking ‘How could the children of five and eight years be terrorists?’ (*The Frontier Post*, 2009f, p. 1). TTP also warned the government that increasing drone attacks would lead to more attacks on government property. People from South Waziristan took to the streets on June 19, 2009, to condemn the US drone strikes which were killing innocent people, and termed them extremely counterproductive (*The Frontier Post*, 2009g, p. 1).

In an interview with local journalists on October 5, 2009, the TTP commander Hakeem Ullah Mehsud announced that the resistance against the government would continue and the group would take revenge of those killed in drone strikes (quoted in Shahid, 2009a).

The local leading Pakistani newspaper reported that when ‘drones kill innocent bystanders it infuriates the Taliban – on both sides of the border – who use this campaign to recruit additional foot soldiers and suicide bombers’ (*Dawn*, 2010c). John Brennan, Obama’s counterterrorism advisor, while defending the use of drones also expressed concerns that ‘an action that eliminates a single terrorist but causes civilian casualties can, in fact, inflame local populations and create far more problems – a tactical success but a strategic failure’ (quoted in De Young, 2010, p. 2). On May 1, 2010, a Pakistani born American, Faisal Shehzad, who was trained by the TTP in Waziristan, made a failed attempt to blow up Times Square in New York. Responding to the judge’s question about how could he be so comfortable about killing innocent people, Shehzad replied: ‘Well, the drone hits in Afghanistan and Iraq, they don’t see children, they don’t see anybody. They kill women, children, they kill everybody. It’s a war and in war they kill people. They’re killing all Muslims’ (Boyle, 2013, p.1).

In another report, *Dawn* (2010d) observed that ‘Pakistanis feel that the US drone strategy compromises its sovereignty and enrages militants who then seek revenge by attacking the Pakistani military and civilians.’ Williams (2010) recounted one such story of a tribesman who rammed his explosive-filled vehicle into a Pakistan army convoy to take revenge for his family members killed in a drone strike. Imran Khan,
the then opposition leader and current Prime Minister of Pakistan (in 2021), took a long march to Waziristan in October 2012 to express solidarity with the victims of drone attacks. Addressing the rally, he criticised the government for allowing the US to kill innocent people. On another occasion, he stated that due to drone strikes the Taliban think that ‘we are slaves of America, that the Pakistan government is taking money from the US and fighting its (America’s) war and killing its own people…. Therefore, they have declared jihad (holy war against the Pakistan army and Pakistan security forces) (quoted in Dawn, 2013b).

In March 2012, a newly formed FATA joint parliamentary group threatened to block all US and NATO shipments to Afghanistan if the government failed to stop drone attacks in the tribal areas. A tribal elder was quoted as saying that ‘30,000 innocent tribal people including women and children have been killed while hundreds of mosques, hospitals, educational institutions have [been] blown up. The war on terror triggers mass migration of a thousand families, but there is no one to speak for them’ (Masud, 2012, p.1). Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesperson, Tasneem Aslam, stated in a briefing that the drone strikes are violating Pakistan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and negatively impacting the government efforts to bring peace and stability to the region (quoted in Dawn, 2014a).

In January 2013, the local Taliban commander from South Waziristan, Mullah Nazir, was killed in a drone attack. He was chief of the Ahmadzai Wazir tribe and played a key role in the ousting of Uzbeki Mujahideen from South Waziristan. Once a pro-government local Taliban leader, he turned against the government due to US drone strikes (Fishman, 2010). On February 2, 2013, a group of insurgents attacked a camp of security forces in the Southern district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, killing 13 security personnel and 11 civilians. Claiming responsibility for the attack, the TTP said that the attack was carried out in retaliation for a drone strike which killed two militant commanders in North Waziristan (The Tribune, 2013b).

In 2013, after general elections were held, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) came into power. The new government initiated high-level peace negotiations with the local Taliban, who accepted the government peace initiative and formed a committee to engage in dialogue. However, the killing of a Taliban leader Hakimullah led to the suspension of the peace process. Pakistan’s interior minister, Chaudhry Nisar, said that ‘it was not an attack on an individual but murder of the peace process that was
being diligently pursued by the government with unprecedented support of political parties, ulema and the army’ (quoted in I. Khan, 2013). Soon after the killing of its top commander in a drone strike, the local Taliban cancelled the offer and vowed to continue fighting. A Taliban spokesman, Azam Tariq, said that ‘Every drop of Hakimullah’s blood will turn into a suicide bomber. America and their friends shouldn’t be happy because we take revenge for our martyr’s blood’ (quoted in BBC, 2013). The internal counterinsurgency efforts to resolve the issue politically and win the hearts and minds of people once again failed due to the action of an external actor.

**Conclusion**

This chapter analysed the impact of an external factor on the internal counterinsurgency in the light of the third stage of the framework developed for this study. It was concluded that the key aim of the counterinsurgency strategy is to win the support of the people. However, the said support cannot be effectively obtained if an external actor’s intervention reinforces the insurgents’ narrative. In order to understand this, the global counterinsurgency theory was applied as a theoretical framework. The theory of global counterinsurgency argues that a terrorist organisation such as Al-Qaeda provokes the international powers, and when they react and pursue coercive policies, the organisation then exploits the local reaction and aggregates it against the enemy. Therefore, the best strategy, according to Kilcullen, is disaggregation, which deprives the international and regional insurgents of local support.

The US, however, instead of applying the strategy of disaggregation employed its drone policy which failed to undermine the support for insurgents. The strategy further contributed to the escalation of insurgency in the tribal areas. Presidents Bush and Obama both allowed and justified the use of drone strikes. Similarly, successive heads of the CIA supported the programme for its precision while incurring the minimum loss of American soldiers. However, the lack of an official account regarding drones generated wide debate about their legality, utility and precision. Different sources suggested an alarming number of innocent people, including women and children, had been killed in these strikes. Internally, the strikes undermined the credibility and legitimacy of the Pakistan government for not protecting its citizens. This also strengthened the insurgents’ narrative projecting the US as the biggest enemy and the Pakistan government, its puppet, as killing its own people for US dollars. This helped insurgents to garner public support and attract new recruits.
As stated earlier, insurgency escalation has been discussed by numerous scholars. They have discussed how external support to insurgents, and internal military operations contribute to the escalation of insurgency. This chapter enhances our knowledge by providing a different explanation for the escalation of insurgency. The chapter suggested that the intervention/support of an external actor into a host state and its support for counterinsurgent forces also determines the escalation of insurgency. The tribal areas of Pakistan, in this case, offered a classic example of how the militants exploited the victims of drone strikes to escalate the insurgency.
Conclusion

The key aim of this thesis was to examine the insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan and the responses of the government to counter it. This project attempted to address the following key questions: why the insurgency began, why it expanded and why it escalated. Furthermore, this study dissects why the government’s counterinsurgency strategy failed to contain the insurgency and how external factors influenced the efforts to address the insurgency. In order to address these questions, this thesis applied a three-stages framework to obtain a holistic understanding of insurgency, and suggested novel explanations for the different stages of the insurgency. Furthermore, the thesis integrated classical and global counterinsurgency theories to understand how the internal and external dimensions of insurgency can effectively be countered.

There remains no single explanation for the onset of insurgencies. The various theoretical and empirical literatures have, therefore, put forward different explanations to understand insurgencies. For instance, the existing theoretical literature suggests that insurgencies are best explained by poverty and inequality (Gurr, 1970; Muller and Seligson, 1987; Fandl, 2003; Blattman and Miguel, 2010; Benmelech, Berrebi, and Klor, 2012). The literature suggests that there is a robust relation between poverty and internal state conflict (Blattman and Miguel, 2010). According to them, poverty and inequality generate discontent against the state. This discontent leads to political violence and culminates in rebellion. This study suggested that poverty provides an enabling environment but alone does not explain insurgency and revolution. If this was the case, as argued by Goodwin and Skocpol (1989), why did some states in Asia, such as China and Vietnam, witness revolution, but not India or Indonesia? Why did Cuba, a more developed country in Latin America, have a revolution, but not Haiti or the Dominican Republic? Similarly, this argument fails to explain insurgency in the tribal areas because the area suffered from poverty and backwardness for a long period of time; however, it did not witness any insurgency before Pakistan joined the US-led war against terrorism.

Another key argument demonstrated in the theoretical literature is that it is weak states that make insurgencies more feasible (Goodwin and Skocpol, 1989; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Jones, 2008a). The literature suggests that countries such as Afghanistan, Mozambique, Georgia and Bosnia faced insurgencies because of their weak state
control (Jones, 2008a). It has been noted that weak states provide opportunities and create a favourable environment for the onset of insurgencies, and increase the survival rate of insurgents compared to strong states (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). The literature on weak states thus concludes that it is not poverty but the structure of the state and its relationship with different sections of the society which explain the origins of insurgencies. However, while the literature partially explains why some states, such as those noted above, have faced insurgencies, it does not explain why other states, such as Bhutan, Cameroon and Ecuador have avoided insurgencies, despite being weak. Similarly, Pakistan, although a weak state, did not witness any insurgency before 9/11 in its tribal areas.

In addition, a number of scholars have stressed that Pakistan’s foreign policy during the Soviet-Afghan war is a key explanatory factor for the insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan (Fair, 2004; Weinbaum and Harder, 2008; Murphy and Malik, 2009; Siddiq, 2009; Gopal, Mahsud and Fishman, 2010; Bokhari, 2011; Brown, 2013). They have maintained that the army and ISI support for different militant groups during the Soviet-Afghan war was the most important factor responsible for the current insurgency in the area (Gopal, Mahsud and Fishman, 2010). Furthermore, Islamabad’s Kashmir policy, where the army extended its support to different militant groups, is also described as a key explanatory factor for the current insurgency in the area (Fair, 2012). This argument is important, however, in isolation, this does not explain the beginning of the insurgency in the tribal region. The key question why the tribal areas did not witness any insurgency before 9/11, despite Pakistan’s relations with, and support for militant groups in Afghanistan and Kashmir has not adequately been addressed by the current literature.

Similarly, there is increasing agreement among scholars (as demonstrated in Chapter 1) that insurgency expanded in the tribal areas because of the unwillingness of the Pakistan army to take indiscriminate action against all the militant groups (Weinbaum, 2014; Fair, Malhotra and Shapiro, 2010; Nawaz, 2009a; Rubin and Rashid, 2008; Behuria, 2007; Hussain, 2007). According to the relevant literature, Pakistan’s reluctance was caused by two key factors. The government did not want to lose its leverage over Afghan militant groups, in order to ensure the security of its western border with Afghanistan. The second key factor discussed in the literature was that Pakistan wanted to use these militant groups in other areas such as Kashmir. So, taking
actions against militant groups selectively, not indiscriminately, it is argued, was an important factor which led to the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas.

Scholars have also maintained that it was not the lack of the government’s political will, but the capacity of the security forces, which was the key factor which influenced Pakistan counterinsurgency strategy (Lieven, 2011; Rizvi, 2011; Cohen and Nawaz, 2009; Kilcullen, 2009c; Nawaz, 2009b; Paczynska, 2009). It has been argued that the Pakistan security forces lacked the necessary counterinsurgency training, and this undermined their efforts to fight a revolutionary war. It has also been suggested that the security forces lacked operational materiel such as helicopters and mine-protected vehicles which hampered the efforts against insurgents in the tribal areas (Cohen and Nawaz, 2009). The empirical data, however, suggests that the Pakistan army did conduct major military operations against the Pakistani Taliban, demonstrating its political will, and the security forces applied a counterinsurgency strategy in Swat and Bajaur in 2009 reflecting their capabilities. So, the above arguments do not fully explain the expansion of insurgency in tribal areas.

Similarly, studies on the escalation of insurgencies (Bose, 2003; Byman, 2006; Kubo, 2007; Melshen, 2007) have argued that external support to insurgent groups helped them to escalate insurgency. Insurgencies in Vietnam and Afghanistan were successful and escalated because they were supported externally (Melshen, 2007). The literature has also suggested that internal coercive operations against the insurgents play an important role in the escalation of insurgencies. The key shortcoming in the literature is that it explains the significance of external support to insurgents but does not explain the importance of external support to counterinsurgents and how this escalates insurgencies.

As noted earlier, the key contribution of this study is that it addressed the key gap in the literature by using the three stages-framework. The first stage of this framework demonstrated that insurgency began in the tribal areas of Pakistan when the government attempted to fight militancy militarily after 9/11 without challenging it ideologically. Instead of neutralising and undermining the existing support base of militancy – a key principle of counterinsurgency – the government began to conduct military operations to address deep-rooted ideological problems. The security forces had supported these groups earlier as it was in the national interest. This deviation from traditional security policy provided a strong cause to the insurgents without which the
insurgency could not begin. Based on this cause, the insurgents built a narrative against the government. The military government, however, could not produce an effective counternarrative to undermine the support for the insurgents. This inability to develop an effective counternarrative after 9/11 was the most important factor leading to the outbreak of insurgency in the tribal areas.

The second stage of the framework demonstrated that the most important factor responsible for the expansion of the insurgency was the disproportional use of force in military operations. These military operations were not complemented by an effective counternarrative (as I demonstrated in the first stage) and they were conducted in areas of limited statehood where the government had weak control and legitimacy. The tribal areas had been neglected for a long time and remained underdeveloped. The arrival of the army and the use of force and the subsequent collateral damage created space for the insurgents to obtain the support of the people and increase their area of influence.

The third stage of the framework suggested that the intervention of an external actor (the US) was a key factor that led to the escalation of the insurgency. Despite being allies in the war against terrorism, there was a lack of compatibility and coordination in the goals of Pakistan and the US. Pakistan wanted to eliminate those groups who were involved in the armed struggle against its security forces, whilst the US was more interested in eliminating Al-Qaeda and Taliban operatives who were using the tribal areas for their cross-border incursions into Afghanistan. These differences intensified in 2008 when the US initiated a series of drone strikes which targeted the high-profile leadership of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. However, the drone strikes killed an increasing number of innocent people, which helped the insurgents to exploit the survivors and train them to avenge their loved ones.

While addressing the above key questions, the study also applied both classical and global counterinsurgency theories to understand why Pakistan’s counterinsurgency strategy failed to contain insurgency in the tribal areas. The classical theory suggested that the whole purpose of the counterinsurgency strategy is to win the support of the people. However, this study demonstrated that the support of the people cannot be obtained if an external actor’s actions strengthen/reinforce the insurgents’ cause. Therefore, this study applied the global counterinsurgency theory along with classical theory. The global counterinsurgency theory suggested that international terrorist organisations exploit the local militant groups for their own objectives and suggested a
disaggregation strategy. The application of both the theories enhances our understanding of insurgency in a single theatre of war where different actors are involved and help us learn how to win the support of the people.

Arriving at the above key findings, I demonstrated in Chapter 3 that Pakistan was born as an insecure state in 1947. Its eastern border with India remained vulnerable and so does its western border with Afghanistan. In the very first year after independence, Pakistan fought a war with India over the princely state of Kashmir. Considering it to be an integral part of the country, Pakistan continued to extend support to the Kashmiri Mujahideen groups. Similarly, to avoid the exploitation of its unrecognised western border with Afghanistan, Islamabad supported pro-Pakistan Afghan Mujahideen groups. These groups were actively supported by the army and ISI with the help of CIA during the Soviet-Afghan war. During that time, the tribal areas were also used to train Mujahideen for Afghan jihad.

The above security vulnerabilities left a deep impact on the internal politics of the country. Pakistan was created in the name of Islam. After the creation of the country, the Objectives Resolution was passed in 1949 to ensure Pakistan followed the ideology and faith of Islam. Furthermore, the military regime of General Zia ul Haq adopted a number of measures to Islamise the country. The army and security agencies not only used religion for foreign policy goals externally but also let militant groups and religious parties exploit religion for their vested interests. Jihad as demonstrated in Chapter 3 was also glorified in the national interest. Pakistan supported the Taliban during the civil war in Afghanistan (1992-96) and was one of the three countries along with Saudi Arabi and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which recognised the Taliban government in Kabul.

Against this background, Pakistan became a frontline state in the war against terror, and the Musharraf government was urged on different occasions by the US to abandon the traditional security policies and take indiscriminate action against all the militant groups. Musharraf also wanted to consolidate his own regime and needed international support; therefore, instead of formulating an indigenous strategy to win the support of the people, he ordered the deployment of security forces in the tribal areas to flush out foreign militants. The government began to convince the tribal people that the same jihad they had been fighting against the Soviet forces had now become terrorist. As demonstrated in this study, the military government failed to understand
the vital importance of developing an effective counternarrative before starting military operations.

This failure was further compounded by the inability of political and religious parties to build a consensus and present a united stance against insurgency. All the major political parties including the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI) and religious parties including Jamiat ul Islam (JuI) and Jamaat-i-Islami, and nationalist parties such as the Awami National Party (ANP) criticised the government for deploying security forces to the tribal areas. The dysfunctional parliament in the military regime and the division of political and religious parties along religious and parochial lines left enough space for the insurgents to promote their cause and consequently their narrative remained unchallenged. The Taliban declared Pakistan an un-Islamic country fighting the US war. On the other hand, the Taliban presented themselves as saviours and promised to implement a Shariah-based justice system. The presence of the above factors made it easier for the militants to exploit the population of the conservative tribal society and start an armed struggle against the government when the army was deployed in the tribal areas.

The tribal areas as I demonstrated in Chapter 5 constituted an area of ‘limited statehood’ which curtailed the government authority to have a monopoly over the use of violence. The state’s limited territorial control and bad governance made the area ripe for the expansion of the insurgency. It was observed that the century-old administrative system in the tribal areas had lost the trust and confidence of the people. Similarly, the state was unable to foster a conducive environment for sustainable economic growth. Lack of accountable political institutions undermined the legitimacy of the government in the tribal areas. However, as I have demonstrated in Chapter 1, these factors alone did not contribute to insurgency unless they were combined with the lack of counternarrative and were compounded by the military operations. The unwarranted military operations and consequent collateral damage enabled the militants to win the support of the people and expand insurgency to the rest of the tribal areas.

Initially, there were a few hundred foreign militants which could be flushed out with the support of the people, but the government installed 80,000 security personnel in South Waziristan in 2004 to conduct a military operation against Al-Qaeda and its
affiliates. When the military operations failed, the government began to appease the militants by signing different peace agreements to the latter’s benefit. The government lack of control made it difficult for the government to protect the tribal leaders who resisted the militants. According to one estimate, some 800 tribal elders were killed by the Taliban after 9/11 (A. Ahmed, 2013, p. 77). The weak state control let the Taliban abduct 1,000 security personnel in 2007. Despite the backlash and weak state control, the government continued to focus on an enemy-centric approach. In 2008, for instance, the army destroyed 4007 houses in a military operation in South Waziristan, inflicting huge financial loss while displacing 200,000 tribesmen from the area.

The shifting of strategy from coercion to winning hearts and minds helped the government to achieve some success in Bajaur and Swat in 2009. In Bajaur, the government established Tribal Lashkar and involved junior field officers in decision making which helped the government to alienate the hardcore insurgents from the reconcilable ones. Similarly, in Swat, the government first signed a peace agreement with the militants, indicating that the government was serious about peace in the area. However, the peace agreement was violated by the insurgents, who refused to surrender their arms and began to attack the security forces. This helped the government to obtain the support of the people.

However, the government efforts to counter insurgency were also influenced by external factors. As I demonstrated in Chapter 6, the application of a counterinsurgency strategy in a single theatre of war is unlikely to succeed if the counterinsurgent forces have divergent interests. After 9/11, despite being an ally of the US, Pakistan continued to differentiate between Afghan-based Taliban and Pakistani Taliban. These differences intensified in 2008, and the US began to directly target the high-profile leadership of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. According to a report, 424 drone strikes were carried out in Pakistan between 2001-2016. In 2009, only five Al-Qaeda operatives were killed in 44 drones strikes which reportedly killed 700 innocent people (Dawn, 2010b). A report in a local newspaper revealed that in order to kill four Al-Qaeda members, the drone strikes killed 103 innocent children (The Tribune, 2014).

The US also continued to pressurise Pakistan to ‘do more’ and take more decisive action against all the groups indiscriminately. The US drone strikes and their collateral damage significantly affected Pakistan’s internal counterinsurgency efforts. If on one hand, it reinforced the Taliban’s narrative of fighting a religious war, on the
other it weakened the government narrative that it was Pakistan’s war. Most importantly, the insurgents would attack security forces and innocent people to avenge those killed in the drone strikes. Consequently, this made it difficult for the government to win the support of the people against the insurgents.

Given, the above key findings, this study suggests that without taking into consideration the following essential points, the reactionary-traditionalist insurgency in Pakistan cannot be effectively countered.

- Fighting a religiously motivated struggle without building an effective counternarrative will lead to the outbreak of the insurgency, Therefore, a counternarrative should be a key constituent of a counterinsurgency strategy to counter religiously motivated insurgencies of a tribal nature.
- Limited statehood minimises the chance of counterinsurgent forces winning the support of the people. If compounded with the lack of counternarrative, it helps the insurgents to expand their area of influence. Therefore, in addition to fighting insurgents militarily, the government should address the fundamental grievances of the people to reduce the underlying support for insurgents.
- Insurgency is likely to escalate if an external actor reinforces the insurgents’ narrative and decline if it opposes the insurgents’ narrative. Therefore, reactionary-traditionalist insurgencies cannot be defeated if the local counterinsurgent forces are considered part of the global counterinsurgency campaign who are pursuing their own vested interests which are perceived to be in contradiction with the religious beliefs of the population.
- Reactionary-traditionalist insurgencies cannot be defeated if the counterinsurgency strategy is in contradiction with the deep-rooted tribal traditions.

Insurgency has remained a challenge for states in different times. However, the ‘great challenge is to find the right blend for a particular situation—a formulation that may well be different from that used at another time or place, or even during the same conflict’ (Birtle, 2008, p. 52). The Pakistani government and scholars faced the same challenges of finding the right strategy suitable for the tribal areas. This study provides a new framework, which helps us to understand the reasons for the outbreak, expansion and escalation of the religiously motivated insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas. The findings of this thesis fit with the broader literature which argues that lack of an
effective counterinsurgency was the most important factor which led to the beginning and expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Scholarly work of writers such as Weinbaum and Harder (2008); Nawaz (2009); Rashid (2009); Rana (2009a); Siddique, (2010) are particularly important which have discussed how the lack of counterinsurgency training led to the failure of government policy. However, this study advances the literature further by arguing that lack of an effective counternarrative was the key reasons which led to the onset and expansion of insurgency, and it should be an important component of the counterinsurgency strategy to address a reactionary-traditionalist insurgency.

**Research Implications and Potential Area for Future Research**

This study provided a new framework, which enables us to understand the outbreak of insurgency in Pakistan’s tribal areas, its expansion, and its escalation. The study also integrates classical and global counterinsurgency theories which helps to understand how reactionary-traditionalist insurgencies can be effectively countered. The study reshapes our understanding of insurgency and alerts policymakers to the fact, that every insurgency has its own peculiar dynamics. In order, to address these, an indigenous framework of counterinsurgency strategy should be evolved to undermine the support for insurgents.

The findings of the study emphasises that international power such as the US needs to analyse whether its intervention in a country, undermines the militancy/insurgency or increases it. They should analyse whether the threat emerges from a particular country, or its leader is the result of the insecurity dilemma of the ruler or there is a serious militant threat. The ruler who suffers from an insecurity dilemma will consolidate his/her own position at the cost of eliminating the insurgency/militancy. Most importantly, they (external powers) should help the host government to find an indigenous solution to the problem they are confronting instead of imposing an external one on them.

This study provides an opportunity for the researchers to conduct comparative studies in different contexts and to explore whether the three-stages framework employed in this study can be used to counter other examples of reactionary-traditionalist insurgencies. As we know that numerous governments are fighting
religiously motivated insurgencies in different parts of the world. These insurgencies distort and exploit religion to achieve their objectives. It is important to undermine their ideological support first before fighting them militarily. For instance, the framework can be used to understand the South Thailand insurgency where the Salafist Jihadis are currently struggling to establish an Islamic Caliphate. Initially, the insurgency was mostly ethnic based however, religion is being used presently to liberate the Muslims dominated Malay region. Similarly, the findings of the thesis help us to understand the Philippines insurgency of 1968 where currently Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is struggling to establish Islamic state in Southern Philippines. The study is particularly important to understand the insurgency in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan insurgency began in 2001 after US and NATO forces invaded Afghanistan and deposed the Taliban government. It is critically important to understand that despite having strongest military machine why the US and NATO forces have failed to bring peace in Afghanistan. Similarly, the framework and finding of this study can be used to understand the insurgency in Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir insurgency is a secessionist movement for independence started 1989. Kashmir is a disputed land between India and Pakistan (for more details see Chapter 3). Although the insurgency in Kashmir is driven by political and economic grievance but it also has a religious dimension.

However, it is important to note that the government employing an effective counternarrative should have legitimacy. If a government lacks legitimacy and it is perceived as a puppet, it will undermine the efforts to evolve an effective counternarrative against the militants. The examples of Afghanistan and Pakistan can be presented as case studies here. It is also important to mention here that the framework and findings of this study cannot be applied to ethnic insurgency. For instance, insurgency in Macedonia which started in January 2001 and ended in August the same year with internationally brokered Ohrid Peace Accord was ethnic based. Similarly, the framework also cannot be applied to understand Sari Lankan Civil War (1983-2009) which aimed to create an independent Tamil state. Likewise, the framework cannot be helpful to understand the insurgency in Baluchistan which is driven by ethnicity.

Furthermore, the tribal areas also present research opportunities for future researchers. It is important to note here that the government in Pakistan along with the opposition parties evolved National Action Plan (NAP) in 2014 to take indiscriminate
action against all the militant groups. The NAP also emphasised on addressing the root causes of militancy by bringing reforms in the governance system of tribal areas. The plan also stressed on reforming the madrassa system in the country. Researchers interested in the area/region can explore how the NAP has affected support for militancy in the area. Research can be conducted to assess the support for military operations after the government created an effective counternarrative against the insurgents in 2014.

The government conducted two major military operations ‘Operation Zarb-e-Azb and Radd-ul-Fassad’ after 2014 which destroyed the command-and-control system of the militant groups and many of them fled to Afghanistan. A comparative study can be conducted to analyse why the earlier military operations were failed to contain insurgency and why the later succeeded. Similarly, in May 2018, the government passed an amendment in the constitution which merged the tribal areas with the adjacent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The merger fulfilled the long-awaited demand of the tribal people who wished to be ruled by the same law applied elsewhere in the country. The merger offers an interesting case for researchers to assess the implication of the merger and its impact on the support for insurgency.
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