



## Pragmatic Model of Countering Violent Extremism for Pakistan

- DOI: 10.31703/gsssr.2022(VII-I),04      ▪ URL: [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2022\(VII-I\),04](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2022(VII-I),04)  
▪ Vol. VII, No. I (Winter 2022)      ▪ Pages: 34 - 46      ▪ p-ISSN: 2708-2121      ▪ e-ISSN: 2708-3616

Muhammad Ejaz \*

Waqas Ahmed \*

Jamshed \*

**Abstract:** *Violent extremism has become a constant threat to the stability and very existence of the state of Pakistan. State adopted the foreign approaches and models to deal with the violent extremism without understanding the local environment and the drivers of violent extremism. The indiscriminate applications of traditional approaches without taking into account contextual model have made all the attempts of the state directionless and miscarry. This study is an attempt to construct a contextual and multi-dimensional model of countering violent extremism for Pakistan. The qualitative methodology has been adopted, to dealing with the research objectives. The study utilizes the review of existing literature, non-structured interviews and personal reflections for the collection of empirical data. The proposed model is comprehensive, contextual and impeccable. Likewise, it is practical, because it treats the non-violent non-state actors, such as, civil societies as vital actor, as violent extremism cannot be transformed with only the involvement of state authorities.*

**Key Words:** Violent Extremism, Violence, Countering Violent Extremism, Model, Peace

### Introduction

Pakistan is facing many contemporary problems but notable among them is the violent extremism (VE) that has amplified the instability and violence. Since 9/11, VE has affected Pakistan economically, socially and psychologically and also have taken a toll of human lives. (Qadeem, 2018). Khan D. M. (2015) estimated that during last two decades 81000 people have lost their lives (p.24). As per estimation of Pasha (2018), Pakistan, directly and indirectly, lost US\$ 135 billion (p.20). It is consistently ranked as the top five hard hit countries of VE in Global Terrorism Index (Johnston et.al, 2016). Currently, internal VE is more serious threat than the international threats.

The determination in focusing on courting violent extremism (CVE) has never been higher in Pakistan (Peace Direct, 2017). Still, Pakistan has implemented certain programs and

strategies for eliminating VE and got some level of success (Khan D. M., 2015). Certain issues and misunderstandings are the cause of low progress. Zaidi (2013) mentioned weak governance, domestic political constraints, civil-military divides, proliferation of sectarian seminaries and the social injustices. Khan et.al. (2020) enlisted deficiency of funds, lack of skilled professionals, slack coordination among the Government agencies and weak monitoring as problems. Likewise, Khan D. M. (2015) mentioned that the arrangements for courting VE for CVE are *ad hoc* in nature. Bukhari and Huda (2020) stated that Government has failed to get support and mobilize the public. Khan et.al. (2020) also stated that state ambivalently perceive the local terror as external. Iqbal (2014) levelheadedly indicated that the local dynamics are not considered while launching the strategies. Currently, along with the Government media and civil societies are also

\* Assistant Professor, Government Postgraduate College Mansehra, KP, Pakistan. Email: [meaabbasi85@gmail.com](mailto:meaabbasi85@gmail.com) (corresponding Author)

\* Lecturer, Government Postgraduate College Mansehra, KP, Pakistan.

\* PhD Scholar, Department of Political Science, Qurtuba University of Science & Information Technology, Dera Ismail Khan, KP, Pakistan.

working for CVE but still the involvement of civil society and media is not worth-mentioning (Peace Direct, 2017). Therefore, the response is weak, progress is slow and results are still invisible. However, the underlying cause behind the lack of coordination, monitoring, and *ad hoc* nature is the lack of models for understanding and strategies of CVE for Pakistan. Pakistan waged war against the militants but failed to get the ideological and identity related dimensions of the conflicts. Likewise, it also failed to develop the comprehensive contextual models and strategies to address the VE. It borrowed the foreign models of scholars and countries but did not realize that the social context and the nature of violence are different in Pakistan. The violent groups principally utilize the religion for motivation and legitimacy but the CVE of foreign countries do not necessarily have the religious colour ([Johnston et.al, 2016](#)).

The CVE is the sumptuous area and much has been written about this subject. Some writers, institutions and organizations endeavored to suggest the models and strategies. [Basit \(2015\)](#) attempted to offer a model in his recommendation of paper. His model is consisted of national policy, community engagement, counter narratives, faith based networks and public-private partnership. [Seefar's \(2016\)](#) non-coercive CVE programming includes the broad-based community engagement, vocational training and counter-narrative campaigns. Thorud and Javed (2016) suggested plan includes counter-narratives, de-radicalization, education, cultural integration, peace-building and interfaith-harmony dialogue. The [Khan et al. \(2020\)](#) suggested the religious education, discourses for CVE on media, engagement of religious people and educational institutions. [Gill et.al. \(2020\)](#) presented the model with similar themes, as of [Basit \(2015\)](#), [Bukhari Huda \(2020\)](#) suggested the communication among stake holders, research and evaluations and counter narratives as measures. [USAID \(2021\)](#) suggested the youth, women and civil society engagement, capacity building of religious leaders, strengthening of local government and involvement of parliamentarians and policy makers. However, the main concern of some of them including [Basit \(2015\)](#) and [Gill et.al. \(2020\)](#) is directly de-radicalization. Except,

Thorud and Javed (2016), none of them deeply focused the drivers of the violent extremism. Excluding, [Bukhari Huda \(2020\)](#) none of the above left the bursting room for the civil society. The models and plans are not comprehensive and country-specific. Thus, there is a major gap with respect to CVE in Pakistan.

This paper is an attempt to explore the drivers of the VE and to construct the model that would be suitable to the environment of Pakistan. The existing frameworks and models are borrowed on whole scale from foreign countries that ignore the Pakistani context. The main objective of this research is as follow;

1. To construct the comprehensive CVE model, based on the state-civil society partnership for Pakistan
2. To explore the CVE-specific and CVE-relevant strategies for the each step of model

This will proceed as follow. The first part is related with the objectives of the study and methodology that is set to deal with these objectives. The second part deals with the literature review of the concepts of CV and CVE. It also reviews the literature on the aspects and models of CVE in Pakistan. Third section deals with the drivers of the VE in Pakistan. Fourth section is about the anticipated model of CVE for Pakistan while the last section is the concluding reflections of the concepts, model and the application of model.

## Research Methodology

This research aims, to construct and describe the model for CVE that contain the activities, steps and strategies. Therefore, qualitative research methodology is adopted. This study utilized combination of literature review, field work and personal reflections to accumulate the empirical data. Desk-based literature review was conducted on the themes of CV and CVE in context of Pakistan. The data in shape of books, research papers, periodicals, reports and electronic sources was utilized, after checking its internal and external validity. The data is also collected from non-structured interviews of the civil society activists, Islamic clerics and some politicians. The sample is selected while using the non-random

purposive sampling and only those people were approached who had relevant information regarding the subject. Furthermore, understanding was also developed with dialogue with the CVE experts. Seven (7) civil society activists, four (04) *ulema* (clerics) and two (02) politicians were interviewed in Mansehra, Abbottabad, Islamabad, and Peshawar. Some interviews were also conducted through online sources. The study identified the four major drivers of VE at macro level; two at meso level while four at micro level. The anticipated model of CVE is the response to the identified VE drivers. Each major driver at macro, meso and micro level is responded with one major response (theme) and each response (theme) is further explained in five sub-sections (sub-themes).

### Countering Violent Extremism: Theory and Practice

It is hardly unanticipated that definitional vagueness of CVE has made it into a catch-all category term that lacks accuracy and focus (Heydemann, 2014). It is, therefore, necessary to understand the VE before CVE. The violent extremism (VE) is a concept that is recognized by all the international community. However, as mentioned by Kitzmann (2018) and Bak et al. (2019), still it lacks the commonly accepted definition. The common discourses on VE have created the confusion because it is used interchangeably with terrorism and radicalization. Kitzmann (2018) stated that VE as a concept is border than terrorism because it includes any form of violence, as long as its motivation is thought to be extremist. Arlington (2015) explained that it is also different from radicalization because it is wider in scope and, not only restricted to the radical beliefs. Usually, it is understood as the violent type of mobilization that aims to uplift the status of one group while excluding forcibly the others on the bases of religion, ethnicity and culture. The violent extremist groups and organizations destroy the existing social and political institutions and alternatively replace it with their intolerant ideology and totalitarian structures. They usually behave with common public with intolerance, totalitarianism and violence (Bak et al., 2019). The countering violent extremism (CVE) is the central focus of the policy-makers but it also lacks the global

consensus on its definition and practice. Defining the concept of “CVE” has proved to be a difficult task as the term primarily developed out of government strategy rather than the scholarship (Nasser-Eddine et.al, 2011). The term is normally stated in the context of strategies that either aim to prevent or response the violence, frequently within the policy sphere (Aly et.al, 2015). CVE generally is understood as the range of activities that aims to address the drivers of VE (push and pull factors) and to reduce the supports of extremist groups (McCants & Watts, 2012). However, within the discourse VE, the CVE efforts have mostly the focus of kinetic methods or use of military for dealing VE (Agastia et.al, 2020). Subsequently, CVE has been determined by top-down approaches that, fundamentally, favor hard power (Aly et.al, 2015). Recently, hard power approaches have been substituted with “soft approach” for CVE, in order to address the limitations of kinetic dealings. Distinct form kinetic approach that is reactive, the soft power approach takes an integrative measure to deal with root causes of VE and deter extremists from embracing violent ideologies (Gunaratna, 2011). It draws on the theoretical premise that violence cannot be efficiently addressed by counter-violence alone. Rather, violence should be transformed by addressing its underlying grounds ((Aly et.al, 2015; Agastia et.al, 2020). Frazer & Nünlist (2015) mentioned that CVE is the soft side of counterterrorism strategies. Schmid (2013) also elaborated that CVE is more flexible than terrorism and not only deals with security but also with the developmental interests. CVE measures includes the plans aimed at changing behavior to ones that challenge beliefs and ideas, through to undertakings aimed at building social cohesion (J. Horgan, 2014; Harris-Hogan, Barrelle, & Zammi, 2016). Peters and Saeed (2017) divided the CVE strategies into CVE-specific and CVE-relevant. The CVE-specific is the actions that are taken to suppress the violent extremism in direct and targeted fashion. The CVE-relevant measures are taken indirectly through education, narrative building and developmental initiatives. The CVE-specific strategies are taken by the state authorities while the CVE-relevant strategies are taken by soft non-violent actors like civil societies and academia. The civil society is the primary actors in the CVE. The vital role of civil

society in CVE highlights the fact that VE is as much, a social issue, as a security one (Aly, 2015; Aly et.al, 2015).

**Drivers of Violent Extremism in Pakistan**

The drivers of violent extremism can be analysed at three levels. The macro level drivers are related with the socio-economic and political context. The meso-level drivers are connected with exploitation of ethnicity while micro level has relation with individual motivations. Each level of driver is presented and elaborated in the tables given below. The tables are drawn while taking major help from the literature review of the Khan A. (2013), Zaidi (2013), Iqbal (2014), Aziz (2015), Basit (2015), Khan D. M (2015), Mirahmadi et.al (2015), Thorud and Javed (2016), Pakistan Institute of

Peace Studies (2017), Qadeem (2018), Bukhari and Huda (2020) Gill et.al (2020) Khan et.al (2020) and Weiss (2021). Some activists were also interviewed including Amir Hazarvi (personal communication, September 12, 2020), Waqas Khan (personal communication, January 05, 2021), Raza Tanoli (personal communication, January 06, 2021), Syed Khalid Raza Shah (personal communication, January 23, 2021) and Farnood Alam (personal communication, February 25, 2021), 28, 2021).

Macro-level drivers or push factors are the border socio-economic and political trends. Such as high level political terror, violation of rights, group grievances, lack of religious freedoms and lower respect for international law.

**Table 1.** Macro-level Drivers of Violent Extremism in Pakistan

Drivers	Explanation	Changes in Individual behaviors
Lack of socio-economic opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Unstable macroeconomic Environment</li> <li>2.Lack of merit and performance of institutions</li> <li>3. Political instability</li> <li>4. Inflation, low income and Poverty</li> <li>5. Underemployment</li> </ol>	The lack of socio-economic opportunities has strong motivation for joining VE groups. The social disorganization and economic strains have weakened the familial ties and societal bonds that have created the violence-friendly environment. The economic exclusion induced people to join violent groups. Furthermore, many
Social and political Marginalization and discrimination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Economic and political horizontal inequalities</li> <li>2. Poor governance</li> <li>3.Polarization of society and disparity</li> <li>4.Grievances and state’s responses</li> <li>5. Low level of human development</li> </ol>	The state has conventional social contract of better dealing with the minorities. State’s failure to maintain such an agreement resulted in social and political marginalization. The victims utilized the violence as a tool to seek compensation of their social and political grievances. Such, people were easy pickings as recruits for the violent groups
Prolonged and unresolved conflicts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Culture of violence</li> <li>2.Insecurities and vulnerabilities</li> <li>3. Anarchy and instability</li> <li>4. Psychological issues</li> <li>5. Fragmentation in society</li> </ol>	The intolerance and radicalism has become the accepted standards. Even non-warring groups join the violent groups for their safety resistance.
Violations of human rights and the rule of law	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Injustice</li> <li>2.Governance and political instability</li> <li>3.Lack of respect for human rights laws and activists</li> <li>4.Ambiguous ideology and misinterpretation of law and religion</li> <li>5.The violators (elites) enjoy immunities and stand above the law</li> </ol>	The violation of civil, political and social rights have link with violence. The abuses caused grievances and group identities. It also gave impression to the victims that violators were immune from punishment. The victims joined the violent groups for rescue and alterative future.

Lack of socio-economic and political marginalization and persistent conflicts are the stronger determinates than the individual level factors. These drivers are prompted from

unstable economic environment, lack of well-functioning institutions, instability, inflation, poverty, prolonged conflicts, lack of rule of law, political marginalization and unemployment. Likewise, the horizontal inequalities, poor governance, disparity, injustice, fragmentation, gender discrimination, anarchy and culture of violence also stimulate them. The net result is the long term economic deprivation, insufficiency, inequality, food insecurity, financial corruption, lack of merit, illiteracy and lack of basic services. The economic exclusion makes them vulnerable to violence. The marginal violent groups raised the political and economic grievances against state and

resort violence. The prolonged conflicts give rise to radicalization while denial of civil liberties breaks the trust of people and expose the responsiveness of the system.

Meso-level drivers or pull factors and related with group influences. The CV is a social process and the constructed identity is key factors in individuals joining the movements (Schmid, 2013). The violent groups exploit the ethnicity and religious beliefs. In Pakistan ethno-political identities such as Baloch, Muhajir, Sindhi, Saraiki and Pashtun and ethno-religious identities such as Jihadists and Sectarrians have also attracted the people on the name of ethnicity and religion (Basit, 2015; Peace Direct, 2017; Bukhari & Huda, 2020).

**Table 2.** Meso-level Drivers in Pakistan

Drivers	Explanation	Changes in Individual Behaviors
Religious Motivation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Politicization of religious groups and institutions for political and strategic interests</li> <li>2.Extermination of education system and media</li> <li>3.Involvement of trans-national violent organization</li> <li>4. Policy of traditionalism</li> <li>5. Misinterpretation of religion</li> </ol>	<p>The people who joined these groups have become illogical, intolerant, ethnocentric, counter-cultural and violent. Some of them are working with the anti-state foreign organization against the integrity of Pakistan.</p>
Ethnic motivation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Polices contrary to Constitution</li> <li>2. Economic marginalization</li> <li>3. Political marginalization</li> <li>4. Recognition</li> <li>5. State's responses</li> </ol>	<p>The folks that joined these groups have become intolerant, ethnocentric, counter-cultural and violent. Furthermore, they lack trust on state and in some case are working against Pakistan.</p>

In border sense there are two types of identities in Pakistan, ethno-political and ethno-religious. The religious identities were politicized by the state during the Afghan Jihad (1979-88) for its strategic interests. Traditionalism, foreign funding and support, extermination of media and curriculum further strengthen the extremist elements. The radical religious groups like *Jaish-e-Mohammed* (JeM) and *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* (LJ) are intolerant, radical and violent and consider these attributes as valid for greater Islamic cause. The Jihadist attracted the people for Islamic System and state and revenge from the infidels. The sectarian exploited them on the name of purification of Pakistan from the impure and anti-Pakistan sects. Such groups have spread the radicalization and intolerance and with misinterpretation of religion attracted the uneducated and non-vigilant educated youths. The case of ethno-political identities is a bit

different. The Constitution provides the framework of recognition, equality and fair treatment. State alternatively adopted the policy of marginalization. Instead of recognizing their language and culture adopted the policy of unification of culture on the name of Islam and national language Urdu. The breaking up of social contract set in the Constitution, political and economic marginalization and recognition issues made the people think that they were alienated gradually. The state's military responses created the retorts and made them fierce. The violent groups such as *Sindu Desh*, *Muhajir Qaumi Movement* (MQM) attracted the people while presenting them as their real rescuer from tranny and exploitation.

The micro level drivers (individual pull factors) are individual factors. The individual vulnerabilities because of social isolation, cognitive constraints, disposition of violence

and influence from the extremist’s narratives make them violent extremists (Allan et al., 2015). The micro-level drivers in Pakistan are as unde

**Table 3.** Micro level Drivers in Pakistan

<i>Drivers</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Changes in Individual Behaviors</i>
Socialization to violence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exposition to direct violence</li> <li>2. Exposition to structural violence</li> <li>3. Exposition to cultural violence</li> <li>4. Violence in schools, seminaries and media</li> <li>5. Violence as accepted norm in society and politics</li> </ol>	The exposition made the violence as normal behavior, practice and the way of dealing in society. Individuals do not consider it immoral and illegal of hurting verbally, psychologically and physically the other individuals.
Cognitive vulnerability and Lack of information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Illetracy</li> <li>2. Lack of culture of debate and questioning</li> <li>3. Curriculum and instruction in schools</li> <li>4. Commercial and socially irresponsible media</li> <li>5. Misinformation on digital media</li> </ol>	Because of this something remained missing, incomplete and ambiguous.
Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inclusion in a group for status</li> <li>2. Inclusion for the provision of feelings of self-worth</li> <li>3. Affiliation with groups provides social needs,</li> <li>4. Joining groups is the source of goal achievement</li> <li>5. Feelings of superiority</li> </ol>	The environment of insecurity created by the violence made the individuals vulnerable. The past memories, status, self-worth and needs made them think that “standing alone” could not give them all these things. Therefore, joining the identity groups gave them the feelings of superiority and dominance.
Clash with values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Incomplete socialization</li> <li>2. Nonstandard objectives</li> <li>3. Deviant methods for achieving these aims</li> <li>4. Powerfulness through joining groups</li> <li>5. Non-compromising attitude</li> </ol>	The clash with existing values made them deviant, non-compromising, counter-cultural and easy prey for the anti-state element.

These factors are the outcome of incomplete information, social exclusion, recognized violence, deviance, illiteracy, inability of curriculum and media to socialize. The net result is individual are unable to realize the real causes of violence and behave abnormally, immorally and illegally. They are unable to understand the real motivations behind extremist narratives and actions (Basit, 2015; Peace Direct, 2017; Bukhari & Huda, 2020).

**Anticipated Model for CVE for Pakistan**

The proposed model is the result of the extensive literature review of the material available on VE and CVE in Pakistan, interviews of the civil society activists, religious people, people from academia and the media persons. Mainly, it is the result of the work of [Khan A. \(2013\)](#), [Zaidi \(2013\)](#), [Iqbal \(2014\)](#), [Basit \(2015\)](#), [Frazer and Nünlist \(2015\)](#),

[Khan D. M \(2015\)](#), [Mirahmadi et.al \(2015\)](#), Thorud and Javed (2016), PIPS (2017), Peace Direct (2017), [Qadeem \(2018\)](#), [Bukhari and Huda \(2020\)](#) [Gill et.al \(2020\)](#) [Khan et.al \(2020\)](#), [Khilji et.al \(2021\)](#) and [Weiss \(2021\)](#). Some of the activists who are interviewed for expert opinion were Amir Hazarvi (personal communication, September 12, 2020), Moulana Mushtaq (personal communication, October 20, 2020), Moulana Muhammad Waseem, personal communication, October 20, 2020), Moulana Muhammad Ayaz Yousufzai (personal communication, October 21, 2020), Waqas Khan (personal communication, January 05, 2021), Raza Tanoli (personal communication, January 06, 2021), Syed Khalid Raza Shah (personal communication, January 23, 2021), Farnood Alam (personal communication, February 25, 2021), Shafqat Mehmood (personal communication, January 28, 2021), Mossart Qadim (personal

communication, January 28, 2021), Sabookh Syed (personal communication, January 29, 2021) and Amir Rana (personal communication, January 30, 2021)

**Table 4.** Macro Level Factors

Factors	Elements/Action	Responsible Actors/Sector/Institutions	Strategies
Lack of socio-economic opportunities	Political Stability and Economic Development	<b>Primary</b> - Government <b>Secondary</b> - International Institutions - Civil Societies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stability of macroeconomic environment</li> <li>2. Poverty eradication programs and gender equality</li> <li>3. Modernization of agriculture and rural development programs</li> <li>4. Merit and financial accountability</li> <li>5. Human capital development</li> </ol>
Social and Political Marginalization and discrimination	Addressing horizontal inequalities and Accommodation	<b>Primary</b> - Government <b>Secondary</b> - Civil Society - Army - Media - Academia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Addressing grievances and concessions</li> <li>2. Better governance</li> <li>3. Provincial autonomy</li> <li>4. Acceptance of language and culture</li> <li>5. Reconstruction of narratives</li> </ol>
Prolonged and unresolved conflicts	Implementation of National Action Plan (NAP) and Reintegration	<b>Primary</b> - Government - Civil Society <b>Secondary</b> - Army	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Soft means (Negotiations)</li> <li>2. Hard means (operations)</li> <li>3. Amnesty</li> <li>4. Disengagement</li> <li>5. Transformation</li> </ol>
Violations of human and the rule of law	Reformation of Criminal Justice System and advocacy for rights	<b>Primary</b> - Government - Judiciary - Civil Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reformation of judiciary</li> <li>2. Rule of Law</li> <li>3. Respect for human rights activists</li> <li>4. Activism of Advocacy organizations (international and national)</li> <li>5. Citizenship education</li> </ol>

According to the report of CRSS (2011) the lack of socio-economic opportunities are the main drivers of instability. Though, it is difficult to deal with this issue, as Governments and international institutions continuously failed to sustain the socio-economic progress. Primarily, it is the responsibility of the Government but the partnership of Government, international economic institutions like international Monetary Funds (IMF) and better strategy can resuscitate the economy. Still, the enough budgetary allocation to developmental sector, industrial and agricultural development, preference to stability of macroeconomic, poverty eradication, merit, professional education, gender equality and adoption of

modernization can check the attraction in extremism.

The state failed to deal with the marginal groups with its CVE-specific strategies. The CVE-relevant strategies, such as, concessions and addressing the genuine grievances of the marginal groups can deal the VE better. Principally, it is the responsibility of the Government and army but the role of civil societies for mediations, negotiations and facilitation and media cannot be ignored. The maximum unitary autonomy, respect to cultural and lingual identity and creation of new narratives for their empowerment can be helpful. Above all, the good governance and welfare of the people based on parity and equality can make these groups pacific.

The prolonged conflicts cannot be resolved with the traditional security approaches because these conflicts are not among state armies rather among the communal groups (Gawerc, 2006). The strategic culture and political culture of Pakistan indicates that security approaches cannot be separated from pacific approaches. Therefore, the management contains both hard (CVE specific) and soft (CVE relevant) measures. The hard measures include the military operations and coercive diplomacy under the framework of NAP (2018-23) and disengagement of the militants. Unfortunately, the soft side of the NAP, the involvement of media and civil societies, has not been implemented yet. The reintegration of past militants can be possible with general amnesty, dialogue, disengagement and transformation of extremist ideology with the support of service delivery and advocacy civil societies.

The judicial activism and involvement of judiciary in political matters have created a regime in which violation of rights and act against law is without any serious penalty. The propaganda of anti-religious and foreign anti-state agents against the activists and non-governmental organization (NGOs) has further aggravated the situation. Therefore, state and judiciary have to de-politicize the judiciary. Likewise, actions would be taken for respect for the human rights activists and the advocacy organization for rule of law. Similarly, the citizenship education in Pakistan is traditional and just teaches the unconditional respect for some institutions and personalities. The liberal citizenship education containing the human rights, gender equality, democracy and legalism can be helpful in minimizing the number of reactionary people. The advocacy for rights and law and the propagation of alternative citizenship education would be the functions of civil societies.

**Table 5.** Meso Level Factors

Factors	Elements/Action	Responsible Actors/Sector/Institutions	Strategies
Religious Motivation	Checks and reformation	<b>Primary</b> - Government - Civil Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educational Reforms</li> <li>Regularization of Seminaries</li> <li>2. Check on foreign funds and ideologies</li> <li>3. Policy of secularism and pluralism (patronage)</li> <li>4. Anti-discourse</li> <li>5. Modernization</li> </ol>
Ethnic motivation	New Social Contract	<b>Primary</b> - Government - Civil Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The rule of law (constitutionalism)</li> <li>2. Autonomy</li> <li>3. Addressing horizontal inequalities</li> <li>4. Cultural Integration</li> <li>5. Reconstruction of narratives</li> </ol>

The extremism that is the result of competition for the religious recognition and identity is perhaps the furthest common and dangerous in terms of violence. The first requirement is the will of state for dissociating itself from these identities. Then partnership of both state-civil societies is vital. The measures of checks on foreign funding and ideologies, regularization of seminaries and deconstruction of narratives, adoption of policy of secularism and modernization can transform their minds and actions. The soft measures alone cannot produce productive

results because religious extremists have little capability of understanding and also little will of accepting other's views.

The ethnic identities unlike the religious identities are not the result of state's patronage; rather, state's negative treatment and repression. State has breached the contract which it has made in the Constitution. The new social contract with rule of law, equal treatment, provincial autonomy, reconstruction of negative narrative against them and addressing the horizontal

inequalities in political, economic and social spheres can reduce their activism. Furthermore, the national cultural integration, after accepting their regional identity, can also integrate them with the state's nationalism.

State has to make the new social contract based on equal treatment while civil societies have to deconstruct the negative narratives against them.

**Table 6.** Micro Level Drivers in Pakistan

Factors	Elements/Action	Responsible Actors/Sector/Institution	Strategies
Cognitive vulnerability and Lack of information	Cognitive Amplification	<b>Primary</b> - Academics - Civil Society <b>Secondary</b> - Media - Government	1. Culture of reading (Social media networking) 2. De-construction of Curriculum and modernization of education 3. Critical thinking (True teaching of religion) 4. Media engagement 5. International linkage
Socialization to violence	Culture of peace	<b>Primary</b> - Government - Civil Society	1. Socialization to democratic behavior 2. Peace education 3. De-construction of art, history, folk culture 4. Individual security 5. Psycho-social support
Identity	Addressing status and self-esteem issues of individuals	<b>Primary</b> - Government - Civil Society <b>Secondary</b> - Academics - Media	1. Cultural acceptance and national integration 2. Welfare policies and good governance 3. Sports and recreation for status 4. National dialogue forum 5. Alternative to the extremists narratives and Jihadi Literature
Clash with values	Socialization	<b>Primary</b> - Academics (Educational Institutes) - Civil Societies - Media	1. Utilization of Education institutions 2. Utilization of religious institutions 3. Utilization of mass media 4. Literature and art 5. Community engagement

Pakistan lacks the culture of reading and according to a survey only 9% citizens have studied books outside of their syllabus (Shaikh, 2019). The lack of proper information and arrangements for the cognitive uplift has made them the easy prey of the extremists. The curriculum which is outdated and favors the narrative of extremists should be deconstructed. The culture of reading is to be developed by opening up the libraries and utilizing the social media platforms. The critical thinking, an attribute missing in the schools is to be developed. The misinterpretations of religions have caused enough damaged. There is need of the presentation of true peaceful teachings of the religion. The link of the people with

international environment can also create the pluralism and tolerance. Primarily, it is the sole function of academia and civil societies but reformed media can be helpful. The role of Government is to facilitate the actions of civil society, academia and media.

The socialization to violence can be tackled while developing the culture of peace. The important source for culture of peace is the introduction of peace education in schools, colleges and media. The provision of individual security, so that they should not join the groups, and socialization to democratic values and deconstruction of history, art and culture that favors the violence are supportive moves. Lastly, the provision of the psycho-social

support to the victims can also return them to the normal and peaceful life. By all these moves the culture of violence is to be replaced with the culture of peace, so that joining extremist groups would no longer be their necessity. Government because of its political and strategic interest may not be deterministic to introduce these changes; therefore, the primary role lies on the civil societies.

One of the reasons of joining of identity and extremist groups of individuals' is the status and self-esteem issues. The cultural acceptance of all individuals, efforts for national integration and recreation on one hand and good governance on the other are crucial for handling identity. The national dialogue forum for the discussion of individual concerns and alternative to extremist narrative can make them normal. The Government has to enhance the good governance and to create the national dialogue forum. The rest of the functions are particularly of civil society and also of academia and media.

The clash with the exiting societal values on which majority are satisfied is a reason of individuals joining and accepting the violent groups. The solution is to make measures to their understanding and socialization to set values. Because of the soft nature of this action, it is the concern of civil society, academia and mass media. The utilization of education, religious institutions, mass media, literature and art and community engagement for practical way outs of this issue. Though, it is not easy to return back to the normal life to such individuals because of their short tempered and intolerance. However, religious education, trauma healing and placement with market can change their minds.

## Conclusion

The VE, as in world-over, has become the momentous menace to the stability of Pakistan, as it has affected negatively the country's society and economy [\(Qadeem, 2018\)](#). The drivers of VE are diversified and are charted into three levels i.e. macro, meso and micro in this study. The macro level drivers are related with the larger social context. Meso-level drivers or pull factors are associated with the influence of identity on group behaviors [\(Schmid, 2013\)](#). The micro level drivers are individuals push and pull factors [\(Allan et al.,](#)

2015). It is found that poverty; unemployment and unstable economic environment, horizontal inequalities, marginalization, prolonged internal communal conflicts and violations of rights are the macro level factors in Pakistan. The tussle of politicized religious and ethnic identities with one another and with state is the meso level factors. It is revealed that the socialization to direct and structural violence, cognitive inability because of illiteracy, the issues of status and self-esteem and clash with social values because of incomplete socialization are the micro level drivers. Pakistan has launched operations and also utilized the soft measures to deal with the VE. However, as discovered, all the attempts went in vain and VE is still a potent threat [\(Mirahmadi et.al, 2015; Johnston et.al, 2016\)](#). The research found that one of the factors that contributed in the failure is the non-availability of comprehensive contextual model of CVE that would focus on all levels of VE drivers. This study was an attempt to construct the workable model for Pakistani context. Likewise, to construct a multi-dimensional model that involves both hard and soft actors' i.e. state authorities and civil societies. The anticipated model is the equal response to the main drivers of the VE. Each level of driver is responded with contextual, workable and rational set of solutions. Each explored main driver of VE is responded with a single main response (theme) in the anticipated model and then it is further elaborated with five sub-sections (sub-themes). The main actors are the Government and the civil society.

It is anticipated that this model is complex and somehow difficult to materialize. Because this archetypal focuses on multidimensional themes and the involvement of multidimensional actors. The proposed activities, as particularized in research, are ranging from short term to long term focus. Such as implementation of NAP is short term while reviving the economy is the complex and long term focus. Besides that there may also be the issues in the adoption and implantation of the model. This model gives the leading role to the civil societies along with the Government. Conversely, the role of civil societies have not been recognized yet in Pakistan, rather, state considered them as the element that challenge the writ of state [\(Ejaz & Khan, 2021\)](#). The

government's will for surrendering the larger political, ideological and strategic interests for peace is not an easy decision. Furthermore, the expectation of citizenship education from traditional academia, morality and non-commercialism from current media and non-partisan role from ethnic and sect-based civil societies is also unreasonable. To sum up, the construction and spread of VE took 30 to 40 years, so the de-construction may not be the results of days; surely, it will take years. The ground work and the creation of foundational steps for CVE and training of the actors and

institutions involved is necessary before the adaptation this model.

This research is a preliminary attempt for constructing the contextual model but because of the scathing literature, trivial experts and imprecision of the state on the subject the topic is not deeply investigated. Secondly, it deals only with drivers and the construction of model. It shows that still there are many gray areas in the field that can be explored like the model of CVE for religious actors and the model for CVE for advocacy civil societies.

## References

- Agastia, I. G. B. D., Perwita, A. A. B., & Subedi, D. B. (2020). Countering violent extremism through state-society partnerships: a case study of de-radicalisation programmes in Indonesia. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, 15(1), 23-43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2020.1722317>
- Aly, A. (2015). Finding meaning for countering violent extremism. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, 10(1), 1-2. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2015.1035554>
- Aly, A., Balbi, A. M., & Jacques, C. (2015). Rethinking countering violent extremism: implementing the role of civil society. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, 10(1), 3-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2015.1028772>
- Arlington, V. (2015). *Radicalization and violent extremism: Lessons learned from Canada, the U.K. and the U.S.* Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.
- Aziz, K. (2015). *Drivers of Radicalism and Extremism in Pakistan*. Islamabad: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
- Bak, M., Tarp, K. N., & Liang, D. C. (2019). *Defining the concept of violent extremism: Delineating the attributes and phenomenon*. Geneva: Geneva Centre for Security Policy.
- Basit, A. (2015). Countering violent extremism: Evaluating Pakistan's counter-radicalization and de-radicalization initiatives. *IPRI Journal*, XV(2), 44-68.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a>
- Bukhari, R., & Huda, Q.-u. (2020). *A critique of countering violent extremism programs in Pakistan*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Global Policy.
- Ejaz, M., & Khan, A. (2021). Civil Society organizations and peace-building in Pakistan: A case study of role of Paiman Alumni Trust in identity conflicts. *Asian Journal of International Peace and Security*, 5(2), 1-14.
- Frazer, O., & Nünlist, C. (2015). *The concept of countering violent extremism*. Zurich: CSS Analyses in Security Policy.
- Gawerc, M. I. (2006). Peace-building: Theoretical and Concrete Perspectives. *Peace & Change*, 31(4), 435-478. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0130.2006.00387.x>
- Gill, S. A., Mustafa, G., & Rizwan, M. (2020). De-radicalization in Pakistan: Implication of Swat model. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 57(1), 366-381.
- Gunaratna, R. (2011). Terrorist rehabilitation: a global imperative. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, 6(1), 65-82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18335330.2011.553182>
- Harris-Hogan, S., Barrelle, K., & Zammit, A. (2015). What is countering violent extremism? Exploring CVE policy and practice in Australia. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, 8(1), 6-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19434472.2015.1104710>
- Heydemann, S. (2014). Countering violent extremism as a field of practice. *Insights*(1), 1-4.
- Iqbal, K. (2014). *De-radicalization: Pakistan's dilemmas*. <https://criterion-quarterly.com/de-radicalization-pakistans-dilemmas/>
- Horgan, J. (2014). Theory vs. practice. *Insights* 1, 2-4.
- Johnston, D., Madonell, A., Burbridge, H., & Patton, J. (2016). *Countering violent religious extremism in Pakistan*. Washington, DC: International Center for Religion and Diplomacy.
- Khan, A. (2013). *Pakistan and the narratives of extremism*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.
- Khan, D. A., Mehmood, S., Khan, A. S., & Afridi, S. J. (2020). Countering violent extremism in Pakistan. *Elementary Education Online*, 19(4), 6155-6160.
- Khan, D. M. (2015). Countering violent extremism in Pakistan: An appraisal of Pakistan's CVE initiatives. *Strategic Studies*, 35(4), 23-44.
- Kitzmann, S. (2018). *Prevention of Violent Extremism*. Bruxelles: Eurodiaconia.

- Mirahmadi, H., Ziad, W., Farooq, M., & Lamb, R. D. (2015). *Empowering Pakistan's civil society to counter global violent extremism*. Washington, DC: Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings.
- Pasha, H. A. (2018). *Growth and inequality in Pakistan*. Brussels: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
- Peters, A., & Saeed, J. (2017). *Promoting inclusive policy frameworks for countering violent extremism*. Washington, DC: Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security.
- Qadeem, M. (2018). *Engendering extremism: Women preventing and countering violent extremism in Pakistan*. London: Centre for Women, Peace and Security.
- Seefar. (2016). *Designing countering violent extremism programs: A strategic overview*. [www.seefar.org](http://www.seefar.org)
- Shaikh, N. A. (2019, November 25). *The diminishing reading habits in Pakistan*. <https://www.pakistangulfeconomist.com/>
- USAID. (2021). *Countering violent extremism: A provincial perspective*. Islamabad: USAID.
- Weiss, A. W. (2021). *Countering violent extremism in Pakistan: Local actions, local voices*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Zaidi, S. M. (2013). *Pakistan's security dilemma: On doctrines, perceptions and institutional interests*. Oslo: Center for International and Strategic Analysis (SISA).