



The Expansion of the Insurgency in the Erstwhile Tribal Areas of Pakistan

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Abstract

The incident of 9/11 and its aftereffects profoundly affected the security situation in Pakistan. The US and NATO forces invasion of Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 led many Al-Qaeda and Taliban operatives to take refuge in the erstwhile tribal areas of Pakistan. Pakistan army conducted military operations against the militants, but militancy initially confined to the South Waziristan expanded to the rest of the tribal areas. The question of insurgency expansion has been discussed by various scholars, but this study advances a different explanation. Firstly, the military operations were not supported by an effective counternarrative against the insurgents. Secondly, the military operations were conducted in the area of limited statehood, which helped the insurgents to obtain the support of the people and contributed to the expansion of insurgency. This study enhances our understanding of insurgency expansion in the tribal areas and contributes to the existing literature by providing a different explanation.

Key Words: Insurgency, Tribal Areas, Military Operations, Expansion

Introduction

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 to conduct indiscriminate military operation was the most important factor responsible for the expansion of insurgency in the tribal areas (Weinbaum, 2014; Fair, Malhotra, & Shapiro, 2010; Behuria, 2007). 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 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 (Rashid, 2012, p. 55). Pakistan's former ambassador to the US and renowned author Hussain Haqqani argue that after 9/11, the government took action against some militant groups and apprehended their leaders, but they allowed to operate under different (Haqqani, 2005, pp. 299-300). Jessica Stern maintains that support to different militant groups demonstrates that Pakistan does not realize its own vulnerability to violent extremism (Stern, 2000, p. 1). Similarly, Weinbaum argues that Pakistan has not taken actions against the Afghan Taliban in North Waziristan loyal to Haqqani Network (Weinbaum, 2009, p. 76).

The other key argument advanced in the literature suggests that the lack of capacity and capability of the security forces was the key

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reason which led to the expansion of the insurgency (Lieven, 2011). 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 numerous scholars who maintain that the lack of counterinsurgency training was a key factor that undermined the government's efforts to contain the insurgency (Rashid, 2009; Weinbaum and Harder, 2008). Another scholar 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 (Lieven, 2017).

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 the 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 study attempts to address the key gap in the literature.

The Inability of the State to Develop an Effective Counternarrative

Before discussing the major military operations in the tribal areas, it is pertinent to discuss the people's resentment against the government. A tribal elder was quoted as saying that the US and Pakistan supported jihad against the Soviet and called these fighters Mujahid, and now they call them terrorists. They (US and Pakistan) can change their policies, but we (tribesmen) cannot change our hearts overnight (Tohid, 2004). Not only the tribesmen but the security forces were also reluctant to fight against the militants because they had been told for a long time that fighting in

Afghanistan and India was jihad and now it has become terrorism (Rashid, 2009, p. 1).

The common Pakistani also 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). For instance, in 2007, only one in three considered militancy a critical threat, and one in four considered them an important threat (Fair, 2009). An IRI survey in 2008 showed that 89 percent of people opposed Pakistan's decision to become a US partner in the war against terror, which slightly declined to 80 percent by July 2009 (Fair, 2009). It is evident from the above facts that the government lacked the necessary support required for conducting military operation in the tribal areas.

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, and poor governance, had increased the grievances of the people, thus undermining the legitimacy of the government.

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, there are some areas of the state which have what they term "limited statehood". In contrast to limited statehood, consolidated statehood defines an area where the state has a monopoly over violence and its means and has the ability to enforce its decisions. (Krasner & Risse, 2014, p. 549). It is a state's poor territorial control which contributes to the outbreak of civil unrest (Koren & Sarbahi, 2017).

Pakistan has been described as a weak state (Kfir, 2007) or a fragile state (Bajoria, 2009),

but this study uses Thomas Risse's concept of 'limited statehood' to explain the expansion of insurgency in the tribal region ([Risse, 2011](#)). I argue that the Pakistani state had control 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 over the means of violence. According to Risse, there can be different causes of limited statehood ranging from colonial histories, limited resources, internal conflicts, failure of nation-building etc ([Risse, 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.

Hendrix 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 ([Hendrix, 2010](#)). 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, 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 ([Siddique, 2010](#)).

Legally and constitutionally, the tribal areas were considered highly autonomous, operating outside the constitution and the 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:

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 for such phrases, they have done nothing for us. Everyone is aware of the miseries of the people of FATA, but they have done nothing (quoted in [Yousaf, 2019, p. 178](#)).

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 expand 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 maintained that traditionally, tribal jirgas are not held in a mosque or madrassa but rather in public places ([Jones & Fair, 2010](#)). 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 which maintain that for early success, a counterinsurgent needs to be resolute and should be seen as a victor; only then will the majority follow him ([Galula, 1964, p. 246](#)).

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 1.1) 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 and Anaconda in December 2001 and March 2002 respectively ([ICG, 2006, p. 13](#)).



Figure 1: Pakistan's border with Afghanistan

Source: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/taliban/tribal/map.html>

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. Pakistan agreed to assist the US and permitted overflight and landing rights near Jacobabad in Sindh province, and Shamsi airbases in Baluchistan province (Jones & 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 (Jones & Fair, 2010). 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.

In March 2002, Pakistan increased its security forces in North and South Waziristan to fight militants if they cross the border during the US military operation in Anaconda in Shah-i-Kot valley (Jones & 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 & Harder, 2008](#)). It is important to note that it was the first time since Pakistan's independence that regular forces were deployed in the tribal areas. The discussion below will analyse how the military operations led to the expansion of the insurgency in the tribal areas.

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 ([Mullick, 2009a](#)).

According to the International Crisis Group (ICG) Asia report the government installed 80,000 military and paramilitary forces in the tribal area and launched a "search and destroy" drive against militants in South Waziristan in March 2004 ([ICG Asia report 2006](#)). 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 1.2 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 & 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, 2004c, p. 1](#)). Nawaz argues that the forces deployed had little knowledge of the terrain and people in the tribal areas ([Nawaz, 2011](#)).

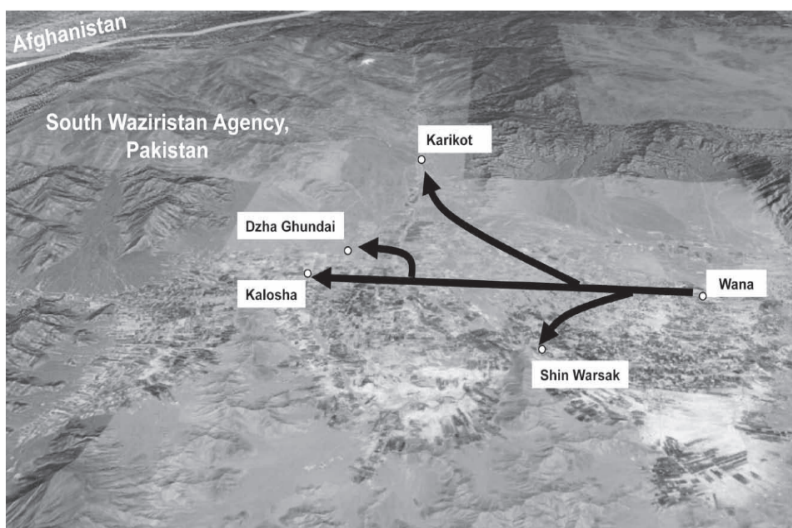


Figure 2: Military Operation in South Waziristan in 2004
Source: Counterinsurgency in Pakistan (2010, p. 48).

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 operation was started without exhausting peaceful means of conflict resolution which undermined the capacity of local administration and tribesmen to resolve the issue through non-military means (ICG report, 2006, p. 15). 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 Mehsud Khan was quoted as saying that the military operation is tantamount to attack against the Pakistan-loving tribesmen similar to the one conducted by British forces in the pre-partition era. The government should not punish the tribal people for someone else's sin (quoted in Tohid, 2004, p. 2). 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 the

military operation has created strong resentment amongst the tribal people whose support could have played a significant role in the successful military operation against terrorists (ICG report, 2006, p. 15).

Operation Trib-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's 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). 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 areas of South Waziristan.

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* revealed that 4,007 houses were destroyed, causing a loss of Rs 1.32 billion to the tribesmen ([Dawn 2008c](#)). 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 ([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 & 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](#)). 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](#)). 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](#)).

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 conducted 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 & 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 this war has been imposed on us and we know how to fight it and defeat the Pakistan army. Furthermore, he vowed that the Taliban defend their land till the last drop of blood and will gain victory ([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 a result of the ongoing operation in South Waziristan, 589 terrorists were killed, and 79 soldiers also embraced martyrdom ([The Frontier Post, 2009c](#)). In addition, a huge amount 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 ([The Frontier Post, 2009c](#)). Regarding the damage and destruction made by Pakistan army operations, Hakeem Ullah Mehsud in his interview in 2009 said that if the purpose of the Pakistani army is to suffer the helpless people, displace them, orphan the children, martyr them, humiliate them and destroy madrassas and mosques then the government has successfully achieved its target (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 & 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.

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 support. Secondly, the government adopted an enemy-centric approach which created resentment against the government and helped the militants to expand their area of influence. In order to defeat insurgents and it is essential that the government obtain the support of the people. The support of the population provides a lifeline to the insurgents against the government. Undermining population support to the insurgents help the government to obtain victory. However, in the case of tribal areas of Pakistan, the government conducted military operation without undermining the ideological support of the insurgents, which helped them to increase their area of influence.

Furthermore, the military operations were conducted in the area where the government had limited statehood. The limited statehood undermined the government legitimacy and support required for successful military operations. The government had to sign peace agreement after every military operation which helped the militants to expand their influence. The already weak administrative system in the tribal areas was profoundly affected by the incident of 9/11 and its aftereffects. The three pillars of government, i.e., the political agent, the Malik and the Mullah were replaced by the militants. This shift in power undermined the government's legitimacy and its control over the use of violence which significantly contributed to the expansion of insurgency to the rest of the tribal areas of Pakistan.

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